
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

	PAGE
<i>Die Veneris, 24° Aprilis, 1896.</i>	
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -	3
Mr. Clifford Luxmoore Drew - - - - -	21
<i>Die Lunæ, 27° Aprilis, 1896.</i>	
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -	29
Mr. Samuel Babey - - - - -	31
Mr. Athelstan Braxton Hicks - - - - -	43
<i>Die Jovis, 30° Aprilis, 1896.</i>	
Mr. Athelstan Braxton Hicks - - - - -	57
Mr. E. De M. Rudolf - - - - -	59
Miss Isabel G. Smith - - - - -	67
<i>Die Martis, 5° Maii, 1896.</i>	
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -	75
Mr. William Crooks - - - - -	83
Mr. Wynne Edwin Baxter - - - - -	89
<i>Die Martis, 7° Maii, 1896.</i>	
The Rev. Benjamin Waugh - - - - -	95
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -	115
Mr. Thomas John Barnardo, F.R.C.S. - - - - -	117
<i>Die Martis, 12° Maii, 1896.</i>	
Mr. Hugh Percy Dunn, F.R.C.S. - - - - -	125
Deaconess Gilmore - - - - -	132
Miss Marian H. Mason - - - - -	138
Mrs. Crowder - - - - -	150
<i>Die Veneris, 15° Maii, 1896.</i>	
Mrs. Hardie - - - - -	155
Mrs. Bostock - - - - -	164
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -	166
Mrs. Wethered - - - - -	167
Miss Steer - - - - -	173
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -	177

Die Veneris, 24° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl DENBIGH.	Lord BELPER.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.	Lord KINNAIRD.
Viscount LLANDAFF.	Lord THRING.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.	

THE EARL DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

MR. ALFRED SPENCER is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

Chairman—continued.

1. WILL you tell us, please, your official position?—I am the chief officer of the Public Control Department of the London County Council.

2. And how is the London County Council concerned in the subject of infant life protection?—The London County Council is the local authority under the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872 for the county of London.

3. And has the administration of the present Act been carried out under your direction since then?—Yes; the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act has been carried out in London in my department and under my direction for the past 18 years, since the year 1878.

4. Will you describe briefly the provisions of the existing Act?—The first section of the existing Act deals, amongst other things, with the local authorities, and the local authorities named in the Act are set out in the First Schedule to the Act. For England the local authorities in counties, except the metropolis and City of London, were the justices in petty sessions; but this jurisdiction has been transferred from the justices to district councils by the Local Government Act of 1894, Section 27, and, therefore, in counties, except London, the local authorities are the district councils. In the metropolis the local authority is defined to be the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that jurisdiction was transferred to the London County Council by the Local Government Act for England and Wales of 1888, Section 40, Sub-section 8. In the City of London the local authority is the Common Council, and in the boroughs the council of the borough is the local authority. In Scotland the local authorities are defined by the Act to be, in the counties, the justices of the peace; in the burghs the town council; and in places where police commissioners or trustees exercise the functions of police commissioners, the local authority are the commissioners or trustees; and in Ireland,

in towns corporate, the town council; in towns having commissioners, the commissioners; and in places not included in the foregoing descriptions, the petty sessions for the district in which the place is situate. Section 2 of the Act provides that "It shall not be lawful for any person to retain or receive for hire or reward in that behalf more than one infant, and in case of twins more than two infants, under the age of one year, for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents for a longer period than twenty-four hours, except in a house which has been registered as herein provided." Section 3 provides that the local authority shall keep a register of all houses registered under the Act, and "shall from time to time make bye-laws for fixing the number of infants who may be received into each house so registered." So that on the registration of a house the local authority has to make in each case a bye-law fixing the number of infants that may be received lawfully into that house.

5. A special bye-law has to be made for each house?—For each registration. "The registration shall remain in force for one year; no fee shall be charged for registration;" that is to say, it remains in force for one year from the date of registration and not for any specified period, as, for instance, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.

6. Has the registration to be renewed at the end of that year?—The registration has to be renewed; it is only operative for one year, and it has to be renewed at the end of that year.

7. And is a separate application required by the person who owns the house for registration; the registration lapses of itself unless an application is made?—The registration, I apprehend, would lapse of itself if an application for its renewal were not made. Probably the local authority would take care that an application was made if the registered person so desired,

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that is to say, before the expiration of the registration, notice of the expiration would be given, and forms of application would be supplied, in order that the registered person might make application for renewal of registration. This course is pursued in London. Then the same section further provides that any person who receives or retains any infant in contravention of the Act shall be guilty of an offence against the Act. Section 4 enables the local authority to refuse to register a house "unless they are satisfied that such house is suitable for the purposes for which it is to be registered, and unless they are satisfied by the production of certificates that the person applying to be registered is of good character, and able to maintain such infants." The Council requires that the applicant shall produce a certificate which states that the applicant is a person "of good character, and able to maintain infants" received for hire or reward, "for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents;" and the certificate is to be signed by a justice of the peace, or by a duly qualified medical practitioner, or by a minister of the Established Church, or of a registered place of worship, and also by two rated householders not relatives of the applicant, and each applicant for registration, in addition to a form of application, is furnished with a form of certificate upon which she can obtain the necessary signatures.

8. Also by two householders, you say?—Also by two rated householders who are not relatives of the applicant. Section 5 provides that "The person registered as aforesaid shall immediately enter in a register to be kept by him the name, sex, and age of each infant under his care, and the date at which, and the names and addresses of the persons from whom, they were received, and shall also enter in the said register the time when, and the names and addresses of the person by whom, every such infant received and retained as aforesaid shall be removed, immediately after the removal of such infant, and shall produce the said register when required to do so by the local authority; and in the event of his refusing so to produce the said register, or neglecting to enter in the register the name, sex, and age of each of the said infants, and the date at which, and the names and addresses of the persons from whom, they were received, and by whom they were removed, respectively, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds. The person registered shall be entitled to receive gratuitously from the local authority a book of forms for the registration of infants; such register may be in the form contained in the Second Schedule to this Act." I produce a copy of the register that is supplied to every person that is registered, in which she has to make the entries of the infants received and taken away, as provided in the Second Schedule of the Act. The form prescribed in that Schedule may be departed from, but in the copy submitted it is adhered to, except as to one column. The schedule requires merely the age to be put in; but we found that that was not sufficiently exact, so that we substituted the date of the birth of the infant. Section 6 provides that "If any

person shall make false representations with a view to being registered under this Act, or shall forge any certificate for the purpose of this Act, or make use of any forged certificate, knowing it to be forged, or shall falsify any register kept in pursuance of this Act, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act." But I do not know of any offence against that section having taken place in London.

9. That of forgery of the certificate, you mean?—Yes, or any offence against the section.

Lord Belper.

10. When you say no offence, you mean there is no case where they have been prosecuted under that section?—Yes, that is what I mean. It may be convenient at this point to state that when a person is registered, in addition to the register, the inspector also provides the person registered with a short and simple abstract of the law relating to houses registered for the keeping of infants, and also with suggestions as to the care of infants at registered houses. These suggestions comprise suggestions as to clothing, air and ventilation, cleanliness and food, and then as to the preparation of food and the regularity of feeding, and the ages at which food of different kinds is suitable for the infant; and it also gives a caution against using soothing medicines and sleeping draughts, and that sort of thing. It really comprises those practical suggestions which our experience in the treatment of infants in registered houses makes us believe to be essential for the welfare of the infants. Section 7 of the Act enables the local authority to strike off the register any person registered, for one of three things. First of all, for "serious neglect;" secondly, for incapacity to provide the infants entrusted to his care with proper food and attention; or, thirdly, if "the house specified in the register has become unfit for the reception of infants." The number so struck off has been 24 in the period I refer to.

Lord Thring.

11. What is the period you refer to?—Eighteen years.

Chairman.

12. You have only in the 18 years struck off 24 for the causes mentioned?—We have struck off 24, not wholly for the causes mentioned. In some cases it has been desirable to strike off the register persons who voluntarily desired to give up the keeping of infants, and who did not desire their names to continue to appear on the register. While they were registered they were liable to inspection, and were anxious in such a case to remove that liability; and we think it is a desirable thing that some power should be inserted in the Bill for dealing with cases of that kind.

Viscount Llandaff.

13. How many have come under that head?—I should think, speaking from memory, perhaps 25 per cent. of them; the remaining number have been struck off for one or other of the causes specified in the section.

14. I think

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

14. I think I gathered from you the other day in private conversation with regard to that matter, that a certain amount of inconvenience has arisen on your not being able to strike people off the register except from default?—That is the case.

Viscount Llandaff.

15. Could you divide the 75 per cent. into the different classes, saying how many were struck off for serious neglect, how many for the unfitness of the house, and so on?—I think that could be done, but I am not prepared at this moment to do it. Then Section 8 provides for the giving notice to the coroner of all deaths that occur in a registered house; the deaths, that is to say, of the infants affected by the registration; and for that purpose we supply all registered persons with forms of notice, which they simply have to fill up, and directions are given what they are to do with them. I put in a copy of that form. Then Section 9 provides for the penalty: It provides that "Every person guilty of an offence under this Act shall be liable to imprisonment for not more than six months, with or without hard labour, or to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.*, as a court of summary jurisdiction may award, and shall, in addition, be liable to have his name and house struck off the register." Sections 10, 11 and 12 deal with matters of administration; and Section 13 deals with the exemptions under the Act. Section 13 provides that "the provisions of this Act shall not extend to the relatives or guardians of any infant retained or received as aforesaid, nor to institutions established for the protection or care of infants, nor to any person receiving any infant for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infant under the provisions of any Act for the relief of the poor." The Act does not include any definition of relatives or guardians or institutions; and some amount of difficulty has been experienced from the absence of those definitions. Those, I think, are all the provisions of the Act to which it may be necessary to direct the attention of the Committee.

Chairman.

16. You have stated that inconvenience has arisen on account of the want of definition of "relatives" and "guardians" in Section 13; you mean by that, I suppose, that cases have arisen where keepers of children have raised difficulties and claimed to be exempted under that clause, and that you have been unable to prove that they were really guardians or really relatives?—There has been some difficulty with regard to those two words on account of not knowing where to draw the line; but the chief difficulty has been experienced with reference to "institutions"—what did or did not constitute an institution; whether, in point of fact, a lady establishing a home for infants and receiving at the same time payment for those infants, but obviously doing it for philanthropic purposes, was or was not within the scope of the Act. The practical rule that has been acted upon in London is, that an "institution" has been regarded as an organised society established for some social or philanthropic object and managed

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

by a committee of at least six persons. That is the practical rule which we have endeavoured to apply in all these cases; and I may say that it has acted fairly well. Wherever there was no committee we have required registration; but where there was a committee we have assumed that it was an "institution" within the meaning of the Act, and therefore exempt.

17. But you have never brought anybody actually before a court of law and had it interpreted by a court?—That has not been necessary; no sufficiently acute case has arisen to make that absolutely necessary.

18. Will you briefly describe the circumstances which led up to the Act of 1872. I do not want you to traverse the whole of the ground, but if you could tell their Lordships briefly the principal points I should like you to do so?—Prior to 1871 a state of things arose which is somewhat paralleled by the existing state of things, that is to say, there occurred cases in London where infants were found dead in the streets by the police in considerable numbers; and in the end a large proportion of them were traced to a particular woman, Margaret Waters, who was tried for their murder and hanged. Considerable public attention was drawn to the matter and a strong feeling arose that led up to the appointment of the Commons Committee which sat in 1871, and which took a large amount of evidence. That Committee embodied the result of their deliberations in a very good Report, which was submitted to the House, and which I may have to refer to from time to time in the course of my evidence.

19. That led up to the Committee of 1871, which took the evidence?—The Committee of 1871.

20. When the Act came into force how many houses were registered in London?—In the year 1872 there were five only; in the following year that number increased to 10; in the year 1874 it decreased to two; in the year 1875 the number was five; in the year 1876 it was six; and in the year 1877 the number registered was five. For all practical purposes I think the Act during those years was hardly operative, or, at any rate, to so slight an extent as to be of no real value to the community.

21. And what steps were at first taken for enforcing the Act in London?—At first the only steps taken were that complaints on matters brought to the attention of the local authority were inquired into, and any applications for registration that were received were dealt with; but at that time no special inspector was appointed, because the Metropolitan Board of Works felt very strongly that the provisions of the Act were too limited to be effective in dealing with the evils aimed at.

22. They appointed no inspector because they did not think the Act was strong enough; they thought it was no use; do you mean that?—They thought it was useless. Their reasons, I think, will come out in a later answer.

23. Did the Metropolitan Board of Works make any representation to the Government upon the subject?—Yes; in the year 1873 they addressed a letter to the Secretary of State, which I will read to the Committee. The letter is dated the 28th of May 1873. "Sir,—

A 3

The

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

The Board is desirous of calling your attention to the operation of the Act passed in 1872, to provide for the better protection of infant life. The circumstances which led to the passing of the Act are probably within your knowledge. It came into operation on the 1st of November 1872, and its purport shortly stated is, to require every person receiving for hire, for the purpose of nursing apart from its parents, more than one child, or in the case of twins more than two children, under the age of one year, to be registered by the local authority. The Board being constituted the local authority to carry out the provisions of the Act within the metropolis (except the City of London) at once took the measures which seemed best calculated to make the requirements of the law known to the persons affected by it. Advertisements were inserted in the newspapers, and printed notices sent to be put up at all the police stations and all the workhouses in the metropolis. It was evident, however, from the very small number of applications made to be registered, either that the provisions of the law remained unknown to the great bulk of the persons to whom it related, or that there was a general indisposition to comply with its requirements. The Board then addressed letters to all the vestries and district boards, and to the boards of guardians, in the metropolis asking them to instruct their various officers, who, in the course of their duties of sanitary or medical inspection or poor relief, might be brought into contact with persons who received children to nurse, to report to the Board any case in which they might find children so kept without the sanction given by the Board's registration, in order that proceedings might be taken to enforce the law. A similar request was made to the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. These measures, however, have produced very inadequate results. The total number of cases brought before the Board since the 1st of November last, the date when the Act came into operation, has been 25. Of these, nine were registered according to the statute, in four cases registration was refused, in seven the parties were found to be exempt from the operation of the Act, in that only one child was being kept apart from its parents; two were institutions, and as such exempted; and the remaining three cases are still under consideration. Looking to the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on this subject in 1871, the Board cannot avoid the conclusion that the number above mentioned bear but a very small proportion to the total number of persons in the metropolis who receive children for hire apart from their parents. At the same time the Board is of opinion that it has done all that it can do in the matter. Feeling, therefore, the responsibility under which it has been placed by the Legislature in being constituted the local authority under the Act, the Board desires to call your attention to the subject, and to express the opinion, based upon the experience above detailed, that some amendment of the law is required to enable this object to be effectually accomplished." That is signed by the Clerk of the Board.

Chairman—continued.

24. What was the result of that letter?—A letter from the Secretary of State, dated the 30th of May 1873, in which the writer says: "Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Bruce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th instant, calling attention to the operation of the Act passed in 1872 to provide for the better protection of infant life, and stating that in the opinion of the Board some amendment of the law is required to enable its object to be effectually accomplished, and I am to say that Mr. Bruce will be happy to receive any suggestions for the improvement of the Act which the experience of the Board may enable them to offer." The Board thereupon sent a series of practical suggestions for the amendment of the Act, in a letter dated the 25th of June 1873. The suggestions are: "(1.) That the term 'infant,' for the purposes of the Infant Life Protection Act, shall mean and include persons up to seven years of age. (2.) That any child kept for hire or reward beyond the period of 24 hours, as provided in the Act, shall be so kept only in a registered house, as provided in the same Act; that is to say, that it applies the Act to one child. (3.) That any police constable finding that any infant kept in a registered house is not provided with proper food and attention shall forthwith apply to any justice of the peace, or police magistrate, for a summons against any person keeping a child and neglecting it, and the justices on hearing the case may make an order that proper food and attention shall be given to any child kept pursuant to the Act. (4.) That the police authorities shall, on all occasions when they can procure any information relative to the keeping of any child for hire in any house not registered, give that information to the local authority. (5.) It is suggested that as persons who act as nurses without registration might claim exemption as relatives or guardians under Section 13, the clause should be considered, and probably the existing exemption repealed, leaving the distinction as to nurses to depend simply on 'hire or reward.' (6.) That clearer authority and facility should be given for obtaining admission by the police or anyone authorised by a local authority to any premises where children are supposed to be kept." The Secretary of State replied to that letter on the 10th of October 1873. I may first add that a further letter was sent on the 8th of October to the Secretary of State, calling attention to a special case, and directing attention to the letter that I have just read. To that this reply was received: "Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Lowe to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, and to acquaint you, in reply, for the information of the Board, that their suggestions which accompanied their letter of the 25th of June last, for the amendment of the Act passed in 1872 for the better protection of infant life, were carefully considered by the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the subject, of which Committee the Under Secretary for the Home Department was a Member. The measure itself is tentative. There is a great risk lest, in order to

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

to prevent occasional crime, regulations should be introduced interfering intolerably with the non-criminal habits of a large class of the community, and especially subjecting the houses of the poor to no small intrusion; any such result would be fatal to the permanence of any legislation on the subject. Accordingly, taking the six suggestions of the Board, Mr. Lowe is not prepared (1) to raise the standard of infancy from one year to seven years; (2) to apply the Act to the nursing of one child; or (3) to transfer the oversight of the registered houses from the local authority to the police; though, doubtless, (4) the police should inform the local authority if they have reason to suspect violations in the law by non-registration. (5) The exemption of relatives was approved by the Select Committee, and Mr. Lowe concurs in their conclusion. (6) The Select Committee thought the present police powers ample, and that any extension of them would provoke opposition. Under these circumstances Mr. Lowe does not propose any alterations in the law on the subject, which has not been yet a year in force."

25. And then, what was the next step taken?—The Board addressed a further communication to the Secretary of State on the 7th February 1877. A great part of that goes over the ground already traversed, and I will not trouble the Committee with it, but the letter concludes, "I am now directed to state that the experience which the Board has since obtained as to the inadequate operation of the Act, which may be instanced by the fact that during the past year the total number of houses registered by the Board has been only six, leads the Board to adhere to the opinion which it formerly expressed, as to the advisability of the amendment of the Act, and in support of that opinion I am directed to point out, with regard to the case of the institution to which reference has already been made, that this is one of the places exempted from the operation of the Act, and over which the Board has consequently no control. Under all the circumstances it appears to the Board that the subject is one which is worthy of serious consideration, and it has therefore felt it to be its duty again to draw attention to the matter." And to that letter the Secretary of State replied in the following November, under date 2nd November 1877: "Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 7th February last, urging for an amendment of the Act for the better protection of infant life, passed in the year 1872, with a view to enabling the object to be more effectually accomplished, I am now directed by Mr. Secretary Cross to inform you that he has fully considered this question, and he is of opinion that ample powers exist for inspection under this Act, and that, before any fresh legislation is thought of, further steps ought to be taken for making the present law known; and Mr. Cross would suggest that such steps be taken by the Metropolitan Board of Works."

26. What was the result of that?—The result of that was, that the Board transferred the administration of the Act to my Department, and under my advice an inspector was appointed solely for carrying out the Act, and instructions were issued to the inspector for his guidance.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

If the Committee will permit me I will read the instructions which were then given, which will show the course that, in the main, has been followed since in carrying out the Act in London.

27. It was in the year 1878, I think?—It was in the year 1878. These instructions are dated the 12th February 1878. "The inspector will, in the first instance, in addition to fully ascertaining the powers of the Board under the Act, make himself acquainted with the state of things the Act is partially intended to remedy, by a careful study of the Report of, and the evidence given before, the Select Committee on the Protection of Infant Life, and the Appendix thereto. That gives, better than anything else, an insight into the causes of the excessive mortality of infants; and it contains information as to the proper treatment of infants, which ought to be of great value to the inspector. It will be desirable that the inspector should note, in a convenient form for reference, any facts, either as to the detection of crime, or as to the treatment of infants, that it is necessary he should be cognisant of. He will also at first carefully examine the advertising columns of certain newspapers, a list of which will be supplied to him, in order to ascertain (1) any private lying-in establishments in the metropolis; and (2) any places where children are taken care of for hire. With the same object he will also obtain lists of all relieving officers, officers of charitable societies, sanitary officers, registrars of births, &c., and all workhouses and police stations in the metropolis. He will then arrange these in groups geographically in such a way that he can call at the places named in each group on the same day, and as frequently as possible. He must use his utmost endeavours to interest the officers in the working of the Act, so that they may give him any information bearing upon the subject coming to their knowledge. To facilitate this, he will leave them addressed envelopes, as well as his official card. On hearing of any lying-in place, he will make quiet inquiries as to what is known in the neighbourhood as to the number of the births, and as to the disposal of the infants. He will ascertain what births have been registered and endeavour to trace the children, if alive, and if dead, to satisfy himself as to the cause of death, either by reference to the registrar of the sub-district, or to the doctor who attended the child. In cases where he succeeds in tracing infants to the keeping by persons for hire, he will ascertain full particulars as to the terms on which they have been received, their present condition and treatment, and of the houses and persons who keep them. The inspector will fully report each day in writing to the Clerk to the Board what he has been engaged in during the day, and report separately as to each case, when such case is ripe enough to be reported on, or when he requires instructions or assistance from the office. As regards the inspection of the premises of persons applying for registration, the inspector will examine and report as to the (1) situation and surroundings of the premises; (2) if the applicant occupies the whole or part of such premises; (3) the number of rooms occupied and the cubical size

A 4

of

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

of each; (4.) the number of persons occupying each room; (5.) as to the fitness of the person applying; (6.) as to the methods of maintenance proposed, and the means of carrying them out. The inspector will frequently visit the premises already registered and satisfy himself that the number of infants is within the number allowed, and also that their condition and the condition of the premises is satisfactory."

28. And what was the result of the active enforcement of the Act?—This result is embodied in a further letter to the Secretary of State, who must have been moved from some other quarter in the direction of an amendment of the Act, as he applied, in a letter dated the 10th of March 1880, for the Board's suggestions "as to the proposed amendment of the Act." I may perhaps be allowed to read the letter of the Metropolitan Board of Works in reply, because it does embody the experience of the Board after the appointment of an inspector up to the year 1880, an experience covering a period of about two years. After recapitulating what had gone before the letter goes on: "Acting on that suggestion" (that is the suggestion of Mr. Secretary Cross to more actively enforce the Act) "the Board has since taken all available means not only for making the law known, but for enforcing it. Notices have been published in most of the daily, weekly, and local metropolitan journals, pointing out the necessity of registration, and information has been sought from the police, the Poor Law relief officers, registrars of deaths, &c., and from other sources. In addition to this, a special inspector has been appointed, and all the advertisements inserted in the public prints by persons taking infants for hire have been answered and the cases investigated, 669 investigations having been made in the two years ended 31st January last. The number of cases in which information was obtained from other sources during the same period was 427, making together 1,096, the total number of investigations made during the two years. As a result of the additional experience gained, the Board is strengthened in the opinion that in its present form the Act does not touch the great majority of cases in which infants are kept for hire in the Metropolis, all of which should, in the Board's opinion, be provided for; that some of the exceptions now made by the Act are undesirable; and that in some minor particulars also the Act requires amendment. Of the 1,096 cases investigated in two years, only 67 cases came within the operation of the Act, that is to say, only in that number of cases were two or more infants under the age of one year kept for hire or reward."

Lord Thring.

29. Will you explain that term "investigations"?—The advertisements which appeared in the public papers asking for children for adoption, or for hire or reward, were replied to by the inspector, and 669 investigations followed; that is to say 669 different inquiries were made.

30. On the advertisements?—On the advertisements. Then, in addition to that, the Board received from other sources information of 427 cases; and all these were investigated. Out

Lord Thring—continued.

of the 1,096 cases dealt with only 67 cases came within the operation of the Act; that is to say, only in that number of cases were two or more infants under the age of one year kept for hire or reward. The letter continues: "Of the persons concerned in these cases, 38 were registered under the Act and the remainder were either prosecuted or compelled to give up nursing some of the infants in their charge. In the remaining cases inquired into (in some of which infants were not kept, but only sought for), 622 infants under five years of age were found to be kept for hire."

31. Those were outside the Act?—They were outside the Act; 622 infants outside the Act were found to be kept for hire, "and there is every reason to believe that the number was much larger."

32. They were not within the Act?—No; the Board was seeking to bring them within the Act. There were 622 infants under five years of age.

33. But under five years of age would include the infants within the Act; you understand that I want the line drawn between the one-year infants and those outside the Act?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

34. Were they outside the Act for various reasons or for any particular reason?—They were outside the Act because, although in some cases under one year of age, only one infant under that age was kept with others over that age, and in other cases because none of the infants were under one year of age, although they were all under five years of age. "These infants were often kept under conditions which, if the cases had been within the operation of the Act, could not have been sanctioned. Either the persons in charge of the infants were old and unfit, the accommodation bad, or the food insufficient and unsuitable. In 89 cases it was found that, in order probably to escape the operation of the Act, only one infant under one year was kept, but that there were others above that age." That, I think, gives the information his Lordship wants as to the proportion not under the Act that were under one year. "From the experience thus gained the Board is satisfied that, if it is desirable to extend the special protection of the law to infants placed out at hire, as provided in the Act, there is little reason why that protection should not be extended to all such infants under five years of age, and whether the number received for hire be one or more. Numerous instances have occurred in which infants entrusted to persons who only receive one at a time have died in quick succession, and there are strong reasons why the taking of one infant for hire should only be permitted under the same supervision as two or more are taken. The Board also consider that some provision should be included making it unlawful to transfer infants for lump sums. At present it frequently occurs that a parent gets rid of all responsibility for an infant by the payment of a few pounds to a person whose interest certainly is antagonistic to the child's welfare. In one of these cases a woman, who had previously been imprisoned for six months at the instance

instance

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

instance of the Board, for improperly keeping infants, 'adopted' an infant 14 days old for the sum of 6*l.*, the parents of the child being entire strangers to her. In such cases it would appear desirable to make the parties to the transaction liable to punishment. The Board also remains of opinion that institutions should not be exempt from the operation of the Act. In three cases during the past year, including the notorious Deptford case, much good would probably have resulted from supervision. The managers of properly regulated public institutions can have little or no objection to registration, and there are other establishments claiming exemption from the Act where official supervision would probably have a wholesome effect. In some minor matters also the Act needs amendment." Then follow the suggestions for the amendment of the Act which, being set out formally, I perhaps need not trouble the Committee with unless they desire it.

Chairman.

35. Then was the Bill of 1890 introduced?—There was further correspondence, which is more or less of the nature of recapitulation. The Board addressed a further letter on the 14th of November 1888, eight years after the other, again urging the amendment of the Act; and on the 8th of December 1888 a letter was received from the Secretary of State which I will read to the Committee; it is dated "Whitehall, 8th December 1888. Sir,—The attention of the Secretary of State having from time to time been drawn to instances of evasions of the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, and various amendments of the law having been proposed by coroners and others interested in the subject, Mr. Matthews is desirous of obtaining any further observations or suggestions with a view to the amendment of the law which the experience of your board among those of other large towns might be able to afford. As an instance of evasion of the law a case has come to his notice where a woman, by means of advertisements under several names, was in the habit of obtaining possession of children under pretext of adopting them herself. On receipt of the premiums she would as soon as possible put the child out to nurse with some person who was willing to take the charge of a single child under the age of 12 months, or she would place it with some person whose house was registered under the Infant Life Protection Act for a weekly payment, or she would answer the advertisement of people who wished to adopt a child, and place it with them at a reduced premium (leaving a margin for profit for herself). Fictitious names and imaginary particulars as to parentage would be given to the various parties receiving the children. The Act would thus be evaded as follows:—1. The main provisions of the Act in Sections 2 and 3 are entirely evaded by the process of distributing the children who are received 'for hire or reward.' 2. The provisions of Section 5 as to the entries to be made in the register when the child is received are evaded by giving false particulars, and in the same way the provisions as to entering (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

the name and address of the person removing the child are evaded either by giving a false name and address, or by giving no name or no address. Section 6 does not apply in these cases, because the particulars are entered by the person receiving the child, and are therefore not false to the knowledge of the person making the entries. To meet these defects in the law the following suggestions for legislation have been made to the Secretary of State, and will be considered by him when he is in possession of further information:—1. The operation of the Act should be extended to infants up to five years of age, and to the keeping for hire of any number of infants. 2. Where two or more adults live together and take infants for hire they should be severally liable. 3. Registered persons should be required to give notice of removal, and upon the discontinuance of their registration to surrender the register kept in compliance with Section 5. 4. I am to request that in laying this letter before the Town Council of . . . you will be so good as to move the council to favour Mr. Matthews with their observations thereon, and with any information as to the working of the Act at . . . that may be likely to be of assistance in the consideration of this question." The letter is signed by "C. Stuart Wortley." In reply to that letter the board did on the following 18th of January make suggestions for the amendment of the Act, which in point of fact are very similar to those I have already put before you.

36. Then with reference to the Bill of 1890, was a Bill introduced into the House of Commons by the Home Secretary?—Probably, as the result of the information that Mr. Secretary Matthews obtained in response to that circular letter, which was sent to the various local authorities in the kingdom, a Bill was prepared by the Home Office, and introduced by Mr. Matthews and Mr. Stuart Wortley in 1890; and the Bill that is now before your Lordships is practically a reprint of Mr. Matthews' Bill of 1890. I may say that there is one addition which deals with the transference of infants, but in the main it is the Bill that was introduced by Mr. Matthews.

Lord Belper.

37. The printed Bill, as introduced?—Yes, as introduced; we shall come to the amendments afterwards.

Chairman.

38. What were the main provisions of the Bill?—The answer to that question is, that the main provisions of the Bill were similar to those of the Bill now before your Lordships.

39. And what became of that Bill?—The Bill was referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons, of which Mr. Stuart Wortley was the Chairman. Evidence was taken, and the Bill as amended was reported to the House, but for some reason it was not further proceeded with; possibly because it was late in the Session. The Report was presented on the 2nd of August 1890, and it may have been too late in the Session to go on with the Bill; but, as a matter of

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fact,

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

fact, it was not re-introduced at a subsequent date.

40. However, you do not know the reason of that of your own knowledge, of course?—I only know as a matter of fact the date of the presentation of the Report, and that the Bill was not re-introduced. I am unable to give the reasons for it.

41. Will you give the Committee some information as to the defects of the present law?—I hand in a return giving particulars of the number of infants in registered houses in London from 1883 to the present time, and their death rate. The return also indicates the number of infants up to the age of seven years that the inspector found being kept for hire at unregistered premises visited in the course of his investigations; and also the number of deaths, so far as they could be ascertained by inquiry from the persons keeping the infants. The return is divided into two parts, which are quite distinct; one relates to registered houses, and therefore within the scope of the present Act; the other relates to unregistered houses not under the Act.

42. Are you quoting from the return published in your report?—I am quoting from a return which I have specially prepared for this Committee.

43. It is not the same thing?—It is not precisely the same. The return first of all gives the number, in each of the years from 1883 to 31st March of the present year, of registered houses that were actually under registration in each year, and the number which were on the register at the end of each year. I do not know whether the Committee would desire me to go through the numbers, but they vary from about 20 up to about 50 in the various years.

Viscount Llandaff.

44. In what year were the 50?—Perhaps the Committee would like me to take the recent years; shall I take the last five years?

Lord Thring.

45. This is the number of registered houses?—I am now dealing with the number of registered houses. In the year 1891–92 (the official year is from the 1st April to the 31st March) the number registered during the year was only 15, and the number on the register at the end of the year was only 11. In the year 1892–93 the number registered during that year was 21, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 16. In the year 1893–94 the number registered during the year was 22, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 21. In the year 1894–95 the number registered during the year was 50, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 38. And in the year 1895–96, which has just expired, the number registered during the year was 54, and on the register at the end of the year, 41.

Viscount Llandaff.

46. This was under a system under which you could not get off the register. Under the Act as it stands you cannot get off the register?—Not

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

until the expiration of the registration year, unless you are struck off under Section 7. I should explain it in this way. The official year is from a fixed date to a fixed date; but the registration year is not from a fixed date to a fixed date, and in order to give full information to the Committee, I am obliged to give the fact that during a year so many houses were actually registered, although at the end of that year that precise number was not on the register. A few cases are accounted for by being struck off the register for one or other of the reasons provided for in the section, but only a few.

47. Do you mean that a certain number, not quite 13, but a certain number of registered houses had their registration expire before the end of the official year 1895–96?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

48. When you say "registered" you do not mean newly registered; you mean newly registered and renewed?—Some of them would be renewals. At the end of twelve months the registration ceases, and in a legal sense they are new registrations; but in point of fact, they are what your Lordship would understand as renewals; that is to say, houses that had been registered before were re-registered.

49. Like public-houses?—Like public-houses.

Lord Belper.

50. Then, when you give us the figures of 50 or 54, it does not mean all new houses?—No.

Lord Thring.

51. You mean the actual number on the register whether renewed or new?—That is the meaning. Of course, changes are always going on; new houses come on the register and old ones not being renewed, go off; they are continually changing. The registration is only for one year.

Lord Kinnaird.

52. And all go off?—And all go off; and only those are replaced on the register for the ensuing year as to which applications are received. Then, dealing with the number of infants under one year that were found in the registered houses during the 13 years which the return deals with, we found that the number of 1,502 infants had been received during that period; that the number of deaths that took place in the registered houses during the period was 253.

Viscount Llandaff.

53. Under one year of age?—Yes, under one year; and the number of inquests held was 23.

Chairman.

54. Twenty-three inquests, you say?—Yes.

55. And how many deaths?—Two hundred and fifty-three; that is to say, in 230 cases out of the 253 cases the coroners on the information received did not think it necessary to hold inquests.

Lord Thring.

56. But the deaths were of infants under one year?—The deaths were of infants under one year.

57. Not

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

57. Not of infants received under one year, but infants who, at the time of their death, were under one year old?—They were the deaths of infants under one year old. Then, passing to unregistered houses, that is, houses not in any way affected by the Act, the number of infants being kept for hire that the inspector found in the course of his inquiries at these unregistered houses during the period named was 4,501, almost precisely 3,000 more than those which came under the Act; and of that number 1,970 were found to be under one year; 852 were found to be between one year and two years; and the remaining number, 1,579, were found to be between two years and seven years. At that time we took cognisance of children up to seven years old.

Chairman.

58. The 4,501 means the children under seven years of age?—The total number of children kept for hire at unregistered houses under seven years of age.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

59. That is not merely the total of the different children for each separate year, it might include the same child twice over?—That has occurred to me; and any deductions that may be made from the death rate must be made with that allowance. It is impossible to tell, either with the infants at registered houses or the infants at unregistered houses, to what extent the numbers are duplicated. Of course, the inspector is able to know and visit a comparatively small number of the unregistered houses; he only comes across them in the course of his ordinary duties of inquiry; and there may be and probably are, a great number of other houses at which infants are kept for hire, of which he has no cognisance; but these are the number of infants he found at unregistered houses; and the number of deaths given are compiled from information that the persons receiving the infants supplied to him. In the case of the deaths at registered houses, the figures are exact, that is to say, we are cognisant of those deaths; but in the case of the deaths at unregistered houses, we can only know of them from the information given by the persons who received the infants; and the deaths of which we received information amounted during the period to 561; those were the deaths of infants of under one year.

60. Then the percentage would really be higher?—Probably very much higher.

61. If you duplicate the particular cases, of course that makes the death percentage higher?—It does. In the case of the registered houses dealing with the children under one year, it would probably not have been much higher; there would be very little duplication there, because, of course, the children soon reach the age of one year.

Lord Thring.

62. Does not the Bishop's question lead to this: that the comparison between the deaths in unregistered houses and registered houses is necessarily fallacious?—To a certain extent that is so; and I pointed out that any deductions (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

made from the death-rate must be made with some allowance for duplication.

Lord Kinnaird.

63. If the 4,500 included duplicated children, the percentage would be lower, would it not?—No, the actual number of children would be less, so that the death-rate would be higher. Then the deaths of infants under one year found at unregistered houses during the same period was 273.

Chairman.

64. You have some figures, I understand, with reference to the proportion of deaths of infants under one year at registered and unregistered houses?—Going on with the figures shown in the return, and subject to the allowance I have indicated to your Lordship, the death-rate was only 16.8 per cent. at the registered houses, of infants under one year, which is only slightly above the general death-rate in London of infants under one year, which averaged 15.4 over a period of 10 years (see the Registrar General's Annual Summary for 1894, page 6). All the deaths in registered houses are known to us, and although only a proportion of those at unregistered houses, the ascertained deaths at unregistered houses give a rate of mortality of 28.5 per cent. In other words, for every 1,000 births 168 infants under one year that died in registered houses, at least 285 died in unregistered houses. I think I may put it in this way: that so far as the figures apply to the children under one year there is very little duplication, and the figures are to a certain extent a guide.

65. Can you give the Committee any further information as to the mortality of infants?—I have gone through the evidence attached to the Report of the House of Commons Committee of 1871, which gives the following rates of mortality of infants. The ordinary mortality of infants under one year in England and Wales is between 15 and 16 per cent.; the ordinary mortality of infants nursed by their mothers in workhouses is also between 15 and 16 per cent.; that of infants put out by the Foundling Hospital to wet nurse is also between 15 and 16 per cent.; while the average mortality of hand-nursed infants is stated to be about 40 per cent.

Viscount Llandaff.

66. Even in well-conducted homes?—I am coming to that. In inferior houses and in rural districts it reaches from 40 to 60 per cent.; in large towns where the sanitary conditions are unfavourable it reaches to 70, 80, and even 90 per cent. The children of wet nurses taken from their mothers' breasts to make room for other infants are stated in the report to scarcely ever live; and even the infants of wet nurses left in well-conducted establishments like the Magdalen Home, are subject to a death-rate stated to be 54 per cent.

Chairman.

67. Those figures that you have quoted just now with reference to the infants of the wet nurses taken away, came out in the evidence

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

given about the Foundling Hospital, I think?—That is so.

68. That the Foundling Hospital put out children to nurse in the villages with wet nurses, and then the children of these wet nurses are put out to be hand-nursed and they generally die?—That was the evidence.

69. Can you tell us what are the proportions of legitimate and illegitimate children born in London?—From information supplied by the Registrar General's office and published by the council in London statistics, I find that in 1893 there were 128,149 legitimate infants and 4,913 illegitimate infants born in London. Then going to the death-rate I find that the deaths of children under one year in the County of London in the year 1893 were 21,802, or at the rate of 163 per 1,000.

Lord Thring.

70. One year children?—One year; I am dealing with the deaths of children under one year.

Viscount Llandaff.

71. What percentage does it give?—16·3 per cent. There were only 1,576 inquests in respect of those 21,802 deaths. Turning to the illegitimate children, I find that out of 4,913 illegitimate children born in London in 1893 only 80 came into registered houses; we found 125 in unregistered houses, and some probably were taken by institutions, but how many it is impossible to say. The average death-rate would account for about 840, and probably a small proportion were brought up by their mothers; but I think I may put it that many are not accounted for.

Lord Thring.

72. Do you mean that they are not known?—What becomes of them is not known.

Chairman.

73. Did you state that 80 illegitimate children you found in registered houses?—In that year.

74. Out of a total of how many children in the registered houses; I want to know what proportion of the legitimate to the illegitimate children you found in the registered houses; have you got that?—I find that in 1893-94 there was a total of 80 infants under one year in registered houses. These were nearly all illegitimate children.

Lord Thring.

75-8. As against how many legitimate?—I would rather that the inspector under the Act answered that question; but I think it will be found that few, if any, of the infants at registered houses are legitimate children.

79. Do I correctly understand you to say that all the children in the registered houses are illegitimate; when I say all, I mean nearly all?—Yes, I believe that to be so.

80. And that you know?—Well, the inspector would answer that question more positively.

81. I want to know this very much: as far as you know, when you talk of these registered houses, the children in them are, as a rule, illegitimate?—I have been myself pressing the

Lord Thring—continued.

inspector on the point several times, and he estimates that from 1 to 2 per cent. of the infants at registered houses are legitimate, the remainder being illegitimate.

82-3. And, as far as you know, you agree with that?—I have no knowledge apart.

Chairman.

84. You said just now, that out of a total of 4,826 illegitimate infants a certain number are at institutions and with their mothers; you cannot give anything more precise as to what became of them later?—We have no means of ascertaining how those infants were disposed of; and of course I am putting these figures forward as an argument indicating the desirability of some further powers being given in order that there may be some means of dealing with a larger proportion.

Lord Thring.

85. I understand you to say that the mortality of the children under one year old is 15 or 16 per cent.; but then that is only a very little higher than the mortality of adults, is it not?—I refer to the annual summary of the Registrar General, of the births, deaths, and causes of deaths in London and other large towns for the year 1894, and I find under the head of London, at page 6 of the Summary, and under the heading of Infantile Mortality—

86. Under one year old, or what?—The deaths of persons at all ages include those of 18,732 infants who had not completed their first year of life. These deaths are equal to a rate of 143 per 1,000 children born, as compared with 154, the average rate in the preceding 10 years. Infantile mortality was highest, 158 per 1,000 in the east group of sanitary areas, and lowest, 131 per 1,000 in the north.

Viscount Llandaff.

87-9. It does not say what "infantile" means; infants of what age?—Infants who have not completed their first year of life.

Chairman.

90. Can you give the Committee any information as to the number of inquests on legitimate and illegitimate infants in London. I may take it that when you speak of infants it is always infants under one year old, unless specified to the contrary?—I submit a return showing the number of inquests held in London on legitimate and illegitimate children in the years 1893, 1894, and 1895. Dealing first with legitimate children, the return shows that for the year 1893 there were inquests held on 894 male infants, and 796 female infants under one year; that there were 452 inquests on male infants of over one year and under seven years, and 381 inquests on female children between those ages; which gives a total of both sexes of 1,690 legitimate infants of under one year, and 833 legitimate infants of between one year and seven years during the year 1893. Dealing now with illegitimate or unknown infants, there were inquests on 162 male infants under one year, and 137 female infants under one year; and on illegitimate infants between the ages of one year and seven years

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

years there were 15 inquests on male infants, and 11 on female infants. In the year 1894 the number of inquests on legitimate infants, both male and female, under one year was 1,576, and 778 on legitimate infants between one year and seven years. On illegitimate infants under one year there were 287 inquests held, and 27 on illegitimate infants between one year and seven years. And for the past year, the year 1895, the numbers were slightly increased. There were 1,797 inquests on legitimate children under one year, and 877 upon legitimate infants between one year and seven years. There were 322 inquests on illegitimate infants under one year, and 38 inquests on illegitimate infants between one year and seven years.

Viscount Llandaff.

91. How many of those inquests resulted in any criminal verdict, do you know?—The information supplied to me by the coroners, from which this return is made up, does not include that; but I think you will be able to get it from the coroners themselves, some of whom it is proposed to call.

Chairman.

92. Then dealing with the Bill, and with Clause 2, why do you think that the Act should be extended to children under five years of age?—The view that our experience leads us to take is, that registration and the consequential supervision would benefit infants over one year kept for hire almost as much as it would benefit those under one year. The experience of the inspectors is to the effect that the conditions under which infants are found to be kept at unregistered houses are not nearly so good as those at registered houses, and we feel very strongly that supervision of some kind would be very beneficial to nurse infants up to, at any rate, the age when they would come within the operation of the Elementary Education Acts; and for that reason we suggest that the age should be raised from one year to five years, when the Elementary Education Acts apply; so that to a certain extent law and authority will be in touch with nurse infants, not merely for the first year and after the fifth year, but continuously from their birth forwards.

93. And then by the same clause, persons keeping only one infant for hire will come under the Act?—Some of the worst cases that we have come across are cases where only one infant under the age of a year is kept. The inspector will give you more detailed information than I can give as to trafficking in infants where only one is dealt with at one time. It may be within the knowledge of the Committee that in a case that is now under investigation, the Reading case, only one infant was taken and kept at a time, and yet clearly that is a case where some amount of supervision was desirable.

94. And how will this clause affect the boarding out of infants by societies and institutions?—Of course the keeping by societies and institutions is covered by the exemption, but the boarding out by societies and institutions is not covered by the exemption. The method that the Select Committee of 1890 proposed to apply (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

to that was the insertion in the exemption clause of sub-clause (b.) There they proposed that "in the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants," but I believe that exemption would only apply to one institution, the Foundling Hospital. The Committee may consider it a desirable thing to somewhat extend that exemption.

Lord Thring.

95. It is a matter of difficulty?—It is a matter of extreme difficulty; but where no other infants are kept, except infants that are boarded out by a properly organised society, the registration and supervision by a public authority may not be so necessary, because a properly organised society would take some private means of supervision, which might be equally effectual, or more effectual than public supervision.

Chairman.

96. The difficulty, I suppose, was where to draw the line between what you describe as a properly organised society, and these so-called philanthropic institutions which perhaps are not so well managed?—They are not so well managed. We have experience of a considerable number of societies where the management has been anything but good.

Lord Thring.

97. Could you name them?—Any evidence of that nature that the Committee desires will be forthcoming. I prefer that the inspector who was in touch with the cases should give you that evidence.

Chairman.

98. On that point you suggest the question of a possible extension of the exemptions. It might be possible, perhaps, to meet it in the way that was indicated by Miss Hill in her evidence before the Committee of 1890, in which she suggested the registration of committees in different places; I mean to say that possibly institutions might be exempted which are duly authorised by the local authorities in places where infants are boarded out, that have the leave, as it were, of the local authorities to board out infants in that locality, so that the local authority might know of the infants being boarded out there?—Some provision of that sort would probably meet the case. I may say that I have no experience of that sort, because I think boarding out in that way would be largely carried on outside London rather than inside London. I ought to have said "little" experience; we have some experience of infants being put out at registered houses by institutions, but, of course, no difficulty has arisen with them because they have been placed in registered houses under supervision.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

99. Are these institutions you refer to as not so well managed, managed by a committee or by single persons?—By single persons as a rule.
100. You

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

100. You know, of course, that the objections raised by several of these institutions mainly consist in the contention that the respectable people with whom they board out these children in the villages would be rather loth to come forward and offer to take the children if they had to register them; that is the objection urged by the Foundling Hospital and various other institutions?—That is the case.

101. How would this clause affect the case of a working man or woman who desires to put an infant with a friend?—If in such a case objection to registration is felt by the friend, it would doubtless be a difficulty. It is a difficulty that the 1890 Committee attempted to meet by suggesting the limitation of the proposed Amending Act to illegitimate children. That doubtless might meet the case, but at the same time I point out to the Committee that any limitation of that kind would be extremely difficult to deal with in actual administration. I apprehend that it would not be a difficult thing for almost any woman to produce to a person receiving infants for hire sufficient evidence to justify that person in receiving the infants. She might, for instance, borrow a certificate as evidence that she was a married woman. I do not think there would be very much difficulty in that being done. So that I apprehend that if so wide an exemption as that were inserted in the Bill there would be considerable scope for evasion. I ought to mention also that one of the proposed exemptions that the Committee of 1890 inserted in the Bill was under exemption "E," which reads: "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause." But I feel even more strongly that that exemption might be so wide as to cover nearly every case that might arise; and for that reason it requires to be considered with very great care. At the same time I also point out that the whole of this Clause 6, dealing with exceptions, is intended to apply only to cases where lump sums are paid for the infants. The proviso is: "Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of five years, in consideration of an immediate payment, shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section." It is a little difficult to see how that would work.

102. It would be rather difficult to prove that they had received some lump sum, would it not?—It would be exceedingly difficult to prove it; and I think possibly it would be a very easy thing to evade, because when the transaction took place it would be necessarily a private transaction; the person receiving the infant might protect herself by preparing what purported to be an agreement that the payment should be periodical, and it would be very difficult indeed to obtain evidence to show that an offence against the Act had been committed.

Chairman—continued.

103. She might have a series of receipts for several weeks ahead and yet a lump sum might be paid down?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

104. I suppose the most desirable thing of all is that the lump sum cases should be prevented?—Yes; I think that those cases in which a parent practically parts entirely with an infant to another person on payment of a simple sum of money lead to more crime than any other class of cases.

Viscount Llandaff.

105. In the case of a lump sum payment, it is to the interest of the receiver that the child should die; in the case of a weekly payment it is her interest that the child should live?—That is the case.

Chairman.

106. But all the evidence given in the past by people interested in these boarding-house institution shows one of their cardinal rules is that payment should always be weekly or monthly on behalf of the children; both in the case of Poor Law rules and voluntary institutions?—That is the case.

107. How would this clause affect the case of parents in India and elsewhere who may have to send children to England?—It would undoubtedly affect those cases; and I have no doubt that cases of that sort should be exempted, and probably the Committee will be able to see some means of providing an exemption for them. I think it might not be difficult to prepare an exemption which would cover cases of that kind. They do not appear to be altogether covered by the amendments inserted in the Bill of 1890, unless the proviso as to limiting the operation of the Bill to illegitimate children is adopted. That would, of course, entirely cover them.

108. It would be covered, of course, if the children were sent to relatives or guardians?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

109. But, practically, the introduction of the word "illegitimate" would solve the difficulty in all these cases?—Practically it would.

Chairman.

110. But at the same time, with regard to the question of the Bishop, you are of opinion strongly that if the Act was confined to illegitimate children it would open the door to a very large amount of practical evasion of the Act?—I fear that that might be so.

111. That in the case of these people who are the worst class, and necessarily very unscrupulous, it would not be in any way difficult for them, and would not require any very great ingenuity on their part, if the inspector came round and made inquiries as to the infants in the house, to prove that they were legitimate?—I think that it would not; that the receiver of the infants would probably be able to satisfy the inspector that she had taken the necessary means for ascertaining that the children were legitimate before she received them.

112. The

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

112. The inspector would be entirely at the mercy of the person's statement?—Very largely so.

113. In fact, he would have no means of checking it?—I see very little means at his disposal; he could only do so by subsequent inquiry, which would be a matter of great difficulty.

114. Then, with reference to Clause 3 of the Bill, will you tell the Committee the object of requiring written statements as to the parentage of infants placed out to nurse?—The object of making the statement a written one is that we believe that a person would frequently hesitate to make a false statement in writing while possibly ready to do so orally. The present law, as you are aware, prohibits a false statement, but provides no penalty for making the false statement. This clause is practically as it left the Select Committee of 1890, except the period of residence; that Committee altered it to three months, both in Sub-Clauses 1 and 2.

Viscount Llandaff.

115. But the Bill of 1890 does not require writing. Clause 2 only says, "Shall state truly the name, sex and age of the infant"?—"Shall state truly"; that is the case; and I have given the reasons for desiring that the statement should be in writing, because we believe there would be less probability of evasion being attempted.

Chairman.

116. Do you say that there is no penalty for a false statement now under Section 5 of the present Act; it does not state so in the section, but it says in the section, that the person "shall immediately enter the name, sex, and age"; is it not the assumption that if they state it wrongly there is a penalty?—The penalty in the Act is directed solely against the registered person, and not against a person who may give false information.

117. We have dealt with Clause 3 with regard to the question of statements in writing respecting infants received, but not with Sub-section 2, about the preventing of the handing on of children; I do not think we have had any remarks from you on that subject?—That, I think, does not arise under this clause, but under another clause; Clause 5, I think it is.

118. Yes, it comes under this: "Where an infant is removed from the care of a person registered under the principal Act the person removing the infant shall state truly in writing"?—That is in order to enable the registered person to make the entry in the register which is required under the existing Act.

119. That is for the purpose of enabling the inspector to trace the people if he finds that they have gone?—That I apprehend is the purpose, that there may be some means of tracing what becomes of the infants.

120. They are not able to do it under the present Act, then?—Yes, the present Act makes a provision for the registration by the registered person, of the infants, both as to their reception

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

and disposal, but it makes no provision as to misleading statements made to the registered person; and I apprehend that sub-clause (2) of Clause 3 of the Bill is intended for the protection of the registered person with a view to ensuring that correct information is given for the entries on the register.

121. Then Clause 4, which requires the delivery up of the register, what is the object of that?—That is a small point; but it has been found in practice that persons remove and do not give up the register, so that we lose trace not only of the persons but of the infants; and the object of the clause is to enable us to follow the person, and in order to regain possession of the register. All the person is now required to do is to produce the register while under registration, and the object of the proposed clause is to require him, on leaving the house or giving up registration, to give up the register.

122. Clause 5, have you anything to say about that?—Clause 5 is an attempt to deal with the transfer of infants, and is, I apprehend, one of the most important clauses in the Bill. At present any person can receive an infant and then get rid of it to another person without committing an offence; that is, supposing they take care to avoid keeping two or more infants for more than 24 hours; and this appears to be conducive to the practice of taking in infants for lump sums and disposing of them. The Bill proposes that a person may not receive infants without being registered, and may not dispose of them to another person without consent.

Viscount Llandaff.

123. The consent of the local authority?—The consent of the local authority; that is to say, that a registered person having received for hire an infant, that person should not be allowed to traffic in it (that is, to dispose of it for a profit) without the transaction being in some way registered.

124. The Bill goes much beyond that: you must not transfer it in any way; not merely for hire?—I think the intention is that it shall apply to transfer for hire.

125. Transferring to the Poor Law authorities would be within the clause?—It is obvious that that is not meant; it is, I think I may say, entirely directed against such a transference as is very common, and which you will probably hear of over and over again in the evidence, where persons do take infants for lump sums, and place them out with other persons at a profit.

Chairman.

126. That is to be guarded against by putting in the words "For hire or reward," again after the word "person" in the third line, "It shall not be lawful for any person who receives any infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person for hire or reward"?—It would require a little consideration, but that might probably meet the case.

127. That would make it absolutely clear: You say that is what you mean?—I think it requires consideration before any modification is made.

B 4

128. "Transfer

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

128. "Transfer or give for consideration"?—Yes; I think possibly after the word "relative" in the proviso, in Clause 5, the words "or guardian" might properly be added. It would be a re-disposal, practically, on the part of the person from whom the infant was received. I may say that it is a matter which comes frequently within our experience that a person has been paid a lump sum to take charge of an infant, that that person has transferred the infant on a promise to pay a periodical sum, say, 5s. a week, for its maintenance, that the payment has been made for two or three weeks, and that the payment has then ceased, and no trace at all of the intermediary has been obtained; and that child has been then taken to the workhouse and its maintenance fallen upon the rates.

129. Under this clause it could not be taken to the workhouse without the consent of the local authority?—That is not what is intended.

Lord Thring.

130. How can the local authority know anything about it; how can they know even of its existence?—Assuming that the law has been complied with as to registration, the local authority would, of course, know of its existence; but at present this transference of infants can be done perfectly legally, and the object of the Bill is to make it an offence to put obstructions in the way of doing it, and to make it somebody's duty to see that it is not done.

Viscount Llandaff.

131. Supposing that a woman has got a child to take care of for a neighbour, and the woman gets scarlet fever, and in a hurry wants to transfer the child to some safe house, she must, under this clause, get the consent of the local authority before she can do it?—Of course, every Act must be carried out with discretion.

132. But the words are, that she is not to transfer the child to anybody without the consent of the local authority?—It is rather difficult I apprehend to draw an Act to cover every possible case, and my experience is that a large discretion is necessary in the administration of all Acts.

133. A dispensing power, in fact, in the local authority to administer the Act or not as they think fit?—A dispensing power not to enforce penalties where the local authority considered it undesirable.

Chairman.

134. But before we leave this very important question are you going to bring evidence afterwards, or can you bring now any evidence, to show the extent to which children are passed on in this way which you desire to put a stop to?—The inspector will be able to produce evidence on that point.

135. We want to know to what extent it exists now?—Yes; evidence will be given.

Viscount Llandaff.

136. The transfer in itself would not be a bad thing; it is maltreatment of the transferee that you want to guard against?—I think the system of traffic which leads to possible maltreatment is what we want to guard against.

Lord Thring.

137. The most dangerous thing of all is to give a lump sum to a woman, and two hours afterwards she gets rid of the child to another person?—I apprehend that Clause 5 of the Bill would affect that. There is no limitation to 24 hours in that clause. It provides, "It shall not be lawful for any person who receives any infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person without the consent in writing of the local authority"; that is to say, what now goes entirely untouched by the law and is believed to be a common practice, would be created an offence, and this would enable the local authorities to some extent to touch it.

Lord Belper.

138. Do you intend that this clause should necessarily hang by the clause which compels all people having children under five years of age for hire or reward to be registered, because if it does it is better to say in the clause that any person registered under the Act, under these circumstances, shall not be allowed to transfer the child without the consent of the local authority; but if you mean it to be effective, whether you get the other power passed or not, then it is another thing?—I think the clause should stand on its own merits quite apart from any question of registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

139. That a non-registered person having received a child ought to get the consent of the local authority to its transfer?—Having received it for "hire or reward."

140. That person being already liable to the penalty you mention for not having registered?—Yes.

141. You think that such a person would try to get the consent of the local authority?—It would enable the local authority to keep in touch with the case.

142. The non-registered person being already liable to the penalty of imprisonment for having taken a child without registration, you suggest that that person should go to the local authority for consent to transfer it. They would not do it?—They very likely would not do it; but the clause makes something illegal which is legal now, and which in the common interest of the community ought to be stopped. We may or may not be able to enforce the clause, but it will give us some power to stop the practice.

Lord Thring.

143. Take the case of a child at a school sent from India to a friend in this country; cannot they transfer the child to another school without the consent of the local authority?—I have already said that in my opinion the Committee will have to devise some means of exempting cases of that sort.

Chairman.

144. What you want is to hit the person that comes to the house and takes the child away?—I want to hit the intermediary.

145. You

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

145. You want to find out where the child has gone to. The inspector asks, Where is such a child that I saw last week; he finds it is gone, and wants to know where it is gone to?—I do not think the case is one such as you have in your mind, but it can be illustrated in this way: a woman who does not really keep infants herself at all, or only for quite a short period, advertises for infants or answers advertisements in which infants are proposed to be given out for adoption; the ordinary practice is that that person enters into negotiation with the parent or guardian of the child; finally, a sum of money, varying possibly from a few pounds, say 10l., up to a very considerable sum of money, is paid to this person to take the child off the parent or guardian's hands. The person who receives the child and the sum of money then gets rid of the child by placing it out in the care of somebody else who receives it for hire or reward, sometimes in a registered house. Our experience is that the money may be paid for a week or two, but that then the payment is dropped, and the person who receives the infant very likely puts it on the parish; it is the intermediary, the person who makes the profit out of the transaction, that we want to hit.

146. But you have already hit that person by two clauses; you hit him by the clause that requires him to be registered?—I am afraid not, because in a large number of cases they do not keep the child for a period of 24 hours, so I do not think they are hit by that clause, but they would be hit by the clause you now have before you.

Chairman.

147. They might take the child and receive the payment, go straight away to the other place and put it out?—That is the ordinary practice: they receive the child at a railway station, and put it out at once.

Lord Thring.

148. It is involved in the registration clause: you mean to say you want to make it a statutable offence for a woman to take a child, getting a large sum of money with it, and then get rid of the child immediately?—Yes.

149. But she does not maintain the child at all?—No. An ordinary case would be where she would receive 10l., and put that child out at 5s. a week, and pay for two or three weeks, and then drop the payments.

Earl of Buckingham.

150. Then the child would go to the workhouse?—Yes, it ordinarily does, so that the profit made would be upwards of 9l.

Chairman.

151. I should like to know whether this clause would hit the lying-in-house keeper in the sense of handing over children; would it make it illegal for the lying-in-house keeper to take a child and pass it on?—I think it would where the lying-in-house keeper undertakes the charge of the child for the mother. When she simply acts as an agent of the mother in placing the child out, I doubt whether it would touch her.
(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

152. What proof could there be of that?—Everything arising out of this Act is difficult of proof, I admit. I think that the very fact of the thing being made illegal would go a great way towards stopping it.

Lord Kinnaird.

153. Do you know whether many of those struck off the register or who wish to get off the register, afterwards take in infants for hire or reward; do you follow them up?—They sometimes come back for re-registration. The inspector does more or less keep in touch in them. I think that the effect of having once registered is to render it improbable that the registered person would seek to avoid registration afterwards.

Chairman.

154. Now we will go on to Clause 6; do you think that the power of entry that is given there is necessary?—Some difficulty has been experienced by the inspectors, and it is suggested that their powers should be enlarged. I observe that the Committee of 1890 proposed to limit the power of compulsory inspection to those cases where the warrant of a Justice is granted; and as that is the ordinary practice and custom of this country, I apprehend that this Committee will desire to embody a proviso of that sort in the clause. I do not suggest that any departure should be made from the safeguards that are ordinarily attached to the right of entry. I am not now speaking of registered houses, I am speaking of the right of inspection in a case of suspicion; and the section as drawn gives the right of entry in such a case as that, but the Committee of 1890 modified that right by requiring a warrant of a Justice in the ordinary way; and I suggest that that may be a desirable safeguard.

Viscount Llandaff.

155. There is no power of entry in the existing Act?—There is none.

Chairman.

156. And the consequence was that, when the officer went to make inquiries, where he had reason to suspect that children were kept, they sometimes refused to admit him, and he had no power of entry?—That is so.

157. Will you tell us what you think of Clause 7?—That enlarges the power of the local authority to strike the house off the register, not only for serious neglect or incapacity to properly provide food and attention, or because the house has become unfit, as provided by the present Act, but also for other reasons; for instance, when the registered persons themselves desire to be struck off the register. No such power of cancelling the registration appears to exist except for the reasons specified in the section, and it would be desirable in the interest of the registered persons that some enlargement of the section should be provided for.

Lord Belper.

158. Would it not be proper to put in that Clause 7 in the principal Act should be repealed; they

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

they appear to follow exactly the same lines with the addition you have mentioned?—Yes, or simply to provide an amendment of the clause.

159. You embody the whole of Clause 7 of the principal Act with an addition, and in that case it ought to be repealed?—Yes, in that case it ought to be repealed.

Viscount Llandaff.

160. What is to be done with the children? Here is a house with several children which suddenly gets struck off the register, and therefore keeping these children would be an offence?—It would be so under the existing law. It would not arise under any cases that the enlarged section is proposed to meet; but, as a matter of fact, the practice is that the inspector always takes care as to the disposal of those infants before the house is struck off the register, or immediately afterwards. We take the greatest care that no unnecessary inconvenience is put upon the registered person, and that the infants are properly cared for. May I put the case of a woman who commits a breach of the law and is committed to prison; the inspector invariably in those cases has to look after the infants by taking them to the workhouse, or providing proper care for them; otherwise they would be quite without care.

Chairman.

161. Have you got any other suggestions to give to the Committee?—I have no further suggestion to make in my examination-in-chief; possibly certain points will arise in the further examination as to any exemptions that the Committee may question me upon; and I may be in a position to make some suggestions then.

162. I should like to ask you before we conclude the examination-in-chief about Clause 8, the interpretation of the expression "institutions established for the protection or care of infants"?—There an attempt has been made to define the meaning of the word "institutions" as meaning "societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons."

Lord Belper.

163. It is rather broad?—It is very broad, necessarily broad I think.

Lord Thring.

164. Does it add anything to the former clause?—It does this: it endorses a practice that has been practically acted upon for many years past. There is no definition as you are aware in the present Act; we have acted upon that definition and find it answers in practice.

Viscount Llandaff.

165. I do not quite see what you get by the words "societies organised for some public or social object." The point is a committee of six?—Yes, that is the principal point.

166. I suppose taking the words in the original Act "for the care and protection of infants," those words indicate a public and social object?—I think they do. Then the words "relatives" and "guardians" are not defined, and I think it may be found very possible to

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

give a definition of those words. I venture to suggest to the Committee this definition: that the word "relatives" shall mean persons related to the infant either by blood or marriage within the degree of first cousinship; the word "guardian" shall mean, the person or persons, who is or are by law, liable to maintain the infants.

Lord Thring.

167. The persons liable to maintain the infant would be the parents?—But the parents might be dead or absent.

168. I should have thought it desirable to leave them both alone?—It is quite possible that it might be desirable to leave them alone, but it may tend to make the thing a little more workable if you define what relationship is, and therefore I suggest within the degree of first cousinship by either blood or marriage.

Chairman.

169. Do you see any objection to qualify this definition of a society "controlled by a committee of not less than six persons," and putting in a proviso that it shall be approved by the local authority of the district in which they shall board out children, because it seems to me that one of these women might be able to get six other persons worse than herself to form such a committee, and then you would have no control over them?—I see that difficulty.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

170. What would you believe to be the reason why there are so few registered houses in London for the taking in of children, when any registered house can be legitimately a source of profit; there are only some 20 or 30 houses in the whole of London; why are there not more?—I am afraid I can give no explanation. The Council has endeavoured by every means in its power and by vigilance to increase the number. They have appointed in recent years two additional inspectors, and there are now three inspectors for London, one male inspector for the north of the Thames, one for the south of the Thames, and a lady inspector who visits the registered houses; and we have taken every means in our power to make the necessity for registration known, and have endeavoured to find out all about the disposal of infants put out for hire; and the practical fruit of our endeavour is that those houses are on the register, and under supervision. Why there are not more it is very difficult to say, except that we find in practice that, I should think, 90 per cent. of the infants that are now put out for hire do not come within the purview of the Act; that is to say, either only one infant under one year is kept, or if there are more infants than that one infant, the remainder are over one year old, so that the Act is not transgressed, as registration is not necessary in the present state of the law in such cases.

171. But if it be, as one would think it may be, a most profitable thing to have a house properly conducted for three or four infants, is it not possible that the very inquiries you refer to have been discouraging respectable people who might desire to have a registered house rather than encouraging them. I mean this: That

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

That at present the *prima facie* view that anyone would take of a place where infants are received is, that it is a disreputable place, and that though it may just escape condemnation, or may even succeed in being registered and fairly well conducted, it is not such a thing as respectable people would desire to engage in. Why not? It puzzles me; I am asking simply for information?—I think the objection to registration must be mainly a sentimental objection. Our experience shows us that many people have a prejudice against their houses being considered as baby farms, and that directly you register them, their neighbours, and anyone cognisant of the fact, begin to regard them suspiciously, and although the reverse of that is really the fact, that is to say, they remove by registration any real reproach against the practice of taking infants for hire, that is not the way it is regarded by the general public.

172. You are not of opinion that anything could be done by the authorities just now rather to encourage the registration of a larger number of houses than merely to inquire whether existing houses are registered or not?—Everything that can be done in London is already done in the direction of encouragement of registration of houses.

173. The registration of houses which at present takes place?—Yes.

174. But I mean multiplying registered houses?—As far as it is possible for us to increase the number, we do so; we offer every facility by information and advice, and in every way we desire that persons who do take infants for hire should come on the register, and we point out to them that it brings with it no disabilities except the sentimental disability of being regarded as keeping a baby farm.

175. And you find it difficult to understand why, considering how many hard-up people are in pursuit of a fair source of profit, there should not be more of these registered houses?—I am inclined to think that at the prices usually paid for infants taken for hire there would not be much profit.

176. That is what I wanted to get at; there are two reasons that might prevent it; one that there might be no demand for such places, and the other that they would not be profitable, and you rather think that they are not profitable?—I do not think there are many inducements to enter into it. It is not a lucrative business.

Viscount Llandaff.

177. Why do so many people take one child; you have given us a large number of cases of people who take one child only where they might register and take two or three?—I think it is very difficult to say why.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

178. You mentioned in connection with that, that in existing houses that are registered changes are continually going on, that people are going off the register and on to it; what does that mean; what induces this constant change; do the majority of the places that are registered remain on the register for a term of years, 10 years say; would you find people registered to—
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Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

day who were registered 10 years ago?—I would rather that you would take that from the inspector, who would be able to give you more precise information. I can only say in general terms that as a rule registration is not of any considerable permanence.

179. Then taking your evidence as a whole, I gather that you regard the operation of this Bill as practically intended for the case of illegitimate children almost exclusively; it may be going too far to say that, but in overwhelming preponderance?—In great preponderance as far as our experience goes, that is to say as far as the cases of which we have any record, the proportion of legitimate children which have been found kept for hire would probably not reach 5 per cent. of the whole.

180. The children who would come under the purview of this Bill may practically be said to be 95 per cent. of them illegitimate?—I think that may be said to be the case.

Lord Belper.

181. Then practically it would not affect your object much if this second clause was confined to illegitimate children?—Except as to the practical difficulty, which I have already pointed out, on the question of the evidence of legitimacy. I fear that that would be exceedingly easy to obtain, and that although the children might be illegitimate, evidence of legitimacy might be brought forward to induce persons to take them for hire, and in that way the law might be evaded. I point out, for the information of the Committee, that the House of Commons Select Committee of 1890, while proposing to limit the operation of the Bill to illegitimate children, did not propose to repeal Section 2 of the Act of 1872; so that it was intended that two or more infants under one year, either legitimate or illegitimate, should require registration under the existing Act, but that the extension of the law should be limited to illegitimate infants.

182. Of course, in that case this would go in a different form; not to repeal the former clause?—That would be so.

183. I did not intend in my former question to suggest that you should alter the clause in the original Act, but that this clause as far as it is new should be confined to illegitimate children?—Yes, that I understood.

Viscount Llandaff.

184. I did not quite appreciate your objection to the exemption clause, Clause 6, Sub-section (e) of the Bill of 1890, which exempts from the provisions of that Bill the case of working people leaving home in search of work, and leaving their children with a friend; is not that a constant case in the North of England especially, where men leave home for a week or a fortnight, or more, in search of work?—I think that that may be the case, and to a certain extent, to a less extent, in London also.

185. Wherever it occurs, whether in London or in the North, surely that is not a case in which you would insist upon registration?—I think if any means can be devised to avoid the necessity of registration in such a case it ought

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

to be devised; but the difficulty I see is this: the Bill, as I have just pointed out, was proposed to be applied only to illegitimate children.

186. The Bill of 1890?—Yes, the Bill of 1890. Of course we are now dealing with a clause suggested by the Committee of 1890, and incorporated in the Bill of 1890, just as they incorporated the provision as to illegitimate children. They, first of all, only applied the Bill to illegitimate children, which appears to me to cover all such cases as these; and they then in addition, put in a proviso which, as far as I am able to judge, would have left little for the Bill to deal with. It would be a matter of the most extreme difficulty to deal with a question of legitimacy or illegitimacy, but when to that is added the exceptions contained in (e), it seems to me that the Bill became almost inoperative.

187. But, forgive me, Clause 6 has nothing whatever to do with legitimacy or illegitimacy, except where it is expressly mentioned. Clause 6, Sub-section (e) applies to the principal Act, the Act of 1872, as well as the Bill of 1890, and it exempts those cases of working men leaving home and putting their children in the care of a friend?—Yes.

188. And you admit that that is a proper exemption if you could ear-mark it?—Yes, I do think that; but the provision is to this effect: "In the case of any infant left by the desire, or with the knowledge, of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person, not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian, from home, on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause," I apprehend that it would not be difficult in the case of any infants we might find in charge of persons for hire, for one or other of these exemptions to be brought forward. They are so exceedingly wide; that is my difficulty.

189. It is wide; it covers the case put by Lord Thring, the case of a parent in India, with reasonable and necessary cause for putting his child in somebody else's care?—I fear it is too wide to make the Act beneficial.

190. But if it is a true cause for the transfer of a child to the care of another person, you admit that it is a legitimate cause?—I admit that that might be so, though at the same time I do not admit that there are any reasonable objections to registration, and I am disposed to think that there would be an advantage all round if registration were effected, because the parent or guardian who had been called away in search of work would have some guarantee that his child was being properly looked after meanwhile, and I see no reason at all except a sentimental one against registration in such a case.

191. What is the cost of your system of registration and inspection in London?—The cost to the registered person or to the ratepayers, do you mean?

192. To the ratepayers?—I should think that at the present moment it is about 600*l.* or 700*l.* a year, with three inspectors, and practically no other expenses beyond the inspectors.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

193. Printing and stationery?—That is small, certainly not more than about 25*l.* a year. I find the present cost of enforcing the 1872 Act in London is just over 500*l.* a-year.

Lord Belper.

194. The registration of these particular houses, do you mean?—The whole administration of the Act in London.

195. But you have only about 40 registered houses in London?—Yes, but we are dealing with the whole subject; we are dealing, or attempting to deal with the whole question of the putting out of infants to hire in London. Every case that we can possibly find out is thoroughly inquired into, so that I do not anticipate that any very great addition to the staff would be necessary in case there was an extension of the Act. Of course that would be a matter of experience.

196. Do you mean that the 500*l.* is spent in the administration of the Act, or that it is spent with reference to the registration of these particular houses?—In the administration of the Act I should say that the registration and supervision of the registered houses would be covered by a cost of 100*l.*

Lord Thring.

197. I should like to ask you one or two more questions. Whether we like it or no, must we not admit that, as the Bishop has suggested, registration is detested under this Act; as a matter of fact, sentiment has immense power in these matters, and there is the strongest sentimental objection, if you like to call it so, to registration?—I do say, as a fact, that the feeling does exist, and exists very strongly.

198. And is it an unnatural feeling; registration means, in the apprehension of the people in general, baby-farming, does it not?—It does, but I think that the view is a false one to this extent, that it is much more serious to take infants without registration than with registration.

199. Yes, I only want you to admit this, that registration under the Act is detested on the ground that it is supposed to imply baby-farming, and that baby-farming means a system of taking illegitimate children for the purpose of carrying out the views of those who wish to get rid of them?—I think that the objection to registration is in connection with that sentiment.

200. A true sentiment; the majority of these children are really farmed out, committed to the care of these people with a view of getting rid of them, so that the parents may never hear anything more of them, but may go their way without having anything to do with them again?—I do not think that that is so with legitimate cases.

201. Are there any legitimate cases?—I am not speaking of legitimacy in the ordinary sense. I do not think that that is so in ordinary cases where the mothers put out their infants to be taken care of, and pay periodically for their maintenance; I do not think that in all those cases it can be said that the object is to get rid of those infants.

202. Then really and truly the whole object of

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

of this Bill so far as you can make out, practically the direct object, is to extend it to places where one child is kept and to the five years' old children?—That is the main object.

203. I want to point out to you that all these clauses with respect to written statements are really of very little value, because you have no possible means of checking them?—I venture to think that if you make a thing unlawful there is less probability of its being done than if it can be done quite lawfully.

204. Then we have got to balance the advantages that may accrue in certain cases by extending the Act, for all the reasons which have been suggested by you, against the disadvantage that it would include people who legitimately take children and yet would detest to have their houses registered?—No doubt that is the case.

Viscount Llandaff.

205. Registration itself does no good, but notice to a local authority that some person has got a child, not her own, to take care of, would not that answer the purpose; if the law were this, that if you take in somebody else's child you must give notice to some local authority?—The whole object of registration is with a view to that.

206. Would there be the same objection to giving notice, do you think, that there is now to being registered?—I think very likely there might not be the same objection to giving notice as to registration.

207. Then supposing notice were coupled with a provision for the medical officer of the district yearly to visit the child, would not that answer every purpose you want?—I think not.

208. Why not?—It is only for the health of the child that you are concerned. If the child is improperly fed or the ventilation not sufficient, or from want of cleanliness the house is not healthy, the medical man is the best person to see it, is he not?—I think in London some special officers are absolutely essential; it would never be carried out by medical officers with their multifarious duties, I feel very strongly upon that point. For instance, we have a Public Health Department as well as a Public Control Department, and with us it is found

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. CLIFFORD LUXMOORE DREW is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

217. You are, I think, Her Majesty's Coroner for the Western Division of London?—I am.

218. Would you mind telling the Committee some of your experience of the Infant Life Protection Act?—Well, as a preliminary, I might say that I have had a large experience in the western district during the last four or five years, and that during that time several cases of note have come under my investigation. Although during that time the number of cases of baby farming and allied cases to that

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

more convenient that this Act should be administered in my department by special officers, because there would be a serious practical difficulty in carrying out the Act in connection with ordinary public health matters; there is nothing in common between it and the ordinary duties of the medical officers of health.

209. I should have thought that the whole point was whether the children were in a satisfactory state of health?—But the ordinary duties of the medical officers of health are connected with the sanitary condition of the premises rather than the condition of the individuals; and here it is the condition of the individuals, and an ordinary medical man would be a better parallel.

210. I suppose there would not be so much objection to the visit of the medical officer, as to that of an inspector; it would not excite the same feeling as if the public control inspector calls?—The public control inspector who visits these houses is a lady. I do not think there can be any real objection to her visits.

Chairman.

211. We shall have her evidence, I presume?—You will have her evidence.

Lord Kinnaird.

212. Should you say that many children are taken out of London and boarded out in the country?—I believe that is largely done.

213. Then if many of them went into the country and they died in the country they would be out of your statistics?—Yes.

214. Then that would make your statistics unreliable with regard to percentages?—To a certain extent; of course, although that is a considerable number it is relatively small to the large number born; but it would be relatively large possibly to the number of illegitimate children born.

215. In the case of most of the societies that have boarding out, it would be almost entirely in the country, would it not?—I think almost entirely.

216. You have not any figures to show how far that is the case?—I am afraid I have not. I do not know whether they exist.

Chairman—continued.

have decreased in the district, I do not suppose that it is an actual decrease, because I should think it very likely that the cases have gone to other places where investigation is less strict.

219. Is your jurisdiction wholly within the administrative County of London then?—It is, entirely.

220. Have you got any figures to give as regards the number of cases which have come under your notice?—No, I cannot give the figures.

c 3

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

figures. I might have given them if there had been time; but I do not know whether the inspector of the County Council would give that.

221. We have the figures that come before the County Council?—Whether he could differentiate between the different districts I cannot say; but I cannot off-hand tell you the number. I could give you, if you like, the outlines of a few of the more important cases.

222. Could you give the Committee one or two samples of the class of cases that come under your notice?—Yes, certainly. I have noted one or two cases. The first case was that of a child named Weston, that was received from a woman living in the south of London, by a man and woman residing near Kensal-road. This man was a street artist—a man who drew pictures on the pavement—and they were in very poor circumstances. It appeared from the evidence before my court that at the time that this child was received there was another child. The other child was taken for a weekly sum; but the child in question, Weston, was received, I think, for a sum of 2*l.* to be taken right out and adopted, in fact. Now, I may say that the child that was taken for a weekly sum was handed over to the parents in a very healthy condition; the other child died. The investigation showed that these persons were extremely poor, and that the milk obtained for the two children could not have been sufficient to support two children; the natural inference being that the child that had the weekly allowance made for it, and was returned in a healthy condition, had more sustenance than the other. Of course, that is only an inference, but the fact of one child dying from starvation, and the other being returned in a healthy condition, justifies that inference, I think.

223. What was the verdict?—"Death from starvation;" and the woman was sent for trial for manslaughter, and convicted for neglecting the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

224. As to the children; were the two children together in the house?—Yes, the two were there together. Another case of rather a different nature was this: There were two people, married people; the man was a man who was shifting about from occupation to occupation; and during the evidence in my court the wife said that at the time they took the child he was out of work; but he himself denied that, and said that he was not. Whether that was so or not I cannot say; but I do know this, that shortly after taking this child he started a business, presumably with the 25*l.* received for this child, as a greengrocer, and the child died, and eventually the business collapsed. I was told by the officer that within three months the business had gone altogether. The inference is that he bought the business with the 25*l.*; but had the child lived and the business failed, we do not know what would have become of the child. That seems to be a class of case where the people obtain a living distinctly out of the child.

Chairman.

225. Was it a child under 12 months old?—Yes, I think it was two months old. The child died, and I held an inquiry on it.

Lord Belper.

226. What was the verdict?—"Natural causes." This verdict, on reference, was found to be from "Improper feeding."

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

227. Can you tell us whether these children were illegitimate or legitimate?—In the case of Weston it was illegitimate; but whether the other child, returned in a healthy condition, was illegitimate, I cannot say. The second instance was the child of a servant living in the North of England. A third example is the case of a woman named Boucher. It is rather a celebrated case; the real name is Butcher, but she assumed the French for it, and called herself Boucher. This woman keeps a lying-in house, and in the particular case in point a servant-girl went to this house and was there confined. The mother of the child made arrangements previously for the child to be taken away and taken care of; and it appears that this child was removed at the age of about two hours and afterwards died, and a *post-mortem* was held, and it showed that the cause of death was congestion of the lungs, owing to exposure from removal at that early age. At the inquiry certain statistics were given by the inspector under the Act, and a few of these I will give you now. The first evidence he gave was as to four children whom he traced. The first had been removed from this woman at the age of 10 hours; this child was dead. The second child had been removed at the age of half an hour; this child was also dead. The third child had been removed at the age of one hour; that one also was dead. The fourth, which had been removed at the age of 14 days, was also dead. There were five other cases traced to this person, four of which were found to be dead.

Lord Thring.

228. You said that the child was removed; where?—Removed from the house where this person lived to the care of an outside person.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

229. Is the point in these instances that the death was due to exposure?—In the case where I held the inquiry the child was taken out at the age of two hours, death resulting from congestion of the lungs.

Lord Thring.

230. Supposing a child is removed, and nothing done to it, would not that kill it?—From the want of feeding, you mean? The evidence that I get in my court is that midwives, and many doctors also, do not recommend any feeding for 24 hours, or so, afterwards.

231. These children did not die of starvation, you think?—I cannot tell you, except as to the case in my own court, what the children died from; but these four children certainly have died, and four out of the other five have died; eight out of nine cases traced to her.

Another

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Another case is that of a woman named Blackburn. In the case of the child on whom I held an inquest, this woman was proved to be in pecuniary difficulties, and in that case evidence was given that she had received 19 children; how many of those died I cannot say, but the deaths of five children were traced to this woman's house.

Chairman.

232. Nineteen children in what length of time?—That I cannot tell you. That was the evidence given in my court by one of the daughters, who said that she remembered 19 children being under the care of her mother. I have no doubt that the inspector under the Act, who investigated all these cases can give particulars; they were not in my own district.

233. I am afraid we cannot take from you as evidence any cases except cases within your own knowledge?—The evidence in this case about the 19 children was given before me on oath by the daughter of the woman herself; but I think you will find that the inspector under the Act will be very likely able to give you details of the five children that were traced. Now the other case, and the last which I propose mentioning, was one that came under my own investigation. This is a case where a friend takes a child from a person for profit. This was a case where a single woman had two children, both of whom a friend took with her other children. The subject of the inquiry was 10 weeks of age. This woman was apparently in the habit of frequenting public-houses and getting intoxicated, and on the day of the child's death she appears to have left home about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and returned at 10 o'clock the worse for drink, and the child was then dead. It appears that these children, the woman's own children together with the two little children belonging to the single woman, were left in the care of a little child of seven years of age. When the inquiry was held evidence was given by the doctor and others that the room was in a very dirty condition, and also the child. On a chair was one child with three kittens, a child was on the floor, and another child was climbing over the sofa where the dead one lay. The doctor said in his evidence that the room was in a filthy condition, and that the smell was simply abominable. There was found a dirty milk-bottle and a tin of sour condensed milk. In that case a verdict of manslaughter was returned against the woman, and she was eventually sent for trial. Those are typical examples of the different classes of cases; first, where a person takes a strange child for profit; secondly, where it is possible they may take it with the intention of starting a business, and where a lump sum is paid down; and, thirdly, a case where a person takes the child of a friend for profit.

Chairman.

234. But none of those cases would be touched by the present Act, I take it?—No, except the first.

235. Because in none of those cases was there more than one child of less than 12 months of age?—In the first case there was; in the last case certainly not.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

236. What were the ages of the two children in the last case?—The inspector will tell you that, but the one which came under our consideration was 10 weeks old.

237. What was the age of the other one?—I cannot tell you; that was over the age of one year, as far as I remember; so that she would not require to be registered. The last case was the case of a woman with an invalid husband, and she told us that she had a great struggle to keep a roof over her head. She admitted that she had that child, the subject of the inquiry, for which she received 5*s.* a week, and had taken it at the age of 14 days. During the inquiry she told us that she had had three children, and in this case a verdict of death from improper feeding was returned. It was clearly proved at the police court that she had three children at the time, and she was convicted under the present Act for keeping more than one child under the age of 12 months.

Chairman.

238. Have you got any particular views or recommendations as regards the present law and alterations of it?—I think that the present Act, being an Infant Life Protection Act, should extend much further than baby-farming. It should commence at a much earlier age than that. For instance, under the present law, in order to constitute murder, the child must be wholly born; that is, it must be completely born.

239. That is rather beyond the question that we are inquiring into; but what I want to know is, have you any recommendations to make, for instance, with regard to extending the age of children to be registered; have any of your juries made a strong recommendation with reference to that; some coroner's juries have?—They have frequently, and I have forwarded some recommendations as regards extending the Act to the registration of one child.

240. Registration in all cases, you say?—Yes.

241. And extending the age?—Yes.

242. To any particular time?—No. As far as I can remember, we have had no riders to that effect.

243. Can you tell us anything of your own knowledge which points to the way in which these children are disposed of by the mothers to other people and then passed on from them to others again?—The way would be first by the midwife herself arranging it, and in that case in particular, which I referred to just now, the midwife admitted that she sometimes made the arrangement, and that she had got women to take the children, and she charged them a fee of about 10*s.* for it. A second way is for a friend to take a child from another person, and the other means most common is to get it done by advertisement.

244. Have you got any particular remedies to suggest with reference to that, beyond the extensions of the Act which you mentioned just now?—The remedy would be extending the Act to all children taken for profit or reward, and also having very strict registration and inspection.

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Those

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Those are the remedies that, as far as I see, are the ones likely to deal with the case in point.

245. Have you got any particular remarks so make with reference to the system of baby-farming as it comes under your notice as a coroner, I do not mean with reference to the general question of baby-farming; that we shall be able to get from the inspector who looks after the Act?—Well, the system is this: that a person in some cases receives a large amount for taking the child, sometimes 100*l.* or 200*l.*, and then she passes the child on to some one else for a lower sum, and it is very likely to reach another person for, perhaps, 3*l.* or 4*l.*, so that there is extensive profit made in that way.

246. You mentioned the case of lying-in houses just now; do you know of your own knowledge of many cases where children are habitually passed on from these lying-in houses to professional baby farmers?—Yes. In the case of this woman Boucher, she keeps a lying-in house, and has a certificate as a midwife, and she passes them on, and that woman gets a fee of 10*s.* from the woman who takes the child.

Lord Belper.

247. From what class do those people generally come?—It is very hard to trace the people, but as regards my own cases they have principally been from the servant class.

Lord Thring.

248. And the children illegitimate?—Yes. In one or two cases they received children from somebody at the railway station, and these people gave a fictitious name, and they never saw them again; we could get no information.

Lord Belper.

249. But I was speaking with reference to the lying-in houses; did it come out at all what class of women used them?—No. I know from my own experience in another case where a child had been overlaid at this very house, the woman was the wife of an artisan.

Viscount Llandaff.

250. That was a legitimate child?—That was a legitimate child.

Chairman.

251. What means may be used to destroy children?—Well, of course, there are some rapid, and some less rapid but still quite as effectual. For instance, the first classification would be that of actual violence, such as cases that have recently occurred in the Reading baby-farming case, where there has been actual violence. Not very long ago, about three weeks, I held an inquest on a child that was found in a parcel, and the medical evidence showed that the child had died from suffocation. There were marks about the face and mouth, and it was also proved that the child had been put into the parcel, and the parcel had been tied up before death, because *rigor mortis* had set in; the child was found with *rigor mortis*. That was a very clear case of actual violence, and it was a case of murder. There are other cases of slow starvation which are very difficult to bring home to

Chairman—continued.

any person; and under this heading may be classified, perhaps, improper feeding, which is starvation only of a slower nature. One knows this: that it is not necessary for starvation that the person starved should be deprived wholly of food. If you give a child improper food, or if you give any person food that person cannot assimilate, the effect is the same, though slowly brought about; so that if a child is given improper food, and food that is not nourishing, and that cannot be assimilated, death sooner or later must occur, but it is longer delayed than if it had been wholly deprived of food.

252. You find as a rule, do you not, amongst people of the poorer class great ignorance as to the proper method of feeding infants?—Yes, great ignorance, and also amongst the midwives themselves.

253. Amongst certificated midwives?—No; but a very large number of the people who are attending cases are not certificated.

254. Is it the case that the people who keep these lying-in houses are not generally certificated?—Some may not be. I think it is necessary that all lying-in houses should be under some supervision.

255. Do you know whether medical men are generally called in, or do these midwives, as a rule, practise without them?—A great many do, and I get a great number of children dying without any medical man seeing them at all, and a great number of so-called still births.

256. Do you get many cases of deaths of the mothers in lying-in houses from improper treatment?—No. There was one case where a child was suffocated, in which it was proved that this Mrs. Boucher had left the mother a few hours after the confinement, and had returned to her the next morning, and that she had been left all night alone. It was a peculiar bed, which sank down in the centre, and the child had rolled from the side on which it was placed, and the mother had overlaid it. In that case there was no attention at all.

257. With reference to the question of medical men and medical certificates, is it your experience, as has been stated before the former Committee by coroners, that sometimes a considerable amount of difficulty is experienced on the part of these people who take in children in obtaining proper medical certificates from doctors as to the cause of death?—I am afraid I do not quite understand the question.

258. I will put it in this way: Is it your opinion that it is very difficult, from some of the certificates of death that are given by medical men, to trace the exact cause of death, in order to find out whether a death was due to improper feeding or resulted from negligence, or whether the death was caused by criminal intent?—That may be so. I have myself refused certificates that have simply had the cause of death assigned that was merely a symptom of something else. For instance, I have had certificates of marasmus and of syncope and of convulsions. Now, a child may die from convulsions, from natural or from unnatural causes, and, therefore, "convulsions" itself is not a cause of death; there must be a cause behind that.

259. In

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

259. In fact, it is very difficult, in the majority of the cases of these children, to tell whether it is a case of natural death or of criminality?—It is absolutely impossible in many cases, because it may arise from what I may describe as a small amount of ignorance. For instance, in many cases where children are fed on condensed milk, which does not satisfy them, and where they are slowly starving, they become ravenous; then the people knowing this, and thinking that the food itself is not sufficient, instead of going to the proper treatment, namely, cow's milk, give the child pieces of bacon, or, as they say, anything they are eating themselves; and when they give a child of two months old a piece of bacon this may cause its death. That is a case in which it arises from ignorance, but not gross neglect amounting to any criminal charge.

260. So that in that respect the instructions which are given out by inspectors in registered houses as to the feeding of infants are very valuable?—Quite so. In many towns cards of instructions are issued; for instance, in the town of Bristol; I remember that the General Hospital there used to issue cards to all their patients with reference to the feeding of children. I think it very essential that it should be made known to people how to feed these children; many people have not an idea.

Viscount Llandaff.

261. Of your five cases three are within the present Act, are they not?—Three; that is to say, in the first case of Weston there was no prosecution by the inspector; probably if there had been supervision there would have been, if the other child had come under the age of 12 months. In the second case, that is the case of the 25*l.*, it was certainly not within the Act.

262. But that is a case in which the verdict was "Death from natural causes," and you have no suggestion to make to the contrary?—No, but it is very hard, as was said just now, in cases of mal-nutrition and improper feeding, to return anything else but a verdict of "Death from natural causes."

263. Was there any evidence of mal-nutrition?—I forget now what was the cause of death in that case, but I know it was the case of a child who had been received for the sum of 25*l.*

264. Then the third case, the case of this woman Boucher, would not be touched by the present Bill. The Bill does not oblige you to get registered if you do not keep a child for more than 24 hours, so that Madame Boucher, who despatches the new born infant, at the age of half-an-hour or 10 hours, and so on, would not be touched by the present Bill?—In one case the child was 14 days old when it was removed.

265. In all the cases but that one the child was less than 24 hours in the house?—Yes.

266. In the two remaining cases the child was taken by a friend who got drunk and left the child; that would come under the Act?—But the other child was over the age of 12 months; there is no inspection there.

267. Then the woman with the invalid husband was within the Act?—That was a case in which she was prosecuted and convicted under the Act for keeping more than one child.

(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

268. You spoke of sour milk; you are aware that sour milk is slow poison?—It would very likely cause irritation and intestinal inflammation in a young child.

269. I do not follow you as to what you want to do; supposing we extend the Act to everybody who keeps one child, how would you do with regard to parents living in India who sent home a child to be kept in England instead of in India?—But is that a case simply of profit; would they be making a profit out of that?

270. The child might be sent to a school?—You would not send a child to school at that tender age. Probably, if the Act were limited to five years of age, very few under five years would go to school.

271. I really want to know how you would do it. Children are constantly sent home from India under five years of age to be kept by friends who are paid for their maintenance, and in such a case a man technically may make a profit out of it?—I do not think there should be any limitation myself, but that where any child is taken for profit or reward there should be registration. I have never myself had any difficulty about it, never had a question raised, never heard people say that they objected to it. As regards the inspection, that perhaps might be left to the discretion of the people carrying out the Act; but the fact of registration, I think, should occur in all cases.

272. Do you say that in the case of a school of the highest possible class you would recommend that that school should be required to be registered, because they took young children who came back from India?—But would they take children of that tender age, under the age of five.

273. Children are constantly left in England of the most tender age. If an officer goes out to India and cannot take out a child, he gives it to a friend and he pays for maintenance; how would you avoid including a case of that kind?—But is that taking a case for profit? Are they actually giving a person a sum so that they might make profit out of it?

274. You cannot in law examine whether a person makes a profit; it is "hire or reward," that is the condition. I want to know what you would suggest in such a case; would you require registration and inspection?—I am afraid that in case there were any exceptions made to registration that might be fatal to the efficiency of the Act altogether. Who is going to decide in which cases registration shall occur and in which it shall not? Cases of ill-treatment of children are not restricted to the poorer classes, and "hire or reward" should guide registration.

275. You cannot suggest any remedy. You must be aware that you could not expect people in such cases to submit to registration?—I do not see myself that the people would object to registration. If a person takes a lunatic into a private house that is under the Lunacy Commissioners it is liable to inspection; there is never any question raised or any objection as to that.

276. You do not think that there would be any objection to this?—I do not think so. Of course the inspection in this, as in other matters, would be a confidential matter between the persons

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administering

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued]

Lord Thring—continued.

administering the Act and the persons employed to take charge of the children, and it would be carried out with great discretion.

277. You surely would not give a discretion to the persons employed, with reference to people who kept houses which came under the Act?—I should, perhaps, use the expression "tact." They come down, but they do not come down in a public way; they come at odd times.

278. However, you think it would not be objected to?—I should think not; I have never heard anything to make me think that it would.

Viscount Llandaff.

279. Registration is no use without inspection, is it?—Not a bit, I think.

Lord Belper.

280. You have not read the evidence before the House of Commons Select Committee in 1890 on Infant Life Protection?—No.

281. There are cases there mentioned where strong objection would be taken to inspection?—Of course, I was only speaking to my personal knowledge. I have never heard of any person objecting to it.

Lord Thring.

282. I asked what you thought would be the effect if the law were extended in the way you suggested, and whether it would not involve inspection in all cases?—I do not see myself personally any objection. Knowing the law, I should not myself object to it. You see that inspection and registration are so essential, in order to know the class of people who are taking children, to know that they are fitted mentally, physically, and morally, and in other ways, to undertake the care of children. I have had cases of children sent out during the day to people who have had some impediment in their speech, or something of that sort, and were not able to make other people understand; and such persons are totally unfit for the care of children.

283. You are aware, I suppose, that in all the great factory towns the infants are sent out from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening?—Yes.

284. Do you wish them to be brought within the law, because they are not within the law now?—They would not be under the proposed new law, I take it.

285. I say do you wish that they should be within the proposed new law?—I think the inspection of these houses would be beneficial to the children; I have had many cases of children who have been taken in at these places, and only the other day my jury censured a woman for her want of care. I think she had two children, and this child died the last day she had it; the child had inflammation of the lungs. One of the witnesses living in the house said: "The day before the death I noticed that the child was extremely ill, and had it been mine I should have called in medical advice." The woman who kept the *crèche* said that she had noticed nothing the matter with the child.

286. If you make the law include these cases, you would do away with the 24-hours limit?—Where a person had perhaps 20 or 30 children

Lord Thring—continued.

under her care, I think she should be competent to undertake the care of children.

Viscount Llandaff.

287. Had that woman any children of her own?—She had been a nurse, she told me.

288. If it had been a child of her own, do you think she would have called in medical advice?—I cannot say.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

289. Speaking generally, would you say that you have been able to draw a marked difference in your experience between the treatment of legitimate and illegitimate children; that is to say that a very large proportion of the cases of this kind in which you hold inquests would be illegitimate?—I could not say that, because I hold inquests on a very large number of legitimate children who die from improper feeding.

290. Let me put it in another way: not those in whose cases inquests are held, but those cases in which the results of the inquest seem to betoken wilful, deliberate neglect?—Well, of course wilful or deliberate neglect come under the criminal law at once, and it would constitute either murder or manslaughter. I have had only five or six cases in which people have been sent for trial for neglecting children. It is very hard to say whether that improper feeding to which reference has been made is wilful or not. It is a very easy thing to feed a child so as to cause its death wilfully, but at the same time it is very hard to prove it.

Chairman.

291. Do you get many cases of death from improper feeding from registered houses under the Act?—No, I do not.

Viscount Llandaff.

292. Do you get many cases of mothers with their own children at home who feed them improperly?—A great many cases, especially among very young mothers. The sanitary condition of many houses is so imperfect that it is absolutely necessary that some inspection should occur.

Lord Thring.

293. What houses?—The houses where one child is taken in under the age of 12 months, and where there are several children over that age.

Viscount Llandaff.

294. Is there not sanitary inspection by the sanitary authority in every district?—There is no house-to-house inspection; no compulsory inspection, I mean. Unless the attention of the sanitary authorities, I take it, were drawn to a particular house, there could be no inspection.

295. How would it be under this Bill?—In all cases where the child was taken for profit or reward there would be registration, and the licence would not be issued unless there was proof that the house was in a good sanitary condition, and also that the people applying for the licence were fit. In the case I mentioned just now, where a little child was found dead

on

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

on a sofa, the overcrowding and the filthy and abominable condition of the house, and the sour milk there, rendered the chance of a young child living very remote.

Lord Belper.

296. But would not that overcrowding apply in many cases to children living with their own parents; but the Act here is to apply to children taken for hire or reward?—That is so.

Viscount Llandaff.

297. Is there any reason for dealing differently with those children?—In many cases there may be a motive for neglecting them which does not exist in the case of children living in their own homes.

Chairman.

298. These children are given out often for a lump sum?—Yes.

299. And, naturally, there is a motive then for neglecting them?—Yes; and whether there may be such a motive in cases where a child is sent out for a weekly sum is a matter for consideration; one only hears one side of it; that is the mother's; it is very often to the mother's interest to keep a child alive that she may have a hold on the man; but, on the other hand, there may be other people who are interested in the death of the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

300. Not the keeper of the child, you mean?—No; but other people might be interested in the death of the child and might use influence on the person keeping that child.

Chairman.

301. I should like to ask you one question with regard to the lying-in houses; do you regard them as being the main source from which the profession of baby farmer is fed?—Very often I think they are; and in regard to the large number of cases of children found dead, I, myself, have no doubt, though, of course, one has no proof, that many of those children do come from lying-in houses.

302. Are you a medical man?—I am, and a barrister too, so I speak from both sides.

303. And do you strongly recommend the registration of all lying-in houses?—Certainly I do, and inspection.

304. That would include the private hospitals kept by many in the profession; a good many doctors have private hospitals of their own?—I would not go so far as that, because I do not see very well how you can class them together.

305. There is a distinction between a private hospital and a hospital that is a public one?—I do not see why a difference should be drawn for the purposes of the Act.

Lord Belper.

306. Where would you draw your line?—In the case put, the doctor in charge of a house of that sort would be conversant with sanitary (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

and other matters, and for his own sake he would not have his house in an unsatisfactory condition.

307. Where would you draw the line in a law compelling the registration of lying-in houses?—I should have inspection, certainly, of all houses kept by midwives who systematically receive persons about to be confined, and who are to be attended by the midwife herself.

Lord Thring.

308. Is it not a fact that in almost innumerable cases men in the country bring up their wives to London for their first confinement?—Some may, but they are under the care of a doctor.

309. They are in a lying-in house?—But what one understands by a lying-in house is not a house where a person comes and takes rooms under the supervision of a doctor, who previously sees that matters are correct.

Chairman.

310. But where would you draw the line so as to distinguish between the bad class of lying-in houses, which cause the evils which now exist, and the perfectly legitimate and well-conducted lying-in houses managed by some well-known doctors?—I should say that all houses kept by midwives for the delivery of women should be under inspection.

Lord Thring.

311. An ordinary lodging-house keeper might have them. You must know what goes on in London. A man's wife is going to be confined; he takes a lodging in the best part of London for the purpose of his wife being confined in London; do you mean to tell me that you are going to have that house registered?—That is not a lying-in house as I understand it. I mean a house that lays itself out, and advertises to receive women during their confinement.

312. Do you mean that where people do do that, and do not advertise, then the houses are not lying-in houses?—No, but I should not classify a lodging taken by a doctor as in the same class.

313. It is not taken by a doctor; the commonest thing in the world is, as everybody knows, that a man living in the country with a delicate wife, or for some other reason, wishes her to be confined in London, and comes up and takes an ordinary lodging in a house where they take in people who are going to be under the care of a doctor; are they all to be registered?—But those are only rooms engaged for one occasion. If these landladies kept houses and advertised to take in women, and attended them themselves, I should say that that is a lying-in house; that is what I mean. I mean the doctor himself is perfectly competent, or should be, to say what the surroundings are, and to see that the person undertaking it is a fit person.

314-16. Are you to register every house which is accustomed to receive ladies who are going

D 2

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

going to be confined. I ask you how are you going to distinguish between those cases and the other cases, or are you going to register them all?—I can only say what I just now said, that in all cases where women lay themselves out for it and have a lying-in house, and

Lord Thring—continued.

where they advertise to receive women during their confinement, and where they attend the patient themselves, as midwives, in all those cases there should be inspection. It is only a suggestion that I make.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Lunæ, 27^o Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. ALFRED SPENCER, having been called in, is further Examined, as follows:

Lord Thring.

317. I THINK we got a little puzzled about the comparative mortality of adults and infants; I understand with regard to the County of London you can give the comparative mortality of infants and adults in the County of London?—I can.

318. Infants under one year of age I mean?—I can.

319. Will you give it?—I find that the corrected general death-rate for London was, in the year 1894, 18·93 per 1,000, which is equal to 1·893 per cent.; that the average death-rate of infants under one year for the 10 years 1883 to 1892 in London was at the rate of 154 per 1,000, or 15·4 per cent., which, I think, is nearly eight times as great as the average death-rate for all ages.

320. And then I understand there are a certain number of other large towns, I forget how many you told me?—The corrected death-rate in 33 great towns is given in the Registrar General's Annual Summary for 1894 as 19·59 per 1,000, or 1·959 per cent.

321. Of all?—The general death-rate. Then the average death-rate of infants under one year in 33 great towns.

322. In the same 33 great towns?—In the same 33 great towns. For the 10 years, 1883 to 1892, it was 166 per 1,000, or 16·6 per cent.

323. Then can you give the differences, I mean the percentage of deaths of infants as compared with the percentage of adults in London; what is the difference?—In the one case it is 18·93 per 1,000, and, in the case of infants, 154 per 1,000, or a difference of 135·07 per 1,000.

324. Then I understand that in respect of the whole of the country there are no materials for comparing them?—I am unable to find in the (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

Registrar General's Summary any materials as to the general death-rate of infants under one year, but I can give the corrected general death-rate for England and Wales, and that is 16·59 per 1,000. I understand that the Registrar General is to be called, and he will probably be able to carry these figures further than I can.

Chairman.

325-6. A Member of the Committee has asked me to inquire what particular effect the registration of houses has upon children; can you speak to that of your own knowledge, or shall we be able to get at it from your inspector?—I can only speak in general terms. The inspector would probably be able to describe to the Committee the difference that his experience has shown him to exist between the treatment of infants at unregistered houses and the treatment of infants at registered houses.

327. But I may take it from you that the general effect of the reports which you have received since you have been administering this Act shows that in registered houses the mortality is less, and the children are better looked after, and better fed, and more kindly treated, in registered houses?—That is exactly the case.

Lord Thring.

328. With your great experience, I should like to know why you think that strengthening the law in the way that is suggested by the Bill would enable you to get more houses registered; because I apprehend that wherever anybody wants to treat children badly they would evade registration?—Where there is a deliberate intention of treating infants badly I apprehend that that might be the case; but there is a very large proportion of cases where there may be

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27 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

no deliberate intention to neglect or ill-treat infants, but where a certain amount of neglect undoubtedly takes place, which would, in my opinion, be to a large extent met by bringing the houses in which these infants are kept under registration and supervision.

329. But what clause in this Bill, or what law, do you think, would enable you to get at the houses, because the people will not come in voluntarily?—Clause 2 of the Bill, which extends the operation of the Act to all infants under five years of age, would bring in an enormously greater number than are brought in by the present Act.

330. A greater number of children, I admit: but what do you say as to a greater number of houses where the children are under one year of age?—Already we are brought into contact, in the course of our inquiries, with a large number of houses at which infants under five years of age are kept for hire. That alone would, in my opinion, increase the operation of the Act by 90 per cent.; but I also think that if you widen the law we shall be able, by the means we shall be able to take, to find out and to get into touch with a very much greater number of cases than we are able to do now.

Lord Belper.

331. I understand that at present you say there are only 20 houses registered under the present law?—Forty-one under the present law.

332. Certainly in some form we have had the number 20 given us?—At the end of last year there were 41 on the register.

333. Do you know how many children there are in those 41 houses, or were at that time?—That the lady inspector who has the houses under inspection will be able to give you.

Chairman.

334. I think the lady inspector would be able to answer a great many of the questions of Lord Thring as to the willingness or unwillingness to come on the register?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

335. Can you form any opinion what proportion of the houses which ought to be registered under the present Act, or what proportion of the children who should be registered under the present Act, are registered?—That, of course, is a question partly of opinion and partly of experience. I believe that at the present time there are few, if any, of the houses in London not under registration which should be under registration.

336. Therefore, practically, you mean that as far as the law permits you, it is your opinion that you get hold of nearly the whole of the houses that ought to be registered, and, therefore, nearly all the children that under the present law ought to be registered?—That is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

337. You mean that in the whole of London at this moment you do not think there are more

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

than 41 houses in which there are two infants under one year of age kept for hire?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

338. Then the effect of any increased stringency of the Act in London would be to bring in an additional class of children, not more houses?—A very much greater number of houses and a still greater number of children.

339. True; but at the present moment, with regard to the one year infants, I understand you to say that you are of opinion that the one year infants are all, or nearly all, brought in that ought to be?—As far as the present law goes.

340. Therefore, the effect of the increased stringency of the proposed Bill will be to bring in not more of the one year infants, but to bring in a very large number of cases between one and five years old?—It would bring in the infants over 12 months old; but in addition to that, it would bring in a very large number of cases where only one infant under one year is now kept either alone or with other infants of over one year.

Lord Belper.

341. I understand that you say that you practically get hold of the cases of the whole of the children that come under the present law, or nearly all?—I believe that to be the case as regards London.

342. Then if that be the case, as far as that class of cases go, that is, those which come under the present law, there are really no malpractices going on, or ill-treatment of children, because they are all under registration and under inspection?—That is my belief.

343. Then do you believe that the fact that the present law only goes a certain way and does not include those children to whom it is now proposed to extend it, the fact of its being so limited, drives the people who wish to indulge in these malpractices and in the ill-treatment of children, into keeping them in houses with children over the age that is now the limit. If there are any malpractices, they must have gone on somewhere; with regard to the children of one year, if they do not go on in the houses which are now registered, which, you say, include nearly the whole of the cases, they must go on in some others?—That is probably the case.

344. You say that the fact that the law only goes a certain way drives them into keeping one of these younger children in a house with several other older children?—That in our experience has been found to be the case.

Chairman.

345. Is not your contention rather that, instead of keeping the children all together, the children become more widely distributed, whereas people who would, if there had been no existing law, have kept perhaps more than one child under one year, now only keep one child under one year?—And frequently others over one year with that child; yes, that is so.

346. So that although the present law may not be, and you think it is not evaded at all as regards

27 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

regards the existing administration, still it is practically evaded as regards the children by means of the limitation of age?—That is the case.

Lord Belper.

347. I suppose the law, if you extend it to a certain number of houses where there is only one child kept, will be much more difficult to carry out than the present law is?—There would be a very much larger amount of work to be done, but I do not apprehend that there would be any greater initial difficulties in carrying it out than in carrying out the present law.

348. But surely there must be much more difficulty in finding out where the houses are where such children are kept; if there are a number of children kept together your attention is easily called to it: if there is only one, clearly it is more difficult to find it out?—But we have already had our attention called to a large number of cases where only one infant has been kept.

349. But that does not show that your attention has been directed to the whole of the cases where only one infant has been kept?—But adopting, as we do, the system of answering, practically, every advertisement that appears in the public press for nurse children, that does bring us very closely into touch with the practice of putting out children to nurse, and we think that by that means, and by communication with the registrars of births and deaths, and by using the other machinery that we employ in carrying out the present Act, we should be brought into contact with the greater part of the extended work that would be given by the enlarged Act.

350. I understand your answer, but I think it is not actually an answer to my question. I thought that you at once admitted that where you have got a large number of houses to deal with of a similar character it would be very difficult to deal with the same proportion as you can of a smaller number of houses of a larger character?—I do not apprehend greater initial difficulty.

Chairman.

351. It is a mere question of administration?—It is a mere question of the enlargement of the area of our work.

Mr. SAMUEL BABEY, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

358. You are an Inspector under the Infant Life Protection Act for the London County Council?—I am.

359. When were you first appointed to carry out these duties?—In February 1878.

360. That, I think, was the time when Mr. Spencer told us the Act first began to be really efficiently administered, really taken in hand?—Just so.

361. Will you describe your duties to us?—

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

352. In other words, an increased staff of inspectors?—That is my opinion.

353. It is the fact, is it not, that these people whom we desire to catch in the net of the law, who ill-treat and neglect children, do so habitually; I mean to say, a person who takes in a child casually, and for a short time, and does not take another one, as a rule is not necessarily found to be unkind to that child; the people we want to catch are those who take in children habitually, and, as soon as the first child is dead, take in another one, and, as soon as that child is dead, take in a third one?—That would be the case.

354. And therefore, when you have once located them you know them, you have got your finger on them, to a certain extent?—To a certain extent that is the case; and, as a matter of fact, we are in touch with a large number of persons who make a practice of taking in infants for hire.

355. It is a regular mode with them of getting a living, in other words?—It is.

Lord Belper.

356. I quite understand that there is a demand for such houses, and I understand that that creates a supply; the demand, I mean, of people who have got infants to dispose of whom they do not care about seeing again. If that is the case surely the supply will be found somehow, in future, to a certain extent?—Does your Lordship mean that we shall to a certain extent be able to get into touch with the supply in order to get cognizance of the disposal of the infants?

357. I mean, it becomes more difficult to get hold of every case, and therefore it will not be so easy to get hold of the cases to which you are now going to extend the Act as it has been with reference to the earlier cases?—May I answer the question in this way; that I do not anticipate that any enlargement of the Act would reach all cases where infants are put out at hire and ill-treated or disposed of, but that it would bring the law and the administration into closer touch with the whole system, and would give a greater initial probability of knowledge on the subject.

Chairman—continued.

My duties are to examine the advertising columns of certain newspapers for advertisements for the care or adoption of infants, and to investigate each one. Also to keep observation on private lying-in establishments with a view to ascertain the number of births of infants at these places, and endeavour to trace what becomes of the infants. Also to keep touch with the police, relieving officers, registrars of births and deaths, and other officials, with a view to obtain information

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27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

mation of places where infants are kept, and generally to avail myself of all sources of information of the keeping of infants for hire. I report in writing each day to the chief officer of the Public Control Department the result of my inquiries. Previous to April 1894 the registered houses were also inspected by me, but the Council from that date appointed a female inspector, to whom this duty was deputed.

362. Have you got anything more to say on that?—No.

363. Those are your official duties now?—Yes.

364. Practically your duties are confined now to following up advertisements, and enquiring about children in unregistered houses?—That is so.

365. And then when once the house is registered, you hand it over to the lady inspector?—Exactly.

366. Since your appointment in 1878, how many investigations have you made?—Apart from the visits which I have made to the houses registered for the keeping of infants, I had made, up to March 1895, 9,575 investigations at houses where I had reason to believe nurse-infants were being kept for hire. From April 1894 to March 1895 I was assisted in this work by another inspector whom the Council had appointed to assist in carrying out the Act. I have not included any figures as to my visits to the houses properly registered for the keeping of infants, but these houses were under constant inspection by me to see that the infants were properly cared for.

367. Do you mean to say that you called at 9,575 houses, or that you investigated the cases of 9,575 children?—That number of houses.

368. In these investigations how many cases did you find which came within the terms of the Act of 1872?—Two hundred and five cases only came within the Act, and these were cases where I found persons infringing the Act by keeping two or more nurse-infants under the age of one year without registration.

369. And what course did you take with regard to these 205 cases in which the Act had been disobeyed?—In 89 cases the persons keeping the infants were summoned; 85 convictions were obtained; one case was dismissed; three persons failed to answer the summons and could not afterwards be traced; in the remaining 116 cases the offenders were cautioned in writing, and all of them subsequently complied with the Act, either by having their houses registered, or by giving up the care of the infants kept in contravention of the law.

370. Why did you summon some and simply allow the others to register themselves?—Because the cases were of such a character that it was considered unnecessary to take them to the police court.

371. You did not then necessarily summon them because you found them keeping children unregistered that ought to have been registered, but you only summoned in the cases where you

Chairman—continued.

found children badly kept; is that so?—Chiefly so.

372. Where did you draw the line?—In some cases, where the accommodation was fairly good, and the children kept in a fair way, and where the persons subsequently complied with the law by having their houses registered; those cases were not prosecuted.

373. One question I should like to ask about those you cautioned; did you find, when you cautioned these people, that there was any disinclination to register themselves, or did they prefer to give up keeping more than one child, in order to still remain outside the provisions of the Act?—In many cases no doubt that was so.

Lord Thring.

374. Do you mean that they gave up the child?—They gave up keeping more than one child.

Chairman.

375. But then they went on keeping one child?—Yes, very often.

376. In how many of the investigations made by you did the Act of 1872 not apply?—In 9,370 cases.

377. And in how many of these 9,370 investigations did you find infants kept for hire?—In 3,991; and, taking account only of infants under seven years of age, I found altogether 5,955 infants kept for hire or reward.

Lord Belper.

378. I thought you said that the whole of the cases where children were kept for hire was 3,991?—That is so.

379. Then how can you make out the 5,955 infants under seven years of age?—

Chairman.

380. Were the 3,991 under one year old?—No, they were not.

Lord Belper.

381. As far as I understand it, the number of cases where any children were kept for hire was 3,991 only?—I will give them in detail.

Chairman.

382. I do not see how you make up your 5,955?—Because some are keeping probably three infants, or four, one being under the age of a year, and the others over that age.

383. Then does the 3,991 apply to houses?—Houses.

384. And the other number is children?—Yes.

385. When you say that they were kept for hire, did the people admit that they were being kept for hire?—Yes, or in many cases they were adopted for a lump sum.

386. I suppose there were a good many that were not kept for hire. Had you any reason to suppose

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

suppose that they deceived in that respect; that they gave you false answers?—Many times I got false answers, especially where I found the law being broken.

387. They told you that they had taken the children in for nothing, and then you found out afterwards that that was not the fact?—That is so. In one year alone, that of 1892 to March 1893, I found 215 unregistered houses with, in all, 345 infants under the age of seven years kept for hire.

Lord Thring.

388. When you say unregistered houses, do you mean houses that ought to be registered?—No, they needed no registration under the law, because they were not breaking the law. In the same year there were only 21 houses registered by the council with 72 infants kept in them. The infants in the registered houses were benefited by the protective provisions of the Act of 1872. The infants in the unregistered houses were not.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

389. Seventy-two infants under seven years of age, do you mean?—No, 72 under one year old.

Chairman.

390. In how many houses did you say?—In 21.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

391. In the first instance, the 345 in the unregistered houses were children under seven years of age?—Yes.

392. The two cases are not exactly parallel?—That is so.

Lord Belper.

393. Can you say whether you intentionally visited any houses where you knew there was only one child kept?—In answering an advertisement I would call at the house and find the child received and kept.

394. What I mean is this: that I conclude you were making these visits in trying to enforce the present law?—Just so.

395. Therefore you probably would not visit houses where there was only one child kept, or unless you had reason to suppose, or thought beforehand, that there was more than one child kept?—I might not, but I could only learn that by visiting the houses.

Chairman.

396. Can you give any information as to how the infants were distributed amongst the unregistered houses?—Yes. In 205 cases two or more infants under one year were kept unlawfully. In 1,598 cases only one infant under the age of a year was kept. In 683 cases one infant under the age of a year, with others over one year, was kept; and in 1,505 cases only infants over one year old were kept.

397. Can you give any figure as to the mortality of the infants at unregistered houses?—Yes; 807 deaths came to my notice; in 658 of these the infants were under the age of a year, and in 149 the infants were over one year but under seven years.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

398. Can you give any idea of the number of children that were kept in the houses in which the 807 deaths occurred: can you form any sort of idea of the per-centage?—In some cases one only would be kept; in others, two or three.

399. I asked you if you could form any idea as to the number of children that were kept in the houses in which these 807 died; I wanted to get at the per-centage of deaths in the unregistered houses?—I do not think I can give that. In many cases there was only one infant kept, and in others there were two or three, or, in some cases, four kept, one of them being under 12 months old.

400. Do you know how many inquests were held in respect of these 807 deaths?—Inquests were frequently held, but I cannot give the correct number previous to April 1889.

401. I forgot to ask you over what period do the 807 deaths extend?—From the commencement of my work in 1878.

402. From 1878 to now, or to the time you gave up inspecting the registered houses, do you mean?—These deaths were at the unregistered houses.

403. Up to the present date then?—Up to 1895.

404. Do you know how many inquests were held in respect of these deaths?—Inquests were frequently held, but I cannot give the number previous to April 1889. From the 1st of April in that year 1889 to the 31st of March 1895 there were 323 deaths.

Lord Kinnaird.

405. Of infants?—Of infants.

406. Under one year?—No, not all under one year; and 135 inquests were held in respect of these 323 deaths; 101 verdicts of deaths from natural causes being returned. There were 30 verdicts of deaths from improper feeding and surroundings, when the nurses were cautioned or censured; and four verdicts of manslaughter or wilful neglect. This shows that in 41 per cent. of the deaths of infants at unregistered houses coming under my notice the circumstances were such as to demand inquiry by the coroner.

Chairman.

407. What have you got to say as to the condition and the treatment of the infants you found kept for hire at unregistered houses during your investigations?—In many cases the infants were kept under very unsatisfactory conditions as regards cleanliness, food, clothing, want of proper accommodation, air space, and the unsuitability of the persons who had charge of them.

408. May I ask whether you came across many cases of actual cruelty?—Not actual cruelty.

409. I mean cases that would come under the present Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—No; in many cases the children were neglected, but not criminally neglected: they suffered from want of suitable food and clothing, and were kept under conditions not at all satisfactory, but the neglect was not criminal.

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410. As

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

410. As compared with this, what was the condition of the infants kept at registered houses?—While the supervision of the registered houses was entrusted to me, I found the infants clean and fairly well kept and clothed, suitable food provided, and medical attendance when needed, and the accommodation so far as regards air space and surroundings satisfactory. Before granting registration in these cases in London, the local authority always satisfied itself that the provision for the care of the infants was satisfactory. The houses were afterwards frequently inspected, so that the conditions under which the infants were kept should be satisfactorily maintained.

411. I should like just to ask you there, when you visited the registered houses did you find much annoyance on the part of the people?—No, none whatever.

412. They did not dislike your coming?—No.

413. Can you give the total number of persons and houses which have been registered since 1878?—From 1878 to the 31st of March 1894 there were 550 registrations granted.

Lord Belper.

414. That means 550 different houses, does it not?—Not different houses.

415. Is the same house when registered another year counted again?—Yes.

416. Then they are not different houses?—Sometimes they are.

417. But I ask you if the whole of the 550 are different houses?—No, they are not different houses; sometimes the registration is renewed, and, in that case, they are not different.

Chairman.

418. Do not you distinguish between fresh houses and houses which simply had the registration renewed?—I do not think I can distinguish them.

419. Perhaps you can tell us at a later period; you can find out, or perhaps Mr. Spencer can let us know?—Yes.

420. In counting the number of cases you have investigated you did not put down as a separate investigation each visit you made to an unregistered house, did you?—Yes, they are all separate investigations.

421. Each time you visited an unregistered house?—Yes.

Lord Kimnaird.

422. If you went 10 times to one house would you count that as 10 visits?—I have never been 10 times to one house, but if I did I should so count the visits.

423. If you went five times to one house should you count that five investigations?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

424. You mean investigations; should you count the same child over again?—No, I should not count the same child over again, but cases where I could identify children kept at unregistered houses would be very few.

Lord Thring.

425. Then how do you possibly identify the children; you say you never count them over again?—I should not if I knew it. I may see the same child at another house, but if I did, and recognised it, I should not count it again. Children are frequently moved to other houses.

Chairman.

426. Can you give the total number of infants received into these houses during the period named?—I cannot give the correct number previous to 1883, but from the commencement of that year to 31st March 1894, 1,227 infants had been received.

427. How many deaths of infants have occurred at these houses during the period you have stated?—Two hundred and twenty deaths have occurred from 1883 to March 1894.

428. And what number of inquests were held in respect of these deaths?—Fourteen inquests were held, which resulted in satisfactory verdicts, except in two cases where the persons were admonished and cautioned.

429. Can you say where these people who take these children, generally, get the children from?—They get them in various ways; some from homes, some from lying-in houses, by advertising, and in various ways.

430. Can you tell the Committee anything about the number of births of infants at private lying-in establishments, and what becomes of the infants?—It is very difficult to trace the infants born at these places, the keepers of houses of this description seldom caring to give any information, either as to the infants born or what becomes of them. In 1893 I traced four infants, who, soon after their birth, were taken to Waterloo and Victoria railway stations by the keeper of one of these houses, and were handed over by her to persons to whom she paid 2*l.* each for their adoption. Three of these infants died soon afterwards, and inquests were held in two cases, and a verdict of manslaughter was returned in one case. The judge who tried this case, and the jury, expressed a strong opinion that houses of this description should be under strict supervision, and that the authorities whose duty it is to administer the Infant Life Protection Act should endeavour to obtain a speedy alteration in the law for the better protection of infants. Other abuses in connection with such houses have also come under my notice, and I am satisfied that the practice of disposing of infants for adoption is carried on to a considerable extent by persons who keep lying-in houses.

431. Can you tell the Committee who that judge was?—Mr. Justice Hawkins.

432. And what was the date of the case you refer to?—In 1893.

433. Then I gather from your explanation that you are of opinion that lying-in houses should be under some supervision?—I am strongly of that opinion. Infants are frequently put out to nurse, or for adoption, from these lying-in houses, and if we had any control over them we could get to learn where the infants go.

434. Clause 3 of this Bill requires statements to be made in writing respecting infants received

or

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

or removed from registered houses. Can you give us reasons in support of this clause?—False names of infants, and false names and addresses of persons who have placed infants at registered houses, have been given; and persons on removing the infants from these houses have refused to give their address, or to state where the infant will be taken to, so that in such cases it would be almost impossible to trace the person or the infant, or to take any steps to prevent the infant being improperly dealt with if any harm had been intended.

435. Have you often gone to registered houses and found children taken away which had been there before, and been unable to trace them?—I have very often.

436. And the people have refused to give you information?—Not the registered person. The person who placed the child there has refused to give any account of where it has been taken.

437. The person who places the child there you say?—Yes.

438. Then Clause 4 requires delivery up of the register after the lapse or expiration of the registration; can you state anything in support of this clause?—In several cases registered persons have removed, and neither they nor the infants in their charge could be traced, and there is reason to fear that in some such cases the persons have used the registers to falsely represent themselves as being still registered.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

439. They represent themselves to whom?—They may represent themselves to anyone as being still registered.

Chairman.

440. To anyone who comes with a child, you mean?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

441. Do you mean that persons coming with a child ask is this house registered or not?—No.

442. Then who are the people to whom a person would misuse an old register by saying, "I am registered"?—That may be done, and I know of two cases where persons have removed from outside districts into London, and have still taken infants to be nursed, and have represented themselves to be registered.

443. But whom did they make that representation to?—To the person who takes the child there. In fact, two told me so themselves.

444. In that case the person bringing the child did ask the question?—No, that representation was made to me personally, and it may be made to others.

445. It was made to you on the strength of the old register, you mean?—Yes.

446. They produced to you a register for somewhere else?—From an outside district, and outside London.

447. Then it was not made to the person who brought the child?—No, not to the person who brought the child.

Chairman.

448. You knew all the registered houses, because they were under your supervision?—This (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

was outside London; those have never come under my supervision. When they left a district outside London they came into London, and brought their register with them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

449. A person comes from Manchester, we will say, where he has been registered; he comes to London, bringing a Manchester register; what use is that in London?—No use at all.

450. But to whom is it offered or supposed to be of use?—It may operate upon the person who brings the child there.

Chairman.

451. Clause 5 of the Bill requires that it shall be unlawful for any person who receives an infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person without the consent in writing of the local authority, unless it be to a relative: can you explain the benefit that would result from that provision?—I may explain that a system of barter or trafficking in infants has come under my notice where infants have been received, under pretence of adopting them, for sums of money from 2*l.* to 50*l.* These infants were seldom kept by the trafficker, who, through advertising in the newspapers or answering advertisements, has succeeded in immediately transferring the infants to other persons for adoption, in some cases without any premium, and in others for less sums of money than originally received, or has placed them out to nurse for weekly payments which have not been kept up; the trafficker has given a false name and address and has not been traced. If the Committee will allow me I can give particulars of nine cases of this kind which have come under my notice since the year 1886, in which 144 infants were received. The sums paid with these infants could only be ascertained in 66 cases, for which in all a sum of 632*l.* was received by the traffickers. Some of these infants were afterwards abandoned in a most heartless manner and died, and others were sent to the workhouse and became a charge upon the rates.

Lord Belper.

452. Were these cases found out afterwards?—They were traced afterwards.

453. Was your information in time to have stopped any of these cases taking place, supposing the law had permitted you to do so?—I should say so.

454. I thought you said you only found it out afterwards?—The offence must take place before we can interfere.

455. But sufficiently soon after to enable you to trace the people and prosecute them?—In some cases.

Chairman.

456. Then Clause 6 of the Bill requires that additional powers shall be given to officers in carrying out their duties; will you explain any difficulties you have experienced in working the Act of 1872?—I have been refused admission to houses where I have had reason to believe

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that infants were being kept for hire. Information as regards infants kept for hire has been refused me; and false information has also been given me in respect of infants kept for hire for the purpose of evading the Act, and much difficulty has, in consequence, been experienced in proving offences against the Act.

457. And has there been any other difficulty in administering; it is mainly a question of people refusing to answer questions, and refusing to admit you to their house, I understand?—Yes.

458. Will you describe the manner in which you now carry out your investigations, and the way in which you gain admission to unregistered houses, and learn whether infants are kept there to nurse?—On seeing an advertisement in a newspaper for the care or adoption of an infant, I call at the address given.

459. Have you got any samples of those advertisements?—I have (*handing in a paper of samples of advertisements*). On seeing an advertisement in a newspaper for the care or adoption of an infant, I call at the address given and inquire for the person by name or initials as given by her, obtain an interview, and satisfy myself, before disclosing who I am, as to whether infants are being kept or the Act infringed. I then explain the object of my visit and the requirements of the Act, and hand a notice form, No. 47, which gives instructions as to where application should be made for registration if it should at any time be needed. Should the advertiser give her address at a newsagent's shop where letters are received, I write a letter asking an interview, and for terms for the adoption and care of the infant.

460. Do you write the letters yourself, or get them written?—Very often I get them written; I write sometimes myself. On getting a reply to my letter I interview the person and satisfy myself that the Act has not been infringed, and explain its requirements. Should I obtain information of any person suspected of keeping infants, I visit the house and act as the circumstances of the case may justify me in doing.

461. Have you had much difficulty, as a rule, in getting into these places?—Very often.

462. They suspect you?—I think they do.

463. You generally represent that you have a child to put out, I suppose?—I lead them to believe so; I have to do so.

464. Then, as regards Clause 7, as to the power of the local authority to strike the name off the register, do you find that necessary?—I think so. Under the present Act there is no power to strike off the register the name of a person who has discontinued the keeping of infants. Such person must remain on the register until the expiration of the registration, and some inconvenience has been caused thereby. The suggested alteration is to meet that difficulty.

465. Now I want to ask you a few questions arising out of some of these points. I want to know, first of all, would the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, if properly administered, cover the deficiencies in the present Act?—I think not.

Chairman—continued.

466. It simply deals with cases of criminal cruelty, you mean?—With cases of criminal cruelty.

467. And starvation, I presume, is included in cruelty. It also dealt with those cases?—Yes.

468. Then is it your experience that there is much dislike on the part of respectable working people to register their houses?—I have not found a great difficulty in that matter. It seems there are some who do not particularly wish to register, but, generally speaking, I have found no objection.

469. I mean, when you have gone round to these unregistered houses and explained the Act, possibly in cases of infringement as well as in cases where it is not infringed, are the more respectable of these people generally quite willing to come and register themselves?—Many of them would be if they required it.

470. But I mean to say, if the Act were extended to include all children?—I do not think there would be a very great deal of objection; there would in some cases, no doubt.

471. You know that objection has been raised on the part of a great many philanthropic societies that board children out, on the ground that if the present Act were extended it would be very difficult to find respectable people who would take these children in. From your experience amongst people do you find that that would be the case?—There may be an objection felt by some people, but I do not think that, generally speaking, it would be so.

472. You do not think that there is any general objection to registration?—No; and particularly I may say that when a person has been registered they have no objection whatever to the visit of the inspector.

473. And do you find that they have less objection to a lady inspector than to a man?—I really cannot answer that.

474. You do not know?—No.

475. But do you think there might be objection to the visits of a man in uniform; there was a great deal of evidence given before one of the previous Committees as to the objections that would be entertained to a man in uniform visiting the house; that is rather a different question?—Possibly there may be objection to a man in uniform; I should think there would be.

476. But I do not know that there is any proposal with reference to that. Would you tell us what do you think is the best way of defining "relatives" and "guardians"?—There is some difficulty about that, but I think it has been thought that first cousin by blood or marriage should be the extent.

477. Have you found cases where children have been taken away in what you think ought to be regarded as an improper manner, and in which you have been simply told that they have been taken away by a relative; I mean to say cases where you think that it would have been advantageous if the term "relative" had been defined?—Cases of that kind have come under my notice, where it would have been satisfactory if the child could have been traced.

478. I want

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper.

478. I want to ask you one or two questions with regard to the evidence that you have given. I understand you made 9,575 visits of enquiry; I think you said you could not state how many different houses those visits included?—I cannot say exactly the number of different houses.

479. But you have included in that 9,575 all the visits you have made, whether they were second or third visits to the same house or not?—Yes.

480. Of those there were 205 cases in which you found there was an infringement of the present Act?—That is so.

481. In that number of 205 cases, have you also included houses which might have infringed the Act twice?—I have only two cases of that kind where I found the same person breaking the law a second time.

482. Therefore, practically, except those two cases, they would be all different houses?—Yes, they were different houses; when I found the second offence the persons had removed to other houses.

483. Different houses, but the same people?—The same people.

484. Of those cases I see that 116 were not prosecuted, but were cautioned, and with regard to several of them (I think you said several) you consented not to prosecute on their giving up keeping more than one child; is that the case?—Yes, they complied with the Act by giving up one child.

485. How often have you visited those houses since?—Very frequently; I cannot tell you how often.

486. You have assured yourself that they have not gone back and taken another child afterwards?—Some I have not been able to trace; others I have, and have frequently seen them since.

487. Should you agree with the evidence that Mr. Spencer gave us, that nearly the whole of the cases that ought to be registered under the present law are registered?—Well, we know of none that are breaking the law.

488. Have you any assistance in your work, or are you the only official?—I have another inspector to assist me; I take the district north of the Thames and he takes the district south of the Thames.

489. Then are these visits that have been made by you two or by you alone?—By me alone up to March 1894.

490. I think out of these, in round numbers, 10,000 visits you find that only about 200 were infringements of the Act; I suppose if the Act applied to all cases of children up to five years old and to all the cases where only one child was kept it would be a most enormous increase of your duties?—There would be a great increase.

491. It is almost impossible to say what the limit of the houses you might have to visit would be?—I do not think that a very great increase would take place, simply because I have discovered these myself from time to time, and I should bring them under the law that would extend it to one child.

492. I understand that you have discovered

(0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

these where you had reason to think that there was a *prima facie* case, for supposing that the present law might be infringed?—Yes.

493. Therefore, you did not take the trouble to visit a great number of the cases where only one child was kept, or where there was no reason to suppose that the present law was being infringed?—But still in any case where I had suspicion, I would always take steps to visit again.

494. However, the number of visits that you have made is something like 48 times as many as the cases where there has actually been an infringement?—Yes, that is so.

Chairman.

495. On that point can you state from your experience what the capacity of an inspector in looking after registered houses is; how many houses do you think an inspector could properly look after; 100, 200, 300, or what?—I should think an inspector could look after 200 or 300 houses very well.

496. Two hundred or 300 registered houses I mean?—By arranging the visits to the houses it could be done.

497. How often do you generally go?—I went never less than once a month; and I went very frequently if I had suspicion of anyone, and thought it required it.

Lord Belper.

498. In the case of your visits for the limited purposes of this Act, you discovered 3,991 cases where children were kept for hire?—I did.

499. Do you think that the greater part of those houses would register if the Act were extended?—Well yes, they would have to, or give up keeping infants.

500. They would either have to give up keeping children, or have to register, or have to infringe the Act; there are those three courses open to them; but my question is whether you think that the greater part of them would register?—I cannot say that.

501. At all events, that 3,991 is only a very small proportion of the houses where children are kept for hire?—That is so; no doubt there are many more.

502. I think you did not divide your visits or your cases into different years at all, you cannot tell us what the effect of the working of this Act under the county council has been by showing what number of cases you have had to visit, or what number of cases of infringement of the Act have been in the different years?—No, I have given them all together, but I think it must be in the return that Mr. Spencer has handed in.

503. From your personal recollection should you say your work was very much diminished since you first undertook the administration of the Act?—There is a slight improvement in the way infants are treated; the work has not diminished because it has increased rather; a greater number of persons advertise for the care of infants.

504. Therefore the fact of the attention of the county council having been turned to it has not had the effect of greatly diminishing the practice of keeping children?—No, it has not.

E 3

505. In

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

505. In fact you do not think that if the Act were extended there would be any fewer children kept, but you think that the children would have a very much better chance of being properly kept?—I certainly do.

506. I want to clear up some of these points about these lying-in houses. There are a great many advertisements in the papers now with regard to these houses?—There are.

507. Have those advertisements increased of late more than they used to do?—No, recently they have rather decreased.

508. The advertisements of the lying-in houses; I do not mean the children?—Advertisements as to lying-in houses have decreased.

509. But I ask you if they have increased?—I do not think they have increased.

510. Because I believe it is a fact that the number of advertisements regarding children to adopt have decreased, have they not?—Yes, within a few months they have.

511. Do you know any particular reason for that?—No. I may state that some of the newspapers that had inserted these advertisements very freely discontinued it. Year after year they do that. Some three years ago the "Weekly Times and Echo" advertised very freely; they have entirely discontinued it.

512. You do your best to prevent the more respectable papers from putting in these advertisements, you and Mr. Spencer, I suppose?—I have spoken to some. I have occasionally called at a paper office about an advertisement, and sometime afterwards they have discontinued them. The papers are very good; they will do all they can to prevent anything going wrong.

513. But what I want to know is this: do you think that people who put out children are finding that advertisement renders them open to too much interference from the authorities, and that they are adopting other means of getting rid of the children?—Yes, I think it probable they apply to lying-in houses without making their wants known publicly, that is to say, without advertising in the paper. They adopt the course of writing to a lying-in housekeeper, and arrangements are made in that way, and children are distributed all over London and other places by that means, and we know nothing of it.

514. Have you ever called at any of these lying-in houses?—Yes.

515. How have you generally been met; with a rebuff?—No, I cannot say that, but I get no information as a rule as regards an infant; they very seldom tell what becomes of them, they pretend not to know; I am told the "mother made the arrangements; I know nothing about it."

516. But it is your belief that it is the lying-in houses that are the great means of supplying children to what I may call the professional baby farmer?—Yes, I believe that to be the case.

517. I mean like the people in this Reading case?—Yes; I have no doubt a great many are distributed through those houses.

518. Do you know of many of your own personal knowledge?—I cannot say that I know many cases, but I know some where the children

Chairman—continued.

have come to grief through being distributed from these houses.

519. But you do know as a fact that the children from these houses vanish in a mysterious way and cannot be traced?—They do.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

520. I am anxious to return to a point on which you have already answered Lord Belper; do we clearly understand from you that you think we are practically getting hold now under the existing law of all houses in which more than one infant under 12 months is being kept?—As far as we know, we are.

521. That is exactly my point, as far as you know; but you have told us that over London there are at this moment 41 houses registered; do you believe that there are not much more than 41 houses in London now in which two children under 12 months of age are being kept for hire?—It is possible there may be.

522. What is possible?—That there may be more than one kept.

523. But practically you have no reason to suppose that there are a very large number more who ought to be registered, and who are not?—No, I have not.

524. Then you would say that all the mischief that occurs now which the Act would touch, occurs in houses unregistered in which only one infant is now kept?—That is so.

525. That is to say that is the main amendment that the law wants, to cover houses in which only one infant is kept?—Yes.

526. Then have you, with your experience of the working classes, thought at all as to the mode of doing it, if the law were made to cover every house in which only one infant was kept for hire; have you considered the question of the difficulties that would arise in working men's houses as to the temporary lodgment of a child with a neighbour for payment?—I do not think there would be much difficulty in that.

527. I see, on looking at your evidence that you gave in 1890, that you were asked, "You do not wish to interfere with people who take a neighbour's child out of kindness, but may receive 1s. or 2s. a week for supporting it?" and your answer is, "There are very few cases of that kind that comes to my notice?"—There are very few.

528. Do you mean that you have not an opportunity of seeing it, or that you think it is a rare thing to happen?—I do not think it is a very frequent occurrence; but it may be that such cases have not come under my notice.

529. Do you think it is a rare thing for a mother who goes into a hospital, or for a widower who is working elsewhere, or for 100 other such cases, to get a neighbour to take a child for a month, say, for a few shillings a week?—There are such cases, no doubt.

530. But you think it is rare?—To me it is; it has not come under my notice.

531. But I mean, have you had such means of observing as to make your view that it is rare, a view based upon the real knowledge of the facts; your evidence would be very important if you can assure us that you have had the means of observing,

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

observing, and think that it would be a rare thing to happen?—It may be that such cases would not come within my experience.

532. Then you told us that it was part of your duty to keep watch over private lying-in establishments, and find out what becomes of the infants; under what authority at all do you profess to go to make such enquiries at a lying-in house?—Well, I do it in the ordinary course of my duties; of course the lying-in housekeeper could shut the door in my face if she liked, and not admit me.

533. She may reply "what business is it of yours," and you have nothing more to say?—That is so.

534. Are many of the cases of the advertisements that you follow up found by you to be really genuine cases of people who honestly wish to adopt the child in order to bring it up themselves?—There are some cases of that kind; the majority are the other way.

535. You think that in the case of advertisements the majority are the other way?—I do.

536. In the houses where children are taken in for hire, can you give us roughly any idea of what proportion are illegitimate children and what proportion are legitimate?—I should say that not 5 per cent. of the children who have come under my notice have been legitimate.

537. That is to say that 95 per cent. are illegitimate children?—Yes, as far as my experience goes.

538. That corresponds with what Mr. Spencer told us. Now why do you think it is that there are not more people in London who register themselves as ready to take children, if it is so profitable a thing to do as it seems to be?—Well, it is not very profitable. In some cases it is profitable because the people are well paid. The payment for the maintenance of children varies very much; some get 4s., some 5s., some 6s., others 10s.; I have known as much as 15s. and 17. a week paid for a child. Of course in those cases where it is well paid for it is profitable; but there cannot be much profit in taking a child at 5s. a week.

539. Do you know what is the sum paid by guardians to persons for taking an infant who is boarded out?—I have not much experience of that, but I have been told that they pay 5s. a week.

540. And do you know what the Foundling Hospital give in such cases?—I believe they pay 6s. a week.

541. If that is so, and if it is the case that there are a large number of people, who, as it would appear, are prepared to pay more than that, does it not seem to you that, if there were more registered houses known to be respectable, and in every way commendable places, not registered as baby farms, but registered as wholesome places, that would offer a legitimate mode of making money properly; and I want to know why you think that is not more adopted. You have answered that in many cases it is not profitable; but in many cases it will be profitable?—In many. It is quite clear that the law does not apply to so many; it applies to persons keeping more than one infant; and therefore very few (0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

are registered. They prefer keeping only one infant under a year old, and the others over that age, and so to avoid registration.

542. But now you told us a few minutes ago that you did not think there was much objection on people's part to being registered?—Not those I know.

543. But you still say that people would rather keep one infant than two even if they could make more profit out of the two, because of their objection to being registered?—Yes, I do think so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

544. Have you ever known a registered person advertise for a child?—Yes.

545. Would you expect a genuine advertisement for a child for adoption to appear in any of those papers you have referred to?—There may be some.

546. Would you expect it, or would they go to other papers?—I should not expect to find any of the advertisements genuine, although some might be genuine.

547. The majority of children, I think you said, now that are included in baby farms you think come from lying-in houses?—A great many do.

548. A majority?—I do not think the majority.

549. When you refer to lying-in houses do you include houses kept by a qualified practitioner?—By midwives.

550. But by a qualified male practitioner; a doctor?—I do not refer to them.

551. You do not refer to those kept by a doctor?—I have not referred to them.

Lord Kinnaird.

552. Do you register the house or the person?—The house is registered and the person as well; the registration is granted to a person for a certain house.

553. May that person move with that form of registration to another house, or must they inform you?—They must inform us, and have the new house registered.

554. So that if they change in the 12 months would that house count as two; I understood that the figures you have given us are merely the total number of registrations?—Yes, the total number.

555. So that if they change that would be two houses?—Yes, two houses.

556. You told us you had no power of getting into a lying-in house if they chose to keep you out?—None whatever.

557. If you think there is anything going on wrong, have you any power then?—I have not.

558. You cannot put the police on them?—The police may go by a warrant.

559. Do they work with you?—Frequently.

560. Do you put them on the scent of a great many?—They assist me.

561. I was surprised to hear what you said a short time ago; do you say deliberately that you do not think people object to registration, though we hear that in practice not one in 50 of the houses are registered; why do they not register if they do not object to registration?—Because the law does not require them to register unless they keep two infants.

E 4

562. And

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

562. And you do not think there are many who keep two infants under one year not registered?—I do not.

563. How often do you visit these registered houses?—I used to visit them when they were under my control about once in three weeks or a month, sometimes oftener.

564. Do they change their names much in order to avoid registration or being found out?—I do not think so.

565. Are many sent out of your area into suburbs beyond, do you think, in the case of those that you suspect?—There are a great many sent out into the suburbs outside our district.

566. Then when they leave you do you report to the authorities having the administration of the law there, if you can follow them?—I have done so when a case has come under my notice.

567. Do you do that regularly, I mean?—Only when I knew of such cases.

568. There is no general list kept in which you exchange names and so on with those who are working the law in other parts?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

569. Have you a copy of the form that a person fills up to apply for registration?—Yes, I have.

570. Would you put it in?—I think it has been already put in by Mr. Spencer. (Mr. Alfred Spencer.) I have one here. *That (pointing to a form) is the form of application. This is the certificate of character. This is the register of infants. This is a letter to the person instructing him about being registered. This is an abstract of the law for the guidance of the person. These are the suggestions as to the care of infants. This is the form of notice to the coroner. The only one that I have really put in hitherto is that one "Suggestions as to the Care of Infants." I will hand them all in. (The same are handed in, vide Appendix.)*

Lord Thring.

571. (To Mr. Babey.) On the subject of lying-in houses on which you have been pressed, take a case you are very familiar with; a great many ladies come up to be confined in London, and take lodgings for that purpose; would that be a lying-in house or not?—I should not like to include a solitary case like that.

572. It is not a solitary case, for houses are constantly let in London for that very purpose?—Lying-in housekeepers who advertise weekly in the papers, I look upon as professional lying-in housekeepers.

573. But supposing they do not advertise them, I want to ask what demarcation you intend to draw between lying-in houses and places where ladies are confined?—My impression of a lying-in house is where month after month several women are taken in to be confined and the people keeping the house make a profession of it.

574. How do you know? I will put the case of a lodging-house keeper in London; she receives during the year 10 ladies, is that a lying-in house or not?—I should call it so.

575. You would call it so?—I should.

576. Then the frequency of it makes it so?—Yes.

Lord Thring—continued.

577. Then you would define a lying-in-house to be a lodging-house where a person is sent to be confined, and pays for her lodging?—That would be a lying-in-house.

578. Then with respect to the children, you are aware that this is intended to include children up to five years old?—I am.

579. I want to draw your attention to a class of children quite different from those to which the Bill refers; you are well aware that Indian children are constantly, almost always left behind, and sometimes two or three of the same family are brought up in a family for hire or reward; would you bring them within the Act?—If the Bill became law it would bring them in, of course.

580. Then you think that a school that takes in young children should be brought within the Act?—There may be some exemptions in a case of that kind.

581. But you think that on the whole they ought to be brought within the Act, both those and the cases of friends taking Indian children (as a good many people who are not in good circumstances do), for hire or reward; you think they ought to be within the Act if they have more than two children under five years old?—Well, as regards school children they are not often taken at school under that age.

582. But there are cases. The other case is also most frequent; I only want to know whether you think the Act ought to apply to them or not?—There is a difficulty in that matter I quite admit.

583. And do you see any means of drawing any line between the two?—No, I really do not.

584. Then I want to draw your attention to this particular clause, Clause 6, the clause about entry, that "any officer so appointed may visit any house registered under the principal Act, or any house in which he has reason to believe that any infant under the age of five years is being kept for hire or reward." I want to draw your attention to the meaning of that clause, "any officer," that would include a common constable, or anybody not a constable "may enter any house in which he," the officer "has reason to believe that an infant under the age of five years is being kept for hire or reward." Now, do you really mean that you think that is a proper clause, to empower any constable to enter into my house if he chooses to think that I have a child there; he has only got to say that he "has reason to think," and he can enter my house because he has reason to think that I have a child there; any officer of the local authority it means, I suppose?—Any officer of the local authority, I suppose.

585. Do you really think that the County Council ought to be able to come into my house, because any officer thinks he has reason to believe that I have a child kept for hire or reward, under the age of five years?—If that power was invested in an officer, I should presume that he would not exercise it unless it were in a very serious case.

586. Did you ever hear of any Act of Parliament under the sun investing any officer with power to go into any house in London because he

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

he chooses to think that a child under five years old is kept there for hire or reward?—It is usually done by warrant; I quite admit that.

587. And also when there is a warrant there is usually a reason assigned in the warrant?—Yes.

588. I only want to know whether you seriously consider that that is a proper clause?—I have met with cases where I should have been very pleased to have had the power.

589. Then with reference to these visits you have told us of, you have, in fact, acted as a detective, very properly, no doubt?—Yes.

590. When you went to these places, if the people had known that you were coming, they would not have let you in?—No.

591. You have no right in law to ask these questions?—I have no right; they can refuse, of course.

592. And if they refuse, they do no wrong?—They do not offend against the law, I admit; then the law is evaded in consequence, very often.

593. Therefore all the information given you was entirely willingly given, and under no obligation whatever?—Yes, but the information is frequently false.

594. But why is it more wrong to give false information if you are asked a question that you are not bound to answer, than it is to ask the question; however, that is a question of morals?—Yes.

Chairman.

595. You stated that you corroborated what Mr. Spencer said, and that you thought there were no houses which ought to be brought under inspection which are not under inspection?—There may be a few.

596. And you give as your reason for that, the fact that you practically follow up all the advertisements that appear?—That is so.

597. And you think it is done mainly through advertisements?—It is, no doubt, except that as I have stated, it is done through the lying-in houses.

598. I can understand your following up the case of a person who wants to adopt a child, but there are cases here of people who advertise and want to put out children. There is one here for example: "Wanted, a good motherly home for two children, boy eight years, baby girl nine months." You cannot possibly trace the circumstances of the people putting out the children?—There is very great difficulty in doing so.

599. And no doubt also the children are given out secretly by the lying-in houses?—Yes.

600. You have two sources of secret supply of children, and I should have thought there must be many cases in which people who take children secretly like that are keeping them illegally, without any possibility of your finding them out?—Of course there may be some; it is impossible to say, but we have not found them out yet.

601. Then, can you tell me how many lying-in houses you yourself have traced in London through the advertisements?—Sixty seven, I think.

(U.95.)

Chairman—continued.

602. Altogether in London?—Altogether in London.

603. You mean, then, to say that there are only 67 that advertised?—That advertised, just so; 67 houses known through advertising.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

604. Are you speaking of London or of your district?—Of London.

Lord Kinnaird.

605. Do you think that is approximately the total number?—That is the total number that I see advertised; there may be more.

Chairman.

606. There are a lot of advertisements here of lying-in houses; are all these houses known to you that are advertised here?—I have not studied that; that is a list which has just come out; there are a good many there that are known to me, no doubt.

607. They advertise generally?—Generally week by week.

608. Well, then, it has been suggested that if the Act was extended to include all children under five years of age it would embrace the lying-in houses; would it do so, or do the lying-in houses invariably get rid of the children as soon as they possibly can?—They are very seldom kept there.

609. So that the lying-in houses are therefore sort of feeders to the baby farmers, but you could not by any means bring them under the Act as baby farmers themselves?—Just so.

610. And then, with regard to the question of institutions, have you any experience of what I might call shady institutions for the care of children, which are run ostensibly on philanthropic grounds, but really as matters of private gain, which it would be highly desirable to have under proper supervision?—At the present time I know none that are shady, but I have known them previously.

611. I do not want you to mention names, but do you know of any?—Not at present.

612. Have you come across any?—I have in the course of my inquiries.

613. What sort of places; I do not want you to specify names, but what class of cases; do you mean persons who keep a sort of boarding house or home for children, or what?—It would be in the shape of a home for little children, and the mothers pay, as a rule, something for their maintenance, and subscriptions are received, or were received, rather to supplement the keeping of the children.

614. Do people go round and ask for subscriptions for them?—I think it is done through advertising.

615. And were these institutions ever managed by a committee that you knew of?—None of those that I have been speaking of.

616. Did they publish accounts?—No, I think not.

617. I was rather trying to get at the point of the exemption of those that have a committee and are managed by a committee of six; I wanted to know whether the proposed exemption of an institution managed by a committee of six would be likely to exempt many places which it

F

appears

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

appears desirable to include; but then you say these classes of places are not very frequent now?—No, I know none but what appear to be genuine at present; but in these places there is an enormous death-rate of children.

618. You do not mean what are known as crèches, places where they take in children by the day only?—No, I do not refer to them at all.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

619. The Act exempts institutions?—Yes.

620. How would you decide whether a place was an institution or not?—That has never been defined, but it has always been considered an institution where it is an organised society.

621. You say you knew some that advertised for subscriptions, so that they would be institutions?—Yes. Persons keeping a place of that kind seldom kept the infants apart from their mothers, the mothers used to lodge in the house as a general rule.

622. Why would you call that an institution?—It is a home more than an institution.

Lord Thring.

623. You said, and quite rightly I thought, that its being an organised society was to constitute it an institution. A person keeping a house like that which you have been talking of does not constitute an organised society?—I want to convey in that case that the infants were kept in a home, and their mothers as a rule with them.

624. My Lord asked you why they were institutions?—They used to claim to be institutions.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

625. And on their claim you allowed it?—Because there was no offence against the Act.

Chairman.

626. You know it was proposed in the amended Bill which went through the House of Commons in 1890 to limit the application of the proposed Act to illegitimate children only?—Yes, it was.

627. Is it your opinion that if the Act was extended, but was restricted to illegitimate children only, that would lead to great evasion through illegitimate children being laid out as legitimate?—I quite believe that; there would be great difficulty.

628. You think it would not be a very difficult thing for a person bringing a child to a baby-farm to produce what are known as "marriage lines" belonging to somebody else, which she had either borrowed or got hold of in some way?—I think it very probable that would happen.

629. And that then when you went round to make inquiries at the house, and you found this child put down as being legitimate and therefore as being outside your inspection, you would find yourself practically powerless in the matter, and it would be very difficult for you to check the statement as to whether the child was legitimate or not?—That would be so.

630. Can you suggest any means, supposing it were restricted to illegitimate children, of preventing that suggested evasion; for instance, in the Bill of 1890 it was put that "the burden

Chairman—continued.

of proving, for the purposes of this Act, the legitimacy of any infant under the age of five years, retained or received for hire or reward, shall rest with the person retaining or receiving the same, unless he proves that he took all reasonable means to satisfy himself of such legitimacy;" now that last sentence opens the door to unlimited evasion, does it not?—It does, no doubt.

631. I suppose they would all say that they have taken "all reasonable means"?—They would, no doubt.

632. It might be very difficult to prove that they had not taken reasonable means to satisfy themselves; can you suggest any other means of putting a stop to evasion; any better words, or any better way than simply throwing the onus of proof on to the person who takes the infant in?—If some written statement was given with it it would perhaps prevent that being done.

633. You would have to get a written statement from the person who gave it in?—Yes.

634. And you would probably want that statement endorsed by two responsible householders, persons who knew them, to show that it was, at all events, a married woman who brought the infant?—I should think it necessary to have it verified in some way.

635. But from your experience of the class of people who take in these sort of children, it is your firm conviction that it would be very easy to evade the Act if it was restricted to illegitimate children only?—I do think so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

636. Do you work with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or do you find that they like to work entirely independently of you?—I do not work with them.

637. Do you refer cases to them which come under your notice indirectly?—I should do so.

638. You are looking for a child under one year, and find a child under five years being cruelly treated; would you refer that to the society?—I should, or to the police.

639. But you do occasionally do it?—I have not found a case for some time that it was necessary to send on to them.

640. But you would do so; you would work with them in that way?—Yes, certainly.

641. I want to be quite clear on this point; you think there are only 67 lying-in houses in London now, or, roughly speaking, that number, and you judge of it by the advertisements?—Yes, there are only 67 who advertise.

642. I find that there are 13 in one newspaper that you have put in?—Yes.

643. That is to say, one-fifth of the whole body in London advertising in this particular paper?—They advertise in various papers.

Lord Kinnaird.

644. How do you define a lying-in house?—Where persons are taken in to be confined.

645. One or more?—I should not call it a lying-in house unless they took in several cases.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

27 April 1896.

Mr. ATHELSTAN BRAXTON HICKS, having been called in; is Examined as follows:

Chairman.

646. You are the coroner for the Kingston district of Surrey and the South Western district of the county of London?—Yes.

647. You have, I believe, taken considerable interest in this question of Infant Life Protection?—I have always, from the commencement of my holding office.

648. How long have you been coroner?—Coroner since 1885, and deputy-coroner before that, since 1883.

649. Are you a medical man?—I am a barrister-at-law.

650. We had a coroner last time we met, who was both a medical man and a barrister, and I know many coroners are medical men?—I have been at the hospitals and been bred in the medical profession all my life.

651. You have considerable knowledge of medical subjects therefore?—Yes, and I have been deputy-coroner in 11 London districts in and around the metropolis, so that my knowledge is not confined to one district but applies to many.

652. You gave evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1890?—I did.

653. You may take it that the Committee does not want to go over the whole ground which you covered to a certain extent as to the general necessity of an Act for the Prevention of the Destruction of Infant Life; and what we more or less want to confine ourselves to is the necessity, if any, for the extension of the Act; and the reasons which you have for desiring such extension, and I may say the extent to which you would extend it, and the effect that that extension would have?—Quite so.

654. Have you anything further to say on the general question of the necessity of extension than what you gave before the Committee of 1890, because I think the Members of this Committee have seen that evidence, and we do not want unnecessarily to go all through it again?—Then I think I may put it in this general way: that I have carefully read the evidence which I gave then, and that my experience of the last six years has made me more strongly convinced that the opinions I expressed then, with regard to some of which I was then doubtful, have been confirmed by that six years' experience, and that there is an absolute necessity for a strong amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872.

655. Will you read a letter, please, which you received lately from the Home Secretary?—Yes; it is dated 12th of March 1896. "Sir,—I am directed by the Secretary of State to forward herewith for your consideration a copy of a Bill to amend the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, which has been introduced into the House of Lords. A Bill for a similar purpose was introduced into the House of Commons in the year 1890, and a copy of the form in which it passed a Select Committee of that House is also enclosed herewith for comparison with the present Bill. Sir Matthew Ridley will be much obliged if you

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

will be so good as to furnish him with any observations that you can make on the provisions of the present Bill, and as it is probable that amendments may be proposed with the object of assimilating the Bill to the form passed in 1890 by the Select Committee, he will be glad if in your observations you can institute some comparison between the respective values in your opinion of the two Bills. The Bill has been read a second time, and it is intended to proceed with it with as little delay as possible. I am to beg, therefore, that your reply may be sent at your earliest convenience.—I am, Sir, your obedient Servant, *Charles S. Murdock.*"

656. Then, I think, you had better read your reply, which expresses your opinions on the subject?—So far as I was able to deal with it in that mode, to that extent as a comparison. "17th March 1896.—To Her Majesty's Secretary of State, Home Department. Sir,—I am in receipt of yours of the 12th instant, and in answer thereto, I beg to say that the subject-matter of the Bills for the amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, has been under the consideration of the Coroners' Society since 1890; and previous to that the society had often discussed the inadequacy of the Act of 1872, and last year I was requested as the honorary secretary of that society to draft certain observations for its consideration. These observations have been approved by the council of the society, and are to be discussed at the annual general meeting to be held in June next, and I have no doubt that the meeting will endorse the recommendations of the council, which is composed of prominent coroners from all parts of England and Wales. However, without waiting for the annual meeting, I have the honour to forward you a copy of these observations. In accordance with the request contained in your letter, I beg to submit some further observations in my personal capacity as a coroner. I have carefully considered the two Bills forwarded to me, and where the clauses of the House of Lords' Bill, 1896, are similar to that of the Amended Bill of 1890, I offer no criticism as I entirely agree with them. Where they differ, I would state that I prefer the provisions of the Bill of 1896, for the following reasons:—It is to be noted in Section 2 of the 1896 Bill, that the provisions of the Bill of 1890 are extended to any infant, without regard to legitimacy or otherwise. This is a distinct improvement, as the 1st Section of the Bill of 1890, with regard to proving legitimacy, would, in practice, have been difficult and unnecessarily inquisitorial. The extension of the age to five years is another improvement, as it would be greatly to the benefit of the child itself. The old limit of 12 months was much too low, for it is about that time that the change from milk food to stronger diet commences, and so it is found in practice that at 12 months children often fall away and die in a manner which gives rise to suspicion. The change of food in a child is one of the most common sources of wasting, and my experience forces me to think

F 2

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

think that it is often done intentionally. Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, which is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, is one of the most useful, as tending to minimise the evil called baby sweating, where a child is handed over by some unknown person to be nursed, or for so-called adoption, and a lump sum is paid down. It would also check the practice of handing a baby from one person to another without any check, and where each such person gives it a different food. I have known a case in which a child was in the care of five different people in less than 12 months. To keep a register in the terms proposed would be very little trouble to the individual, and for the sake of coroners who would have to be informed of each death, it would materially assist them in their inquiries. The next section which calls for comment is Section 8 of the Bill of 1896, as to the interpretation of institutions established for the protection and care of infants. Personally, I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill, and though it does not appear to be so wide as the exceptions in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, yet it may open a means of evading the Act. The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of the Bill of 1890. It may be possible that the promoters of the Bill will find themselves compelled to accept some amendments on this point, but I think it would be a great advantage to the children themselves that a register should be kept of the facts required in Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, and that the local authority may have access to such register when required. Regarding exceptions A, E, and F of Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, I have carefully considered them, and I cannot conceive any exceptions which could be more useful for the purposes of evading the provisions of the Act. The Bill itself does not attempt to define what or who is a relative or guardian, or a reputed parent, nor in exception E is any check placed upon the excuses where given; and if this exception, or anything like it, was to hold good, every alleged evasion of this Act would be pleaded under this exception. It should be noted that most of the exceptions, if *bonâ fide*, are really covered by the words of Section 2, in the Bill of 1896, because there it says that the Act shall only apply to persons retaining or receiving an infant for hire or reward. The word reward brings me to the consideration of those cases which are called adoption; that is, where a person receives a sum down to adopt a child. The newspapers teem with advertisements offering this mode of the disposal of infants; and it is a notorious fact, as exemplified in many cases which were brought before the Select Committee of 1890, and others which have been inquired into since, that the majority of such advertisers are of the most wicked kind, and carry on their business as an absolute trade." (I may mention that this letter was written before the Reading scandal came out.) "Therefore, I think that the word reward should be interpreted in the new Bill in the terms of the proviso to Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, viz., 'Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of

five years in consideration of an immediate payment shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section.'" (That would be that they would have to register the original arrangement by which they entered into an arrangement to take care of the child, and that a certain amount of inspection might occur, not necessarily.) "It is the experience of most coroners that where children are taken in to nurse singly, and the house is therefore unregistered, some of the worst cases of neglect occur. I think the effect of the present Bill will be most salutary, and would cause a class of respectable and careful persons to undertake the care of a child or children. The fact that they are registered and inspected will, in my opinion, have an effect quite different to that which some of the opponents of the Bill allege it will have. That is, instead of such people being looked upon with suspicion, the registration will be equivalent to a certificate of good character. As a proof of this, I have always asked witnesses at inquests, who had from the evidence undoubtedly taken every care of the infants under their charge, if they had any objection to registration and inspection. The answer has always been in the negative, and some have gone further and stated that they would prefer this course. Where children have been more or less neglected, I have always found that the nurses are fully aware that registration and inspection is not required by law where one child is kept, and therefore advantage is taken of this, I cannot think that the effect of this Bill will be to arrest philanthropic efforts, or the adoption of children by the well-disposed, and I sincerely trust it will pass into law. Coroners, of all persons, are in a better position to judge of the weakness of the present Act, and though it may entail an extra amount of work, I do not think that any would be willing to oppose the present Bill. Should there be any other point on which you would wish me to make observations, I am quite at your service.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant. (signed) A. Braxton Hicks, Coroner." Might I be allowed to read the copy of a memorandum that is enclosed with that letter to the Home Office?

657. What is it?—Observations which I was requested to draw up for the consideration of the Coroners' Society at their meeting in June next. We have a large council who pass all the matters to be placed in the report, and this matter among others was approved by them; it was under the heading of "Suggested Amendments in the Law." "Infant Life Protection Act. This Act was passed to regulate the system which had sprung up and become known as 'baby farming,' as it was found that children were taken charge of by persons for a fixed sum or periodical payment, and were either ruthlessly murdered or allowed to die by general neglect; there was no check upon this system, and it became at last such a scandal that the Legislature passed a law called 'The Infant Life Protection Act,' to afford some protection to such children. It provided that no person shall receive into a house for hire or reward more than one infant under the age of 12 months for the purpose of nursing unless they are registered, and

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

and that the local authority shall cause a register to be kept of such houses, and generally have supervision over the same; that every death of an infant occurring in a registered house shall be notified to the coroner, in order that he may hold an inquest, if necessary; and further, that these provisions shall extend to Scotland, except that the procurator fiscal is to be informed instead of the coroner. There are also penalties attaching to infringements of this Act to be enforced by the local authority, in London by the county council, in counties by justices in petty sessions, in the City of London by the common council, and in boroughs the borough council. Although useful as it was at the time, it is now found that except in the Metropolis and other large towns, it is nearly a dead letter. Experience has shown that advantage is taken of the provisions of the Act by persons, to evade being registered, by only taking one child under 12 months of age at a time, and a great amount of neglect has been found to occur in these cases, especially when a cash premium has been paid in one sum. These children die from neglect, starvation, &c., and others are taken in their place, and probably as many die in 12 months as in six under the old jurisdiction, or no supervision. This subject was again brought before Parliament in 1890, and a Bill was introduced to extend the provisions of the Act to persons who received any illegitimate infant under the age of five years, and that they should be registered, and a proper record kept of age, sex, &c. A Committee was appointed to consider the Bill, but it was found that so many classes of persons would be exempted from its provisions on sentimental, philanthropic, and other grounds, that little or no improvement would be effected upon the Act of 1872, and that it would be, therefore, practically valueless. It was further pointed out to the Select Committee that persons taking upon themselves the custody of a child and assuming the duties and responsibilities of parents which did not otherwise belong to them, should be placed under some supervision, so that the authority could ascertain if they did their duty. Such supervision would be no hardship on the well-disposed, and it would be a great check upon evil-doers. Another point to be considered with regard to these children is, that they are the subject of what may be called 'baby-sweating.' A person advertises to adopt a child for a lump sum. She makes arrangements to meet the parents of the child at some public place, and the child—frequently without its real identity being known—is there and then handed over with the money; and the motives which actuated the parents are suppressed and all knowledge of them is lost. These facts have been brought to light over and over again, but with the law, as it is at present, nothing can be done to check the evil. The Coroners' Society would recommend to the Home Office an amendment of the Act of 1872, embodying the Bill of 1890 as originally drafted, with such addition as recent inquiries have shown to be advisable for the due protection of infant life. It is considered that in this way all requirements would be met."

658. Then there is another paper in which

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Chairman—continued.

you made some statements about lying-in houses; we will keep that till we come to the question presently. I think now we can best get what we want by going through this letter. The first thing is the inadequacy of the present Act; I should like to know what you have to say about that?—The great thing there in the opinion of the coroners and myself, is that the age limit is too low. We deal practically with these questions; we see the bodies of those children, we hear the medical evidence, and we hear, as far as we can ascertain it with regard to the class of people we deal with, what we hope is the truth, and we find that the age limit is too low having regard to the nursing out of children. One reason, as I have stated, is that the food is changed at about 12 months. The child at that time if it has been out to nurse and has fed on the bottle, is very often in somewhat of a delicate condition, because it is very awkward to rear a child in good health at times even with the best of care by the bottle, but with the class of people with whom we find as a fact these children are put out, it is almost impossible to have any check upon them by merely putting it at the 12 months. It certainly is to be said that a lot of these children put out to nurse die at an age under 12 months; but then those are the children who are put out to nurse singly where there is no registration or inspection. I do not think that in my experience since I gave my evidence in 1890 I have had one case in which I could seriously complain of want of due care or proper feeding by the people who were registered. The inference I draw from that is that registration is of advantage because inspection follows and the people know that they will be looked after and so they take more care than otherwise they would.

Viscount Llandaff.

659. But there is no inspection under the law as it stands?—Not with one child, as it stands.

660. But of a registered house I mean?—Yes, there is constant inspection of a registered house.

661. Not by law; there is no power to inspect in the Act. Where do you find that; if they chose to say "You cannot come in," the inspector has no power to enter?—It has always been the practice that an inspection does occur with these places.

662. If you do it without law why do you want the law altered?—I understood that the Act included that. I do not have power to carry out the Act.

663. There is no power of entry on inspection on giving directions as to food, in the Act?—I think it is included in Section 4; surely that would cover it; it says, "The local authority may refuse to register any house unless they are satisfied that such house was suitable."

664. That covers the power of entry and inspection, you think?—How can they satisfy themselves without that?

665. That is a mode of making the people consent to have the house examined before the registration is granted, but that in no way assists you in entering the house afterwards?—It seems

F 3

to

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

to me that if the local authority are satisfied that the house is not properly sufficient, they may not only refuse to register, but strike the name off the register under Section 7. I am not an authority in interpreting an Act of Parliament, but if I were the inspector I should say that if I have the power to strike a house off the register I have the power to see that I can do it.

666. The inspector has never found any objection, you think, made to that?—No; I think Mr. Babey has found no trouble where they were doing well; but he has found some where they had something to hide.

Chairman.

667. With regard to extending the Act, do you think it ought to include children over the age of one year?—Yes.

668. Because a child up to five years old requires almost as much care in looking after as a child of more tender age?—I would not fix the limit up to five years, personally, myself.

669. The first few years of its life, I will say?—Yes; I will tell you what would happen. As a child got older the inspector would know it was going on all right, and there would not be the same need for constant looking after it, so that when he found the foster parents were keeping it well and healthy, up to say two or three years old, he probably would not want to go there much more than once in six months; merely to see whether the same condition of things was going on.

670. In other words the people you practically want to get at are the two classes; first of all those who take the children either from places where women are confined, or from individuals who bring the children to them with the deliberate and set purpose of either killing the children or letting them die as soon as possible; and the other class who have no criminal intent, but still allow the children to die through ignorance and neglect?—That is so; those are the people.

671. And are there a great number of cases where children die through ignorance and neglect and through no criminal intent?—No doubt. I think that is the case with the majority who die; that is to say, the neglect is, at all events, so difficult to absolutely prove.

672. And the people who have no criminal intent would not necessarily object to some sort of supervision, I should think, would they?—No; in fact I found that where they were *bonâ fide* trying to do their best, and it only seemed a little stupidity, or something of that sort, they have told me, "We should be very pleased to show how we are treating the child." I had a very respectable woman before me from Sydenham the other day, and I said to her, "Would you have any objection to inspection and registration?" "No, certainly not, Mr. Coroner; I should only be too pleased to show how much care I do take of the children;" and she was not registered, as it happened, because she had only one child. At one time, I believe, she had been; I am not certain about that; but here was a woman of a superior class, who evidently had belonged to the well-to-do middle-class, who had probably come down a bit.

Chairman—continued.

673. Therefore, I may take it that as regards the general question of the inadequacy of the Act, you are of opinion that if the age was extended it would not result in driving these children away to other places where they would be hidden, but that it would result in their being better looked after?—I certainly think so; and there is another thing which is connected with that question: You ask me if I think it would drive them to other districts? I say, if the law was universally acted upon as well as it is in the county of London, of which I have knowledge, I think we should not have this drafting from one place to another; and in regard to that, I might state the case which I stated before the Committee of 1890, the case of Mrs. Arnold, into which I inquired, and which developed a lot of cases in which children had been entrusted to this woman; and after I had finished the inquiry, the jury then made a very strong recommendation. I spoke a month afterwards to Mr. Babey, the inspector under the Act, and I said, "Will you kindly give me a list of the people who are registered in my district?" He said, "Since that case there is not one left, sir." That shows that they knew where to go, where the Act was not strictly enforced. I am bound to call attention to this because I think the Act has been a dead letter in many cases.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

674. You speak of people who had been registered?—The people who had been on the register all cleared out of my district entirely, so that I had no one left who was registered. They thought that a strict inquiry would affect their interests in some way.

Chairman.

675. Did they clear out, or simply give up keeping children?—I think they moved into Mitcham, which is just out of my district and not in the metropolitan area; Mr. Babey told me so, but I had no cause of complaint with the particular woman who had the charge of the child at the time of its death. Whether she was frightened and thought there were more penalties behind in the Act than she was aware of, I do not know.

676. Now then I will take you to what I have marked as paragraph 4: "I have carefully considered the two Bills forwarded to me, and where the clauses of the House of Lords Bill (1896) are similar to that of the Amended Bill of 1890 I offer no criticism, as I entirely agree with them. Where they differ I would state that I prefer the provisions of the Bill of 1896 for the following reasons." Now I want to go through part of the Bill and just find out your views. You say here, "It is to be noted in Section 2 of the 1896 Bill that the provisions of the Bill of 1890 are extended to any infant without regard to legitimacy or otherwise." Now that is a very important point, on which I should like to have your opinion?—That is so.

677. The Bill of 1890 made it refer to illegitimate children only, and the present one makes it refer to both?—Yes, whether legitimate or not. The reason was this: The provision in the Bill of 1890 stated in Sub-section (2) of Section

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Section 1 that the burden of proving whether a child is legitimate or not "shall rest with the person retaining or receiving the same, unless he proves that he took all reasonable means to satisfy himself of such legitimacy."

678. Now is it your opinion that that last proviso opens the door to a very great deal of evasion?—In the Bill of 1890.

679. Yes, unless he shall have proved "that he took all reasonable means" of doing so; would it not be very difficult for the inspector when he came round and found a child mis-stated as legitimate, whereas it was illegitimate, to prove that the person had not taken every reasonable means of finding out, if they stated that they had done so?—He could not possibly do it with the class of people I am speaking of.

680. And therefore that if a person took in an illegitimate child, and the mother, or the person who brought it, produced borrowed or forged "marriage lines," as they are called—?—Yes, or a certificate of registration falsely given.

681. Or a certificate of registration, it would be very difficult for the inspector to in any way check those statements?—I do not see how he can do it with the present state of the Registration Law in force. I do not know whether your Committee are aware that the registration of births is about as slipshod a way of doing the work as one can conceive if you want to get at the truth.

682. That question of registration of births is rather outside our reference?—I am showing how impossible it would be for an inspector to know. A woman who was confined in the Lying-in Hospital in York-road; she was a married woman; she registered the child as the child of her husband, and his occupation. I had reason to consider otherwise, and I asked her to come up before me, and she made a statement to the registrar which put him on his guard when the death was registered, and she said her husband had been away 14 months. This child was not a legitimate child, and the husband could not be the father of the child; but to Mr. Babey she would say, "This is a legitimate child; here is the certificate of the birth."

683. Do you consider it would be more inquisitorial or less inquisitorial to confine it to illegitimate children only?—I say, make no question about the matter; simply if a child is put out to nurse for hire or reward, legitimate or illegitimate, let it be the same rule.

684. You think that to inquire into the question of whether it was legitimate or illegitimate, in other words, to confine the Act to illegitimate children only would be very inquisitorial?—Yes, it would be a great check on the carrying out of the Act first of all, and next it would be excessively inquisitorial.

685. And would lead to a good many false statements?—Yes, certainly.

686. You say in this letter that you consider that "this is a distinct improvement as the first section of the Bill of 1890, with regard to proving legitimacy, would in practice have been difficult and unnecessarily inquisitorial." Then you go on with the extension of the age to five years, about which I think we have heard your opinion?—I might first of all state with regard to that

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

last part that I do not find that legitimate children put out to nurse are any better or worse treated than illegitimate children. As coroner holding inquests on children apparently neglected, I do not find any more neglect with illegitimate than with legitimate children; and that is one reason why I think there is no reason to make a distinction.

687. Do you, when you hold an inquest on the body of a child, always try to find out whether it is legitimate or illegitimate?—Yes, by law I am bound to find out the requirements necessary for registration purposes.

688. And in distinguishing between the inquests held on the bodies of children that are put out for hire or reward and others, do you find that there are amongst them many legitimate children, children that are put out to hire or reward?—Yes, many legitimate children.

Viscount Llandaff.

689. Generally, is it not the case that there is a greater inducement to get rid of an illegitimate child than of a legitimate one?—May I be allowed to consider that question for a moment? Where children are *bonâ fide* put out with the hope that they will survive I do not think there is any difference really in the treatment; but there is this to be considered in a physical point of view: that illegitimate children are born very often under such circumstances that they are handicapped as to living, whereas the legitimate children very often are only put to nurse when the mother becomes ill, or she is dead, or the husband has to go away, or they generally have some chance of starting life fairly well with mother's milk; but illegitimate children are always bottle children. I have never had experience yet of an illegitimate child dying which was brought up by a wet nurse.

Lord Thring.

690. Do we understand you to say, that in your opinion a law for illegitimate children is no more needed than for legitimate?—No, I am speaking of the question of death generally; as to the necessity of general protection for infants now independently of crime or not.

691. I thought you said to Lord Llandaff that in your opinion there was no greater motive to put an illegitimate child out of the way than a legitimate one?—I was not dealing with the motive for the moment, only with the fact of death. The motive would necessarily be greater with an illegitimate child if there was any motive at all.

Viscount Llandaff.

692. Surely the obvious motive is to get rid of it somehow, so as to put it out of sight; is it not more likely, therefore, to get into bad treatment and bad surroundings?—If it is to be killed I agree.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

693. Both Mr. Spencer and Mr. Babey have stated to us, that at least 95 per cent. of the children whom we have to protect are in their opinion illegitimate?—The majority put out for hire or reward would no doubt be illegitimate; but in the cases that come before me I

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cannot

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

cannot say that I have found lately any great distinction between those legitimate and those illegitimate.

Chairman.

694. Perhaps you misunderstood me. I meant this: Do you when you have inquests on bodies of children take special notice of those who have died under the care of baby farmers, whether registered or unregistered?—Yes, certainly.

695. Do you keep private memoranda of your own in connection with this subject?—Yes, I used to, because since 1890 I have had much fewer cases where I could have any suspicion. Before 1890 I certainly did find that there was a large majority of illegitimate children allowed to die, and I could not get an adequate cause.

696. But the legitimate children that die and upon which you have inquests and which may to a certain extent be said to have been put out for hire or reward are mostly, are they not, children of working people who put them out for the day or for a time while they go to work?—No, not many; my experience of late has been so different from what it was before 1890. Taking the class of cases which I was dealing with before 1890, at any rate so far as I can find out they are not now nearly so bad as they were then. I have not had a case in which I have had to make any severe comments about children put out to nurse since that; I have not found very much except stupidity since then; but in those cases before that Bill of 1890 when I gave my evidence I had grave causes to think that the cases that came before me were more the result of a bad motive.

697. But I thought you said you were more strongly of opinion than in 1890 of the necessity for the Act?—Yes, my experience has been varied since then; since then I have been Deputy Coroner in Middlesex for Dr. Diplock.

Lord Thring.

698. I understand you to say that since 1890 you have not met with many cases of children either legitimate or illegitimate?—In my district.

699. I am asking you what you know in your own district?—In my district; but I have held other appointments.

700. Is it the case that since 1890 you have not found children either legitimate or illegitimate ill-treated?—I have found them neglected, but ill-treated is a different term.

701. Neglected through ignorance?—Yes, and dirt and filth, that is if they live out with people who are utterly incapable or ought to be considered incapable of keeping them.

702. Did they treat the children worse than poor mothers would have treated their own children?—Yes; we see the difference in the people who have to take care of them. The poor respectable person is generally a great deal cleaner, but the ones put out to nurse are put out with people who ought to be the last to have charge of young children. There are two classes of cases that I am dealing with; the cases which are now registered, the class of people and houses, are the ones who take in for hire or

Lord Thring—continued.

reward more than one child over 12 months. Those I say I have very little to say about, because they are registered and inspected. The classes I want your Lordships to suggest in your recommendation are the single children who are put out one at a time, over whom there is no inspection, no supervision, and who are put out as I tell you with people that I have seen myself to be utterly incompetent, from all sorts of causes, physical cleanliness, and other causes, to have the care of one child; old women who are drunken, and those I have come across, and I always come across them, but I do not come across them very much in that class of cases that I did before; but I want to get the Act extended to the case of the single child who is put out for hire or reward. I think your Lordship did not quite understand why I was drawing the distinction.

Viscount Llandaff.

703. I have understood that since 1890 in your district there are not so many bad cases of any children at all?—I do not know. It was in the registered houses I was being asked about for the moment.

Chairman.

704. No. Were you referring to registered houses alone?—Yes, the registered houses; but then I am wanting to point out that it is the unregistered houses which take one child in that I am addressing myself to.

Viscount Llandaff.

705. But even taking those into the account, I understand there are not so many bad cases?—Not so many gross cases which have been found actually to be criminal.

706. You said that since 1890 you had not noticed so many bad cases?—I have not, not so many bad cases, but I have noticed bad cases.

707. Then things have got better?—So far as my knowledge goes.

Lord Thring.

708. Were any of the bad cases criminal?—No, they were not found criminal.

709. You mean to say that these poor women treated them as they would their own children, and that that treatment was not wise treatment; does it amount to more than that?—Yes, it does.

710. Did they treat their foster children worse than they would have treated their own?—Yes, certainly I think.

711. Why do you think so?—From the evidence before me.

712. Then why did not the jury find accordingly in their verdict?—Because there was not evidence to show it.

Chairman.

713. Have you sample cases to quote?—If you were coroner you would see the difficulty. I mean to say first of all the jury had to find the verdict. We are not committing magistrates; we are not in that position. At least the jury acquit, and it is not for me to say if the cases are criminal.

714. You

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

714. You mean to say that in some cases you thought it was criminal but the jury did not?—Yes, the jury did not find the verdict of manslaughter.

715. We are asking you whether or not, in the cases of children, you have met with any cases that were criminal?—I am not entitled to say that, but I have had my suspicions that the case ought to have been sent for trial.

Viscount Llandaff.

716. Did you point out your suspicions to the jury?—Yes; I pointed out to them that it was a question for them.

717. The jury disagreed with you?—They said that they thought it was an error of judgment; if you sent the case to the Old Bailey you find that the juries there come to the same opinion. I cannot answer more than what the juries find.

Lord Kinnaird.

718. What is the cause why you think they are not quite so bad; is it that the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act has helped to frighten bad parents?—I think it has had a great influence.

Chairman.

719. Do you find that there is much difference between districts?—Yes, an enormous amount.

720. When you say not in your district, were you in a different district before 1890?—No; but I was holding inquests in Dr. Diplock's district in 1892, for instance, and before that I was in a different district. I have been in 11 different districts.

721. Therefore you are not comparing the same district since 1890 with the same district before 1890?—No; I was speaking about my own district. With regard to Dr. Diplock's district in 1892 I found an enormous amount of baby farming absolutely and neglect too, in Willesden, Kilburn, Notting Hill, and those parts just there.

Viscount Llandaff.

722. How did you find that out?—By holding inquests.

723. As a deputy coroner?—Dr. Diplock was seriously ill, and I held the whole of his inquests.

724. I understand now. You meant to say that the improvement was in your district, and not in the other district?—Yes.

725. Then may we take it that in your district there has been an improvement since 1890?—Yes, there has been; but when I was in Dr. Diplock's district Mr. Babey had to come constantly to my court to investigate the matter there.

Lord Thring.

726. You cleared out the bad ones from your district and drove them into another?—You go to another district and find the same people there.

Chairman.

727. When you told us at the beginning of your evidence that you saw even greater necessity for the extension of the law than (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

existed then, you were speaking of your general experience?—General experience.

728. And not necessarily confined to your own district?—It was a general statement; and not only that, but as Secretary of the Coroners' Society such facts are constantly communicated to me, and I am more of that opinion for that reason. We have 207 members of the Coroners' Society, and they are constantly communicating the facts to me.

729. Now, about this section which you have dealt with in what I have marked as paragraph 7; "Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, which is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, is one of the most useful, as tending to minimise the evil called 'baby sweating,' where a child is handed over by some unknown person to be nursed, or for so-called adoption, and a lump sum is paid down. It would also check the practice of handing a baby from one person to another without any check; and where each such person gives it a different food?"—Section 3 of the Bill of 1896 is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, "where an infant is received by a person registered under the principal Act the person from whom the infant is received shall state truly, in writing signed by him, the name, sex, and age of the infant, and the place and time of its birth, and his own name and the place or places at which he has resided during the period of six months immediately preceding the statement." Sub-section (2) goes on to say that if an infant is removed from the care of a person registered the person removing the infant shall state truly in writing his own name, and so on.

Viscount Llandaff.

730. How do you propose to enforce that. A woman comes and gives her name as Mary Smith; how are you going to find out whether that is truly stated?—I had that objection raised. If a person is registered they would take some means for doing it.

731. What steps can they take?—Who is the person to whom you are alluding; the person who receives the infant or the person who brings it?

732. You say that the person who brings the child "shall state truly, in writing signed by him, the name, sex, and age of the infant, and the place and time of its birth, and his own name"?—You would be no worse off then than you are now.

733. What is the power to enforce it?—The person registered; they would take some means to ascertain.

734. The question is whether the person who delivered the infant has told a lie; how can you enforce it in suspicious cases, where a person hands over a 10l. note and disappears?—I did not draft this Bill. I would make a suggestion that the person who receives the child for hire or reward should make the best effort he can to ascertain where the child comes from.

735. What are the best methods?—Certainly it would not be receiving it at a railway platform; that is where most of these children are handed over with 10l., 20l., 30l. paid down, and the child is found in the River Thames.

736. The Bill does not forbid receiving it on a railway

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27 April 1866.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

railway platform?—Is not that a matter for your Lordships to assist the public in?

737. How do you suggest that the registered person receiving the child is to ascertain that the person from whom he receives that child is telling the truth?—How are you to say whether the person giving information as to the registration of birth is telling the truth; if you can find out who the person is you can punish him.

Chairman.] We are acting rather on a misunderstanding. Clause 3 that we were talking about says, "Where an infant is removed from the care of a person registered;" that has nothing to do with the person who brings the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

738. "The person from whom the infant is received shall state truly in writing"?—That is in Sub-section (1).

739. Suppose they cannot write?—The same thing applies to any Registration Act that is passed, unless you have got some means for punishing the person for making a false statement. You must have some sanction to the section, I grant you. There is a sanction in the Bill, but it is no more operative than the sanction in the Registration Act.

Chairman.

740. It comes to this, therefore, that it is desirable to check false statements; and if this clause is passed into law, and the person is found making a false statement, you would be able to punish him for so doing, whereas you now cannot?—That is so; there would be sanction for the making of that false statement.

741. What I want now to find out from you is with reference to this question of paying lump sums down for children. We are familiar, I think, with the evidence we have heard as to the practice of doing so, so you need not go into that now; but what I want to know is, have you any proposals for preventing lump sums being paid down? I think you make some remark about it in this letter; I want very much to know whether there is any feasible mode of preventing that?—I think at the end of the letter I mentioned that; that the proviso in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890 should be re-enacted so far as where any child is taken for hire or reward, that is, the reward to be a lump sum down, they must still be registered under the Act and with such particulars as they themselves know of.

742. Perhaps I had better leave that till we come on to that clause; I will ask you a question about that presently. Then the next paragraph of your letter is this: "The next section which calls for comment is Section 8 of the Bill of 1896, as to the interpretation of institutions established for the protection or care of infants. Personally, I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill, and though it does not appear to be so wide as the exceptions in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, yet it may open a means of evading the Act. The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs *b*, *c*, and *d* of the Bill of 1890." Would you mind

Chairman—continued.

telling us now what are your views as to the interpretation of "institutions"?—That is so difficult, I really do not know what to do; I can only state that my knowledge is the knowledge of most people.

743. You do not want to have any exceptions?—I would say broadly that if it were possible to have no exceptions, where people who form themselves into institutions or anything in the nature of a public body have the care of infants, even only whilst the mother is lying-in, they should come under inspection.

744. You are talking of lying-in hospitals as distinct from lying-in houses?—First of all, a *bonâ fide* institution; we are talking for the moment of what is *bonâ fide*, that they should keep a register, and that that should be open to inspection if wanted. I believe that most of the institutions do have such a register, so that it would be nothing more to ask them to keep it than they do voluntarily, but there are a great many institutions which we may call lying-in houses.

745. We will talk about lying-in houses presently?—The only definition that has been suggested was this, that the institution should be that which is composed of a certain number of registered persons.

746. May I ask whether you have come across what might be called boarding homes kept by people who obtained subscriptions, and then ran the concern as a means of profit?—I know as a matter of common knowledge that they have done so. One sees in the papers that they have been prosecuted for trying to do so.

747. You think there are some of these cases which call themselves institutions which would be very much better to be looked after, and under registration and supervision?—Certainly.

748. Have you come across any cases of that sort, when evidence has been given before you?—I have had my suspicions of one or two places.

749. You think there are such places?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

750. What is it you suspect?—That they are not *bonâ fide* carried on as institutions, but carried on for hire or profit; that they are not *bonâ fide* charitable institutions; that there is virtually no committee of management; that there is no one of the outside public knowing what goes on.

Lord Thring.

751. Are you saying that institutions which profess to be public are in fact private speculations?—Yes, and that there are other institutions which are professedly public or philanthropic, of which I have my suspicions, from circumstances that happen, that they are simply houses for the cloaking of crime and immorality.

752. What I mean is this, and it is quite a different thing. In the first place, a private institution for profit claims to be a public institution; that is of course wrong, that is false pretence; then what do you say then, that there are other private institutions that are immoral places?—I will not say they are private; they profess to be public by giving some grand name to them, but they are carried on merely for the profit of one or

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

or two people, and that they are first of all immoral institutions, or for the sake of getting people relieved of their immorality, and if necessary under the cloak or by means of crime.

Viscount Llandaff.

753. I hope that these institutions for immorality and crime, murder, in fact, are not numerous: could you put your finger on them?—I think I could. I am in communication with the inspector when I find any evidence of this sort of thing.

Chairman.

754. In the Bill of 1890, the only institution practically exempted was the Foundling Hospital, because it says here, "In the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants." I think that was the case of the Foundling Hospital only?—It would include the Royal Lying-in Hospital in York-road, and others.

755. "In the case of any infant received in an institution, established or maintained for the protection or care of infants, or for the care and treatment of persons suffering from disease or injury." Now do you consider that that exemption is too wide; do you think that any institution established or maintained for the protection or care of infants would include some of these undesirable places which ought to be looked after?—I think it is so, because it is only on their statement that it rests. There is no means of testing their *bona fides* that I can see.

756. Do you think it would meet the case if we defined an "institution" as being a public institution under the charge of a committee of six persons, six householders?—I should think all institutions might, at all events if public institutions are started, give notice to the local authority and establish their *bona fides*; if the local authority are satisfied of their *bona fides* there need be no other trouble at all unless complaints are made; there might then be given in the names of the requisite persons who might themselves vouch that it was an institution to be carried on for a legitimate purpose.

757. We know that there are many perfectly legitimate philanthropic societies and institutions which look after children and either board them out or take care of them in various ways which are well managed and which the promoters of this Bill do not wish you to interfere with?—I think that by that means you would prevent anything like an interference by simply saying, "Give notice to the local authority that this is going to be established for the care of infants"; and the local authority being satisfied that it is *bonâ fide* there would be nothing more than that probably. They might keep a register of the infants they took under their charge.

758. In other words, the people who start an institution ought to get a license from the local authority?—Not to be paid for, but as an authority showing that they were in a *bonâ fide*

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Chairman—continued.

condition to carry out the object. For instance, there are several medical men in a high class position who carry on lying-in houses and who take charge of the children; there would be no hardship in their having to say, "I am going to open a house for some of my patients who come up and wish me to attend them." The local authority would make a note of it, and be satisfied with the *bona fides* of the person.

759. Then with regard to the exceptions in (*b*) (*c*) and (*d*). "In the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants; nor (*b*) in the case of any infant received in an institution, established or maintained for the protection or care of infants, or for the care and treatment of persons suffering from disease or injury. (*c*) In the case of any infant received by any person under the provisions of any Act for the relief of the poor, or of any order of the Local Government Board made under such Act; nor (*d*) In the case of any infant received by any persons who have obtained the requisite authority of the Local Government Board to act as a boarding-out committee?"—That is what they say; they are already inspected, and under thorough supervision.

760. You do not want the Act to interfere with them?—No, I think I may say about that that it is only a question of interpretation of the meaning of the word "institutions" as regards these houses. I can see no objection to this.

761. You say here, "Personally I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill;" and then go on, "The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs (*b*) (*c*) and (*d*)"?—It would.

762. Therefore you do not want to exclude those children?—This is not written for your Committee. It is my opinion, so far as the Home Office asked me for it, of the two Bills; but anticipating opposition, and knowing what the feeling of a good many people would be, I merely would say that I personally should like to have no exception; but I can see no reason why these places where there is systematic inspection need be included. Now the children boarded out by the Poor Law are wonderfully well looked after, and the children do very well; one cannot ask for registration and inspection where it virtually exists under the Poor Law registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

763. Would you except that?—I would except that from the provisions of this Act if it were passed. I am trying to get some better Act passed, and I should not like by my suggestions unnecessarily to harass people.

764. You mean you would suggest by a perfect Bill to include children boarded out by a Poor Law committee?—As to those bodies of that description, I only say that there should be notice given, and a register kept of the children; no inspection after it; that is virtually done.

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765. Then

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

765. Then (a), (c), and (f); (a) deals with a child "received by its relatives or guardians, or in the case of an illegitimate infant by the persons who would be its relatives or guardians if the infant were legitimate"; you class those three together, and you say that you have carefully considered them, and you say "I cannot conceive any exceptions which could be more useful for the purpose of evading the provisions of the Act"?—That is my opinion, because it all depends upon what the people call themselves. What does a "guardian" mean there? It does not state what a "guardian" is.

766. Will you give the Committee some idea as to how you would define a guardian?—No; I do not know what a guardian means.

Lord Thring.

767. Guardian is as clear a term as father?—In my experience it is not among these people, and they would simply say, "I was a guardian of this child."

768. That is a question of evidence?—Then when you come to prosecute them the magistrates would have to say whether they acted reasonably.

Chairman.

769. Then with regard to the question of relatives, would you define the word relative?—I think it ought to be defined; I do not know what it means. I am dealing as a coroner with these terms.

770. I suppose, before a coroner, blood relationship is recognised?—But supposing it is by marriage?

Lord Kinnaird.

771. You are talking of the poorer classes?—I am talking of the class which come before me. If it is a dictionary term I can define it as an educated man; but when it comes before a magistrate, the magistrate may say, "this person did not intend to evade the Act." I think it is no use putting these terms in, therefore.

Chairman.

772. Have you then known, of your personal knowledge, cases of children taken away like that by people who called themselves simply relatives?—They will come and say, "Oh, yes, I am a relative; I am a friend of the mother."

Viscount Llandaff.

773. When you know they are not?—They do not tell me that till I come to make an inquiry, but the person they take the children to gets that answer.

Chairman.

774. You have come to the conclusion, in your experience as a coroner, that the word relative among these people is a very elastic term?—Yes, and if there is to be any punishment for this it is utterly useless not to define relative in some way or other.

Viscount Llandaff.

775. Have you ever known a case within the existing Act which talks about relatives, of a

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

person having two children, calling herself their relative and not being their relative?—Yes, a child put out to nurse about four months old.

776. That would not be a case within the Act; I am asking whether you have ever known a case of any person escaping from the existing Act by having two children, not from a relative, but from a person who called herself a relative?—There is a reported case in the Courts, and it occurred, I believe, under Mr. Drew's jurisdiction; Mr. Babey can tell you; but I may mention, by the bye, in Kilburn before he took that district, I have had such a case in which a woman had charge of a couple of children; one child was under the Act and the other was not, and she stated that that child was an adopted child. First she said she was the mother, and then I said, "Are you the real 'mother' or is it an adopted child," she said "it is an adopted child; I had a lump sum down."

777. I want to know whether anybody has been prosecuted under the existing Act for falsely calling herself a relative of children?—I cannot tell you. There is a case where one woman was prosecuted under the existing Act; I cannot tell you where it was.

778. The whole difficulty arises with the word relative in the existing Act; it is put in without definition, and I want to know whether that has created a difficulty?—Yes, that has created a difficulty. I read these cases in the different law reports, and that is how I become cognisant of them, by common repute. Mr. Babey, I believe, has the whole facts of that case.

Chairman.

779. With regard to (c) "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause." Now it is held by those who are responsible for this Bill that that Clause would open the door to such an immense amount of evasion as to render the Bill practically nugatory?—Certainly, I cannot conceive, if they were called upon to say why they have done this or that, any other result than that is a method by which they could evade the Act in every possible way.

780. Do you find that these people who take in children when they are tackled are pretty ingenious in making excuses?—They know probably more about the Act than I do myself, as to the way to evade it at any rate. If you look at the wording of that subsection, I cannot see how it does not leave the door open to all excuses as a legitimate answer to any charge brought under this Act.

781. Then (f) With regard to "an infant placed by a parent, reputed parent, or guardian," I think you have practically anticipated that already?—I do not know what a reputed parent means; I have never been able to understand what a reputed parent was.

782. It

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

782. It is in the Poor Law Acts?—But unfortunately the people who have to read this Act do not know the Poor Law Acts; a person would say "I was the reputed parent," the magistrate would say, "I cannot convict."

Chairman.

783. Then I come to this question of adoption on payment of a lump sum; you say here after stating your objection to these people who receive a lump sum down with a child, "Therefore I think that the word 'reward' should be interpreted in the new Bill in the terms of the proviso 2, Section 6 of the Bill of 1890 (viz.): 'Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of five years in consideration of an immediate payment shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section,' " what do you mean by "immediate payment;" do you mean that supposing I take a child to one of these people and I arrange with them to pay them either weekly or fortnightly or monthly, and supposing I want to evade the Act there is nothing to prevent my paying them 10*l.* there and then, and saying "I will make you a weekly payment of 5*s.* or 1*s.* hereafter," would that come under your head of an immediate payment?—Yes, I should call that an immediate payment, and then they would come under the exemption I presume either of reputed parent or they would stand in *loco parentis*.

784. If I went to the same person and said "I want you to take this child at a payment of 5*s.*" and I paid the first 5*s.* down, then would that be an immediate payment?—No, I mean where there is no further demand upon the person who pays the sum.

785. But it seems to me that your proposal would lead to as much evasion?—They would be bound to register then; they were able to evade it before.

786. I am perfectly well aware of the evils of this lump system; I want to get hold of some practical method of stopping it and insisting on weekly payments; it seems to me to be very difficult?—"Immediate payment" is not my wording, again, but it means, as I understand, that if a person wants to make an excuse to adopt that child, or have a lump sum paid for it, they are bound to be registered; I think that is what that proviso meant, that they shall not be allowed to plead any of the exemptions in the Act if they have received any payment for the child, whether one payment or a dozen.

787. Is there any means of proving what a person has received for a child?—They take a child, an inquiry is probably made; you have some means of finding out probably by whom that child is taken charge of.

Lord Thring.

788. How is it to be proved?—Is it a matter of questioning.

789. It is a matter of answering, it seems to me?—That applies to every other fact to be proved by evidence.

790. The question is whether there is any use in passing clauses about things for which you (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

cannot produce the evidence?—I think in most of the clauses that I am suggesting I could find out most of the evidence; I will not say in every case. I think if you were to pass these sections I should have a very good deal more power to be able to find out how some of these misdemeanours and crimes are carried out. It is because we have no power as coroners that we feel ourselves helpless, that we ask the legislature as a body to help the coroners who are trying to check what they know is in existence; and since the Committee met, a very awful object lesson has occurred, which I cannot help alluding to, at Reading; whoever is guilty of that: it is an object lesson. This is not only my feeling of course; it is the feeling of a good many juries that some endeavour should be made to meet it. I quite agree with your Lordship that there is a difficulty in the case in having a clause of a Bill or an Act that will have the desired effect.

791. I ask you as a man who has sat in a judicial position, you have got to find out whether a witness has been paid 50*l.*; if he has he has committed an offence; if he has not been paid 50*l.* he has committed no offence; do you believe that a witness would tell the truth and say he had received 50*l.*?—No, I do not; if I relied upon him alone I should not hold an inquest at all; I have sometimes 30 witnesses.

Viscount Llandaff.

792. But can any of the 30 know?—It is not a question even of one witness, you will find a lot of evidence in another way.

Chairman.

793. You make this statement here: "Where children have been more or less neglected I have always found that the nurses are fully aware that registration and inspection is not required by law where one child is kept, and therefore advantage is taken of this;" cases of that have come under your personal knowledge?—Constantly. Wherever the nurse child is a single child I say, "You were not registered," and they say, "Oh, no, I was not obliged to be."

794. And they keep only one child?—Only one child at the time, and it is mostly those that seem neglected; the single cases.

795. Those are the worst class of cases?—Yes, those are the worst class of cases.

796. Do you think, if they were forbidden to keep single children, they would move to some district where the Act was not administered or give up keeping children, or would they register?—They might do either of the three; but I think if they are fairly careful they would register. If they did not care one way or the other they would either give it up or move; but I think the advantage would be if it were known that persons were registered, it would be a sort of character to them; that they were decent people and known as such to the local authorities, and it would be an inducement to respectable people to take children. Now it is not an inducement to respectable people because they are afraid of being called baby farmers.

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797. An

27 April 1896.]

Mr. Hicks.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

797. An immense number of those with whom children are boarded out never came for any certificate of respectability, and they do not want it?—It is not what they want; it is what the public want. I do not think myself that registration would have any bad effect upon the boarding out of these children.

Chairman.

798. With regard to the question of lying-in houses you write a letter here for the Coroners' Society, in which you go rather into a more extensive question, the question of registration of births?—Yes, that includes a very wide subject.

799. I do not think we can quite take it up in the Bill; and also the question of still-births; and you make certain recommendations, but what we want to know is this (I do not think there is any doubt about it); is it the fact that these lying-in houses furnish a considerable number of children for the professional baby farmer, and that these children are not accounted for afterwards; and may I take it that it is your carefully formed opinion that there exists a considerable number of the worst class of lying-in houses which do this?—Yes.

800. And which you strongly recommend should be placed under supervision?—Yes, certainly.

801. How would you distinguish that class of lying-in houses from the private hospitals which are kept by some of the leading doctors of London, and from what I may call lodging houses where people come up from the country, and which are kept in a perfectly legitimate way?—I say then on the same principle as I said before, give notice to the authority and a proof of *bona fides*, and that would be the end of it.

802. How would you define it though, as a legal man?—I should distinguish between *bona fide* houses, first of all—

803. Would you distinguish between a house which was guaranteed by a qualified medical practitioner; do you think that would be sufficient?—It ought to be sufficient.

804. I suppose doctors are sometimes called into these, what I may call "shady" houses?—I should not say it was sufficient, if you ask me. It depends upon the class of medical practitioner.

805. Therefore the guarantee by a qualified medical practitioner would be practically no guarantee at all?—Not at all.

806. Can you suggest any other?—That they should submit the names of the people who are going to keep the house, and that a proper register should be kept.

807. Ought these houses to be inspected?—I think so.

808. And a register kept of every child born in them?—Yes.

809. Apart from the general registration outside by the registrar of births and deaths?—Yes; they do keep them themselves in the *bona fide* establishments, but I still think that there should be a registration all round for people who undertake the care of sick children and children of tender years.

Chairman—continued.

810. Do you think there would be great objection on the part of the medical profession?—Very likely; and you would find it among the class just now referred to.

811. I am not talking of them; I mean the better ones?—No; I think a doctor would sooner have a patient up to a house that was looked after properly than he would have a person to a house he had no means of knowing to be fit.

812. A doctor having any respect for himself would hardly recommend a person to a house not respectable and fit?—That is so; but in cases of emergency he would have nowhere to send a person to. A person goes to a house advertised, and says, "Would you see me there," and he finds that the sanitary arrangements are wrong.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

813. Do you agree, speaking generally, that 95 per cent. of the children whom we have got to protect are illegitimate; I do not mean that those are the exact figures?—I should say the large majority are. I should not say as much as 95 per cent.; from my experience I should say it was about 60 per cent.

814. Then do I understand that you suggest that there might be some mode of registration rather less irritating, less detailed I will say, than the present mode. You spoke just now of intimating it to the local authority; you suggested that there might be something less onerous than the present rather elaborate system of registration?—I think at first that the same preliminaries ought to start; that there should be an inspection to see that the matter is so far *bona fide*, but then, after that, if the local authority was satisfied, they need not insist on inspection so often; I think there should be some preliminary inquiry as to whether the place was fit to be carried on at all under those conditions.

815. Why do you think it is that there are so few registered houses in London now for the care of children; why are there so few, if, as we have been told, it is so profitable a trade?—I think now that they do not get registered; they still have more children out than before, but they take only one child at a time, and so they do not have to register; they have found that out. Now you can take a single child; that is the reason that they only take one at the time.

816. But your opinion is that, in the event of such a Bill being passed as we have here, making it necessary to register for one child only, a very large number of persons would immediately apply to be registered?—I think the majority of them would if they had to do it, but if they have not got to do it they would not come and tell you they want to be registered.

817. Have you any means of forming a general opinion, not in detail, as to how numerous these lying-in houses are in London; we were told this morning, that in the opinion of some of those before us, there are only 67 in London who advertise?—I cannot give an answer to that.

818. But you would think that 67 was not all?—I should think there are a lot more; I think you alluded to only those who advertise; I believe every midwife, who calls herself a mid-

wife.

27 April 1896.]

Mr. Hicks.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

wife, has two or three rooms for lying-in women, independently of any advertisement at all; in fact I know a great many of them have.

Lord Kinnaird.

819. Are midwives registered?—No, they are not registered yet.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

820. Do you consider that it is an unusual thing for a respectable parent to desire temporarily to put a child out for a week or two for payment?—No, not at all unusual.

821. Then do you consider that there would be an additional difficulty caused to such parents if they could not send out their child except to a registered house?—There might be some difficulty at first.

822. The kind of thing that suggests itself is this: a mother has to go into hospital for a few weeks; a neighbour takes the child for half-a-crown a week; would you say that that neighbour having to be registered would not cause serious difficulties to the working classes?—I do not think so, if they knew that all they would have to do is to let the police know of it.

823. Do you not think that that process of going to the police station would be a great difficulty in their minds?—No, I do not think so. Whenever a baby is ill, and they cannot find a doctor, they always go to the police, and do not hesitate to go there.

824. Then your opinion is that it would not be felt a hardship by the working class that a baby put out for a week or two would have to be

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

registered?—They would have to give notice, but the registration need not be so elaborate if it was sufficient that the person temporarily taking charge of the child was to give notice to the police, who might inform the local authority that such a child was there. They could easily find out that it was only a temporary arrangement.

825. Then would you consider that notice was necessary if a woman was going away for two nights; the Bill says 24 hours; the woman is going away to see her mother or sister, we will say, only for two nights, and a neighbour takes the child; or would you say that is an offence under the Act?—I should not like to say that; but I think something should be put in the Act which should make the definitions different; that is the difficulty I mean. There are cases in which things should be defined better.

Viscount Llandaff.

826. You have objections to the exemption that covers the very case his Lordship has put to you?—It is so wide.

827. "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home"?—But "necessary absence" would be so wide, you might put something to show what a "necessary absence" would be; it is all a matter of definition.

828. Do you think it is necessary to define "necessary"?—That is for the magistrate; I certainly think that that exemption is a bad one.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Thursday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 30° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. ATHELSTAN BRAXTON HICKS, having been called in; is further Examined,
as follows:

Chairman.

829. I THINK we ascertained your opinions pretty fully the other day; is there anything further that you wish to add that has occurred to you since, that you can put shortly?—Yes, there is. I was not prepared to discuss so much the detail of the Bill on the last occasion, not having had to do with the drafting of it; but with regard to some questions asked me which showed that there was some difficulty in the minds of the Committee as to how the notice made to the local authority of the receipt of a child could be quickly and easily given, I may say that it struck me that the local authority in the country might be a long way off, and there would be some difficulty in giving the proper notice, or in knowing to whom to give it. I have therefore suggested certain amendments to the Bill, a copy of which I have given to your Lordship. They are as follows: “(1.) Any person who shall receive any child under the age of five years for hire or reward shall be registered in accordance with the provisions of this Act; that is to say: (a.) On receipt of such child by any person, notice of such receipt shall immediately be sent to the police, who shall at once send notice thereof to the local authority under this Act. (b.) That on receipt of such notice the local authority shall order the inspector to make inspection of the premises, and ascertain the particulars necessary for registration. (c.) The local authority shall then decide if the circumstances are sufficient to justify the house being registered. (2.) No person shall be held to contravene the provisions of this Act if he or she shall have given notice to the police of the district within 12 hours after receiving any child, that he or she has taken charge of such child for the purpose of nursing for hire or reward. (3.) Any person not a parent who shall have taken charge of any child or children under the age of five years for hire or reward shall not allow any such child to be removed from his or her care to be taken charge of by another person not a parent for hire or reward unless he or she has given notice to the local authority of such (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

intended removal, of the name and address of such child, and the person and place where it is purposed to be removed; and such local authority shall enter such particulars in the register. And where a child is removed from the jurisdiction of one local authority to that of another, notice of such removal shall be sent by the authority from whose district the child was removed, to the local authority into whose district the said child has been removed, and that such latter authority shall then make the necessary inquiries and inspection, which are required under this Act for the purposes of registration of the premises.”

830. Those are suggestions?—Those are merely suggestions. I am not a draughtsman myself. There is a great difficulty, when children are removed, in knowing where they are removed to, and the local authority would have no knowledge that the child had been removed into their district unless the person chose voluntarily to give notice to them. The local authority who had registered the child would, if this suggestion were adopted, have to give notice to the other local authority, and so put them on their guard, so to say, and it seems to me that the giving of notice to the police would save all the trouble and a good deal of the inconvenience that might be felt in having to register where one child is taken care of.

831. You do not mean that necessarily the police of the district should have the administration of the Act?—Not necessarily, unless the local authority give it to them. If the police had to act they would be able to give the local authorities the particulars necessary; but if a local authority had certain inspectors as in the county of London, and I believe in some other districts, then on receiving notice from the police that the child has been brought into their district for nursing, they would be able to send their inspector and ascertain all that was necessary for registration purposes, and the advantage of that, of course, would be that the people would be able easily to get at the police;

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whereas

30 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

whereas there would be a great deal of difficulty, perhaps, in getting at the county authority.

832. I want to ask you one question on another subject: many people contend that these cases of what are known as baby-farming are police cases, and that if the police did their duty properly there ought to be no need for any extension of the Act. Do you agree with that?—I do not agree with that; I agree with the view that the Act absolutely wants extending to the case of one child only.

833. Other people again say that they are not really police cases, and that the Act is necessary, because it is very difficult to prove actual murder and actual crime, in a large number of these cases, after the child is dead; is that your experience as a coroner?—To what age do you wish to limit it, may I ask?

834. I am not speaking necessarily to the question of age; but is it your experience as a coroner that in the inquiries that take place into the death of some of these children, which may have taken place under suspicious circumstances, it is extremely hard to prove actual crime?—Yes.

835. Intent to kill?—Almost impossible.

836. Therefore, you think the best way of preventing that is to go to the root of the matter and try and obtain a proper supervision of the children while they are alive?—That is what I do think; that seems to me the only chance of detecting them. You cannot discover crime, though you may suspect it, and people somewhat reckon upon that.

837. Then another thing: inasmuch as it is generally the worst class of baby-farmers that treat children in the way you wish to put a stop to, some people raise the argument that if registration were extended these people would simply not register?—The bad ones, do you mean; then you can punish them, because, as a rule, you can find them.

838. You think you can find them out?—I think, with the proper carrying out of the present Bill thoroughly, you would very soon find out who were the bad ones and who were the good, and if they were registered or if they were not. I may mention with regard to the removal of children, which is an important point also, that on referring to my letter-book I find that in October 1888 I held an inquest on a child, and Mrs. Arnold turned up in connection with that case, and I wrote then to the Home Secretary, for the time being, a long letter on the subject explaining the whole facts of the case. Of course, the Bill of 1890 was introduced afterwards. Whether the case I allude to, and others besides, had any bearing upon that Bill of 1890 I cannot say, but it showed that it was hardly possible to find a trace of these children without an inquiry such as the coroners hold.

Viscount Llandaff.

839. You say that if the Act was extended, as proposed by the Bill, you could find out the bad baby-farmers who did not register?—Yes.

840. How?—I should not be able to; but the police would from neighbours; they would very soon find out.

841. Then what prevents them now from

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

finding out cases?—Because the one child now is not looked after by anybody. They know they need not look after the single child who is taken for hire or reward, and therefore it is only where there is an aggregation of children in one place that they need register, and they may more easily be found out than the one single child.

Lord Thring.

842. I do not quite follow you there; why should it be more easy for the police, if the Act is extended, to find out that a child is kept in an unregistered house, than to find out at the present moment that a child is murdered or likely to be murdered?—At present there is no law to put in motion, therefore the police do not trouble themselves probably to carry out duties that are not forced upon them by statute.

843. Surely it is the duty of the police to find out every case in which they think a child is likely to be murdered?—If they think it is likely to be, but how can they tell that; they cannot go and inquire at every house and ask if they have a child. But you can very soon ascertain from surrounding neighbours that a child has been taken in, and make inquiry. The police would have the power under the present Bill to make that inquiry and report to the authorities.

844. Here is one general question: can you give us any idea, taking London, what number of children would come under the Act, first if you did not increase the age, but simply took the case of single children?—I could not tell you anything as to the number.

845. You could not state it approximately even?—No, I should not like to profess to do so.

846. Nor could you say what would be the effect of extending the age with regard to the number?—That would mean increased work, of course.

847. But you do not know the magnitude of it at all?—No, I think not.

848. You cannot tell us, nor can anybody tell us the number of children that would probably be affected, or as to what is the percentage of children that would come within the Act, as compared with the whole number of children that are born?—I should think that Mr. Babey would be able to give you an approximation to that better than I could.

849. I suppose it is admitted that hand-fed children run a much greater risk of dying than children fed in the natural way at the breast?—That is so; and wherever I find that a single child has been fed by the bottle, as it, of course, has to be (they call them bottle babies), I always, if it is under twelvemonths, begin from the birth of that child, and from all the witnesses who had care of that child from the birth ascertain how that child has been fed. The result of that has been to show that in one case five people had charge of a child under twelvemonths, and they had each fed it differently. It would be impossible for me to say if there was any intent in that case.

850. But I may take it from you that the bottle-fed babies are much more liable, however carefully tended, to die than those fed naturally?—Tha

30 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

—That is so; and, therefore, the bottle-fed baby requires more supervision from some one in authority.

851. And these foster children are almost all bottle-fed?—Yes; I have never known a wet-nurse to nurse the child.

852. The people who take them never nurse them themselves?—No, never.

Chairman.

853. In your practice, as a coroner, I presume in the course of your inquiries how infants have died, you have come across cases of these single

Chairman—continued.

children that are being kept for hire or reward?—Constantly.

854. Where the people who have kept them have openly flouted the inspector and defied him to a certain extent?—Yes, they have laughed at me when I have said, "Are you registered under the Act?" (That is what I generally have asked.) "Oh no, sir, we are not obliged to be," they have answered, and have laughed at me as much as to say, "I have got the better of the Act anyway."

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. E. DE M. RUDOLF, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

855. You are the Secretary of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, I believe?—I am.

856. How long have you occupied that position?—From the formation of the society; in fact I am described as the founder in the articles of association.

857. How many years ago is that?—Fifteen years.

858. What is the object of that society?—To provide homes in several ways for destitute children of all ages and both sexes, from infancy upwards.

Lord Thring.

859. Under one year included?—Yes, from six weeks old we have taken children.

Chairman.

860. How many children are under its care now?—At present about 2,300.

861. What are the society's methods for providing homes for the children?—In the case of the very young children we board them out with foster parents.

862. What do you call "very young"?—Up to the age of about seven; from seven years of age till 13 we put them into small homes; and over that age into larger homes where they can learn industrial occupations. Then we emigrate a certain proportion of the children whom it is desired to remove from their old surroundings, send them to Canada to our homes there.

863. And what are your methods in providing the foster parents; the homes for the younger children; that is what we are more concerned with?—In the first place we have a form of recommendation which has to be signed by the clergyman of the parish, and examined or reported upon by a lady referee. I hand in a copy of the form which contains a series of questions, for instance: The name of the foster parent and address? How far distant from the residence of the proposed supervisor? Is the foster mother a member of the Church of England? What is the occupation of the foster parent's family? What is the income of the family, and from what sources? Of whom does the family consist? Number of children in (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

charge of, or belonging to and living in the family? How many rooms in the house? Are there any lodgers? What provisions will be made for sleeping of child, as to bed and room? Name and distance of proposed day and Sunday schools? What payment per week will be required. (*The form is handed in.*) That is the initial stage. Anybody wishing a child to be placed out with a foster parent has to fill up a form of recommendation on the part of the foster parent in the first instance. If that is favourably considered, and it is decided to send a child to a foster parent, she is supplied with a copy of the regulations to be observed (which I hand in), and a child is sent down, when she is required to fill in a "Form of undertaking by the foster parent" (which I also hand in); that is to say, to bring up the child as one of her own children, to provide it with proper food, lodging, and washing, and provide for the proper repair and renewal of clothing, and so on; and, in fact, to comply with this paper of regulations which I have handed in. Then another form is signed by the foster parent acknowledging that she has received such and such a child. The child having been placed with the foster parent, is reported upon periodically by the supervisor, who is resident in the district, either a lady or a clergyman; and besides that we have a lady inspectress who works from headquarters and visits the children without giving previous notice of her visits. She is a lady doctor, and she reports to headquarters direct; so that we have two inspections; one a continual inspection on the spot by the supervisor, and an occasional inspection by an expert. We have something like 700 children boarded out under those conditions at the present time; and we never have found a single instance of wilful neglect on the part of any foster parent who has complied with our conditions.

Lord Belper.

864. Are the children all placed out singly or two or three together?—Not more than two are allowed to be placed in any one home, excepting in the case of brothers and sisters. Then the number, if there is accommodation, can be increased to four.

H 2

865. What

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

865. What number did you say you have?—About 700 altogether boarded-out.

866. Are you acquainted with the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Bill of 1896?—I have read them through.

867. What is your opinion of the Bill?—Without going into details of the working of the measure, I think it is very desirable, in order to place further restrictions on the practice of baby-farming by irresponsible persons; of course, assuming that such a society as the Waifs and Strays Society does not come within the operation of the Bill.

868. I think I may say on behalf of the Committee that there is no desire on their part to interfere with the good work carried on by a society such as yours?—I understood that.

869. Have you got any special reason for further approving of the proposed extension of the Act? The two principal points are extending the Act to one child and raising the age to five years?—I think both provisions are most desirable. One argument which appeals to me very much in favour of the Bill is the indirect result it will have in checking immorality. For instance, in the course of my work we have frequent applications from persons who have undertaken the charge of an illegitimate child of, we will say, a servant girl. The servant girl having succeeded in disposing of her child in that way has disappeared; having promised to keep up a payment she pays for a few weeks, and then leaves the neighbourhood altogether. If the Bill would result in making it more difficult to dispose of such illegitimate children, I think the indirect result will be good upon the community generally.

Lord Thring.

870. What do you mean by "dispose of"; I do not follow?—A servant girl has an illegitimate child; she persuades some woman to take charge of this child under a promise of paying so much out of her wages; it is very easy for her, after paying it for a month or two, to leave her situation and seek a situation in some other part of the country, thus leaving the child in the hands of the foster parent.

871. I want to know how this Act, whether extended or not, prevents that. I suppose the child goes to the workhouse, as a matter of fact, in such a case as that?—The child might or might not; in some cases boards of guardians have refused to receive children from foster-parents who have accepted them under a promise of payment.

872. They must receive them, must they not?—It is a question for the guardians; they differ in their practice.

873. I want to know how the existing Act, or any extension of the Act, would prevent or assist in preventing cases of that sort; I do not follow?—If it were known, as I suppose it would be known, that it is necessary for a person to be registered and inspected even if she were to take one child, it would deter a great many women from taking these children in who take them in at present. The child would be placed by the servant at once in the workhouse; she would go there at once.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

874. And take the child with her?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

875. And be ruined for life, perhaps?—Hardly ruined for life. It would be a lesson for the girl.

Lord Thring.

876. You know that a good many servants have children of which the masters and mistresses know nothing, and it is not discovered till years afterwards; the servant had one child, she put that child out; that child was kept alive, and nothing wrong was done with it. Would it not be a very strong inducement to put away a child if a servant, in such a case, could not get rid of it quietly?—My own society provides for taking illegitimate children from servants where there is a reasonable prospect of amendment. In a first case they would always take an illegitimate child on the promise of the payment of part of the girl's salary, under the guarantee of some responsible person.

877. Without disclosing the name?—Without making it public. We should know it ourselves, of course.

Chairman.

878. That is the general practice of your society in providing homes for illegitimate children?—Yes, to require a promise of amendment on the part of the mother, and a promise of payment out of her earnings so that she may recognise her responsibility.

879. Do you act on the principle of the Foundling Hospital and only take what I may call first cases?—We only take first cases.

880. And what class are the parents mostly?—Illegitimate children are chiefly children of servant girls who have either been betrayed under promise of marriage or something of that sort.

881. You have told us how the society selects the foster parents; did you tell us the conditions under which it boarded-out children?—I have handed in a paper of conditions.

Lord Thring.

882. Did I rightly understand in your conditions that when a child is sent somebody recommends it; you do not send it out till somebody recommends the child?—Our cases generally come through the clergy of the National Church throughout the country. They act as rescue officers really.

883. Is it then confined to the Church of England?—In so far as this, that we only appeal to members of the church, and bring up all the children in the doctrines of the Church of England; but we take all children, except Jews and Roman Catholics.

884. But does the clergyman who recommends them pay anything?—If he can; but we take many free cases. I suppose half the number of the children we have in our charge are absolutely free; children for whom we have no payment whatever.

Chairman.

885. Are you satisfied from your experience that the society's methods in boarding out secure

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

secure proper care of the children?—Quite; we have had no instance of any case of wilful neglect. Sometimes there has been an overlooking of our regulations as regards sleeping two children in one bed, and so on, but nothing wilfully wrong.

886. Are you of opinion that registration as such would put a stop to some of the evils which we wish to attack under this Bill?—I see one difficulty, and that is how to discover the existence of the single children who are boarded out. If, as I suppose, the Bill is to apply to children up to five years of age, the census would probably help in the matter; you could get information through the census, I suppose, that a child is merely being boarded with a certain person and does not belong to that person. The difficulty in carrying out the working of this would be to discover the houses where the children are placed.

887. But if a person had a single child belonging to somebody else, and was deliberately keeping it secret for the purpose of not registering it, they would hardly be likely to put it down in the census, would they; they would be more likely to put it down as their own?—Then they would make a misstatement, and be under a penalty; there is a penalty for making a wrong statement in the census paper. Then the School Board, for instance, would be able to help. Supposing a child is attending a school under another name than that of the person with whom she is residing, I think it should be reported at once.

888. Is it not the case when these children are given out that one of the points that the parents make is that all identity should be lost, and all the names absolutely sunk?—That is not so in our case; not in the case of my society; I presume that it would be so in some cases.

889. You have no experience of the machinations of the ordinary baby farmer?—No, none whatever.

890. You have not come across them in your inquiries in finding homes?—We have always had the name of the mother given to us; the name of the child is represented to us as the name of its mother always.

891. Then, as a rule, you have found great advantage accruing to the children from the fact of the careful supervision?—Yes.

892. Are you, therefore, of opinion that these children, who are now put out singly, and who are not looked after because they do not come under the Act, would benefit by the supervision which would be provided by registration?—No doubt; I feel sure they would.

Lord Belper.

893. Is the operation of your society confined to London, or to any particular district?—It extends to the whole of England and Wales.

894. Are there a large number of those 700 children, you spoke of, in London?—No, out of London; we board them out entirely in the country.

895. And you are very careful, of course, as to getting information as to the respectability of the houses into which you put them?—We are.

(0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

896. That is much easier to do in the country than it would in London?—Yes.

897. Do you suppose that there would be any objection raised by the people with whom you board out these children to having their houses registered as places for taking in children?—I think there would be a strong objection, both on the part of the foster parents and the supervisors.

898. The foster parents, you mean, with whom you place them?—Yes; and also the supervisors.

899. I understand you think there would be a strong objection?—A strong objection on the part of the foster parent and the supervisor.

900. Whom do you call the supervisor?—The supervisor would either be the clergyman of the parish or some responsible lady in the district near enough to the house to pay frequent visits.

901. And speaking generally, from your knowledge, you think that persons in respectable houses of that character where you place them would object to their being registered as houses where children were taken in?—I have reason to think so.

902. Do you imagine that under this Bill these houses would not be obliged to register?—Yes; I have read the Bill to consider its application to the operations of a society such as the Waifs and Strays Society, and I should imagine that, under Clause 8, the Waifs and Strays Society would be exempt entirely.

903. Clause 8 is the interpretation clause, where the expression "Institutions" is interpreted?—Yes.

904. And then, with regard to that, you would have to refer to the principal Act?—Yes; but reading the clause with the principal Act, I think the Waifs and Strays Society would be exempt.

905. I do not express an opinion about that myself, but I point out to you that the question is whether an institution being excepted from the effect of the Act would mean any child put out in a house by that institution. I should have thought that it would mean children kept within the institution itself, and that it would not mean the houses to which these 700 children were put out by the institution; what is your opinion on that?—But the interpretation reads: "shall mean societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons." I claim that "the Waifs and Strays Society is organised for some public or social object," and that we have "a committee of not less than six persons."

906. But you must read it with the 13th section of the principal Act: "The provisions of this Act shall not extend to the relatives or guardians of any infant retained or received as aforesaid, nor to institutions established for the protection or care of infants." Now, is not an institution established "for the protection or care of infants," an institution where the infants are protected and cared for within the walls of the institution itself?—But the interpretation says that it means "societies organised for some

H 3

public

[30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

public or social object," and I say that we are a society within the definition.

Lord Thring.

907. The foster parent is not?—The foster parent receives the child, and we are ourselves responsible for the child.

Lord Belper.

908. At all events, in giving the evidence you have given, you believe that you are excepted from the Bill?—I do.

909. And if you were not excepted from the Bill you would not like it to remain in its present form?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

910. You approve of the Bill, speaking generally, I understand, provided that sufficient care were taken to exempt such societies as yours?—I do; speaking generally, I approve of the Bill entirely.

911. Have you considered the question of whether the provisions of the Bill, if it became law, would press hardly upon respectable people who desire to take in a child for a neighbour; has that come under your notice?—It might in some cases. I am thinking now of women who go out to work, we will say by the week; they want somebody to mind their children. It would be rather hard upon respectable widows, perhaps; but those cases would be comparatively few compared with the large number of children who are placed out with irresponsible persons, by servant girls and others.

912. Do you think that the provisions of the Bill make that possible hardship unimportant as compared with the general good?—Yes, I think so.

913. You mention those cases, but what about the very numerous cases, one would have thought, of a mother who goes away three or four days and asks a neighbour to take a child for a shilling or two in the interval. Such cases are occurring almost every day of the week in London?—I should have thought it would be easy for a woman who goes away to make an arrangement with a relative. Of course it is difficult to arrive at the number of such cases.

914. Of course it is; but what we want is, as I understand, that those gentlemen who have a large experience in dealing with the arrangements for keeping children away from their parents, should tell us whether or not they would think the hardship sufficient to prevent us from passing such an Act?—Well, in my opinion, the hardship would not be sufficient to prevent passing this Bill.

915. Have you ever boarded children in houses that were registered?—Never.

916. That is to say, you have never sent two children under one year of age to one house?—No.

917. Not even a brother and sister; they would be twins, of course?—No.

918. In short, you have no experience of registered houses at all?—Well, we had a registered home at one time. It was established

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

by the present Lady Derby, and was handed over to the society when her husband became Governor General of Canada. It had been registered before it was transferred to the society; but we came to the conclusion that it was not the best way in which to care for infants, massing them together in one institution; so we dispersed the home and boarded the children out singly. We soon altered the way of dealing with the children. The rate of mortality was rather high, and we thought we would lower it by dispersing the children and boarding them out; and I think we did.

919. There is no question that the rate of mortality is higher when many children of tender age are together?—Yes, very young children.

920. How much do you pay to foster parents for care of children?—We pay 5s. per week.

921. Do you find that adequate in all cases?—Yes, in all ordinary cases. Feeble-minded children, those requiring special care, we have to pay more for.

922. Do you know what the payment made by the Foundling Hospital is?—I do not.

923. It used to be 6s. a week; I do not know what it is now, but you find 5s. adequate?—Five shillings; and I think that is the rate sanctioned practically by the Local Government Board for boards of guardians.

924. Then do you consider that the foster parent makes some profit by taking them for 5s. a week?—Yes, the foster parents would make in the country districts nearly 1s. a week, in town districts or suburbs of town they would make something less, perhaps 6d. a week.

925. There is a large demand, I suppose, for your children; I mean you would have no difficulty in boarding out twice as many?—No difficulty whatever. We have a large number of properly-recommended foster parents on our books, waiting for children.

926. Do you consider that the mother of an illegitimate child ought to find any difficulty in discovering, supposing she wishes to do all that is right, a place where she can respectably board her child under present circumstances?—I do not think that she ought to have any difficulty if she were to come to a society such as ours. The Waifs and Strays Society would always listen to an application from the mother of an illegitimate child.

927. And would endeavour to find for her a proper home?—A proper home for her child under the conditions I have mentioned. They are contained in a printed letter, which I will hand in. The conditions are that it must be the first child, and that 4s. a week should be paid, guaranteed by some proper person, mistress or somebody else; and that there is good promise of amendment on the part of the mother. The society would then pay the extra shilling.

928. Then in the case of any mother who desires, under proper circumstance, to have a child taken care of, and is prepared to guarantee the 4s. a week, you are prepared to find the home for the child?—Yes, find the home for the child, and pay 5s.

Lord Thring.

929. I want to draw your attention to this: You

[30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

You tell us, and no doubt rightly, that your foster parents are almost invariably kind?—They are.

930. And you also tell us that they would almost invariably object to be registered?—I assume that they would from the fact that they would object to two inspections.

931. But you tell us that the foster parents who are of the best class, would object to be registered, and also that the ladies who superintend it would also object to the registration as supervisors?—That is so.

932. You admit, and I fancy it is generally admitted, that the accumulation of these poor little things in any one house, whether they are well-kept or less properly kept, increases the mortality?—I believe so.

933. Has not registration a double aspect; if there were great difficulty in distributing the children in separate houses owing to the requirement of registration, the effect would be to accumulate in the registered houses a greater number of children?—I do not know that this Bill contemplates the aggregation of children; that is to say, more than we will say just a reasonable number, say two or three at the outside in any one cottage.

934. I do not see that either in the Act or in the Bill there is any limit on the number of children that may be aggregated in a particular establishment if the establishment is found to be large enough for them?—There is no limit in the Act.

935. Is not that rather an unfortunate feature, because it seems to stand to reason that it would be very unadvisable to pass any legislation which would tend to the accumulation of children in one establishment, however well kept?—I think it would. The difficulty in having a large number of infants in one establishment is this: that the children would not get that individual care and attention that they would get if they were placed out singly with respectable women. For instance, in the small house that I was alluding to recently, there was a staff I think of four matrons to deal with 20 children; therefore supposing that four of those children were in trouble with fits or something during the night, those four matrons would be fully employed, and the 16 other children would have to get on as best they could.

936. I want to get your opinion; as you know, on other occasions we have had evidence that accumulating children together in large masses at any age was a very unfortunate way of bringing them up?—I quite agree with that.

937. It seems to me that in proportion as you discourage the distribution of children in separate houses, in the same degree you tend to accumulate them in houses where considerable numbers would be maintained; that seems to me a misfortune?—It is a misfortune. It would rather have this effect, to send the applicants to a responsible society such as the Waifs and Strays Society, where the children would be placed out under proper supervision and conditions. It would have that effect as well as the aggregation of children in large homes.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

938. You say that both the foster parents and the supervisors would object to registration; would they still more strongly object to any interference by the police?—They would.

939. And if notice to the police were required of them it would be highly objectionable to them?—Yes.

940. Any respectable foster parent would resent it?—Yes.

941. You said that you had one registered home handed over to you by Lady Derby?—Yes.

942. Where was that Home?—In the north of London.

943. How many children were there in it?—I think 16 to 20.

944. Was it registered under the Act?—It was registered.

945. And inspected, I suppose, by Mr. Babey?—I do not know; it is some years ago. It was before Lord Stanley of Preston was Governor of Canada.

946. Lord Stanley of Preston went to Canada in 1887?—Yes; it must be nine or ten years ago.

947. Do you remember about how many children there were then?—I think some 16 or 20 infants.

948. And you found that the mortality was high?—The mortality was very high.

949. And when that happened you broke the Home up?—Yes.

950. Do you remember whether the inspector visited it?—Not to my knowledge; he may have done; I should not know, perhaps.

951. I gather from you that you never have registered any of your foster parents, even though they had more than one child?—No; we have never placed out more than one under the age of 12 months with any single foster parent; that is to say, we have taken care not to bring ourselves under the Act.

952. What particular reason have you for avoiding the Act?—Simply because we find that a young child under the age of 12 months is as much as any one person can properly care for.

953. I thought you said you had taken care not to bring yourselves within the Act?—We have not troubled ourselves with the Act, but we have done that out of regard to the children, that is to say, we are so careful to see that our children are properly cared for, that we have never placed out more than one child under 12 months with one foster parent; and so we have never brought ourselves under the Act.

954. You want to encourage single boarding-out of children?—Yes, of very young children.

955. And if you hampered the boarding-out by registration you would rather move in the direction of more than one child being taken; you would make anybody who takes the trouble to register at all take the trouble to do more than that?—I am not sure that the society would do that.

956. I do not say your society?—As a matter of convenience it would be best, of course, for more than one child to be taken in.

957. For the convenience of the foster parent, you mean?—And the convenience of inspection and registration.

H 4

958. Not

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

958. Not for the convenience of the child?—
Not for the convenience of the child.

Lord Belper.

959. I understand that you think it very desirable that there should be only one child in these houses at a very young age, and you also think that the respectable people would object to being registered?—Yes.

960. The natural effect of those two opinions is, that single children would have to go and be kept by people who are not respectable?—I am referring not to respectable people; I am referring to the society's foster parents. The original question, I think, was whether the foster parents under the society would object to be registered.

961. I am merely taking the opinions stated in your evidence. There were two opinions. One is: That it is very desirable that children at a very young age should only be boarded out singly; the other is, that respectable people taking in these children would strongly object to being registered themselves; is not the result that between the two you have to send the children to people who are not respectable, or to accumulate them?—The term "respectable," perhaps, ought not to have been used. A person, may be so much in want of a little addition to her income, although perfectly respectable, that she would be willing to undergo the formality of registration. I should like to withdraw that word if I used it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

962. You told us, to begin with, that you did, speaking generally, approve of this Bill?—I quite approve.

963. Do you realise that the effect, if this Bill became law to-morrow, would be that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people in England to-day would immediately be registered or cease to keep the children they have got?—Yes, I think so.

964. You have also told us that as regards the foster parents you have to do with, they would object to registration, and you would protect them by the covering shield of the society?—Yes, quite so.

965. But there are many thousands of foster parents outside your society who all take in one child, and you think that you would not object to a law which compelled them to be registered?—No, I should not object.

966. Can you give us the ground?—On the ground that there should be some adequate supervision. There is no supervision in the case of these thousands of irresponsible foster parents at present.

967. And the advantage of having that general supervision would, in your opinion, outweigh the disadvantage to the foster parent or the deterrent effect upon respectable people, which would make them, perhaps, decline to take them?—I think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

968. But would you be prepared to sanction considerable exemptions from this rule of registration?—I should be prepared. I think that societies should be exempted.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

969. And those whom the societies employed?—Yes. I think that societies should be exempt. The societies might, perhaps, be required to have their system or method registered; that is to say, that the various papers which I have handed in should be submitted to the responsible officer for carrying out the provisions of the Act, and should be approved by him.

970. As I understand, you have no infants under your own immediate care at headquarters?—Oh, no.

971. You board them all out?—Board them all out.

972. You would exempt at any rate the foster parents whom you employ from registration under the Act?—I would exempt the foster parents; but, as I say, I do not think there would be any objection to registering the society.

973. Take the cases of the labouring man or woman obliged to leave their children for some weeks in order to get work, and putting those children with neighbours; do you think that they should be obliged to be registered; possibly for a week or a fortnight?—It has struck me that the 24 hours specified in the Bill might be with advantage extended. That is merely my own view.

974. To what extent would you extend it?—I should say limit it to a week; I think that might be considered; 24 hours is rather a short time.

975. You are aware that the Act as it stands, and the Bill as it stands, requires immediate registration of any child that has been received for more than 24 hours, from whatever cause?—Yes.

976. Now take the case of a child put with its mother's sister or some near relation; is there any need to register it?—Not when placed with relations, certainly.

977. Take the numerous cases of people who send their children to the seaside under the care of a servant; do you think that any public advantage would be gained by registering them. I send my children, we will suppose, to the seaside for three weeks under the care of a nurse?—I should say not; I should say that the parents would see that they sent their children to a fit and proper place.

978. This is one of the exceptions strongly objected to by some. In the case of an "infant placed by a parent, reputed parent, or guardian in charge of a person in the domestic service of that parent, reputed parent, or guardian;" do you see any objection to that exemption?—I see no objection to it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

979. The main object that you would have in view in advocating this Bill would be to secure supervision of the individual child?—Yes, it is.

980. Have you ever thought whether that could be arrived at by the multiplication of some supervising authorities?—I think the existence of the supervising authority would not be sufficient; in order to exercise that power of supervision registration would be needed in the first instance; otherwise the supervising authority would not know of the existence of the boarded-out child; it involves registration, not only supervision.

981. I mean

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

981. I mean that there should be a larger number of people than now exists other than Poor Law authorities to whom a mother might go to ask for advice as to where to put her child; and that the home to which the child is sent should be, not itself individually registered, but under the supervision of somebody who was registered like your own society?—I think so. I think that would to some extent meet the necessity.

982. You have nothing of that kind to suggest?—The only thing that I can suggest is, the extension of my society, the boarding-out part of the work.

983. And you are prepared to extend it to any degree?—We are prepared to extend it to any degree.

Lord Belper.

984. Might I ask, with reference to these exemptions, have you considered whether the Bill would answer your purpose, at all events, as an interpretation of the "institutions" to be exempted. We have got it in the Bill as it stands (I do not think it is generally agreed to). "The expression 'institution established for the protection or care of infants' shall mean societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons?"—I think after the words "shall mean societies organised for some public or social object," there might be inserted such words as "having the supervision of homes in which children are boarded out," or, "exercising proper supervision"; and then to show that such proper supervision is exercised, the system should come under the notice or the approval of the officer who is to put the Act in force.

985. That means that the society must be registered?—The society as a society, but not its homes, not its houses. I think that that would be one way of meeting the difficulty.

986. You suggest that the society should be registered, not exempted from registration, but that they should be registered, and that that registration should include all the homes to which they put out their children?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

987. Except the homes from supervision?—Yes, except the homes from supervision; but the system of the society would have to be approved.

Lord Thring.

988. Do I understand that you would not object to requiring the approval of the local authority to the institution before it registered it. In other words, to give a discretion to the local authority to register the society or not?—Approval by the local authority was not in my mind; it was rather approval by the central authority. I mean it would be impossible to apply to every local authority throughout the country, because we have our children singly boarded-out in a large number of parishes.

989. By a central authority you mean a Government department?—The Local Government Board or whatever authority had the control.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

990. If there was a waifs and strays society at Leeds you would not object to that having to get the approval of the local authority?—If it were independent of ours; but we have our own branch there.

991. Do you mean that your branch in Leeds should apply to the London County Council for leave to continue their operations?—But is there no higher authority, no public department, to which we could apply? I mean such as the Home Office, or the Local Government Board.

Lord Belper.

992. That, of course, would be a new proposal; but your suggestion lies in the direction of its being made the duty of some public department to inquire into the management and status of these societies, and to give them their approval; and that, as a society, it should be exempt from the operation of the Act; that is what you say?—That is what I suggest.

993. And that, getting that certificate of exemption from this public authority, they would be free from any inspection themselves, and that all the houses they sent the children to would be exempt from inspection?—Yes.

Viscount Landaff.

994. What sort of supervision would you have of the children?—The supervision which I would recommend would be a local supervision, in the first instance, and then an occasional supervision by someone not interested in the foster parent or the child.

995. Some private responsible person?—Yes.

996. The London County Council employ inspectors?—I should not advocate that, but a voluntary inspector.

Chairman.

997. With regard to that proposal of yours that societies like yours should be sanctioned by a central authority, I suppose the practical way you would work that would be that they should give you a certificate, and then when your local committee has approved a certain house of a foster parent, you would give her a card or certificate from your society, and then when the inspector came round and inquired if she had got children there, this card or certificate could be produced showing that she need not be registered under the Act?—I think that could be easily given; something could be given to the foster parents by which they could show their authority to take in children as conveyed to them by the society.

998. And you would have no objection when you boarded out a child in a certain place to write to the local authority and say, under the certificate of exemption which we have from the Poor Law Board, or whatever it was, we have placed a child in such and such a house within your district. You would have no objection to that?—I do not know. I do not think we could undertake to do that.

999. Why not?—Simply because of the detail. Our object is not to increase detail in our work when it is not absolutely necessary for our own convenience. A charitable society is not like

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30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Government Department; we must do our work at the lowest possible cost.

1000. It would be only one communication?—It might be done; but we should have a large number of forms and papers to send in to the Government Department, and they are very laborious. We should not mind furnishing a list, or allowing our forms and registers to be inspected by any Government official; but to be bound to give a notice to a public official every time we board out a child or change its residence would involve a considerable amount of work.

1001. I understood you to say just now that the objection to registration on the part of your foster parents is more or less an objection to the double supervision to which they would be subjected?—Yes, the double supervision.

1002. So that if there were only one supervision there would not be necessarily an objection to registration as such?—That is another question. Registration would involve, I suppose, a certain amount of publicity; that is to say, that the visits of the inspectors would become known in the district, and in many cases of respectable people, foster parents who are really above the artizan class, they do not like it known that they are in the habit of receiving payment for these children.

1003. Do they object to having it known that they receive payment from your society?—Publicly known amongst their neighbours.

1004. You have your lady visitor, who knows?—The lady visitor knows and the lady doctor knows.

1005. You think it would get known in the district that they were keeping children, because of somebody coming to inspect?—If there were a regularly appointed public inspector.

1006. You have local committees, and the members of those pay visits?—We have one supervisor, a lady who is in the habit of visiting at all the houses along the street.

1007. She is known as such?—As a district visitor. She visits all houses, irrespective of the boarding out of children.

1008. Now, Lord Thring, some time ago, rather pressed you on the question as to whether what I might call a more extended system of registration, would not tend to accumulate children in certain registered houses, instead of leaving them to be boarded out singly as they are now; are you conversant with the rules whereby the local authorities, who administer this Act, register houses; I mean, have you any knowledge of the rules that they go on?—Some little knowledge; not very much.

1009. Do you think they would allow a house to be registered if it was proposed to keep a large number of children in it; do they not before they register a house for a certain number of children examine the amount of cubic space?—Yes.

1010. Therefore they would not allow undue accumulation of children?—Overcrowding, you are now referring to, I understand; but that is not the point.

Lord Thring.

1011. I asked you whether it is not known to be the fact that a great accumulation of children,

Lord Thring—continued.

especially young children, however much cubic space is allowed them, is detrimental to the children; is not that the case?—It is the case.

1012. My question is this: whether, supposing you make distribution, as I call it, of children in separate boarding-out houses difficult, you do not incidentally make it probable that they will be accumulated in particular establishments; to which you replied, yes. Then my inference is this, that if you discourage by any means whatever the distribution of children you encourage their accumulation in houses; a good object, I admit, but still would not it be injurious on the whole; and I illustrate it (because I wish to show what I mean) by saying that nothing is more detrimental than the enormous schools in the neighbourhood of London which have plenty of cubic space, but it is known that the aggregation of such numbers injures the health of the children. Do you follow me?—I quite follow you.

Chairman.

1013. I should like to ask you something about that Derby Home; can you tell me where it was; "the north of London" is a large term?—I cannot remember.

1014. You cannot locate it now?—I cannot locate it now.

1015. You can find out for us, perhaps?—Yes.

1016. I should like to know whether that house was registered under the Act?—I believe it was; I am only speaking from memory.

Lord Belper.

1017. Was it within the Metropolitan Board of Works area?—I believe so, but I will obtain that information.

Chairman.

1018. With regard to these foster parents of very small children, are they generally wet nurses with whom you put them out?—No; we cannot get them.

1019. You do not go on the lines of the Foundling Hospital?—No.

Lord Thring.

1020. It is too expensive?—And the difficulty is to get them.

Chairman.

1021. The evidence that was given before the former Committee showed that the Foundling Hospital had rather a peculiar system of sending the children to single women who had children of their own, and these women's children were put out to be hand-nursed and generally died?—The mortality of our young children is not high, I think.

1022. I wanted to know whether your system was the same as that of the Foundling Hospital?—Not the same.

Viscount Llandaff.

1023. Have you, in the course of your experience, come across any institutions nominally for the protection and care of infants that are really speculative undertakings for illicit profit?—I have come across none.

1024. We

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1024. We were labouring on a definition the other day in order to exclude certain improper institutions, nominally for the protection of infants?—My experience is bound up with this one society of my own; I am not in a position to

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

speak as to that. The Charity Organisation Society might, perhaps, give information on that point.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss ISABEL G. SMITH is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1025. You have been, I think, for the last two years, an inspector for the London County Council under the Infant Life Protection Act?—I have.

1026. What is your special branch of the work?—The inspection of the houses registered under the Act, and of those of applicants for registration.

1027. Will you tell the Committee how you proceed on receiving an application for registration under the Act?—On receiving notice of application I visit the house of the applicant, and I examine into its fitness as regards situation, cleanliness, sanitary condition, amount of air-space, and the number of occupants. I ascertain the age of the applicant, and whether or not she is entirely dependent on the fees to be received for the maintenance of the infants whom she purposes keeping. I see and note the condition of any children she may already have in her charge, and endeavour to learn her ideas and practice as regards feeding and general treatment of infants; and, as a result of my interview with her, I form an opinion as to her fitness to have the care of nurse infants.

1028. Do you make any inquiries outside as to the character of the applicant?—Yes. On my first visit to her house I supply her with the form for certificate of character which is provided by the Council, and of which I think a copy has been handed in. This she is required to get signed by either a justice of the peace or a doctor, or a clergyman, and also by two rated householders who are not her own relatives. On receipt of this certificate, duly signed, I call upon those who have signed it and ascertain the extent of their knowledge of the applicant's character. I may add that if I am not satisfied with the information that I receive I endeavour to obtain it in other ways.

1029. When you have completed those inquiries, how do you then proceed?—I submit the application to the chief officer of the Public Control Department with a full report on the result of my inquiries, and generally state what opinion I myself have formed as to the suitability of the applicant for registration.

1030. What is the amount of air-space required in registered houses by the Council?—The minimum amount in the sleeping apartments is 400 cubic feet for each adult, and 250 cubic feet for each infant or child of under 10 years of age.

1031. And after houses have been registered, do they come periodically under your inspection?—They do.

1032. And do the persons registered know when to expect you?—No, I never give any notice of my intention to visit.

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Chairman—continued.

1033. How frequently do you visit each house?—On an average, about once in three weeks; but more frequently in cases of serious illness, or where I am not quite satisfied with the result of my last visit, or under any other special conditions.

1034. Do you, as a rule, find the people unwilling to be under registration?—No, not when they understand what it involves. An applicant will sometimes inquire whether, if registered, she will be under police supervision, but she is generally, I may say always, satisfied when I assure her that that is not so.

1035. Do women sometimes voluntarily apply for registration, that is to say, without any intention of keeping more than one infant of statutory age?—Yes; I have had cases in which women who did not intend to keep two infants of statutory age sought and obtained registration.

1036. Though they intended only to keep one?—Although they intended only to keep one. In a few of these cases they have registered in order that they might take a second infant if asked to do so temporarily.

1037. What is their motive for doing so?—They find registration a protection for various reasons. It is to some extent a safeguard against the malicious insinuations of neighbours. Some look upon it as a certificate of their fitness to have the care of infants; and they know that in cases of inquiry into their treatment of their charges I shall be prepared to testify as to what I have found it to be.

1038. Is it a habit of registered persons to seek your advice on matters connected with the care of infants?—Yes; I constantly get letters from them asking me to call soon, as they wish to consult me on some matter.

1039. Do you mean that they consult you instead of a doctor?—No, certainly not. I particularly urge upon them all the necessity of obtaining medical aid for a sick nurse infant, even more readily than they would for their own children; and, although there is frequently a difficulty as to who shall pay the doctor, the parent or the nurse mother, I find the latter generally very ready to call him in in order to relieve herself of responsibility.

1040. Then you find that when women fully understand what is involved by registration they have, as a rule, no objection to it?—I do.

1041. Is any record kept of your visits?—Yes. Every evening I send in to the chief officer a separate report on each visit made that day, stating the number, names, and ages of all the children kept in the houses visited, their condition as to health and cleanliness; if in bad health, whether or not they are under medical treatment; and whether or not I found the

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premises

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

premises clean. I name any changes that have occurred since my last visit, stating whether these have been correctly entered in the register kept by the registered person, and mention any special circumstances which have come under my notice. I also, for my own use, keep a register of all children kept in each registered house, with notes on my visits.

1042. How many registered houses are there at present in the county of London?—There are 41.

Lord Thring.

1043. Are they all under you?—All.

Chairman.

1044. What is the number of infants and older children who are kept there?—At present there are 46 infants of under one year of age; 27 children of between one and two years; and 31 children of over two years.

Lord Belper.

1045. Is that the whole of the children in these 41 houses?—That is the whole of the children.

1046. Are there allowed to be other children in the houses along with them?—Yes, a few of these women have children of their own, but as a rule they are women whose families are grown up and out in service.

Chairman.

1047. What is the average death-rate of infants in registered houses?—Speaking from my own experience merely, that is for the last two years, the average rate is 12 per cent.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1048. Under one year?—Under one year. The deaths of children above one year are very few. In 1894-5 I had five deaths above one year; and in 1895-6 only one death.

Chairman.

1049. And can you tell us the general death-rate for London as regards infants under the age of one year for the same period?—The return for 1895 I believe is not yet issued; that for 1894 was 14.3 per cent. as compared with the death-rate in registered houses, which is 12 per cent.

1050. And what is the death-rate of nurse-infants in unregistered houses?—Of the infants found in unregistered houses during the same period, 23.6 per cent. have been known to die; but the actual number of deaths amongst them may be much greater.

1051. The unregistered houses do not come under you?—No. As to them, I am speaking from figures supplied me.

Lord Belper.

1052. What do you call unregistered houses?—Those in which one nurse-child of statutory age is received, and where they have children over the age.

1053. If they are not registered, how can you possibly tell what age the children are?—I am only speaking now of those cases in which nurse-

Lord Belper—continued.

infants are kept which have come under the inspection of the male inspector.

1054. You mean the houses that in the course of his investigation in regard to these registered houses he happens to have found out?—That is so.

1055. Of course it cannot cover the whole number?—No.

1056. Having discovered those houses, how is the percentage arrived at?—I must refer you for that to Mr. Babey; I have merely used the figures obtained from his information.

Chairman.

1057. I think Mr. Babey has already given the figures?—Yes, I think he has.

1058. But they do not really come under your department?—They do not come under my department. I merely put them in as a comparison with the death-rate in registered houses.

1059. Do you find that the Act of 1872 reaches the class of people whom it is most desirable to keep under supervision?—No, because at present the woman who knows that her house and methods will not bear investigation evades registration by keeping not more than one infant of statutory age, knowing that she may keep any number of children over the age of one year.

1060. Perhaps you can give us some illustrations from your own experience on this point?—I can. A case which has recently come under my notice is that of a woman of notoriously drunken habits who keeps one infant of under one year, and at least one older child. She has at the present moment, at least she had on Tuesday last, an infant of six months, and a child of about five years. Another case is that of a child of about two years of age, who was recently admitted into a registered house, having been previously, through an advertisement, placed with an unregistered person, who was afterwards found by the mother to be training it as an acrobat, unknown to the mother, and without her consent. This person admitted that she had taken charge of the child with that intention. Infants suffering from effects of improper or insufficient food, or uncleanness and other neglect, are frequently brought to registered houses after having been in the charge, for hire, of unregistered persons.

1061. These are cases which you have come across yourself?—Yes.

1062. Have you any special reason for thinking that the age-limit ought to be raised?—Yes. I think it inadequate for even healthy children; but as very few indeed of those who are commonly placed out to nurse are of normal health and development, there appears to me to be particular reason why the age-limit of the infants who come under this Act should be raised.

1063. Then, Section 3 of this Bill provides that the required particulars as to name, sex, age, &c., of the infant shall be given in writing. Have you found any difficulties from the want of this regulation?—I have. One is the frequent desire of parents from whom infants are received to avoid publicity or identification, and the consequent inducement to give false names or addresses, the latter being sometimes those merely of shops to which letters may be addressed.

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

dressed. Another is that the particulars are very frequently given verbally to the person registered, and she, being in many cases an illiterate woman, without any intention to deceive, enters them falsely in her register from having misunderstood them.

1064. You are referring to the statements made by the person who hands in the child?—The clause in question requires that the person from whom a child is received shall give these particulars in writing.

1065. Is the registered person at present required to deliver up her register on the expiry of her registration?—No, she is not legally required to do so.

1066. Have you in consequence ever experienced difficulty in obtaining it?—Yes, difficulty is often incurred through persons who have been registered not informing the local authority of their removal and subsequent address. I am now, in order to obtain her register, in search of a woman who conceals her present address on account of her being in debt to several persons in the neighbourhood in which she lived when registered.

1067. What particular necessity do you see for the insertion of Clause 4 into the Bill; the clause which compels a person to deliver up the register within seven days after the registration has ceased to be in force?—That arising from these persons being liable to show the register, in order to make it appear that they are still under registration. I find that they make use of the fact that they are registered as a sort of certificate of respectability.

Viscount Llandaff.

1068. How can an old register serve in a new house?—It would not serve; but these persons sometimes remove without our being able to trace them, and by carrying the old register with them they may falsely make use of that to give the impression they are still under registration.

1069. A woman is registered for a house in London; how could she avail herself of a London register when she goes elsewhere?—I am alluding more to removal to another part of London. There is at present nothing on the face of the register to show that it is for that house. A woman is not supplied with a new register for every house to which she removes.

Lord Belper.

1070. Is not the date there?—The date of the reception of the infant is there.

1071. Are we to understand that registration only lasts one year, and that the person each time is re-registered at the beginning of the year?—No, it has not been the practice to supply a new register every year; she receives a letter of registration which is dated.

Chairman.

1072. Then Section 5 suggests that it shall be made illegal for any person who receives an infant to transfer it to another person who is not a relative without the consent of the local authority. At what practice is this provision meant to aim?—This provision strikes at the practice (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

of trafficking in infants by receiving them with a lump sum, and disposing of them again, either with a smaller sum, or by promising weekly payments, which very often are not continued.

1073. Have you come across many cases of that sort, of children being handed on like that?—Not in my actual experience in the registered houses. The law at present allows persons who desire to carry on such transactions to evade registration, and thus accomplish their object.

1074. To evade the registration, I suppose, by not keeping the child for 24 hours?—No; by not taking more than one of statutory age.

1075. But there are some of these people who receive infants who do not take them to their houses?—Yes, many such cases have been found in which they have been handed over to some one else immediately.

1076. You anticipate a particular necessity for it, if registration is made compulsory, for all who take charge of any one nurse-infant?—Yes, because we may then expect to have many less scrupulous persons on the register; persons who will rather apply for registration than be debarred from taking nurse-infants at home.

1077. The law at present gives the inspector no power to enter registered houses; do you find any difficulty in obtaining admission?—No, not at present. I always explain, on my first visit to an applicant, that if she is registered I have to visit her house whenever I think fit to do so; and if she objected to this arrangement she could elude registration by taking only one infant of under 12 months of age.

Viscount Llandaff.

1078. You tell her that, do you?—I tell her that it is my practice to visit all registered houses.

1079. Do you also tell her that if she only takes one child she need not be registered?—She knows that.

1080. Do you tell her so?—I hand her an abstract of the Act.

Chairman.

1081. When, however, a person has no alternative but to register if she wishes to keep a nurse-child, there may, you think sometimes, be an objection made to your entering her house?—I do; though undoubtedly the provision will be even more useful to those inspectors who are concerned in the detection of infringements.

1082. But what sort of cases do you refer to there?—I refer to those people who would certainly rather not be registered, because their houses are not always in the most satisfactory condition; but who will rather apply for registration than be debarred from keeping nurse-infants. I am not referring to cases of houses which are so unsatisfactory and so unfit that the local authority would never think of registering them; but there are very many women who are not absolutely dirty, but who, at the same time, do not keep their houses as clean as I should like to see them.

1083. It is proposed to extend Section 7 of the Act of 1872 by the insertion of the Clause: "If it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the local

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

authority that any person whose house has been so registered . . . has from any cause become unfit to be entrusted with the protection and care of infants, it shall be lawful for the local authority to strike his name and house off the register." Do you see any particular necessity for such a provision?—Yes; a person may lapse into, or, after registration has been granted her, turn out to be of intemperate or otherwise irregular habits, without it being possible to prove actual "serious neglect or incapacity to provide proper food and attention," the contingencies provided against by the old Act.

1084. Has the local authority at present power to strike the name and house of a registered person off the register at the request of the latter?—No, registration cannot expire before the end of the year for which it has been granted, except by removal from the registered house, or it has been proved that the registered person has been guilty of serious neglect, or is incapable of providing proper food and attention, or that the house itself has become unfit for the reception of infants.

1085. Do you consider that some such provision will be beneficial?—I do, because it frequently occurs that, before the year is expired for which registration has been granted, the registered person determines to give up the care of nurse infants and generally takes to some other occupation, such as going out to work by the day. I have not found that any purpose is served by the inspection of the houses of trustworthy persons after they have given up the keeping of nurse infants.

1086. With regard to a question that arose earlier in your evidence as to the number of registered houses in London, can you give any reason why there are so few registered houses; is the keeping of the children a lucrative business?—I do not consider it so as a general rule. The common fee obtained is 5s. per week, sometimes it is less. I have, in fact, made a list of the prices received. I have knowledge of the fees received for 236 of the 318 children who have come under my care, and I find that out of these, 151 were received at 5s. a week, 11 were received for smaller sums; the remainder for sums ranging from 5s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. I find only one child for whom 10s., and one more for whom 10s. 6d. was received. I have here, too, a statement made to me by one of the registered persons who really conducts her house as a means of livelihood, and who goes very systematically to work. She stated to me that an infant of one month costs her 3s. 8½d. per week, and that an infant of 10 months costs 5s. 5½d. I have the items here if they are desired.

1087. Will you please mention them?—An ordinary infant of one month requires half-a-pint of milk per day; the cost of milk for a week would therefore be 7d.; the barley also as food 3½d. This woman includes a sixth share of her rent as a part of the cost of the infant as she keeps the house for the purpose, that is 1s. 8d. per week; firing, 5d.; soap, starch, sugar, and the sundries, 9d. She has made no charge for furniture or incidental expenses. In the case

Chairman—continued.

of an infant of 10 months, the milk would cost 2s. 4d., the other items being about the same; so that that child is actually costing her 5½d. more than she receives for it; and she considers that she makes whatever little profit she can get out of the older children whose food will be less expensive, because they feed as the family do.

Viscount Llandaff.

1088. Do you know how many she is allowed?—She is allowed three infants under the age of one year, and five older children; but in point of fact she has seldom more than six.

Chairman.

1089. Where is this house?—At Tooting.

1090. What sized house is it?—It is a six-roomed house, for which she pays 10s. rent per week.

1091. How long has she been under your charge?—Since I began the work, and she was under Mr. Babey's supervision a year previously.

1092. There are generally half-a-dozen children you say there?—Yes.

1093. Has there been any death amongst them?—Yes, last summer, when there was an epidemic of infantile diarrhoea, she lost two infants.

1094. As a rule the children there are pretty healthy, are they?—She is very unfortunate in getting unhealthy children, for this reason; she is known to be a good nurse, and the matron of the rescue home from which she is generally supplied sends her all the delicate babies. She is a woman who is most particular to keep them under good medical supervision, and I find that she does her very utmost for the welfare of the children.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1095. She looks after the whole six or eight alone, does she?—She is assisted by her daughter, and has other assistance for housework when necessary.

Chairman.

1096. Have you any other houses where as many children as that are kept?—That is the largest.

1097. What is your average; it works out about two and a-half, I think?—I have several houses where six are allowed, no other where eight are allowed. In several of my houses there is only one child kept.

Viscount Llandaff.

1098. And yet it is registered?—And yet it is registered. The woman is registered for the keeping of two and is at liberty to take another. Many of them do not care to have a second, and others, again, do not push the matter, but they will take the child if it is brought to them.

Chairman.

1099. What do you find is the proportion of illegitimate and legitimate children amongst these that are given out to nurse?—Of the 318 children who have come under my supervision during the two years, 233 were either acknow-

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30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

ledged to be illegitimate or, judging from the circumstances which attend their being placed there, were undoubtedly so. Of 47 others, I have no knowledge in this respect; the presumption is that the 47 others were also illegitimate. With regard to the remaining 38 (or nearly 12 per cent.) it was claimed that the parents were married, and with regard to 12 of these 38, there is reasonable cause to believe that the claim is true.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1100. That means that out of 318 children there are only 12 whom you have substantial reason to believe to be legitimate?—That is so. I must state that at present I have very great difficulty in ascertaining. The registered persons know that they are not obliged to find that out, and they find it a matter of policy not to inquire.

Chairman.

1101. Have you considered the question whether in the event of this Bill being confined to illegitimate children only, it would be possible to evade it very largely by representing illegitimate children as being legitimate?—I decidedly think so; at present it is a very common custom to represent a child to be legitimate when it is not.

1102. And it is very difficult to prove it, I suppose?—I think it would be very difficult; it would entail a visit, certainly, to many registrars in London, and the writing to country registrars, and even then I do not see that we could actually prove the matter. The certificate might be borrowed or forged in some way. In the case of borrowed certificates, there would be the additional difficulty that the child would be entered under a false name.

1103. I suppose, in the event of a woman coming with a child and producing a marriage certificate, inquiries could be made at the address which was stated on the certificate as to whether there was any person there; but then the woman might vanish, and it would be very difficult to find her again. That would be a difficulty, I suppose. I mean, although you could take the address on the marriage certificate, and send somebody to go and make inquiries, you would absolutely have no hold over the person who originally brought the certificate and child, and she might vanish?—In point of fact, the addresses are constantly changing of the parents of these children.

1104. You think that what I suggested just now, limiting it to illegitimate children only, would open the door to much evasion?—I do.

1105. You are now looking after 41 houses; does that occupy your time very fully?—I work for the county council under another Act, the Shop Hours Act; so that my time is not fully devoted to the inspection of the registered houses under this Act. The work entailed is very much more than one would suppose from the mere visiting of 41 houses; we have very frequently applications for registration which are not granted for some reason or other.

1106. And can you form any opinion now, from your experience, how many houses and

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

how many children you could look after, or what would you say is the capacity of one inspector like yourself?—A great deal would depend upon what the distribution of the houses is. If the law were extended there would be likely to be a great many more houses in a given area than at present, and not so much time spent in travelling.

1107. And probably if there were three or four inspectors you would have London mapped out into districts?—Undoubtedly so; and I should think that then one inspector might look after 150 to 250, possibly 300 houses; it is a matter of experience.

1108. Three hundred houses, or 300 children?—Houses; 250 or 300, perhaps; everything would depend upon the distribution of them.

1109. How many visits do you generally make; you say about once in three weeks?—About once in three weeks.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1110. Who are these people generally who apply for registration; are they widows or women with husbands and families, or in any case single women; what, speaking generally, are they?—Perhaps the majority are widows. I have a few single women at the present moment; I think three; and several others are the wives of working men.

1111. Out of the 41 houses you do now speak of, are the larger proportion in suburbs like Tooting, or are there some in the central parts of London?—Not actually in the central parts. I have houses in Brixton, in Camberwell, and in St. John's Wood; nothing nearer the centre at present. They are more distributed throughout the suburbs, from Woolwich on to Wandsworth at present, and to Shepherd's Bush on the other side.

1112. You said that eight was the largest number for which any existing house was registered; have you no institutions registered?—None at present; there have been none during the two years I have had my present work. May I please state that that house is not registered for the keeping of eight infants; the person is registered for the keeping of three infants under the age of 12 months, and I have never had any house registered for the keeping of more than three infants; but when the accommodation and assistance are sufficient the registered person is allowed a few children over the statutory age.

1113. Is there any payment at all connected with this?—On the part of the applicant do you mean?

1114. Yes?—None whatever.

1115. You have 41 houses in all through the whole of London; of course that is a very small proportion of the houses in which children are being kept for hire; we can only conjecture what the number is, but it must be very much larger than that. Have you reason to think that there are many of those houses which ought to come under the Act, and do not?—No, I do not think that there can be many houses kept by persons who are infringing the law at present.

1116. Why do you think there cannot be?—

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Because

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

Because I know that there are two inspectors working on all information that comes within their knowledge, and whose business is to prevent it.

1117. Do you think that they can get sufficient information to keep them abreast of the fact, whether in the whole of London there are not many houses with two infants under 12 months?—That I cannot form an opinion upon; I have no experience in the matter.

1118. It would not be in your department to find that out?—Not at all. If information comes in my way, of course I hand it on.

1119. May I ask you to state once more, for I did not quite follow it before, what, in general terms, you would say is the reason why there are not a great many more registered houses, considering how possibly profitable it may be to keep such a house?—Well, in the first place, I cannot admit that it is profitable unless the fee received is absolutely certain, which it is not, I may say in the majority of cases, the payments so often fall short. The infants are, generally speaking, not of normal health and development; they entail a very great amount of supervision; and many women find that they can take charge of one infant when they could not possibly with their other duties look after two; and they know that with one they are not bound to be registered. And one objection which I have experienced pretty frequently against registration is that there is a very general misunderstanding as to what registration involves. People so often believe that they will be subjected to police supervision, I am repeatedly asked by an applicant for registration whether the police will come to the house at all; whether any one in uniform will come. That I take to be a very great objection to it.

1120. And if this Bill became law, and everyone keeping one child was registered, do you believe that there would be, on the part of people generally, any great objection to registration?—Speaking from my own experience I should say no, if inspection is carried out as it is at present in London, say, by a woman going to these registered houses, a woman who probably is quite unknown to the neighbours, at least whose business is unknown to the neighbourhood. But I find that the more respectable the person really is the less objection is there to registration. The objections I have met with have been from very ignorant people, from people whom I did not consider altogether desirable nurses.

1121. Then, in your opinion, if the Bill passed to-morrow a large number of respectable people would immediately apply for registration?—I daresay they would find it a hardship at first until they understood what the whole system involved; but I have not found objection after it was understood.

1122. You attach importance to the inspector being a lady and not a man?—Well, I think for that particular branch of the work a woman is best adapted. Undoubtedly, only women would be chosen who had some knowledge of nursing and the care of infants. A woman can be consulted more readily than a man on these matters.

Chairman.

1123. Had you had any previous experience of this class of work before you were appointed to your present post?—No, not exactly of this class of work. I was trained by the National Health Society as a lecturer on nursing and hygiene. It was on the strength of that training that I received this appointment.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1124. Do you get from neighbours a large amount of information as to what goes on in houses where infants are?—Not a large amount; I have occasionally been told by neighbours of a very undesirable person, or a person who is presumably an undesirable nurse, having charge of a nurse infant. I have noticed a case in Woolwich where a woman, who is intoxicated three or four times a week as a rule, has charge of a nurse infant, and she, I consider, is an unsuitable person.

1125. It would be through neighbours you would expect the information to be given which obviously would be required in so much larger quantity, if this Bill became law?—To a certain extent. Undoubtedly, the police would give information: such cases may be known to the police, who have now no power to interfere. I know, in the case I refer to, a neighbour went to the police one night, and he told him he could not enter that house. If that person were obliged to register that house she would be more under supervision.

1126. It would be the duty of the police, then, to keep their eye on every house in London on which one child was being nursed for payment?—I do not say that; I take it that if the law laid it down that persons who kept one nurse infant were obliged to register, the respectable ones—those who intended to do well by the child—would apply for registration; the others would I hope become known to the police.

Viscount Llandaff.

1127. The others would not register?—They would, undoubtedly, seek to evade it, but if the law gave the authority power either to enforce registration, or to require the giving up of the nurse infant, the difficulty would be met I think.

1128. But I understand you take very great precautions before you do register a house?—Yes.

1129. You have two rated householders and a clergyman to certify to the character of the person?—Yes, a clergyman, or a doctor, or a magistrate.

1130. And further inspection of the house on inquiry into the antecedents of the person?—Yes.

1131. You register highly respectable persons only, I take it?—Persons who satisfy the Council on these points.

1132. What percentage of persons do you reject; are there many people who apply whose applications you reject?—The applications received during the years 1894-95 were 53; of these, 31 were granted, five were refused by the Council, and the remaining 17 were withdrawn by

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

by the persons applying before registration was granted.

1133. Now among your registered houses, is there any child for whom a lump sum has been paid?—I have two cases of adoption, each for 20l.

Chairman.

1134. Are they well looked after?—They are very well looked after. I find no difference whatever between them and the children for whom weekly sums are paid; but of course they come equally under my supervision.

1135. Then why do you think if the proposed Bill were passed you would get a less respectable class of people registering?—Simply because I think that many, rather than entirely give up keeping one nurse infant, will apply for registration. In the case of applications for registration I have frequently to tell myself that I must consider not what I think exactly right under the circumstances, but what may be reasonably expected.

1136. Why should you become more lax if this Bill is passed for single nursing infants to be registered?—I did not mean to admit that we should become more lax.

1137. I understood you to say that you might expect to get less respectable people on the register if the Bill passed and single infant houses were registered?—Well, I think that there are degrees of respectability; perhaps the word itself is not very fortunate.

Lord Belper.

1138. You would lower your standard?—No, I cannot say that.

1139. With regard to the figures you gave us, I think you said there were in 41 houses only 104 children?—Yes, that is so.

1140. Is that in the course of a year?—No; on the 31st of March 1896.

1141. On a particular date of the year there were 104 children; have you got a return showing how many there were in those houses during the year?—During any portion of the year?

1142. No, during the year; I see we had a return put in before in reference to these houses showing the number of infants there were in a registered house during the year; have you got that same return?—The total number of infants and children kept during the year (that is not necessarily during the whole of the year, because some of them might be removed) is, under the age of one year, 154; between one and two years, 34; over two years of age, 39.

1143. Can you account for the fact that the figures are so very much larger; is it that they are only at these houses for a certain time; two or three months?—Very frequently children are removed.

1144. Supposing they were removed from one registered house to another, they would appear in the total just the same, and therefore they must be removed from a registered house to somewhere that is not a registered house?—This 154, I must explain, contains a few duplicates. I do occasionally get a child removed from one registered house to another, and in this (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

return that child would be counted as two. That would account for very few.

1145. But taking children under one year on a particular date of the year, there were 46; in the whole year there were 154, which is very nearly four times the first figure; that practically is giving only an average of about three months for each child to be under the care of a person in charge of one of these registered houses; can you account for that short period?—Some would be accounted for in this way: that of these 154, 38 were infants on the 1st of April 1895, and they were no longer infants on the 31st of March; they were children and put into the other class.

1146. They grow into the next classification of between one and two years of age?—Yes. Then we have 21 deaths of infants under the age of 12 months to take into account, and the others would be removals.

1147. It is really in the infants under one year that the very great variations take place, and that is accounted for in the way you have explained?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1148. Have you formed any opinion (it can only be an opinion or conjecture, perhaps) as to the number of houses which would at once, if this Bill became law, have either to apply for registration or to break the law; I mean would you think it to be thousands in London, or hundreds?—I have no experience that would lead me to form such a conjecture. I have not come into contact at all with more than a very few of these houses where nurse infants are kept which are not under registration.

1149. From your general knowledge of the circumstances and life of the working classes of London, which your work at present brings you in contact with, would you roughly think it was a case of thousands of houses having to be registered at once?—I could only form any opinion from the figures already supplied by Mr. Babey.

Lord Belper.

1150. May I ask whether, in many of these registered houses, any of the children taken in are the children of people like sailors, where the child's mother is dead and the father is going on a voyage, and they have to dispose of their children in some way when they leave the country?—I have not had a single case of that sort.

1151. Therefore the whole of those cases must be in single houses, in houses where there is only a single child kept?—That is probably so; and I have had the children of widowers.

1152. In these registered houses, from your experience, there are hardly any cases of children of working men, or of people who have had to leave their own homes, and therefore to put their children out?—Very few indeed. I have come across three or four children of widowers.

Lord Thring.

1153. Suppose you carry it up to five years, can you give us any idea whatever what increase it would make. The Bill proposes two things:

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30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

first of all, to include the children where only one is kept; and secondly, to include them up to the age of five years?—I only know that it would bring in a very large number of nurse children under the age of five years, but as for giving any actual figures, I am afraid I could not do that.

1154. Do you think it would be very large?—I believe that it would be.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1155. All I want to get at is a general idea, which perhaps other people could form as well as you; but we value your experience. It seems to some of us that the change proposed, however beneficial, would be on a gigantic scale; that every street in London would be concerned in it largely; and that one must not think of it as being something trifling; and I am anxious to know whether we could get from

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

you any opinion of the scale on which we should be legislating?—If it was a question of machinery, I do not think that the central part of London would be very much affected; but nurse children are more frequently placed in the suburbs; and if every street is affected the inspection which one inspector will be able to carry on will be very much larger. My time is chiefly taken up really in travelling at present. Sometimes pressing business takes me from one extreme to the other in one day; I have gone from Putney to Poplar in one day, and I went the other day from Fulham to Woolwich.

1156. But you can say nothing to diminish our apprehensions of the gigantic scale on which we should be moving?—I do not think I can add anything to what I have already said.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Tuesday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 5^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1157. I BELIEVE you are the head of the Statistical Department of the General Register Office at Somerset House?—Yes.

1158. How long have you held your present appointment?—Something under three years.

1159. And you were medical officer of health for Manchester and Salford, I believe, for some years?—That is so.

1160. And in that latter capacity have you devoted much attention to the question of infant mortality?—I have.

1161. And have you read the evidence given to the Select Committee on the Protection of Infant Life in 1871 by your predecessor, Dr. Farr?—I have.

1162. Dr. Farr then handed in a table showing the legitimate and illegitimate births in England and Wales in each of the years from 1845 to 1869?—That is so.

1163. And also the proportion in each year born out of wedlock to 100 births?—That is so.

1164. Can you give us any figures to bring the table up to date?—Yes. That is the table brought down to the year 1894 (*handing in the same*).

1165. This is a Return of the Births in England and Wales from 1845 to 1894, which shows the total births, the legitimate and the illegitimate births, and the children born out of wedlock to every 100 births?—Yes. Might I explain the table?

1166. Certainly?—The important column is the last, which deals with the proportion of children born out of wedlock, that is to say, the illegitimate births to the total births. The table shows, with respect to the year 1894 (the whole table relates to 50 years), that there were 890,289 births in that year—

Lord Belper.

1167. Is this dealing with the whole country?—The whole of England and Wales. Of these 851,946 were legitimate, and 38,343 were illegitimate (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

imate, or 4.33 per cent. of the total births. The teaching of the table is that whereas in the year 1845 the proportion of illegitimate births to total births was 7.0 per cent., in the year 1894 it was 4.3 per cent.; and the reduction has been steady through the whole of that 50 years, or almost steady.

Chairman.

1168. That shows a steady decrease in the proportion of illegitimate children?—In the proportion of illegitimate children.

1169. Born since the year 1845?—That is so.

1170. Can you give us any figures on the comparative mortality between illegitimate and legitimate children?—Not for England and Wales as a whole, because, so far as I know, no statistics on the point exist; but I have found statistics which were submitted to the Committee, I think, in 1871 by Dr. Farr, and which had been received from the medical officer of health of Glasgow, and these I beg to submit to your Lordships. May I read them?

1171. If you please?—The figures relate to the years 1873 to 1875. In those three years, there were 56,698 births of legitimate infants in Glasgow and 8,613 deaths of legitimate infants under one year. In those three years there were also 5,288 births of illegitimate children and 1,509 deaths of illegitimate infants under one year. Coming now to the proportion, the deaths of legitimate infants to 1,000 legitimate births were equal to 152; the proportion of deaths of illegitimate infants to 1,000 illegitimate births was 286.

Lord Thring.

1172. Have you any means of telling us the number of births that do not appear in the Registrar's books at all; in other words, that are concealed?—It is impossible to give that information.

1173. Of course it is impossible to give it accurately; but can you give us any idea; any opinion

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

opinion whatever?—I can say this, that in the course of the last 20 years the proportion of children whose deaths escape registration has unquestionably been decreasing, and very fast; I think there is no doubt about that.

1174. Can you give us any idea what it is; are there a third or are there a half?—Nothing like that.

1175. What would you think?—It would be quite impossible to form a judgment.

1176. It would be very small, would it?—Very small now.

1177. Would you say it was under 5 per cent.?—Yes, I should think so certainly. I am speaking of the present time. I think I can explain my reasons for holding that opinion.

Chairman.

1178. Have you got any other figures to give us?—With respect to Manchester, of which city I was medical officer of health for between four and five years, I have some similar particulars. I could not bring down the figures relating to Glasgow from the year 1875 to the present time, because, as your Lordship knows, I only received intimation on Friday last that I should be wanted here to-day, and the time would not allow of my writing to Glasgow and getting the particulars; but I have particulars which I myself procured from Manchester for the years 1891 to 1894, a much more recent date. In those years there were 65,446 legitimate births registered, and 11,371 deaths of legitimate infants under one year of age. In the same time there were 2,807 illegitimate births, and of these 1,099 died under the age of one year. As regards the proportion, of the legitimate infants 174 per 1,000 died before they became one year of age, and of the illegitimate children no fewer than 392 per 1,000 died under the age of one year. With your Lordship's permission, I should like to explain, and I think I can, the reason for this excessive, or for part of this excessive mortality amongst illegitimate infants. It is a matter of fact that frequently the mothers of illegitimate children desire to register their children as legitimate, for obvious reasons, but our experience in the General Register Office in London is that constantly we are receiving from registrars all over the country information that mothers have desired to correct their statement before the Registrar, and to own that their children were illegitimate. The consequence is that if that is true (and I can answer for it that it is true), then the rate of illegitimate deaths appears by these tables to be higher than it ought to be, and I have no doubt whatever that that fact accounts for the very excessive mortality, or of some of it, amongst illegitimate infants.

1179. In other words, you mean that whereas illegitimate deaths are generally registered as such, illegitimate births are often registered as being legitimate?—That is so, and this greatly increases the apparent mortality.

Lord Belper.

1180. If a child has been registered as a legitimate child, why is its death registered as that of an illegitimate child?—The conditions

Lord Belper—continued.

of registration are somewhat different in the two cases. Frequently, in the case of a birth being registered, it is the mother who registers it; the mother is frequently one of several mothers in a registrar's office, and your Lordship can easily see that a girl would probably shrink from exposing her shame before other women. I think that explains it.

1181. I quite understand that; but having once been registered as a legitimate child, why when the death is registered is not that so far accepted as a proof that the child was legitimate?—We have evidence to show that the deaths of illegitimate children are more correctly registered than are the births of illegitimate children; that is a matter of experience.

1182. Then do you mean to say that, if a mother produces a certificate that the child is registered as a legitimate child, you go behind that and say that the child is illegitimate, and go into further evidence?—We have nothing to do with the birth when the death comes to be registered; they are entirely separate registrations.

1183. I should have thought that in the case of a child's death, from considerations of respectability, the parents would at all events wish it to be registered as the death of a legitimate child rather than as the death of an illegitimate child; if it had been registered as a legitimate child at its birth, I should have thought that *prima facie* evidence that it was legitimate?—As a matter of fact, I may tell you that we find legitimate births are much less accurately registered than illegitimate deaths.

1184. Does not the mother or the father who comes to register the death take the trouble to refer to the fact that the child has already been registered as a legitimate child?—I cannot answer that question. I submit to the Committee this table that I have just read (*handing in the same*).

Viscount Llandaff.

1185. Could you tell us the proportion of the illegitimate births which you think are registered as legitimate births?—I cannot tell that.

Chairman.

1186. Have you anything further?—I have nothing further to put in. I have some figures here that I thought your Lordships might want to question me about.

1187. I do not know quite what it is that you have got?—It is with regard to the question of uncertified deaths in London.

Lord Thring.

1188. Will you tell us how in effect they register a death?—

Chairman.

1189. The death has to be registered within five days, I think, has it not?—Under the Act of 1874 it has to be registered within five days.

Lord Thring.

1190. What happens when a child dies?—Under

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Under the Act of 1874, it is compulsory on the parent, or on what are called the qualified informants, to give notice to the registrar within five days of the death of the child, and if he fails to do so he is subject to a penalty.

1191. In what form does he give it, simply that a particular child has died or that it is a legitimate child?—He must be present at the registrar's office, and there furnish him with particulars.

1192. True; but what does he say; what particulars must he furnish him with?—I am sorry I have not a copy of the register here. There are forms prescribed by the Registrar General to be filled up.

1193. He has to state the name of the child of course?—Yes, and the age.

1194. And would the register state the legitimacy or the illegitimacy of the child?—That is a matter of inference. In the case of an illegitimate child the name of the father does not appear in the certificate, only the name of the mother, and from that we infer that the child is illegitimate.

1195. And you ask no questions beyond the form?—The registrar is instructed in all cases to be as accurate as he can in getting at the truth.

1196. The doctor's certificate is as regards the cause of death?—Yes, as regards the cause of death; it is not evidence of the age.

1197. Nor of the legitimacy?—No, it has nothing to do with that.

1198. Simply the cause of death?—Yes.

Chairman.

1199. You will send a copy of the form that is used to the Committee?—Yes.

1200. Can you give us any more information bearing on this subject; any other tables that you may have compiled?—I can put in a table with respect to the uncertified deaths in London in the years 1882, 1883, and 1884.

1201. Will you read them out, and call attention to any particular point?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1202. "Uncertified" means without a certificate of death from a medical man?—Yes. There were in those three years 3,020 uncertified deaths; of these the medical attendant refused to grant a certificate altogether in 66 cases, and made an informal statement, that is to say, not one acceptable to the Registrar, in 215 cases; in 258 cases the patient was attended by an unregistered assistant; in 400 cases by an unregistered practitioner, and in 415 cases by a midwife; in 1,666 other cases there was no medical attendance at all.

1203. But can you distinguish those deaths in any way as being deaths in child-birth, because you spoke of midwives?—No, the table does not deal with causes of death.

Lord Belper.

1204. These are infants, are they?—I have got them at the ages of under one year, one to five years, and over five years.

1205. I understand from the first return you handed in, that the percentage of illegitimate (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

births has varied from 7.0 per cent. in 1845 to 4.3 per cent. in 1894?—That is so.

1206. Can you form any opinion as to what that steady decrease is owing to. I mean, in the first place, of course it is possible that there might have been some alteration in the way of getting the information; in the second place, of course, it might be owing to an increase of morality; or to different habits of life. I should like to have your opinion as to what cause you would ascribe it to?—I have no doubt whatever that it is owing to a very large extent to the increase of morality generally throughout the country. As regards all the causes for it, it is difficult on the spur of the moment to deal with them. I should be very glad to consider that subject if the Committee wish it.

1207. I should like your opinion as to whether there has been any change in the manner of getting the information that might account for the percentage being smaller now than it used to be?—I will consider the question. I am not prepared at the moment to answer it.

1208. In considering your answer you will bear in mind the evidence you have given. You say the births of illegitimate children are more strictly looked after now than they used to be, therefore the tendency would be to show an increase in that return of the percentage rather than a decrease, given equal conditions. We have probably got hold in the return of more illegitimate children than we used to formerly, you say; that would show a tendency to increase the percentage rate of illegitimate children rather than to decrease it; and, therefore, you have not only got to account for the decrease in that Table, but also for some tendency to alter in the opposite direction owing to the circumstance you have mentioned?—I will consider that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1209. What is the death rate of infants under one year throughout the country?—The deaths of children under one year to 1,000 births in England and Wales in the 10 years 1884 to 1893 were 147 per thousand births.

Lord Thring.

1210. One question on the evidence you have given: I suppose the evidence on which registration is formed is necessarily exposed to great danger of mistake because you rely simply upon the evidence of interested persons, do you not?—That must have some effect, unquestionably.

1211. That must have its effect. Though, no doubt, it is done with extreme care and with extreme skill, still we must take it as being subject to the infirmities of human interest?—Yes, that is unavoidable.

Viscount Llandaff.

1212. Could you not now give the general death-rate of legitimate and of illegitimate infants under one year?—I have already explained to the Committee that I cannot do that for the whole of England and Wales; the figures do not exist.

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5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

1213. Can you give us the figures for London?—No, only for Manchester. The reason why I can do it for Manchester is this. With respect to every death of a child under five years of age, I made inquiries by the help of sanitary inspectors and female visitors amongst the poor; I made inquiries with reference to all the conditions, as far as they could be ascertained, of the life, all the circumstances attending the death of those children; and in that way, amongst other things, I got to know about the question of legitimacy and illegitimacy, and the question of whether the children had received proper attention during life; and that is the reason why I am able to give you these figures for Manchester, though they cannot be given for the country generally.

Viscount Llandaff.

1214. According to your figures, Manchester was much worse than Glasgow?—Yes. I have tried to explain that. The Scotch law is different from the English law in regard to illegitimacy, as your Lordship knows.

Lord Thring.

1215. You mean that in Scotland subsequent marriage makes the children legitimate?—Yes.

Chairman.

1216. That would rather tend, would it not, to make people look upon illegitimate children in a lighter way in Scotland?—It is my personal opinion that this is so.

Lord Belper.

1217. You said that the figures are worse in Manchester?—In Manchester the deaths of illegitimate infants to 1,000 illegitimate births are 392 per 1,000; in Glasgow 286 per 1,000?—Yes.

Chairman.

1218. You mean that in Glasgow they are registered as illegitimate births, and then through the marriage of the parents they are subsequently registered as legitimate deaths?—Yes, I think so.

1219. What this really shows is this: that in Manchester the illegitimate children are worse cared for than in Glasgow?—

Viscount Llandaff.

1220. I want an explanation of that; why does Manchester kill so many more illegitimate children than Glasgow?—My belief is that the figures as regards illegitimate death-rates are incorrect, and for the reason that the number of illegitimate births upon which those rates are calculated is inaccurate; that is to say, they are fewer than they ought to be, and therefore the death-rate is greater. If the number of illegitimate births is increased in the way which I have described, then, of course, the rate will be lower. As a matter of fact, they cannot be corrected in Manchester; or can only be corrected in a very roundabout way.

1221. Both Glasgow and Manchester are above the average of deaths, legitimate and illegitimate?—You see you have not got the number or proportion of deaths from legitimate

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

children. You cannot get the proportion for illegitimate children, because the figures do not exist.

1222. But they are above the average of the whole; you have told us that the normal death-rate, legitimate and illegitimate, throughout England and Wales, is 147 per 1,000?—That is so.

1223. In Manchester and in Glasgow both the legitimate, and still more the illegitimate, deaths are far above that?—That is strictly true; but then it must be remembered that that 147 includes the whole of the healthy districts of England.

Lord Kinnaird.

1224. Do you check by name the legitimate deaths to see that they agree with the births; when a child is reported to be dead, do you see that it agrees with the child that was born, or not?—In certain districts, where the registrar knows the people very well, of course that can be easily done, but in very large cities the registrar does not know the bulk of the people.

1225. Is it his duty to do it?—The registrar has the general instruction to get to know the truth, as far as it is possible, from the people who come to him.

Viscount Llandaff.

1226. But is part of the truth which he has to ascertain whether John Smith, whose death is registered, is the same as Charles Jones whose birth was registered a few months ago?—Yes, as far as possible he ascertains that; but migration is very common.

Lord Kinnaird.

1227. Can you give us any experience with regard to the poor people changing their names?—I have no knowledge.

1228. You could not give any tables to show how many of those children who are certified as dying, differ from the names certified as born?—I could not give that information.

1229. Do you think the registrar would be particular in putting the question whether it was legitimate. You have told us that the mother would wish that it should be regarded as a legitimate child, and if he was a kind man would he put it down so on her statement?—He would do so at his peril. The Registrar General would not retain in his service a man capable of doing that.

Lord Thring.

1230. Has the registrar the power to go behind the form that is filled up?—He must secure that the facts entered in the form are correct, as far as in him lies.

1231. If the forms are rightly filled up apparently, has he any right to cross-examine on those forms; I thought you told me he had not?—He himself enters the particulars in the register.

1232. According to the forms?—He has to ascertain the facts *viva voce* from the person who comes to register a birth or a death.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1233. Does he go outside the office and find out whether the answers are true?—It is his business

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

business to ascertain, as far as he can, the truthfulness of the statements made to him.

1234. Does he go outside the office to do that?—In many cases I know it to be done. I speak from my own knowledge of Manchester and Salford.

Viscount Llandaff.

1235. A girl comes and says, "This is a legitimate child"; does the registrar inquire of a neighbour, or how does he find out whether the statement is true?—He is expected to ascertain by any means in his power that the person is telling the truth.

Lord Belper.

1236. In a case of doubt (because there must be a large number of cases in which the registrar cannot find out with absolute certainty), which column is the child registered in, "legitimate," or "illegitimate"?—I do not understand what you mean by a case of doubt.

1237. With the limited means of inquiry that the registrar has, he cannot prove in every case that the statement is absolutely accurate; and if he is left uncertain are there any instructions which would make him enter that child in the one column or the other, or is there a column "doubtful"?—May I put in a form of the register book with respect to births. That contains two columns, columns 4 and 5, and, *mutatis mutandis*, the like information may be got from the death registration book; column 4 gives the name and surname of father, column 5 the name and maiden surname of the mother. In the case of an illegitimate child the column containing the name of the father would be blank, and from that one might infer that the birth was illegitimate.

Chairman.

1238. If she is married she puts down her married name and her maiden name as well?—Yes, "name and maiden surname of mother," is the heading of the column.

1239. What is the practice, to put down the two surnames?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

1240. Are there no cases where the registrar leaves it open in the return that he makes; where he cannot find out whether the child was legitimate or illegitimate?—Only by omitting the column in respect of the father.

1241. That makes it illegitimate?—Yes.

1242. Therefore all those cases would go into the illegitimate?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1243. What is the penalty on the mother for wilfully giving false information?—£10.

Viscount Llandaff.

1244. Have you ever known the penalty exacted?—Personally, I should not know whether the penalty had been exacted or no; that comes under another department, and I cannot give evidence on the point.

Lord Thring.

1245. Supposing the woman refuses to answer in cross-examination, is there any penalty?—May I read this, it is from Section 39 of the (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

Act 37 and 38 Vict., c. 88, with respect to the registration of births and deaths: "Every person required by the Births and Deaths Registration Acts, 1836 to 1874, to give information concerning any birth or death, or any living newborn child, or any dead body, who wilfully refuses to answer any question put to him by the registrar relating to the particulars required to be registered concerning such birth or death, or fails to comply with any requisition of the registrar made in pursuance of those Acts, and every person who refuses or fails without reasonable excuse to give or send any certificate in accordance with the provisions of the said Acts, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 40s. for each offence."

1246. Not 10l.?—That was in the case of a wilfully false statement. The prosecutions do not come under my immediate supervision; therefore I have to depend upon my own reading of the Act, which, as Lord Thring knows, is not likely to be very trustworthy; medical men are seldom good lawyers.

Viscount Llandaff.

1247. Beyond what you have already told us, viz., the inaccuracy in the number of illegitimate births, can you account for the enormous disproportion between the illegitimate deaths under one year in Manchester and the general death-rate?—I have no hesitation, as the result of long experience in Manchester and Salford, in saying that illegitimate children are subject to a course of treatment very much worse than that which legitimate children receive, and that that has a very baneful effect upon their health and life.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1248. And would you say in the same way, from your experience as a medical man, that an illegitimate child is more likely to be an unhealthy child when born?—Yes, I think so, certainly.

Viscount Llandaff.

1249. Do they receive that want of attention and that indifferent treatment from their mothers or from others, as a rule?—From all those who have charge of them.

1250. The mother as well?—I am afraid that is so; in fact I feel certain of it.

1251. Is there much baby-farming (I use the word to describe the thing in general) in Manchester, or was there in those years?—There is no doubt that it does exist to a certain extent.

1252. But only to a certain extent?—Only to a certain extent; I believe, and am sure, it is less now than it used to be; but what the amount is I cannot say.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1253. Manchester has appointed no inspector for the purposes of this Act?—I am not certain about that.

1254. Did you, when you were there, give any particular attention to the subject of the administration, and the necessity of the Act of 1872, the existing Act now, with respect to the protection of infant life?—I thought it was my proper

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

proper business to look after the children because I was sure that they wanted more protection than adults did; and, therefore, under whatever Acts, I took very great care to inquire into the circumstances attending the death of all young children, and especially of those who were illegitimate.

Chairman.

1255. You know the provisions of the existing Act of 1872, what is known as the Infant Life Protection Act?—Yes, I do, generally.

1256. You know that it compels the registration of houses in which more than one infant of under 12 months is kept?—I am aware of that.

1257. Have you, in the course of your experience at Manchester, been able to form any opinion as to the advisability of extending the operations of that Act?—Yes, I should like to extend the provisions of that Act to children above one year of age.

1258. And have you formed any opinion as to whether registration, *per se*, is, as a rule, beneficial to children; I mean to say the registration of the houses?—Yes, I am sure that it must be.

1259. You mean to say that the fact of a house being registered ensures a certain amount of better treatment and supervision of the children?—Yes, a little more publicity, too. The inspector, for instance, I take it, would, if the house were registered, be allowed to enter the house at reasonable times, and ascertain that the children were properly looked after. You drag the whole proceeding into the light of day, and my opinion, as a medical man, is that that is altogether salutary; I mean in regard to the whole system of taking care of children for gain.

1260. So long as mankind remains as it is there will always be a large number of illegitimate children, I am afraid, and, consequently, there will always be a considerable number of children whom it is desirable to hide or put away in some sort of way; have you any opinion to express yourself as to the advantage, a further advantage, which an extended system of registration would have in, what I might call, bringing these children to light in the way you suggest?—I feel confident, from my own experience, that if the circumstances under which such children were attended to were looked into carefully, that would tend to the improvement of the health conditions of the children, and the prolongation of their lives.

1261. Yes; but my point is this: it has been urged that further registration would simply have the effect of driving baby farming more below the surface; that the registration itself would not necessarily enable us to get at the people that we want to get at; that we should only get at the respectable people who are willing to be registered. Have you formed any opinion as to the willingness or unwillingness of people to register; did you come across that in your capacity as officer of health?—Speaking of the question of registration generally, I never found that the effect has been such as you describe. It does not tend to drive information of that kind, as it were, below the surface; I have never found anything but good from the inspection of places of that kind. I may take the

Chairman—continued.

case of the Notification and Registration of Infectious Diseases, which, as your Lordship knows, was at one time looked upon with very great disfavour by many people. It was then said, If you insist upon it, the effect will be to conceal disease to a very large extent. Facts prove that that fear was utterly groundless; and probably there has not been passed in recent years an Act which has done more good than the Act for the Notification of Infectious Diseases has done.

Viscount Llandaff.

1262. Did you ever inquire how many houses there were in Manchester that came within the Infant Life Protection Act?—I cannot give you any figures as to that.

1263. Did you ever inquire?—I do not remember having done so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1264. Was any registration in force at all?—I cannot at this distance of time tell you.

1265. Our general impression from what we have heard is that it was not in operation there; you cannot tell us to the contrary?—I cannot.

1266. Then your view that it would be a good thing to extend it is, so to speak, an academic view rather than one based upon experience, because practically you do not know whether the difficulties existed or not?—Not as regards that particular Act. I am speaking from my experience of other and similar provisions.

Viscount Llandaff.

1267. Have you at all studied the way in which the London County Council have administered the existing Act?—I have not.

1268. Are you aware that their inspectors require certificates of character and respectability and of the perfect sanitary condition of the house before they register at all?—I am not aware of that.

1269. Does it not strike you that under that system none but the good houses register?—That would be the effect of registration.

1270. Registration does not make the house good, but the house must be good before it is registered?—Yes.

1271. And the result is that none of the bad houses are registered?—Yes; I should refuse the registration unless the house were fit to be registered.

Lord Thring.

1272. Is the registration of diseases an analogy?—I think I am entitled to take it so.

1273. Is it not the duty of the doctor to notify the disease?—It is the duty of the doctor to notify the disease; but I am speaking of the publicity given to the fact.

1274. That is the very point I want to point out to you. In the case of the registration of houses it is the interest of the keeper of a bad house not to register; but the doctor is bound, legally and professionally, to register a case of infectious disease; I do not see the analogy. Now, I want very much indeed to ask you this question: with your very great experience, you are aware that this often happens (I do not know whether it is so in Manchester, but I presume it is), that the mother goes out at six o'clock in the morning and stays in the factory till six in the evening,

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

evening, or whatever the time may be; you are aware that the child is handed out at six in the morning and brought back at whatever the hour may be when the mother returns?—Yes.

1275. Are you not aware that the infantile mortality caused by this taking of the child out from home and bringing it home in the cold, and the ill-feeding, is very large indeed?—I am aware of that.

1276. And is it not the fact that really and truly the mortality induced by that system of *crèches*, carrying the children out to places, is much more startling and much greater than that induced in any other way?—Well, I have not been able to satisfy myself on that point.

1277. Do you know anything about Burnley?—No.

1278. Would you agree with what I was told, that in the places where large wages are given to the mother, 20s., 25s., and 30s. a week they earn, do they not?—Yes.

1279. That the child mortality is greater amongst that well-to-do artisan class than it is in the class of the poorer artisan who does not go into the factory, for the reason I have stated?—I should be quite prepared to believe that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1280. What is, roughly, the population of Manchester, the district you worked in?—About half-a-million.

1281. In London, which we may call, say, 5,000,000, the greater London, there are now 41 houses registered; according to that, at the same ratio, Manchester would have four houses registered; would you feel that the registration of four houses in Manchester at all met the needs of the present case?—I am sure it would not.

1282. We have been assured by witnesses that they are of opinion that every house is registered in London which under the existing law ought to be registered; but you would feel that if that were so you would certainly require to register more houses than four in Manchester?—I think so.

1283. In which more than one child under 12 months was kept for hire, I mean?—Yes.

Chairman.

1284. But that opinion, again, is what I may call purely academic; it is conjecture on your part?—Yes; I can only give you my opinion. May I say this: any questions that you would allow me to have from you I will consider to the best of my ability; but it is very difficult with regard to great and most important questions, such as these, to settle them off-hand. I should be pleased if I could be of service in the way I have indicated.

Viscount Llandaff.

1285. Could you state why Manchester left this Act as a dead letter; the proportion of deaths of illegitimate children per thousand there is far beyond the figures in Glasgow; why did you never put the Act in force in Manchester?—If I said the Act was never applied in Manchester I made a slip; I did not mean to say that; I do not know whether it was or not.

(0,95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1286. Would it not have come under your knowledge?—It is a considerable time ago, and, if it was applied, all I can say is, I did not proceed under it; I had other and very much more convenient ways of getting information. I may say, without desiring to take too much credit to myself, that there are very few cities in England where the poor are better looked after than they are to-day in Manchester.

1287. It is a dead letter, because the town council felt that they could do better without it, by other means?—We could do much better; I do not think we wanted the Act in Manchester.

Lord Kinnaird.

1288. There are illegitimate children in Manchester, and they have to be put out somewhere to nurse, as in London?—Yes, not only illegitimate, but legitimate children too.

1289. What means have you for inspecting the places where they are put out to nurse?—May I explain that we have in Manchester, not only a large staff of sanitary inspectors, but also a large staff of female health visitors, as we call them; it was the business of those visitors to go amongst the people, and to get to know all about them, their families, their troubles, and their sickness, and to do all that they could to make life in the poorer districts more endurable. In that way we got an amount of information which I do not think is gathered in any other town in England; and that accounts for my saying that really I know very little about the Act of 1872, because we had an excellent means of getting to know all about the people without it.

1290. And do you think many children were not put out of the way there?—I am afraid I must ask you to excuse my answering that, if my answer is to go down.

Viscount Llandaff.

1291. Have you ever found any difficulty in working that system that you have described?—No; the people were only too thankful for it.

Lord Thring.

1292. These female visitors were philanthropic; not paid, I suppose?—They acted under a society called the Ladies' Health Society in Manchester, and, on the other hand, they were in touch with the medical officer of health, who directed their work.

1293. Were they paid?—They were paid partly by the corporation and partly by the Ladies' Health Society.

Viscount Llandaff.

1294. And they attended as well to children in their own homes as to children boarded out?—Yes; to anyone who wanted their attention.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1295. That was a more successful method than this Act?—I cannot say anything about the Act; I think the methods which are adopted in Manchester were better than could be carried out under any Act alone.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1296. Is there any formal paper or document which

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

which gives an account of the work of these female health visitors?—Yes.

1297. What is it?—The reports of the medical officer of health in Manchester at the time give very full details on that point, and so likewise do the reports of the society itself. I should be very glad indeed to submit them to the Committee.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1298. If you had the houses registered it would rather take them out of the view of your health visitors, and put them under those looking after the registered houses?—Personally I have ceased to have anything to do with Manchester for three years, and I should not like to speak for my successor there.

Lord Thring.

1299. You would not like to take the people there out of the supervision of those ladies whom you have mentioned with so much approbation?—No; I would not for any Act that could be passed.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1300. If you come again, perhaps you will bring statistics of that society?—I will see whether I have them among my papers, and if not, I will write to Manchester for them.

Lord Belper.

1301. This society at Manchester was a regular society formed for the purpose?—The Ladies' Health Society is really a branch of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, which is the oldest voluntary sanitary association in England. The Ladies' Health Society consists of a large number of ladies who associate themselves for the purpose of superintending the operations of the so-called female health visitors, and they devote a very large proportion of their time and money to the task. I know perfectly well that the work which they are doing is beyond all praise.

Viscount Llandaff.

1302. Is it not part of the conditions of their success that they come as voluntary friends of the poor instead of as official inspectors?—That is the secret of their success.

Lord Belper.

1303. There is a return here of 1890, giving the names of institutions dealing with children under five years of age; is this society you speak of the Manchester and Salford Refuges and Children's Aid Society?—No, that is a charity.

1304. I understand that the society you speak of is so far an institution, that they have funds?—I should like to explain that they receive part of the wages of the health visitors, the paid health visitors, from the corporation, and the rest they collect by way subscription from their friends; and a great deal of money they get together in that way; but I may say that the work of the ladies is entirely voluntary, and not only so, but it is a very expensive affair for them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1305. The society has a large staff of female health visitors who are partially paid out of the rates?—Partially paid out of the rates.

1306. Can you give me roughly an idea of the number of these people who are thus in part paid out of the rates?—The number of them at present paid out of the rates would appear, I think, in the paper that I propose to submit to your Lordships.

1307. Is it a question, I mean, of tens or hundreds?—It is a question of tens, rather.

Lord Kinnaird.

1308. Have you had before you any complaints by coroners; we have had two London coroners here who said that the present Act was utterly insufficient to stop a great deal of ill-treatment, and possibly worse than that, of infants; have your coroners in Manchester complained of the same thing?—I have no knowledge of the fact.

1309. They did not complain to you when you were health officer there?—No, I received no complaints from the coroners that I remember.

1310. Did you act under a private Act, a local Act, in Manchester?—The Corporation of the City of Manchester acted under the Public Health Act, 1875.

1311. Are the provisions of that Act not valid in London?—In London they have a special Act.

1312. Did yours go further than the London Act?—I am not acquainted with the present London Act. I know that up to the passing of the last Act for London the Public Health Act, which applied to the country generally and not to London, was very much more useful than the London Act was up to the passing of the last Act; it was very weak.

1313. Do you consider that this new Act is required?—Do you mean for the country generally? I think it would be beneficial.

Viscount Llandaff.

1314. What do you say as to Manchester?—I cannot speak for Manchester now. I am sure that I never proceeded under that Act of 1872 in Manchester, and for the reason I have given.

Lord Kinnaird.

1315. Then they would probably treat the amended Act, if were passed, as they did the old Act?—I cannot tell.

Chairman.

1316. You will think the matter over and let me know if you can throw any further light on it?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1317. You said that you thought it possible that the improvement of the percentage of illegitimate births from seven in 1845 to four in 1894 was owing to a general improvement in morality?—Yes, I think I am entitled to say that.

1318. Have you any figures to show that?—No, it is my opinion, that is all. I think the regularity of the fall supports it.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

5 May 1896.

Mr. WILLIAM CROOKS is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1319. You are a member of the London County Council for Poplar, I believe?—And also a guardian of the poor.

1320. A guardian of the poor for Poplar Union?—Yes.

1321. You have lived there most of your life, have you not?—I have lived there, with the exception of about 18 months, the whole of my life.

1322. I mean you can speak with considerable experience of the feelings of the working classes with regard to this question?—I believe I can.

1323. You have read the Bill which is now before the Committee?—Yes.

1324. Are you in favour of it generally?—Yes.

1325. You are in favour of extending the age of the children to five years?—At the very least.

1326. And you are also in favour of making it apply to houses where only one child is kept?—I am.

1327. Have you had any experience yourself with regard to what are known as baby-farmers, that is to say, have you come across them at all?—No, except in my experience on the Public Control Committee of the London County Council.

1328. It is a fact, I believe, that baby-farmers (you know what I mean) do not exist so much in a district like Poplar as in the more western districts, the suburban and the better neighbourhoods?—That I cannot say. I do not know whether baby farms do exist to any very large extent in the better-to-do neighbourhoods; I have no practical experience of that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1329. Do you mean that you cannot compare the two?—Exactly so.

Chairman.

1330. But do you think that they exist much in Poplar?—Not to a very large extent. I shall have in a minute or two to give you one or two cases of what has happened with people who have taken children.

1331. You say that you are in favour of extending the Act; is it your opinion that registration would be advantageous?—I am positively sure of it.

1332. Do you think that the feelings of the working classes, as a general rule, those whom you have come in contact with, are generally in favour of the proposals of this Bill?—Most decidedly.

1333. Instances have been brought before the Committee of cases of possible hardship if an extended system of registration were in force; can you give us any instances of the general practice of working men with reference to their children when they have not got a mother to look after them, and when the men themselves have to go away from home in search of work?—Yes. I can give you many.

1334. What do they generally do?—A man who is left with a family of children; or a man

Chairman—continued.

whose wife has deserted him, finds always considerable difficulty in placing those children in good homes, and invariably (speaking now for this last four years) men who find themselves in that dilemma in my immediate neighbourhood come to me. They say, "Cannot you get the guardians to take my children?" and I say, "I really cannot; the law is against it unless you personally go into the house with the children;" and they say, "Well, what do you advise that I shall do?" I say, "Have you no sister-in-law, no mother-in-law, no relation whatever that you can place the children with?" "No." "Do you think that you could afford to keep a woman to look after your children?" "Well, I think I could if I could find a proper woman to do it." I then make a suggestion of this sort: "Now what I want to say to you is, that you had better go and look round and find some decent people who have a couple of rooms to let in their house, take the rooms, state the whole of the circumstances of the case to the landlady, say to her that you have a daughter or a son 9, 10, or 12 years of age, as the case might be, and generally they can look after the little ones, and that if the landlady will give an eye to them you will make it worth her while."

The particular case that I have in my mind must have been very successful indeed; for last week, in going through a thoroughfare, a man rushed up to me, shook me by the hand, and said, "I am so glad to see you; I took your advice." I did not quite understand what the man meant, and he said, "Don't you remember that I came to your house and asked you about my children?" I said, "No, there are so many men who come to me that I do not remember this particular instance." He said, "Well, I have taken two rooms in such-and-such a street, and the children are going on well, and I assure you that I shall never pass you again as long as I live," meaning that he would give me some kind of acknowledgment for the advice given to him. The other instance I have in my mind is the case of a man who came to the guardians with two babies; roughly speaking one must have been about two years old, a diminutive little thing, and the other about six months; and in a most imploring manner he asked the guardians to take the children. The guardians said, "We cannot take the children without you. Where is your wife?" "My wife has gone to a hospital very bad. I cannot go to work; I have these two babies to look after, and I can get no one to take them, or, at least, no person respectable enough, and sober enough, to look after my children in the way that I should like." The man was in a terrible way. I was so struck with him that I followed him out across the road and got into conversation with him, and I said, "Now what do you propose to do?" "What can I do? I shall starve if I go on like this; I cannot leave the children and I cannot get anyone whom I can trust the children with." "Very well," I said, "now look here; you go back to the relieving officer; you see the children are gradually getting

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

getting worse; they certainly could not have been left like that when their mother went away; you go and ask the relieving officer to give you an order and then go in with the children, and to-morrow I will come and see you, and perhaps I shall think of some better plan by which I can get your children placed out than I can think of to-day, or I may find some institution that would look after the children."

1335. But what we want really to know is this: you put the children out, you found a lodging for these children?—No, we did not. The man went away and did not go into the house with the child. The point I want to make there is that if houses were registered, or if this man knew perfectly well that any person that took his children would be under inspection and registered, there would be a safeguard at once, and it would encourage him to find a decent person to take his children to; he would have said to himself, "You must register; the inspector will be sufficient guarantee for me that these children are being properly looked after." Now, without that registration and without that power of inspection the man had no certificate that his youngsters would be properly looked after at all.

1336. Is there anything to prevent his doing that now?—Certainly; the man has no guarantee that his children are going to be looked after properly.

Viscount Llandaff.

1337. Two babies require registration now?—But one of them is beyond the 12 months; and you do not get very many working men with two babies under 12 months, I venture to say.

Chairman.

1338. Can you give us any experience of the working of what is called the adoption system; that is, giving out the children on the payment of a lump sum down?—I can only give this experience: that we get into the workhouse several children who have either been adopted for a lump sum down or taken on a promise of a weekly payment which has ceased, and in regard to whom we get absolutely no guarantee that the children are illegitimate, have been boarded out and have been adopted. The foster mother or father comes up and says, "I have a little girl or a boy that has been left with me under promise of payment, and I have not seen the mother or the father for a year, or for three months, as the case may be, and I cannot afford to keep it; and the guardians must take it." And the guardians are obliged to take it.

1339. You regard it as generally a very bad thing for the child, I suppose, that a lump sum should be paid down with it?—I do, indeed.

1340. Can you suggest any method of preventing children being given out on the payment of a lump sum?—I think that the amended Act should be framed to make it a penal offence to accept a lump sum, with a child of that description. I admit there is some difficulty in it, and after all you cannot frame an Act of Parliament that some one would not find a way of getting round; but, nevertheless, it would be better than the present condition of things; you

Chairman—continued.

would certainly get hold of more people than you now do; and if you only got 10 per cent. more it would certainly be worth framing an Act of Parliament to enable you to do 10 per cent. more good than you are doing at the present time.

1341. It is very difficult, is it not, to define and attach a definite meaning to the term "lump sum;" in this connection it has been called "immediate payment"?—Yes, which lands you in this difficulty, that you have no positive proof that a person adopted the child for 30*l.*, 50*l.*, or 100*l.* When the person had got tired of it, and had exhausted the money, they would at once, if they did not take worse measures for getting rid of the child, apply to the guardians to take it.

1342. That is not quite my point. I am talking of the difficulty of drawing a clause so as to make the payment of what is called an "immediate payment" on taking the child, that is, the payment of a lump sum down, illegal?—I think you could under the Act. A person takes a child, and you could register all those particulars. You might say that you have no means of knowing whether the person has adopted a child for a lump sum or not; but I think it makes a great difference if you have got power of entry and notification, which is sure to come about in a crowded neighbourhood; the people are sure to know when Mrs. Brown or Mrs. Black has got a new child; they will begin to ask one another where it comes from; and it is notified; the inspector goes in and makes the necessary inquiry, and satisfies himself, or herself, that all is fair and square and above board; a record is kept of it; and supposing later on the person applies for the parish to take the child over, then immediately you confront them with the record that you have got of the previous inspection; and by that means you would reduce that system certainly to a minimum.

1343. Do you find that there is generally a considerable secrecy connected with the taking of nurse children now; that, as a rule, it is something the people are ashamed of, and like to keep quiet?—Yes.

1344. Do you think that there would be much dislike on the part of respectable people to register themselves as taking in children?—Indeed, I do not. I think the more respectable the person, and the more desirable that they should have the children, the more anxious they would be to register. I can give you several instances of that. I am chairman of a boarding-out committee; that is to say, a committee that supervises the boarding-out of the children from our union; the boarding-out committee of the union. It is our duty to go through the certified committee's reports from the various places where children are boarded out. Sometimes when we get an independent report from a particular committee the guardians suggest that we might ask the Local Government Board for permission to visit. This is usually granted, and I have been on several tours of inspection to children boarded out; and of course in the best homes the door is thrown wide open, and you are called in and are asked

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

asked to inspect the whole of the children's clothes, together with their bedroom, and there is a free and open offer to strip the child to satisfy you that it is perfectly clean. You get to an indifferent home and there you are met with all sorts of excuses as to why a certain thing is not quite clean, or little Tommy or Jenny are not quite up to the mark. At once I object; I say that such persons have no right to be registered under any circumstances, and have no right to have children in their charge. If we frame an Act of Parliament, or a Bill at all, it is that it shall be no injury to honest and good persons, but shall be a terror to evil-doers. I cannot for the life of me understand any objection to registration; and I have never heard a single person who was worth listening to at all object to registration.

1345. You have had considerable experience of the boarding-out system, I believe, have you not?—Yes, I have.

1346. Whereabouts do you generally board your children out from Poplar?—We have some children at Eyke in Suffolk; we have some at Apsley Guise, together with Woburn Sands in Bedfordshire; we have some at Corsham and round that immediate neighbourhood in Wiltshire; and we have also some children under a Balsam certified committee; I have not been there.

1347. Have you local committees in these places to look after them?—They are certified from the Local Government Board.

1348. They are committees?—Yes, or rather shall I qualify that by saying it ought to be done invariably through committees; but in one or two instances that is not literally true.

1349. Have you got any other further reasons to give for supporting the Bill than you have mentioned?—Yes.

1350. Have you any experience of what is called the traffic in children, handing them on from one to another?—To evade the law, do you mean?

1351. Partly to evade the law and partly to ensure all traces being lost of the children. I am talking now of the provisions in the Bill with reference to getting statements in writing from the people who bring the children and pass them on?—I should think that could be done with very little difficulty, but I have had no personal experience as to that.

1352. I did not know whether you might have come across such a thing?—No.

1353. Were you going to give me some other reasons for supporting the Bill?—Yes. My other reasons were these. I am acquainted with a lady who does, and has done, a tremendous lot of rescue work, and she has passed through her hands (in the 18 or 20 years she has been engaged in the occupation of rescue work), no fewer than 3,000 young women. At the present moment she has lying in her house five young women recently confined. She says that, speaking for herself, she should be delighted if even her house could be registered, and that the inspector might go from time to time to children she places out. She boards them out, one only in a house; she pays 5*s.* a week for the children until the mother can afford to pay; she secures a situation for the mother; and she is induced to do this by

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

the fact that where the child can be kept alive and looked after, the mother is encouraged to become a respectable young woman and is encouraged to work and toil for the child, who keeps her from going into bad ways. In answer to what she said, I said, "Well, now, what do you say, Mrs. —, to the person with whom you place this one child being registered?"—"Well," she said, "I believe that people with whom I place the children would be very glad indeed to be registered; and what is more, if they were not glad to be registered I should object to their having the children at all, for I should say at once it was not a desirable home; for in every instance the greatest amount of publicity should be given to these cases; that is to say, those who have the care and study of these children."

1354. She only talks of registering her home as a lying-in house?—Yes.

1355. The Act only applies to children kept apart from their mothers?—Yes; but I wanted to quote the authority of this lady who has had so much to do with these children and has placed so many out, one in a house, as to her opinion of the desirability of registration.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1356. With regard to what you said as to the absence of difficulty, you have not referred to temporary cases; do you think it desirable that where a child is only for a day or two allowed to go to a neighbour, a thing that must be common in your experience, for a trifling payment, that house should be registered?—No, neither do I think it comes within the four corners of the Bill, so far as I have read it, inasmuch as you have got the 24 hours limit, and the trifling payment is very trifling indeed, and you would not call a friendly act of that description receiving a child for fee or reward; hence I do not consider that such cases come within the four corners of the Bill as we now see it.

1357. I do not quite follow you?—Supposing you ask a woman in the next house to mind your baby, because you were going to the seaside for two or three days, or supposing a man going away to work, said: "Here is the money and food for the child, and I will give you 2*s.* for the trouble," that 2*s.* will not pay for the trouble; it is a neighbourly act.

1358. Still it is hire or reward, is it not?—I cannot see it; I do not think you could stretch the clauses of that Act to call it hire or reward; but my experience teaches me this: the working classes, as a rule, are only anxious to do one another a turn of that description without accepting a single penny at all. If you were to ask me to fix a sum, I should tell you at once I could not; but if you were to ask me if I could name anyone who had so minded somebody else's children I could name a dozen at once.

Chairman.

1359. Your desire is that the Act should not interfere in any way with the neighbourly and friendly action you refer to?—Certainly.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1360. My experience exactly corresponds with yours, that in the majority of these cases there is no payment; but I should have thought there

L 3

was

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

was a large number in which there was payment, and what I desire to do is to produce such a law as shall allow of that arrangement without the need of registration?—I am of opinion that the Bill does that, because what I find is that the workman who has no wife has rooms and apartments of his own in a particular house, where the landlady keeps her eye upon the children; that is to say, when there is a family of four or five whose ages run from ten down to one year or less.

1361. Why do you think there are not more registered houses now?—I do not think that the law is sufficiently known, and but for the publicity recently given in the public press, it would not spread as much as it has; that is to say, that it has been, if one may use the phrase, boomed rather, and it is one of those things that we are rather glad to see boomed, to call public attention to the condition of things; and no man or woman that I know of, no woman certainly who desires to look after children, would offer the slightest objection. Supposing she did, and it was pointed out that certain scandals were happening, and that by registering the children she has it would prevent a scandal arising again, like a true woman she would say, Oh, certainly, if it will prevent anything wrong, I am only too glad to permit the inspector to say that my house is all right. It is a kind of certificate of fitness to receive children which they would be glad to have.

1362. Do you think that there are a large number of people in London now who are taking in children, but who are not under the existing law?—I should say yes; and also there are very many people who are taking children who ought to be registered; who ought not to be allowed to take them.

1363. The existing Act allows them to take one, but do you think that there are many people who, as a matter of fact, are taking more than one; who ought to be under the Act, and who are not registered?—I should hardly think so; but what I feel about it is that you get very many children under 12 months not properly taken care of. I know it is so in the case of a man applying from time to time for out-relief; he has care of a little boy; I have watched him for months; the little chap is just beginning to toddle about. Now the man and wife cannot be far off 70, and are quite past work. I do not think any of us would register a house of that kind; certainly not myself. I should think more of the interest of the child than of benefiting the old man and woman.

1364. At present there are, we are told, only 41 houses registered in the whole of London; you would be of opinion that there must be a larger number of houses than that which come properly under the Act now?—I go as far as to say that there must be hundreds, and if the law was made a little more stringent than it is now the registration would go up by leaps and bounds.

Chairman.

1365. I am not sure that you quite understand the Bishop. You say there must be hundreds of houses where children are now

Chairman—continued.

kept which are outside the present law, but which would be within the provisions of the Act if the Act was extended?—Exactly. I also say there are very many houses where there are two children under 12 months that we have not been able to get at; also by the very fact of amending this Bill and getting them within the publicity, you would be able to draw them in also.

1366. You mean to say that, in your opinion, there are a good many houses which have these babies which it has not been possible to get at?—Yes.

1367. That is only conjecture on your part?—It appeals to our common sense.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1368. Have you formed any estimate at all of the number of houses that would require to be registered if this proposed Bill became law?—We could only hazard a guess.

1369. It would be a question of thousands, would it?—I should think so.

1370. If in every case where a child under five years of age is being boarded and a payment made, registration had to take place, you would have instead of 41 houses 4,000, or, at all events, a very large number?—I think you would; I do not know that it would be quite up to 4,000; we have no figures before us to prove that.

1371. But, summing up what you have just said, you would be of opinion that the amount of hardship that would press upon individuals on account of being compelled to be registered would be trifling compared with the benefit the Act would confer?—Certainly, I do think that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1372. Have you got any registered houses in Poplar?—I do not know; I do not think so. Of course, that is a question that Mr. Spencer, the chief of the Public Control Department, could answer. By the way, that reminds me; a lady called at my house the other day, and asked my wife whether I was a member of the London County Council, and she said, "Yes; what do you want?" "Well," she said, "I have got four children; they are very nicely looked after, and it is a very nice house, and I want him to come round and see the house, and to see if he would give me a certificate"; and the message, I left behind was to tell the lady to go to 21, Whitehall; but beyond that I know of no case.

Lord Belper.

1373. This was a case that was not registered, but where she did take more than one child?—Evidently.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1374. You think the working classes are in favour of this?—I should say, yes, decidedly.

1375. Would they be willing to put their children in a registered house for two or three days, supposing they wanted to go away to work, or to go to the seaside?—I do not think that is quite a fair question, because under the Bill the house

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

house must be registered before they get the children.

1376. But there might be children already in the house, and it might be registered?—I think they would in that case.

1377. Do you think you would find people who were registered willing to take in the children of a neighbour in that way?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1378. Do you think that people like being called baby-farmers?—A certified house would not be called a baby farm for any long time to come, but because of the wickedness and cruelty going on there is need to set a better fashion than now exists.

1379. But at the present time they call them baby farmers?—You do not call a person in the country who accepts children to board out a baby farmer.

1380. I ask you is not that the common term used; if a person is registered, we call him or her a baby farmer?—No, the working classes are not so rude as is generally suggested. If you mean that in a drunken brawl, something would come out of that description, that may be so, but that is a matter of no importance to us.

1381. You have told us broadly that the working people are in favour of registration; I want to know what possible evidence you have that the working men in Poplar are in favour of registration?—I think I have the best of all reasons for saying that. I am in daily contact with the men to begin with. I address in my own neighbourhood on an average three public meetings a week. I have taken the subject of this Bill three or four times since we began to talk about the framing of the Bill, and on every occasion the Bill has been squarely debated by the men assembled at the meeting, and a resolution has been carried in favour of supporting the Bill. I cannot go any further than that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1382. Then will you explain this: The parents are in favour of registration: the owners of the houses are in favour of registration, as I understand you?—I say that the parents of the children are strongly in favour, and that all respectable persons who desire to take the children are also in favour of it.

1383. How is it, then, that there so little registration; that there are so few registered houses, and that the existing law is so constantly broken?—I think I have said that I did not think the law has been sufficiently well known until within this last month or two.

1384. Do you mean that for 25 years everybody interested in this question has been asleep?—The best answer I can make to that is the fact that you have just had a witness in the chair who said that the Bill was a dead letter in Manchester; and if an authority like Manchester will not put the Bill into operation, the local authority, surely there is some other person to compel the local authority to do its work.

1385. In London the local authority have been trying?—Yes, and are doing it exceedingly well.

1386. But, nevertheless, with everybody in

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

favour of it, there are practically no registered houses; how does that come about?—Yes; you have some registered houses.

1387. In Poplar you told me you did not know of one?—I know of 40 odd that are registered.

1388. But in Poplar?—In Poplar, no; that is perfectly true.

1389. I am told that there are two in Poplar?—I did not know that.

Chairman.

1390. It would not necessarily come within your knowledge?—No; what I say is that the men who are most likely to be obliged to put children out are in favour of a system of registration.

1391. Do you mean that they are not able to find a respectable person to take them?—That is so; the complaints I generally get from men who want us to take the children are that the person with whom the children now are drinks too much, or has some other failing, not necessarily drink; perhaps there is no ability for looking after children. You may get a sober foster-mother sometimes who knows very little about washing or bathing a youngster or keeping him clean. That may be the fault of our system of not training them properly, but the fact remains

Lord Belper.

1392. I think you were not in the room when Mr. Spencer gave evidence?—No.

1393. He said that he believed that in the whole, or very nearly the whole, of the cases of the children that would come under the present law the houses are registered. The question I asked him at No. 341 was this: "I understand that you say that under the present law you practically get hold of the cases of the whole of the children that would naturally come under the present law, or nearly all;" and the answer was, "I believe that to be the case," and I went on to ask, "Then, if that be the case, as far as that class of cases go, that would come under the present law, there are really no malpractices going on or ill-treatment of children, because they are all under registration and under inspection," and the answer to that is, "That is my belief." I only put that to you because you have expressed the opinion that there are a good many cases not registered?—Notwithstanding Mr. Spencer's very wide experience, I am still of that opinion.

1394. And you still think that there are a good many cases that ought to register that are not registered?—I think so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1395. You told us mainly of the view, and I think your evidence most important, of respectable working men who want a place to which to send their children. The children we have to protect are, in the main, illegitimate children; I mean that the children who are baby-farmed in England, to use the common phrase, are probably 90 per cent. of them illegitimate; we have had evidence to that effect; do you think that the mothers of such children find a difficulty at present in a district like

L 4

Poplar

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

Poplar in disposing respectably of their children?—No, not when they are under the wing of some body of good voluntary lady workers. I should say that then they could do so; but if the girls are left to their own resources to find a home, then I think the children are likely to be very badly placed.

1396. That rather goes round my point. Take an average girl, not linked in with any philanthropic or religious association of any kind, who has gone wrong and has a child; I ask, does she at this moment find a difficulty in knowing what to do with it?—She does.

1397. Would that difficulty be lessened or decreased if this Bill be passed?—Lessened, because a person taking the child would say, "The house is registered," and it is a guarantee to the young woman that everything is fair and square; therefore I do think it will benefit that kind of girl.

1398. You do not think she would find desirable people who are at present ready to take the child quietly without saying anything about it, but who would be unwilling to take the child if they had to get leave from the county council?—I do not think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

1399. Do you know the system under which the registration takes place in London?—I think I do.

1400. We have heard that there is a certificate from the clergyman, a testimonial from rated householders, an inspection of the house to see that it is sanitary and in good order before registration is granted at all; therefore it is not the registration that makes the house good, but the house must be good before it gets registration?—Admitted.

1401. Then there are the houses not registered at present, but as good as they will be after registration; why does the young girl get any additional facilities from the fact that the house is registered; it was good before?—My contention is that the person who might have a good house would feel herself incompetent to take the child; she would say: "All sorts of suspicions would be caused in this girl's mind; I should like to have the child, but what will be worrying her is the thought of what is happening to the child; I know I could look after it properly; I will be registered and take the child, and then she has a guarantee that I am looking after it properly."

Chairman.

1402. Do you express any opinion as to the advisability or inadvisability of limiting the operation of this Act to illegitimate children only?—I express this opinion, and it is very clear in my mind, that it ought to include all children.

1403. Do you think that if it was limited to illegitimate children it would lead to great evasions?—I think it would. I have thought it over very carefully and I have come to this conclusion, that if you were only going to register the legitimate children, there is nothing in the world to prevent a young woman finding a certificate of marriage for the purpose of placing the

Chairman—continued.

child out; her sister, cousin, or some one of the kind, might lend her one; but supposing, for instance, she got married in Devonshire and she wanted to place the child in London, the person receiving the child, or the person responsible, cannot go all the way to Devonshire and take a number of children with them and get the parson or the verger to prove that this was the identical young woman who was married there. And if the number of legitimate children put out is so exceedingly small, where is the trouble; you say the percentage is so very low; why not include them? I am of opinion that if you leave out the legitimate children, the only result will be rather to encourage fraud, and to encourage a girl to find a marriage certificate from somewhere or other for the purpose of evading the law.

Lord Kinnaird.

1404. I understand your evidence to be that you think there would be no objections to limiting the Act to illegitimate children, and you do not think that the classes that would make use of it most would object to registration, or that they would see no need of it?—That is my feeling.

1405. Then would you exclude institutions from the Act, or have you any strong opinion upon that point?—Yes, I would not exclude institutions. I only give you this as my own opinion; and the reason why I would not exclude institutions is that I think it would mean a better attention to the administrative detail of an institution if it were registered by the members forming the committee or the responsible persons. And the reason why I should encourage that, even from a managerial standpoint, is this: if I were manager or chairman of the managers of some such institution, I should welcome the inspection. I should say, "Now here is an institution being run by voluntary contributions; we have an inspection by the Government or the county council, as the case may be, who certify that this home, this institution, is a really good one, that everything that can be done is done for the benefit of the children; and will you not give us some money with which to carry on this good work?" I think it would be such an advantage to the institution that it would overcome any little difficulty that might arise in the managers' minds as to the undesirability of registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

1406. The chief object of this amended Bill would be for the benefit of the houses, as far as I can make out; a certificate of goodness?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1407. You distinctly think that there are many children who are not treated as well as they ought to be, whose treatment would be improved; there is sufficient cause made out for extending the Act, you think?—I do think so; I think it would encourage even the indifferent ones, which we should not be inclined now to register, as good homes to improve. When those people were desirous of taking in children, they would put their house in order; and though you might have to strike them off the register for one year,

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

year, you might put them on the next if they showed the necessary improvement.

Lord Thring.

1408. I should like to ask you one question: do you think the keeping of these children profitable?—Yes, in a good many instances, speaking from my knowledge of the boarded-out children, I should say decidedly so.

Chairman.

1409. What do the Poplar guardians pay?—Four shillings a week; 2l. a year for clothing, and 10s. a year for medical attendance in the case of each child.

1410. You say 10s. a year for the medical attendance; do you pay it to the person or straight to the doctor and tell him to attend the child?—In some cases straight to the doctor, which I think is decidedly advantageous; in other instances the money is paid to the certified committee; they might have a very heavy bill on one child, and in the others they may be perfectly clear; but the same thing applies to the doctor, for that matter.

Lord Kinnaird.

1411. You do not give the 10s. to the person who takes them?—Not to the foster-mother or father.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1412. Why do you go so far afield as Wiltshire?—The wisdom of the Local Government Board says that no metropolitan union shall board children out within the metropolis.

Mr. WYNNE EDWIN BAXTER, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1417. You are the Coroner for the Eastern Division of the County of London, and also for the Tower and its Liberties, I believe?—I am.

1418. And you have been Coroner for East Sussex, I believe, from 1879 to 1887?—Yes.

1419. And you were Deputy Coroner for the City and for Southwark, and the Duchy of Lancaster, in Surrey, and Middlesex, for several years?—I was.

1420. Also Coroner for East Middlesex; and now you are Coroner for East London?—Yes.

1421. Therefore I may say you have had considerable experience as coroner?—That is so.

1422. What particular class has your work mostly brought you amongst?—Amongst the poorest.

1423. And is it your experience that the evils against which this Bill is directed really more affect those of the better class?—It is. There are a smaller number of registered houses in my district, and there is a great absence of baby farming altogether.

1424. In your particular district?—Yes, in my present district.

1425. In what way do you mean that it affects the better classes more than the poorer ones?—(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

1413. Is not that what their wisdom says, because they wish to remove as far as possible the taint of pauperism from the children?—There are a good many sides to that question, which I have very strong convictions upon.

1414. Is there not that one side to it?—I found some villages to which children were sent to a certified committee where the children were actually known by the name of the union they come from. Therefore in that case it was not so.

1415. Is not the object, right or wrong, silly or wise, to remove the taint of pauperism as far as possible from the children?—Yes, but how does that apply to the provinces? You can board out within the union in the country, but you cannot board out within the union in London. That only applies to London, and does not apply to the kingdom generally. The Gloucester Union, for instance, of which I have some knowledge, board out almost within the city of Gloucester.

Viscount Llandaff.

1416. There is nothing to oblige you to go as far as Devonshire or Wiltshire; you might go to Surrey or Kent, might you not?—Yes, except that we find that other unions are anxious to get good homes, and most of the good certified committees have their hands full, and we have not as many homes in the country for that class of children as we might desire; hence we are obliged occasionally to go further than we should like.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Chairman—continued.

When a daughter of a working man gets into trouble, as a rule, she marries at the eleventh hour, whereas, amongst those in a more affluent position there is an endeavour to screen the shame and get rid of the child; and so baby farming starts.

1426. So that the customers of the baby farmer are, as a rule, in your experience, people of a fairly good position; of a comparatively good position?—Yes, a comparatively good position.

1427. What is your opinion with regard to the registration of houses in which nurse-children are taken for hire?—My opinion is that if a house is registered there is far less chance of the child being neglected, and I base my opinion on the fact that I have had no cause to suspect neglect in the cases of deaths that have occurred in registered houses in my district.

1428. Have you got any particular illustration to give us?—The only case of serious baby-farming occurred about a fortnight ago in my district; that is the only case in 10 years; and there two ladies appeared at the East-end at an hotel with a child; they inquired for the Stepney Causeway and were directed; they went into a general shop and inquired of the shopkeeper if

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5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

she knew of anyone who would take a child; there happened to be a poor woman in the shop at the time, and they asked whether she would like to take it; she promised to consult her husband; they eventually took it. The whole of the parties went to a solicitor's office, a formal agreement was drawn up, 25*l.* was paid in Irish notes, the woman took charge of the child, it was registered in the name of the foster-father, christened in the name of the foster-father as the foster-father's child, and the outcome was that the first night the foster-mother was drunk, the police locked her up, the child was taken to the workhouse, afterwards handed over to the foster mother, and the 25*l.* was soon spent. The child was then endeavoured to be got into institutions, and eventually was taken to the workhouse again, and died there. I submit that if this Bill was an Act nothing of that sort could have happened; a solicitor would never have drawn up the agreement without providing for registration; in all probability the police and the workhouse authorities also would have taken action.

1429. The facts which you are relating came out, I suppose, in the course of evidence at the inquest?—They did.

1430. And therefore, in this particular case, if the present Bill had been law, the child would have had some supervision?—In my opinion it would.

1431. Unless, of course, there had been a breach of the law and the child had been put in an unregistered house?—My impression is that the law would not have been evaded, considering the number of legal authorities through which the child passed; the hands of a solicitor, the police, and the workhouse authorities.

Lord Belper.

1432. But the workhouse was after the child had been taken away from the foster-mother, was it not?—The same night. It went twice to the workhouse; it was first taken by the police to the workhouse on the night on which it was received.

Chairman.

1433. As soon as the foster-mother received this 25*l.* she immediately got drunk?—She did, the same night.

Viscount Llandaff.

1434. How would registration have prevented her getting drunk?—It would not have prevented her getting drunk; but having received the child the home in which she was living would have been registered, and the child would have been looked after in the meantime.

1435. How would it prevent a woman suddenly flush of money getting drunk?—It would not have prevented that, but it would have guarded the child afterwards.

Lord Belper.

1436. Why; how would it have prevented the woman who was bribed by 25*l.* taking the child?—I think it would have prevented her taking the child because the necessity for registra-

Lord Belper—continued.

tion would have been brought home to her. She was a perfect stranger to baby farming?—It was the first case in which she had done it.

1437. You think a law about registration would have frightened her from taking the child?—Yes; but beyond all that the child was in her custody for about six months, and there was nothing to show that it was properly taken care of then.

Chairman.

1438. You are in favour of extending the provisions of the existing Act?—I am for the reason that I mentioned.

1439. Have you read the Bill which is before the Committee?—I have.

1440. You see it is proposed to raise the age to five years, and to compel registration in the case of only one child being kept for hire or reward?—Yes; I see no reason why it might not happen that one child would be neglected quite as much as two; and those cases of neglect that have occurred in my district had been cases where there has been only one child.

1441. What is your opinion with reference to the number of illegitimate children in the east end, in your district, as compared with other parts?—I believe that there are fewer illegitimate children. I can tell you exactly the number of illegitimate children last year.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1442. Fewer than what?—Fewer than in other parts of the Metropolis. I held last year 694 inquests on children, and of those there were only 18 illegitimate children. Of those 18 illegitimate children nine were with their mothers, six were with relatives, and three only were out at nurse.

Chairman.

1443. How many inquests did you hold last year?—One thousand six hundred and twelve.

1444. Of which, how many were on children under seven years of age?—Six hundred and ninety-four.

1445. And how many of these 694 were illegitimate?—Eighteen.

1446. Only 18 were illegitimate?—Only 18.

1447. What does that point to in your opinion?—It points to the fact that there is less illegitimacy amongst the working classes than in those parts of London where there is greater affluence; and it points to the fact that the Bill would not press hard upon the working classes if it was law.

Lord Belper.

1448. You mean a Bill which only affected illegitimate children?—But that is only part of my statement; because there are only three cases out of the 694 where they were legitimate, and out at nurse. There were three cases of nurse-children where the children were legitimate.

1449. But I was asking you about your statement that the poor people would be affected less by this Bill than the better class; then I say you understand by this Bill, a Bill which is limited to illegitimate children?—I understand that

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

that the Bill as drafted comprehends both legitimate and illegitimate.

1450. Then, how can you found an argument on it that poor people who have fewer illegitimate children would be less affected by the Bill than better to do people?—That is only half the argument; the argument is that only 21 children out of the number I have mentioned were affected at all; out of the 21, three were out at nurse being legitimate, and out of the 18 that were illegitimate, only three were out at nurse; so that there were only six altogether out of the 694.

Lord Thring.

1451. In other words the Act would have no operation at all?—Not in the east end; I take it that no law is intended to have an operation against the well doer.

1452. If they are not evil doers the Act is not wanted?—I think anyone reading the papers can see that there are plenty of evil doers; they do not happen to be in the east end of London.

Chairman.

1453. What class of children are the nurse children on which you have held inquests generally?—Domestic servants and work girls.

1454. You are talking of the three?—There were 18 altogether illegitimate children, and three were out at nurse.

1455. But in the case of the nurse children has there been fairly good remuneration given for looking after the children?—They have usually paid an adequate remuneration, and every effort seems to have been made to provide an adequate remuneration except in this one case I have already mentioned, which occurred a fortnight ago, which was a case quite strange to the east end, nothing whatever to do with the neighbourhood.

1456. Therefore you do not think that registration and supervision would be any real hardship?—I do not think it would be any hardship on the working classes.

1457. Have you in your other districts, as coroner, ever been brought into contact with any necessity for the present Bill?—I have had several cases, I could not mention instances; several cases where inquests have been held on children that had been out at nurse, and there has been grave suspicion that proper care has not been taken of them.

Lord Thring.

1458. You mean to say in the course of your whole experience?—In the course of my whole experience, yes.

1459. That would be some 20 years?—Yes.

1460. You have had several cases in 20 years in which children have been ill-treated, or there has been suspicion of ill-treatment?—Yes, there have been cases in which a verdict of manslaughter has been returned.

1461. Very seldom?—Seldom.

Chairman.

1462. Have you formed any opinion as to the practice of baby farming, based on your own (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

experience?—I take it that this Bill is more for single cases than for baby farming in the general acceptance of the term.

1463. Have you come across cases where children have been taken in only one at the time, more or less for the purpose of evading the necessity for registration?—I have had several cases, some last year, where children have been taken as nurse-children, and there has been great want of care taken with them. They have been handed about from one person to another. In one case I remember the father could not find out where the child was for a considerable time; it passed through four people's hands.

Viscount Llandaff.

1464. Was it an illegitimate child?—It was a legitimate child.

1465. Why was it put out in that way; was the mother dead?—Yes, it was because the mother was dead.

1466. The father in that case would have been rather glad of some supervision, I suppose?—He tried to find the child, and it took him nine days to do so.

1467. Did he put that child out with a lump sum?—No.

1468. He made weekly payments, I suppose?—He was to have made weekly payments.

1469. Did he make weekly payments?—Eventually, but during the time that it was being handed from place to place he had no opportunity of doing so.

1470. I suppose he did not make the payment without satisfying himself that the child was alive?—No; he had to wait till he found the child before he could pay.

Chairman.

1471. What was the object of handing the child round?—I think they were afraid the child would die and they did not wish the child to die in their custody.

Lord Belper.

1472. Do you mean that they bribed somebody else to take it?—No, they did not bribe; they simply handed the child over so as to avoid having it in their possession when the child died.

1473. They would not take a child without having a payment with it, if the child was likely to die?—Yes, they did; they did not see that it was so near death as the person who last had it.

1474. If no payment was given what was their motive?—They expected payment.

1475. Whom did they expect to get the payment from?—The father.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1476. Had they communicated with the father?—No.

Lord Belper.

1477. Then why did they expect that he would make them a payment?—Because they were told that he would; he had promised it in the first case.

M 2

1478. Did

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

1478. Did the father make payment to the transferee?—Eventually.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1479. To all of them?—All the transfers went on in about nine days.

Lord Belper.

1480. And eventually it was traced?—Eventually it was traced.

Chairman.

1481. Are you generally in favour of the provisions of this Bill?—I am. I consider that if the child is away from its parents it is important that there should be some supervision by a public authority.

1482. And you think that if the registration was extended as proposed there would be a better chance of the children being well treated?—I feel confident they would, for two reasons: the persons with the registered houses would know that they were being supervised, and they would have the dread that the inspector would be in at any moment to see what was going on.

Viscount Llandaff.

1483. I should like to ask you about these inquests; you gave us the number of 694 inquests held in your present district?—Yes.

1484. In what time is that?—Last year.

1485. In one year?—Yes.

1486. How many of them resulted in the verdict of manslaughter?—I cannot say that; I have not the statistics; I did not anticipate such a question.

1487. I presume each of the 694 were sudden deaths, deaths that called for inquiry?—Sudden death or cases of violence.

1488. If it were violence it would be surely murder or manslaughter, to say the least?—No, a child may be run over.

Chairman.

1489. In "violence" you include accidents?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

1490. The 694 were all deaths that seemed to call for inquiry?—Yes.

1491. And you cannot tell me how many of them resulted in a verdict of manslaughter?—I cannot.

1492. You said about one?—Of the 21 cases I originally referred to, one was a verdict of manslaughter; there were 18 illegitimate and three legitimate.

1493. Of the 21 there was one case with a verdict of manslaughter?—The case in which the verdict of manslaughter was returned was the case of a child who had been left in a parcel in the snow.

1494. Was that one a nurse-child, or a child with its parents or relatives?—I cannot say; it was left in the snow in a parcel. I put it down amongst the illegitimate.

1495. Do you know its name?—No.

1496. If you find a child in the snow you put it down as an illegitimate child?—That is according to the Home Office rule in the Return.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1497. And in that case there was a verdict of manslaughter?—Yes, against some person or persons unknown. The child died within a few hours of its being taken to the workhouse.

1498. No registration of houses would prevent a child being dropped in the snow?—No; but still, in giving the full particulars of my cases, I was obliged to mention it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1499. I did not quite follow your argument about the legitimate and illegitimate children; we have been told by other witnesses that, in their opinion, the children whom, roughly speaking, we desire to protect are, in the main, illegitimate; that practically the children that die, that need not die, are, roughly speaking, mainly illegitimate; you seemed a little to traverse that. I was not quite sure what the point was; is it that you think that the proportion of illegitimate children who need our protection has been exaggerated, or is it that East London compares well with other places; what was your argument?—My argument was, that as far as East London was concerned there was not so large a proportion of illegitimate children as elsewhere; at the same time my experience is that it is mainly illegitimate children that require protection.

1500. You would quite corroborate that?—Yes, I had only three cases of legitimate children out at nurse during the year.

Viscount Llandaff.

1501. And only three of illegitimate children also, you have told us?—And only three of illegitimate; that is supplemental to the first proposition that there are fewer illegitimate children in the East-end than elsewhere; and as far as legitimate children are concerned there are very few out at nurse.

1502. I suppose you sometimes have a widower in Poplar?—Often; they are not widowers often for long; they marry again.

1503. You are a marrying district, but what would a widower do?—He either leaves the child with an elder sister of the child, or he marries again, or he puts it out to a relative.

1504. Would you interfere with the elder sister or the relative?—No, I should not.

1505. You would be in favour of that exemption?—Yes, certainly.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1506. Do you think that it is desirable that all the houses in which children under five years of age are taken should be registered, even if there be only one child?—I do.

1507. Have you formed any rough idea of the extent of registration that that would involve?—As far as the East-end of London is concerned very trifling.

1508. Why very trifling?—Because there are so few children that are out at nurse other than with relatives. Since I have been asked to give evidence, I have put it to I should think 20 jurors, who are mostly of the working classes, and they knew of no case in which a child was out to nurse except to a relative.

1509. You

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

1509. You are speaking here of a child under five years, of age and not of a child under one year?—Yes. I think that the necessity for supervision of course is weaker after a year; it is a vanishing quantity of course.

1510. That is very important evidence that you think it a very rare thing in the classes with which you have to do in the East-end to have a child put out for payment at all?—Other than to relatives. It is usual to pay even a relative.

1511. In asking that question of jurymen and others, did your question cover going out temporarily?—Of course I admit that there is a very large number of children that are left from morning to evening.

1512. I am not speaking of that but a few days; a mother goes into hospital or goes away to see another child that is ill, or something of that sort?—It would be as a rule with the mother's sister then.

1513. Or without payment?—Without payment.

1514. But at all events you think that the cases are few in which there is such boarding out for payment?—I feel confident it is so in the East-end.

1515. Then the cases for registration would be very rare in that part of London?—That would be so.

1516. But your experience has been varied; you have not only been in East London but in many other places; would you consider that in those places the need is much greater?—I do; I think there are far more cases in other parts than in East London.

1517. We are legislating, if we legislate at all, not for East London, but for England?—Quite so.

1518. Do you consider that, leaving East London out of account, the number that would have to be registered in London would be very great indeed?—I do not think very great. If you mean that in London it would be by thousands, I should not think so.

1519. At present you know there are only 41 registered houses in London?—I am aware of that.

1520. But you would multiply that by a good many, I suppose?—Perhaps 10 times.

1521. And you think that if you multiplied it, roughly speaking, by 10, you would practically cover all the cases in which any one child under five years of age is boarded with a person other than a relative?—I do.

Lord Belper.

1522. What is the practice amongst the class you are speaking about, the lower class where they have got no relations; supposing the husband to go away, or to go to work somewhere else, or that his employment takes him from home, what would be the usual practice?—I think the most usual practice would be to marry again, or for some woman to live with him as his wife.

1523. Then you think there are very few cases of working men who have no relatives, and who are obliged to make some provision for their (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

children?—Yes. I think, as a rule, that the working man remains a very short time without a woman in his house either as wife or otherwise.

1524. And are there no sailors or people of that sort in your neighbourhood whose business takes them away from home?—There are a very large number.

1525. What do they do supposing the wife is dead and they have got children?—Well, I should very much doubt whether most of them are wives; but they would go with relatives.

1526. I am taking the case where they have not any relatives; I suppose there are some?—All I can say is that there is the clear fact that they are not out to nurse from my experience.

1527. You mean there are none?—None.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1528. Can you account for the exceptional condition of East London in that respect?—I think the code of morals and the ordinary system of life there is quite different from what it is in a more mixed community. Of course they have got curious ideas of life, but I do not think that they would believe in a child being handed over to a stranger to be ill-treated.

1529. You have spoken of South London as well, which I know better than East London; would you apply that remark to Southwark?—I should not like to speak with much emphasis about Southwark; it is some years ago, 10 years ago, since I was there; but Southwark is a more mixed community than East London. Of course, it has quite as bad parts, I admit, as East London, but it is not of such even poverty as you get in East London.

1530. Greater poverty, of course, in some parts than anything in East London?—Yes, there are some of the worst parts in Southwark, but it is more mixed with others, tradespeople in a good position, and so forth.

1531. And therefore their morals suffer?—I think they have got a different code of morals.

1532. A lower code?—A lower code, so far as the poor are concerned.

Chairman.

1533. Therefore, when you said just now that there are fewer illegitimate children in the East End of London, you do not mean that the morality is greater, but that they get married just in time?—Yes. I think that when a young woman gets into trouble amongst the East End poor as a rule (of course, there are exceptions), the seducer does the honourable and marries at the last moment.

Viscount Llandaff.

1534. But I thought you told us it was an extremely common thing for a widower to live with a woman whom he did not marry?—Yes.

1535. Is not that a little inconsistent with what you have just said?—No; they would not live with a young girl, but with a middle-aged woman, probably; a widow, or something of that sort.

M 3

1536. I do

5 May 1896.]

MR. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

1536. I do not quite see why you think a Bill or an Act necessary at all as regards the East-end, because they seem to have an unusual degree of morality there?—The case that I have mentioned as having occurred a fortnight ago shows that these people may even attack the East-end in their practices.

1537. But one swallow does not make a summer; one crime does not make a criminal population?—No; but, like in the case of murder, how many murders do you get compared to the population unless you have a law against it.

1538. Do you think there is an analogy there?—I think a good deal; I think these cases of children, where they do happen, are practically slow murders.

Lord Belper.

1539. Mr. Babey said, in the course of his visits for the limited purposes of the Act now in force, he discovered 3,991 cases where children were kept for hire; whatever that referred to, he admitted there must be a very much larger number of houses than those 3,991. I asked him this question, at No. 501: "At all events, that 3,991 is only a very small proportion of the houses where children are kept for hire?" His answer was: "That is so; no doubt there are many more"; however, that would not be your experience in your district?—No; I can only make a guess when I say it would be magnified 10 times on the present registered houses.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1540. Do you think that there would, if this Bill became law, at once be an immense application of persons desirous to be registered?—I doubt very much whether the law would get known in a wide-spread manner at once; it would be necessary to have inspectors investigating them, compelling them to register. Every man is supposed to know the law, but there are very few who do.

1541. We have had two other gentlemen here who occupied positions as coroners, and they say that the witnesses who came before them were exceedingly familiar with the law about registration?—I think that they must have been from a more aristocratic quarter than the East-end.

1542. But as a matter of fact, you do not think there would be a great number of applications until time had been given for the law to be known?—I do not.

1543. But when it had, say, in six months or a year, do you think that a huge number of people would apply?—I think that they would apply largely, to the extent that the practice is going on; I do not think they would object to being registered.

1544. You do not think there would be any objection on their part?—No, I think that those who did take children would not object to be

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

registered. The others would refrain from taking children. My impression is that in the first instance these solitary cases are not taken with the intention of doing a wrong; but the idea dawns upon them, and they gradually neglect the child, or they find it convenient to take part of the 5s. for their own sustenance instead of devoting it to the sustenance of the child. The inspection would stop that, because there would be the visits from time to time, and the inspector would see what was going on.

Viscount Llandaff.

1545. What position in life was the woman of your one bad case, the one case that you say makes the Act necessary, that of a child boarded-out for hire?—She professed to be a married woman living at Tipperary, and the wife of a coachman; but no one with whom she came in contact believes anything of the sort.

1546. What was the woman who took the child, I mean?—She was a deck labourer's wife, out of work.

1547. Had she any children of her own?—No, never had any.

1548. A woman of respectable character?—Not very. I should say not at all a desirable person as a foster mother.

1549. Was her's a house that would have been registered or that would not have been registered, in your judgment?—She was only in lodgings; had only got one room.

1550. I suppose lodgings can be registered?—Yes; but I do not know what the rules would be about registration; and even if she were registered—

1551. She got drunk the first day?—She did; that would cancel her registration, I should think.

1552. But the inspector would not come in the interval between the morning when she took the child and the evening when she was drunk?—No, but she had the child for six months.

1553. She did not get drunk every day?—No, but I suspect that the child did not drink as much as it ought to have done.

1554. That was not a matter of evidence?—No; that is what one can imagine. The father was not in work; there was no means of keeping the house going except some casual washing that the woman did, and there was the child there without any means for its sustenance.

1555. What was the verdict in that case?—The child had been in the workhouse for three or four days, and the verdict was natural death. In the medical certificate the cause of death was given as embolism supervening on tuberculosis.

Lord Belper.

1556. No reflection on improper feeding or treatment?—No.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered,—That this Committee be adjourned to Thursday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 7^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.

Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.

Lord KINNAIRD.

Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

THE REV. BENJAMIN WAUGH, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1557. You are the Director of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—Yes.

1558. And you are well known as having interested yourself for many years in the question of the protection of young children; will you tell us what is the extent of the Society's acquaintance with the trade of nursing children?—Our acquaintance with it is extensive; geographically it includes England, Wales and Ireland. The extent may, perhaps, be indicated by the number of cases: we have dealt with a little over 250 cases of nursing children for profit in the course of last year.

1559. You have come across 250 cases?—We have had to interfere with that number, and there are many other cases which we do not interfere with which are satisfactory, but we have interfered with 250, rather more, in that area last year. Our method of dealing with them is by warning where we see wrong tendencies, by information where we see ignorance, as the cause of the cruelty. We warned something between 220 and 230 last year, and we prosecuted about 30 for neglecting our warnings and neglecting our instructions.

1560. That makes up the 250?—That is about the 250. Our work is much wider than perhaps the mere criminal aspect or semi-criminal aspect of it. We diffuse and distribute, wherever we find persons taking children to nurse, this pamphlet, and we have sent out some 20,000 copies of it. (*Handing in a pamphlet, entitled, "How to Preserve Infant Life."*) That has been drafted by the doctor at the Great Ormond Street hospital, supervised by our own medical man; and wherever we find people nursing children for profit or from love, we furnish them with that piece of information, which is in many cases useful. Ignorance causes a great deal of the child suffering.

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1561. You say wherever you find people nursing children for profit or from love you send them that pamphlet?—Yes, if we find that they are not doing their duty by the children, if there appears to be any neglect through ignorance or criminal intent. Then we also furnish those who seem to be indifferent with a formal notice, of which I produce a copy (*handing in the same*), and in order to give a little point to that we furnish them with a list of a quarter's returns for the whole kingdom of the prosecutions for the neglect of children (*handing in a copy of one*). This particular one happens to be a return for nine months. We have, in the last seven years, imprisoned and fined over 9,000 persons, fathers and mothers chiefly, but some of them nurses. That is in the last seven years since the passing of what is called the Children's Charter.

Chairman.

1562. You have got no data, or numbers, or means, of identifying any of these cases on this list?—No, they are intended for general use; the verification is not for the public.

Lord Kinnaird.

1563. For what period is this paper you have handed in?—I am not sure; it will be, I think, for a period of nine months. During seven years the judges and magistrates have given 1,600 years of imprisonment for neglect of children and ill-treatment under the Statute.

Chairman.

1564. We are not quite clear as regards this list; is it a six or nine months' return?—I will get to know that, and send you the result.

Lord Belper.

1565. And does it include the 250 cases you mentioned of nurse children?—No, because we only prosecuted about 30 cases.

M 4

1565. Does

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

1566. Does it include the 30 cases?—I am very sorry the document has not got a date on it.

1567. At all events it would include all that class of cases that would come within the period for which this return is issued?—Quite so.

Chairman.

1568. Can you tell us anything about your experience as to the character of nurses, and their motives for nursing?—On the whole, I should say the large proportion are good, well-meaning people; the smaller proportion of them are either very doubtful or very bad in their motives. I will give an illustration of what I mean by "doubtful motives." It is a case that happened a week or two ago in Mr. Horace Smith's Court, where he gave six months' imprisonment. The woman who took the child was a labourer's wife, and he spent too much of his money on drink, and she took in a child to eke out her living. Her own child was well nourished, and the child she took in at 5s. a week was dying because she took it to maintain herself and a little child of her own. Mr. Horace Smith gave the woman six months' imprisonment with hard labour. That was one of the not-criminal intent cases, that is to say, it was not taken to injure the child, but intending to benefit her own child, which was in danger of suffering through the drunkenness of her husband. Many cases we have had where women have taken children in because their husbands were out of work in order to help to maintain the family; not in the interests of the child taken. And these are what I put down as doubtful motives, though not criminal. Many, too, take in children for a little pocket-money. There was a case at Yarmouth where that was assigned as the reason why the woman took the trouble to take these children in. But there are professional women who get a living entirely by advertising for children, and who have a succession of them so rapid as to make their income considerable; and their motive in getting the children is clearly income without regard to the child's life; and the children are fast got rid of. I have two or three cases that I made a note of of that type. There is a case at Southport in Lancashire. The mother was an independent lady of means; 7s. 6d. a week was given with each child; two children were left with her. She and her husband did nothing. Her boy was well nourished and well dressed. We induced the Coroner to exhume the two children, and they were found to have died from opium poisoning. They were both insured, and before their burial the insurance money had been paid; and both the husband and the wife in that case got five years' penal servitude. That is an illustration of a kind of case that I should call criminal. The intention was to destroy the children, and they were destroyed by methods which would prevent detection, simply drugged, made to sleep, and they slept to death and were buried. It was only on account of a quarrel between the husband and the wife about the insurance money that the case came to light.

Chairman—continued.

1569. What class of people were these?—The man had been, I think, a painter, and had given up all work in consequence of his wife's occupation, which enabled him to live.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1570. You say, "his wife's occupation"; what was her occupation?—The taking in of children.

1571. There were two children?—Yes, but she had a succession of them. We found two in the grave; and her business was to get another two from somewhere else; she continuously took children.

1572. What was the profit that induced her to do this?—She received 7s. 6d. a week for each of these children, and also a handsome sum of money for their death.

1573. Receiving 7s. 6d. a week would seem to be a motive for keeping them alive?—No, I think not. I should like to deal with that later on if I may be allowed to do so.

Chairman.

1574. Have you anything more to say with reference to the motives for nursing?—There is the case at Swindon where a farmer was unable to do his work through rheumatic fever, and his wife undertook to nurse children. We found eight children in the house at one time, and they were all starving; one died.

1575. What sort of ages were the children?—They varied from about seven months to five years; and the man got nine months' imprisonment in that case and the woman two years. Only one child died, and the rest we removed to our shelter and nursed back to life again; they were constitutionally strong, but they were being destroyed quietly and slowly.

1576. And this man was a farmer?—He had been, but he had become incapable of work, and his wife took these children in to get a living. She took with two of these children sums of money down; we could not say how much; she admitted to 10l. in each case. We have had a case recently in very high life indeed where a lady has taken to this sort of business, and at the second case (50l. had been paid for each) we were able to detect the proceedings, and brought them to the knowledge of the authorities, under whose favour she was living, and she had to resign her appointment.

Lord Kinnaird.

1577. What appointment?—I would rather not mention the case; she had a very important appointment in public life, a public, or semi-public, appointment.

Chairman.

1578. You do not mean an appointment in connection with the rearing of children; not an appointment by an institution?—No.

1579. You mean something quite independent?—Quite independent.

1580. When you mentioned 50l., do you mean that she got a lump sum down with each?—With each of the two she had taken; and these children were both illegitimate, and both over six years

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

years of age, and they both ran away from her house in consequence of the tortures they had to suffer. One came into our hands; the other we have been unable to find; and though it is six months since she ran away, there has been no discovery of her at all; nobody knows where she is. That is a case where 50l. was paid down, and in a few weeks the girl was gone.

1581. And was there her weekly payment as well?—No.

1582. Was it a case of starvation or of ill-treatment?—Ill-treatment; deliberate.

1583. With the purpose of killing them, do you say?—That I cannot say; it is very difficult to interpret motives; it was, perhaps, to get rid of them. We have had another case, where some were taken with weekly payments and some with lump sums, but all equally badly treated. It was a case that became rather notorious at the time, in which there were ten years' penal servitude given. In the cellar of this lady's house (she was the wife of a lawyer, who, owing to her success in her business, had retired practically from his profession) we found three hundred disused garments of children, all, or nearly all, under three years of age. The woman was a very accomplished woman, and her husband was an accomplished man; I may say with regard to this case that it is a rather peculiar fact that they had been conducting their business for some years, living next door to a constable, and on the ground, as the lawyer said, that the constable was the only man who could never interfere with his neighbour, which is true. Somebody must make a charge before a constable can interfere with any house. The skill of the man in the selection of this spot shows how, understanding the law, people can pretty well screen themselves.

Lord Kinnaird.

1584. Was this public; did it come out in the papers?—Yes; 10 years' penal servitude was the sentence. Mr. Justice Hawkins was the judge.

Chairman.

1585. How long ago was this?—In March 1891. In March 1892 we had another high-life case, a very ladylike person; the lord of the manor and a clergyman of the district were her principal witnesses. Fifteen years' penal servitude was the sentence. That was a weekly payment case. I have mentioned these because some are weekly, some are lump sums, and some are both; and for these reasons I selected them.

1586. Then with reference to the system of remuneration; perhaps you would state now any views that you have with reference to the two systems of a lump sum down and a weekly payment?—I should think we have had during the last seven years at least an average of 100 a year of nurse cases that we have had to warn or otherwise deal with. During that time we have carefully classified the system of remuneration in every case; and I have come to the conclusion that the question of remuneration has absolutely nothing whatever to do with the way in which the children are treated. The sole point is, the character of the woman receiving them. A (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

question was asked, I think by the Lord Bishop of Winchester, as to the matter of weekly payment.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1587. You have now said that remuneration has nothing to do with the case?—Nothing whatever.

1588. Supposing the payment to be, we will say, 7s. a week, and there has been no lump sum paid, is it still in the interest of the recipient to get rid of the child?—Certainly, on this ground: that if the child can be made to die on a shilling a week the woman nets 6s.; but if it required 5s. for the child to live, the woman would net only 2s. The succession of these things makes it profitable. There is any quantity to be got.

Lord Belper.

1589. I do not quite follow you; do you mean that the payment goes on after the child is dead?—Frequently for months.

1590. That the people who put the child out do not take the trouble before making the payment to inquire whether the child is alive or not?—I do not say that they do not take the trouble; they would like, many of them, to do it, but they dare not risk the exposure of their connection with the sad story; they would rather keep away from it entirely.

1591. Your argument is founded really on the fact that the same payment is continued in many cases after the child is dead?—I would not found it upon that, that I would admit; what happens is that another child comes into the house immediately the first is dead, but the same child is continued through the year, and often photographs of the same child are sent to the mothers of three, four, or five children; one child answering for that number.

1592. But if the payment ceases absolutely at death, the person makes no more profit out of getting rid of one child and taking in another, than she would by keeping the first alive?—But excuse me; supposing that a person is in receipt say of 5s. a child; the child will die on 1s. a week, and you can keep the 1s. a week going all the year through, and all next year, and all the year after, so as to provide sufficient nourishment for the child to die of inanition. Teething is the time when they chiefly go off; natural convulsions, the result supervening on too frail a system to throw them off.

1593. Then what you mean is that practically they spend so very little on the nourishment of the child that the child dies, and they are always able to replace it by another child which they can treat in the same way?—Yes, and which the parents do not know that they are treating in the same way, but which some if they did know would be very thankful to know. In this case, the persons interested in getting rid of the child are the people paying for its maintenance; hence comes the fact that there is no check against the destruction of the child on the easy lines of starvation. It would be well if they all strangled, as Mrs. Dyer has done. She is the most saintly of baby farmers I have come across; she gives six seconds of pain, and the

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

the others give six weeks of it. England is wrong altogether about this giving sudden pain and sudden death, and we hang those who do it; but six weeks of pain, six weeks of faintness and dizziness, and finally a collapse, all that is legally little. It may be caused by want of power to assimilate food. I could baby-farm a million a year in this country and never be convicted, and make a good fortune.

Lord Thring.

1594. What do you mean when you say that you could baby-farm a million a year?—Physically I should not be able to do it; but I mean that if the young child is underfed, it will not recover from the ailments of childhood. I mean that any quantity of children may be disposed of by starvation in their infancy. If ailments of infancy supervene upon their emaciated condition they die.

1595. But we have had evidence after evidence that very few children indeed are ill-treated?—In the society which I represent here we have given 9,000 persons imprisonment for 1,600 years in the aggregate for ill-treatment of children since the passing of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act.

1596. That is in seven years?—Yes.

1597. I only wish to point out to you that it is an exaggeration to talk of baby-farming a million a year?—Possibly it is; but I meant to point the statement that there are methods of destroying child-life much more safe than strangulation.

1598. We are quite aware of that; but very often these methods are resorted to through sheer ignorance?—And very often there must be criminal intent there because they are punished.

1599. The number punished is infinitesimally small compared with the number killed by ignorance, is it not?—Would you permit me to make this observation: that there are medical men in England who cannot tell whether a child has died from insufficient food or from inability to assimilate food, whilst it is under six months of age.

1600. That is the very point I put to you; the point I put to you was this, when you talked of this enormous number of children killed, many of them may be killed, at all events, through sheer ignorance?—Yes; that we assume, because we provide for ignorance in the pamphlet I have handed in; the object of that pamphlet is to instruct the ignorant.

1601. Only that is inconsistent with your proposition that so many babies are put out of the way criminally?—Well, it is impossible in early life to say whether the motive is criminal. When there is a profit from allowing a child to die, and a loss from keeping it alive, it is a matter of individual opinion which way the temptation will lie.

Chairman.

1602. Is it not a fact, with reference to these people who advertise, that they almost invariably stipulate for a premium, not for a weekly payment?—No, I think not in the advertisement; I did not read them in that light. I may say

Chairman—continued.

that we have 600 of doubtful character on our register.

1603. Do you follow up advertisements?—We do; and for three or four years, with a view to studying this question, we followed them up systematically. A doctor and a detective were, for that period, employed by us entirely on advertisements; but during that time the advertisements that we answered were not, I think, classified under the heads, advertiser advertised for a lump sum, and advertiser for weekly payments. My impression is that this arrangement is generally a private one, made by correspondence, and not announced in the advertisements. That is the general impression left on my mind.

1604. Therefore, you think that there are many more baby farmers besides those who actually advertise?—A great many. The advertiser is, in many cases, what would be called a middle-man in the market, who receives great numbers of children and disposes of them to persons who are willing to take 5s. a week, or anything that he may arrange with them amongst whom children are distributed.

1605. And those are people whom you have classed just now as the professionals who take in children and get rid of them quickly?—Yes, professionals; and many of them have no children at any time on their premises.

1606. They simply act as intermediaries and pass them on, and make a profit out of the transaction?—Yes.

1607. Can the nursing children business be suppressed, in your opinion?—It is not desirable to suppress it even if it could be suppressed; it is a necessity in the country. We have 50,000 children born out of wedlock in the United Kingdom every year, or thereabouts; I am speaking in round numbers; I believe that is about the number. These are born in various ranks of life, chiefly amongst the poor, but it is impossible for their mothers to maintain the children whilst the children are at their breasts or in their arms; they must be nursed for them, if the mothers are to provide for them. Therefore it is necessary, as it appears to me, that we should have some system which can give a kind of public certificate that a mother will find a proper place for her child, and that the woman who will nurse it will be under proper supervision. I believe that a great many women who in distress part with their children would be delighted to know that they were doing well, but at present they have to depend either upon a monthly nurse at the union or upon a local advertisement in one of the county papers or upon an advertisement in one of the London papers. On the face of the advertisement there appears everything they want, and many of them are bitterly grieved when they discover that they have been deceived, and that the money they gave was used for the life of the person that got it and not for the life of their baby. I have had some sad cases of that kind in the course of our proceedings where the mothers have come confidentially to Harpur Street, fearing that they might be summoned to appear in the case. We never summon the parent;

our

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

our starting point is this; that the child is a citizen; it must be fed properly, and it is not fed properly; prove that to the court, and in that the case is completed. The fact that it is illegitimate or legitimate, that it has a mother or has not, has nothing whatever to do with public duty. Therefore, I do not think that in any case, except where there has been a necessity we have called the mother of the child as a witness.

1608. Therefore you are rather in favour of regulating the business, than of attempting to suppress it?—Very much. It is a necessary business, and if wisely conducted is a business that will be a great advantage to a very distressed part of the community.

Lord Kinnaird.

1609. You said that there are 50,000 children born out of wedlock in the year?—Yes; I believe the return shows that.

1610. The majority of whom have to be brought up by someone other than the mother?—Yes.

1611. Have you any figures as to the number of children born per annum of other families whose parents could not bring them up, because they have to go and work?—There are a great many cases in such towns as Blackburn and Preston where children need day nursing, but we do not call their nurses baby farmers. Mothers go to the factories at six in the morning and return at six o'clock at night.

1612. I only want to know the numbers?—I have not the least idea; it does not come within my knowledge; but we do not call those nursing for-profit-people, those who simply take a child in the morning and return it in the evening, it is only of cases where they are kept for more than 24 hours that I am speaking of.

Lord Thring.

1613. They are nursed for profit as much as in the other cases?—Yes; they are nursed for profit, but under conditions which secure for the child proper treatment. The parent sees the child in the morning and in the evening.

1614-15. Are you not aware that the death-rate is appalling in those crèches?—I am, but it is not crèches I am thinking of so much now as the neighbours who for 3d. will nurse another person's child for the day.

1616. You told Lord Kinnaird that these children were taken in, but, as I understood you to say, not for profit?—I understand that crèches are conducted for charity; and, as I conducted one myself at a loss of 70l. a year for many years, I should be surprised to find that any one made a profit out of a crèche.

Lord Belper.

1617. Would you not correct your reply by saying, a properly conducted crèche?—That I should say: I have never met with an improperly conducted crèche; that is to say, my experience of this society has not led me to prosecute a single case of such a kind, but I should like to say further that I think it is an exceedingly bad (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

thing on many grounds to put a large number of infants of a similar age into one place; they are sure to kill one another; by the mere atmosphere they inhale they are killed.

Chairman.

1618. When you say you have never come across an improperly conducted crèche, what is your actual definition of a crèche?—A place to which various children are taken for the day at a payment.

1619. Do you mean a public institution, or do you mean some old woman who takes in half-a-dozen children?—I mean an institution conducted by a committee, such as a great many parishes have.

Lord Belper.

1620-1. Then your definition of a crèche is an extremely limited one?—It is very large in one way, I should think, for in manufacturing districts large numbers of churches in their parishes make provision of that kind, I believe.

Chairman.

1622. When you talk of regulating this business, I gather that you wish practically to make it easy for any mother who has an illegitimate child to put out, to put it out in a place where it will be looked after?—I do.

1623. Some people, you know, think (I am not expressing any opinion myself) that that might be regarded as what I might call a sort of premium on immorality, by removing one of the deterrents to immorality?—I do not understand immorality which should have a premium put upon it; I think it is far too rude and impetuous a thing to be influenced by remote considerations of that sort.

1624. Therefore you do not think that any harm would be done in that way; I only want to know your opinion?—No, and if it would, I should put a child's life before morality.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1625. One question upon that last answer; I only want to know what it means; do you mean that you think it better that a large number of illegitimate children should be born provided they could be kept alive, than that they should never be born?—No; I mean that when an illegitimate child is born it is a public duty to see that it is treated as a citizen and fed, and properly fed, and treated as one entitled to all the rights of a subject of the Crown; and if in the discharge of that duty we do incidentally seem to put some premium upon immorality, I would say it is our duty to do it. But I doubt it; I do not see any reason to think that it is so.

Chairman.

1626. Have you any experience justifying the hope of any successful regulation of this traffic?—Yes, indeed, a very great deal. Our experience of persons, who are nursing children, is that considerably more than one half of them are doing it to the best of their ability, and are exceedingly thankful for any hints as to a better way

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

way of doing it. Quite one-half of the cases, with a little supervision together with the hints that we give, improve, and very rapidly improve.

1627. You mean to say that quite half are, we will call them "baby farmers"?—I do not like that word, if you would kindly not put it into my mouth.

1628. Quite half, we will say, of the nurses you come across you mean to say are glad of supervision and inspection?—They are not glad of supervision; they are glad to do right by the children.

1629. They are glad of advice?—They accept advice and reform defects.

Lord Belper.

1630. Would they object if they were compelled to be registered?—If reasonable, they would be very glad, because, if I may give a reason, they will become more popular with mothers who want to put their children out, and they will have a larger business, which will make them more profit; it seems like registering a medical practitioner. A registered medical practitioner is a man who stands higher than a man who is practising unregistered. I do not make any comparison between the two in other respects.

Lord Thring.

1631. Are you aware that unless a medical man is registered he cannot recover his fees?—I was not aware of that.

1632. And not only that, he cannot take any appointment, and his certificate is of no value; and consequently an unregistered medical practitioner cannot make his living except by underhand surreptitious methods; what possible analogy is there therefore between that case and taking in children for hire?—I want to make the analogy complete so that no person taking in a nurse child shall be able to carry on, except surreptitiously, the business of nursing children, that is to say unless registered. I would further make it a parallel and say I would not allow them to recover payment unless they were registered as in the case of a doctor. I would make the case as completely analogous as your Lordship's remarks would suggest. It is not analogous at present, but my contention is that it ought to be.

Chairman.

1633. And what is your experience of the parents' desire for the proper treatment of their children when they are out at nurse?—We have given notice this last year to 20 or 30 parents that their children have not been properly treated, and within a few weeks those children have been removed; indicating their anxiety that their child should be well treated. That is an illustration as it appears to me of the desire of a great number (I could not say what proportion), of the parents of the children born out of wedlock, to have them properly treated and to maintain them.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1634. You gave notice to the parents that the children are not properly treated?—To the parents.

Chairman.

1635. How many cases per year of nursing children for profit do you find that you consider bad ones?—We have prosecuted last year about 30. We prosecuted one yesterday at Marlborough-street Police Court, where the magistrate gave six weeks to a woman who was neglecting a child. That we should consider in the class of bad cases; but it is not a bad case of its class; we catch it too soon. You see our business is to prevent a calamity, and we arrest the case before it becomes so serious as to be what would be called a bad case from the public point of view, but the conditions were bad conditions and the tendencies were bad. Therefore, it would be incorrect to say that even all the cases that we have had can be bad cases, so far as the results in the child's life are concerned. The conditions were bad.

1636. And what course do you take with such cases?—We give warnings; and if they are in a country village we give to the person who brought our attention to it a postcard, called the "repeated cruelty" postcard, and we give the name and address of the nearest officer of our society, and we ask that neighbour who called our attention to the fact in a village (they are very largely in villages these cases of bad nursing of children) to be good enough to post that the moment any reversion to the old practice appears. A complaint comes to us, say from a village in Leicestershire, to our inspector at Leicester or at Loughborough; we have two in that county. That complaint is then investigated, and if there be truth in it the woman is informed that she is badly feeding the child, and told what is the proper way of feeding it; also that she is running the risk of six months' imprisonment if this child is found with unnecessary suffering; and she is warned that if she persists in this method of feeding she may come to evil consequences, and that we are desirous of preventing that.

1637. By whom is that postcard posted?—The informant sends it as a postcard to us.

1638. Therefore you proclaim the fact on the postcard?—No, only the case number. The number would be, we will suppose, 19,700 on our books; it is entered; it comes to the society's office. That case number 19,700 is then looked out, and information is sent to the inspector in the district, in England, Wales, or Ireland: "Please call and see this woman." This is not exceptional treatment; we treat all cases of cruelty, domestic and nursing cases, in the same way. And if I may be allowed to refer to the power of this mode of treatment, I may add that the system of warnings is reducing the necessity for precautions very greatly. The system of supervision by the inspector is reducing it right through the country. Whereas seven years ago we had to prosecute in one case of three of complaints, to-day we have only to prosecute in one case in 9. People are beginning to know the law, and to conform their conduct to its requirements.

1639. Before I come to the question of your Bill, with reference to the general question of registration, I may take it that you think that the extension of registration will be decidedly of advantage to the children?—Decidedly.

1640. And

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

1640. And you think that registration, *per se*, does do good?—I do.

Lord Thring.

1641. Would you say why?—I think it gives a standing. If the registration is by an authoritative and competent body it is like a license, and gives a standing.

1642. You do it for the benefit of the person registered?—Both of the child and the person registered; but I was going to qualify my remarks as soon as the questions were finished. May I qualify what I said as to registration? The Chairman asked the question whether I thought registration in itself good. It would not be adequate if it were not supplemented by medical supervision; that I will deal with later.

1643. What do you mean by medical supervision?—I do not know whether I shall be asked any questions on the Safety of Nurse Children Bill.

Chairman.

1644. We are going into that presently?—Then it would come out naturally in the course of my examination on that Bill.

1645. We only wanted to get your general opinions first, before we went into the actual details of the Bill?—I think registration, where it is by a competent authority, by an authoritative body of people who can give standing by registration, and where it is also accompanied by other and adequate arrangements, may be both for the safety of life, to the benefit of the house, and to the great benefit of the sad mothers of these infants.

1646. I do not suppose that people of the worst class that we wish to get hold of would come and submit to registration voluntarily?—Well, if the provisions of the Bill that you propose to ask me questions about were made law, they could not nurse without it.

1647. Therefore those who are interested in this question hope that by making it illegal to keep children in this way we shall have a greater hold over them by making illegal what is practically legal now?—That is the point.

Lord Belper.

1648. What is your experience of the way that the law, as far as it now goes, is carried out?—That it is not carried out at all; I would not say that there are no inspectors under the Act appointed in other parts of England, but my impression is that we have only met with one in the whole seven years, and I think that was at Bristol, but I do not think the man is there now.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1649. Outside London?—I am speaking now of all England.

1650. And outside London?—Yes, I should have said with the exception of London.

Lord Belper.

1651. Would not your opinion be that, before making up our minds whether it is necessary to amend the present law, we should see what would be the effect of the law as it exists being properly carried out?—No, I think not; I think (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

the law as it exists is not carried out, because nobody thinks it worth while to carry it out; there is a general idea that a law which protects children in a house where there are two infants residing under one year old, and will not protect the same children if there is only one infant under one year old, is not a law that it is desirable to enforce; and it is difficult, I believe, because the removal of one child from the nurse's home to any of her friends, if it be under twelve months of age, will at once render the necessity for registration null and void.

1652. You think that the local authority is justified, without taking any steps to satisfy themselves of it, to neglect the law because they think it is not likely to be as efficacious as it ought to be?—No, I should not say that, nor should I indict the whole country for neglect of it. It does not seem to have been anybody's particular business to carry it out, and that probably has been a reason for its not being carried out.

Viscount Llandaff.

1653. It is the business of the local authority everywhere to carry it out, is it not?—It is permissive, but permissive Acts are not imperative.

Chairman.

1654. It is not a permissive Act?—Virtually it is so, for it has been passed since 1872, and I do not think there are three boroughs in England that have taken any notice of it. I do not know whether I am correct in saying three; it may be more.

Lord Belper.

1655. The Act, as I understand, makes it illegal to do certain things, and it puts upon the local authority the duty of dealing with the question; that is hardly a permissive Act?—The practical application of an Act is very difficult if by the shifting of a child from one house to the next house in 24 hours you have rendered the application of it null and void.

1656. You are bringing me back to my question, whether you are justified in assuming that an Act would not be efficacious, if you make no effort to carry it out?—I should not like to say that the Act is permissive in the legal sense of the word; but if it is not, somebody has neglected a duty, and ought to be punished for the neglect of it. As a matter of fact it is not enforced.

1657. There is, however, one authority that has done its best to carry it out, in the metropolis; is that not so?—Yes.

1658. Both under the Metropolitan Board of Works, and now under the London County Council?—Yes, and very efficiently too, as far as our observation goes.

1659. Should you be prepared to endorse the opinions which have been expressed, that the houses at present registered in London, which, I think, number 41, are the whole of the houses where more than one child under one year is kept?—I have no knowledge.

1660. You cannot express an opinion?—I have no data at all on which to do so.

N 3

1661. May

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

1661. May I ask if any of the cases which you have mentioned are in houses which would come under the present law?—I should say that a great many of them are in houses that would come under the present law of registration, still, we have never dealt with them on that ground; we have only dealt with the child's life.

1662. However, if the local authority in which those houses are situated had carried out the law, at all events it would have prevented the cruelty that took place in those houses?—I doubt it; if it was mere registration, and if there was no supervision. They have power, of course, to appoint an officer; but to appoint an officer for one baby farm in a big part of a borough, or for one baby farm in the major part of a county, I think would be considered very ineffectual; anyway, it is not done.

1663. As I understand, the system in force in London is that the houses must be registered; and before they are registered they must fulfil certain conditions, which shows that the house is properly managed?—Yes.

1664. Why is not that possible to do in the country also?—There is no authority or agency like you have had in London to supervise these things and look into them, and keep them continuously under the eye of the central authority. There is no officer like Mr. Babey appointed in the country.

1665. The authority ought to appoint some one to carry out the duties necessary to be carried out?—They might appoint some one.

1666. There is the same authority in the country for carrying out the duties as in London?—Yes; the local authorities have power everywhere.

1667. And the reason it is not carried out is, in your opinion, because they do not appoint an inspector to do it?—Quite so.

1668. There is nothing to prevent them from appointing one?—That is so.

Viscount Llandaff.

1669. And you are aware that London only appointed an inspector when it was stimulated by the Secretary of State?—Yes.

Chairman.

1670. But in rural districts it is not necessary to appoint a special inspector; the police would deal with it I presume?—

Lord Belper.

1671. I think you said that you found that these cases of cruelty to young nursing children were very largely in the villages?—I do not say that there is cruelty largely in the villages; the business is carried on largely in villages.

1672. I understood that your answer was that you have complaints that call your attention to cases that you have to inquire into, very largely in villages?—I gave an illustration of a village to show the use in country stations of these post-cards. The number of cruelty cases is not necessarily large, but the business is large in villages.

1673. You only mean that a great many

Lord Belper—continued.

children are put out in villages?—Yes, and the proportion of cases of cruelty would be the same in villages as in towns.

1674. Do you think that there is frequently as much cruelty or ill-treatment of children in villages as in large towns?—I should say a little more.

1675. At all events, it is largely found in villages?—It is. Violence is greater in villages, according to our returns, than in towns.

1676. Have you had any cases where you have had to take action, where children have been put from institutions into these houses?—Yes, we have had cases where children have been boarded out by institutions; we have called the attention of the institution to the condition of the children, and they have immediately addressed themselves to set it right.

1677. Then would you think it desirable, however respectable an institution may be, to allow those houses in the country which take children from the institutions to be exempted from registration?—Under the condition that those houses were under some medical supervision.

1678. You would exempt them if each house was under some medical supervision?—Yes, periodical supervision.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1679. For clearness sake perhaps you will answer this question; you think that the local authorities throughout England who have not put this Act into operation have deliberately abstained from doing so (that is to say, from appointing inspectors) because they thought that the Act as it exists was not worth it?—I should not like to put the word "deliberately" in. The impression which I have gathered from a great many authorities with whom I have spoken with reference to this subject is that the Act is not worth enforcing; secondly, that the number of cases are small; and that to appoint an inspector would be expensive. I should say that those three things have combined: first, that the Act itself is not worth enforcing from one of its conditions; secondly, that there are very few cases in which it would be necessary to even attempt to enforce it; and, thirdly, that the expense of appointing an inspector to carry out the provisions of the Act would be wholly out of proportion to the work that would have to be done.

1680. Take a place like Manchester; what would you say to the reasons there, for example, why the Act has not been applied?—I could not answer except speaking generally over the country; there is no specific place as to which I could give an answer. We have not been in Manchester much more than 12 months; we have only had a branch there for 12 months, and I am, therefore, very little acquainted with the Manchester local authorities. I, therefore, could give no answer about Manchester in particular.

1681. We had a witness at our last meeting, who had been Medical Officer of Health in Manchester, and who told us that the work, which it would be possible to do under the Act, was being much better done by other agencies at present at work in Manchester. Have you any knowledge of

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

of anything of that sort?—I should say that our agencies are doing the work of supervising nurse children all over England, and with great efficiency and success.

1682. He was not referring to your society?—Then I do not know what he referred to.

1683. But you have no special knowledge of the agencies to which he referred which are subsidised from the rates?—I have not.

1684. You told us that in your opinion quite half the number of nurses who now take children would be glad to be registered; do you mean, would be glad to be registered, or do you mean ought to be glad to be registered?—No; my opinion is based on their character. The inspector who has been at this work for a long time past, Mr. Dowsett, who has been travelling about the country for a long time, and who has answered advertisements, is of opinion that many of them, and I speak roughly when I say quite one-half, would have no objection at all to be registered.

1685. Then how do you account for the fact that so very few are registered now, if, as you told us just now, the fact of being registered would give them a sort of *cachet* which would make people trust them?—I should say that the great bulk of them have no idea that there is such a statute as the Infant Life Protection Act. The great bulk of persons nursing children to-day have never had their attention called to it.

1686. That is in curious contrast with the evidence of at least one of the Coroners who have been before us, who told us that he had never had a witness who did not seem familiar with the Act?—Was that in London, may I ask?

1687. In London?—I am speaking of out of London; I am speaking of England, Wales and Ireland, not London. I can quite understand that in London there would be very few people who do this business who had not some opportunity of knowing the Act.

1688. Then if the Act, as it at present exists were better known, and people all over England were to be familiar with the Act as it stands, you think a great many more would register than are registered now?—Possibly; but the Act only requires registration if two infants are taken under 12 months old, and the practice with nearly all the nurses that we have to do with is not to take two infants under 12 months; they cannot attend to them; but to take one under 12 months, another a year old, and another older.

1689. That is just what I want to elicit; your view then is that even if the Act were to be rigidly enforced by close inspection throughout England to-day there would be a comparatively small number of those who take nurse-children who ought to come under it?—A very small number.

1690. In London at this moment there are 41 houses registered?—So I have heard.

1691. But you told us that you had no idea whether a large extension of that ought at once to take place under the present law?—No.

1692. But in England you think a very small number of those taking nurse-children are registered?—(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

gistered?—Yes. I do not know about London; the London County Council know better than we do. If we find a registered baby farm in London we do not keep it under supervision because we know that baby farms are there under proper supervision at present.

1693. What proportion, roughly speaking, of the children under your supervision are illegitimate?—I am sorry to say that I have not got the facts.

1694. Because in the paper which you have handed in to us here, and which is a paper rather to frighten people than to give any definite information, I suppose?—A paper to shew them that the law is against neglecting children.

1695. I should say, after glancing at a large number of those cases, that in more than 90 per cent. the persons convicted are father or mother?—Yes, that is so.

1696. Therefore that would not look as if you had the protection mainly of illegitimate children?—That is so; but more than 90 per cent. of the children of the country are legitimate.

1697. Yes, but that is not the point: Are 90 per cent. of the children we want to protect legitimate?—Under this Act do you mean?

1698. Under the general aim that such legislation has?—No, certainly not. If you include the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act the bulk of the cases, quite 90 per cent., are cases where the parental instinct has lapsed and vice has supervened and they have become unnatural parents.

1699. Then if a large proportion, something like 90 per cent. of the children we ought to protect are illegitimate, and your society is protecting mainly the legitimate children?—Yours form the 90 per cent. of the 50,000; mine are the 90 per cent. of 16,000,000; and that does not permit of comparison. There are 16,000,000 children in Great Britain and Ireland under 16 years of age or thereabouts, but 90 per cent. of 16,000,000 would be one thing, and 90 per cent. of 50,000 would be another.

1700. The evidence, speaking generally, that has come before us, so far as it has gone, and so far as I have gathered it, is that the overwhelming proportion of the children we want to protect are illegitimate children?—That is so.

1701. That you do not dispute?—No, not at all.

1702. But taking the evidence shown by the actual work of your society, the proportion of illegitimate children is extremely small, and you have given us the reason why?—Yes.

1703. But now you agree that we want to protect mainly the illegitimate children by such an Act as is now proposed; and you suggest, as I understand, that what is desirable is this: that some plan should be devised for facilitating the unmarried mother's knowing where she may respectably send her child?—Yes.

1704. Have you any plan by which that would be brought about?—The Bill that has been drafted, has been drafted on that line; the Safety of Nurse Children Bill, which has been referred to.

1705. We shall be asking you about that presently?—That embodies, in the first part of it,

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

provisoes and provisions which would meet that, I think.

1706. If it passed it would secure that the house in which a child was to be put should be registered?—It would.

1707. But it would not facilitate the mother's knowledge of those places, unless you propose that there should be a publication broadcast of the list of registered houses?—I should suggest that advertisements for children, if not rendered illegal, ought to be understood to be surreptitious, unless the house is registered, and I think that the good nurses, those who are well-intentioned, would be glad to announce that they were registered.

1708. But you do not put any such provision in the Bill?—No.

1709. Then if this Bill became law to-morrow an unmarried mother would have no place to which she could go if she wanted to find out where to send her children?—That is quite true, unless the practice came in, which I believe would soon come in, arising from its being profitable, that the announcement "Registered" would accompany the advertisement.

1710. Now, as to the average respectable mother, or married couple in London, who take children in for nursing, or take a child in for nursing; you have not, I think, yet told us how far you consider they would have an objection to be registered under the Act?—That I do not know.

1711. It is an important point, is it not?—It is an important point; but I should say that the objection should be set aside if it is in the interest of children at large that this registration should be made. I have not any means of knowing what view would be taken in a particular case of that kind.

1712. I should like to read you two or three sentences from a letter written to me. I do not mention the name of the writer of the letter, but it is a person of great experience in London, who writes this: "I cannot but think that such legislation as is now proposed will be found to be very vexatious in quarters where it is not needed, and would seriously interfere with a great deal of disinterested kindness which now obtains among our poor people. For instance, the respectable couple with two or three children are sometimes ready to undertake the charge of a child of a friend at a fair price, and it is often, in my opinion, the best possible arrangement both for parent and child; but if such an arrangement could not be made without registration, inspection, &c., it is pretty certain not to be made at all; in fact, the very persons who are most likely to do well by the child would refuse to submit their homes to the requirements specified in these Bills; I should fear that the result of such legislation would be to send many children who under existing laws are well cared for in respectable families into either (1) baby farms, the number of which would be greatly increased, or (2) institutions such as (I will not name them), a result most deplorable?"—Such cases no doubt are numerous, and there are a good many others that I could mention that we have come in contact with; but in the first

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

section of the Bill I have tried to cover and meet such a case by the words "subject to the opinion of the Court, that in view of all the circumstances of the case it is in the interest of the child."

Viscount Llandaff.

1713. I understand that you have agents who pretty well cover the whole of the country, both Great Britain and Ireland?—Not cover it, I am sorry to say. We are working in that direction; we have 150 stationed in the country now.

1714. Whose business it is to find out every case in which a child is maltreated?—Yes.

1715. And do you think you are approaching a tolerably complete inspection of the whole country?—Wonderfully rapidly.

1716. I see you have in seven years punished 9,000 persons?—Yes.

1717. Could you tell us how many of those 9,000 were cases of nurse children?—The persons punished of that class were a very small number.

1718. Therefore the greatest evils arise in the case of children at home under their own fathers and mothers?—For the reason that they are more easily detected.

1719. Have you any reason to believe that you failed to detect cases of cruelty among nurse children?—Yes.

1720. Do you not apply your operations to nurse children?—Yes; we have a woman that ought to have been hanged three times over, and for three years we have not been able to catch her.

1721. How many mothers have you hanged?—None; the Public Prosecutor takes murders.

1722. You cannot give me the number of nurse children in the 9,000?—I have not the particulars.

1723. How do you get your information?—Chiefly from a neighbour, who knows that something is going on wrong in a house next-door; he forwards a complaint to our office of which he has the address; we give to every house in our area of the country a notice of the law and its provisions as they apply to children, and where a complaint may be made. We have 12 correspondents in Leicestershire; they are all in the market towns in Leicestershire; but we deluge the villages with the information, that in their market town there is a Mr. Brown at such-and-such a house who will receive any complaint on behalf of a child illegally treated; that the names of informants are kept strictly private; that all expenses and inquiries are undertaken by the society; and it is through these leaflets, of which we have printed millions, that our work comes to us.

1724. Then you would propose, as it were, to duplicate that agency by another set of leaflets and inspectors acting on behalf of the local authority?—I would like the local authority to appoint our men; I am satisfied that in that case they would employ a competent and able man to enforce this Act.

1725. Employ them and pay them, you mean?—And pay them by a grant to the central office;

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

office; we should be glad to do it free if we had the funds, because it is a part of our work.

1726. You think, therefore, the existing machinery you employ would be sufficient for detection if taken over by the local authority?—No, not taken over; I would not like the local authority to manage it, but to authorise it.

1727. Why would you not like the local authority to take it over?—The conduct of our work is most delicate and difficult, and once let it get out of experienced and sympathetic hands, there will be greater fiascoes than the country has ever seen, I think. The most delicate and difficult work, I think, is to interfere between parent and child, and our work, therefore, is delicate and difficult, and no public authority could discharge our duties.

1728. Does that apply only to interference between parent and child, or does it apply to interference between foster-mother and nurse-child?—I think it applies chiefly where there is parental right as to which the public is sensitive; but the public is rather cruel about baby farmers, and prepared to adopt any innovation upon a baby farmer; so it would not be dangerous in that case. At the same time, I think it would be an advantage if the whole law in the interests of the children were worked by one institution.

1729. You think you would do the work better than any local authority?—Our men are so trained for the work; they have had large experience.

Lord Thring.

1730. I should like to ask you one or two questions: I quite understand the very great benefit of your society, and you have the greatest possible experience, but I wish to direct your attention to the object we have in view; first of all you quoted a case of opium poisoning; that is a case of murder; it is perfectly clear that registration would not have prevented that?—Mere registration would not have prevented that, but, as I said before, registration in the Bill that we have drafted on our own experience is to be supplemented by the supervision of an inspector and a medical officer.

1731. That is perfectly true, but in cases where they intend to murder the child, surely they would take care to put it in a place where there was no supervision?—Possibly they would, but the difficulties would be very great when the public came to know throughout the whole county or town the new law, which we should circulate to every house, of what was illegal, and that information should be given to such-and-such a person. The thing might be possible just as theft is possible, though illegal, but sooner or later it seems to me that the illicit business would die out.

1732. I cannot understand it; we are aware that there are a great number of illegitimate children, and that there is the strongest possible motive in the case of certain illegitimate children, I am sorry to say, to get rid of them?—Yes.

1733. Do you really think that these unfortunate mothers who get rid of their children, not because they wish to get rid of them, but because (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

they wish to enter respectably into life again, would put their children into registered houses?—I do, a great many of them.

1734. My point is this, that I cannot understand, with regard to these ghastly stories of cases where children are either quickly or slowly murdered, where there is an intention to murder a child either slowly or quickly, how registration is to prevent it?—But if the public could be informed that some murder was going to take place, or that some person was likely to commit a murder, and the place at which it was to be committed was pointed out, does not your Lordship think it would tend to prevent the committal of the murder?

1735. I consider that to be the whole point of the case which you have missed entirely; in all these things the difficulty is to detect the crime; if you can once find out where a child is going to be murdered or where it is going to be injured, clearly the police regulations are quite sufficient to prevent it. I want to know how the fact of registration would enable detection to be secured?—It would bring the authorities into contact with the character of the woman, with her daily habits, and with such features in her conduct as would arouse in any sensible medical man suspicion.

1736. I am afraid my question was misunderstood; under the existing law and under any proposed law, before you register a house you examine the house to ascertain the character of the woman; and you ascertain if she has a good character and if the house is well kept?—Yes.

1737. I say, in cases of intended murder or intended extreme cruelty to children, how would the fact of registering houses facilitate the detection; because by your own hypothesis those crimes would not be committed in the houses that were registered?—I see your point; in other words that if we limit the number of places in which murders can be committed or crime can be committed, by such limitations and by bringing all these under supervision we do not limit the crime; that is your point.

1738. You drive it into other places?—If there is an absolute determination to do something criminal, I quite agree with you; but my experience is that persons commit crime by a gently, steadily pursued course, from which, if our inspector gets into their company, and they know that he will visit them once a fortnight, they will desist.

1739. Is it not true, as you said yourself I think, that the object of these registered houses is to enable poor women to know where their children can be well kept?—Yes.

1740. Therefore the object of your Bill is to enable houses to advertise themselves as being registered with a view to show that they are well kept?—Yes.

1741. Then I do not understand why, at the present moment, if registration is so great a benefit, we are told that it is so little used, why do not people apply for it?—I cannot answer that except first, that persons who take in children to nurse are not required to register unless they take in two children under 12 months; secondly, that they are not aware

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

aware of the *modus operandi* or the existence of the power.

1742. I perfectly understand why it might be right to advertise the existing law more than is done at present, and why the local authorities ought to take it up more; but that does not answer my question. My question is, whether, in effect, the whole reason for our extending the law would not be to enable houses to advertise themselves more fully as registered houses, and thereby enable people who wanted to place their children out well to ascertain the houses where they could do so; is it not rather inconsistent with the fact that, at the present moment, there are few applications, and also that, above all things, the better class of nurses do not wish to be registered?—I could not say what will be the result of this new and better system, but my impression is that it will accomplish the purpose that you fear it will not, namely, reduce the facilities for, and reduce the danger of, the destruction of child-life.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1743. There are a certain number of these unfortunate women who, when they have a child, only desire to get rid of it somehow?—Yes.

1744. Is it not therefore likely that if their child were placed in these registered houses, where they knew they would be well taken care of, they would be afraid that they would be kept more in touch with the children than they would wish to be?—There would no doubt be a certain proportion that would answer to that description.

1745. You said a short time ago that half the cases would be glad of advice?—I think they would be glad of a doctor coming in now and again.

1746. Would they not object to compulsory inspection apart from medical supervision?—Some of the people who have had a little taste of sanitary inspectors and their arbitrary ways might imagine that the same arbitrariness was going to be carried into nursing children; but it is not necessary; there may be the most courteous treatment of these people; it will all depend upon the spirit in which the Act is carried out.

1747. Do these nurses make a profit, as a rule?—Yes, they do it for the profit.

1748. We were told that in very few cases they made a profit?—If the child is properly kept its nurse makes very little profit, but if she lets the child dwindle away on a small proportion of the money she receives for it she is making a large profit.

1749. Then, practically, on the registered houses there would be no profit?—I doubt very much whether there would be much profit if there was only one child; the business being larger there would be fair profit.

1750. The business being larger the children would be more crowded together, and consequently more liable to die?—If the registration is of a house for three children you cannot crowd them together, because the registration would limit the number.

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

1751. With regard to these cases of cruelty which you spoke of in the villages, do they concern cases under 12 months; most of your cases of cruelty are in the villages?—Most of our general cases, but not baby-farming cases.

1752. It would not include children under 12 months old?—Our ordinary cases include babies in the houses of their mothers and fathers from the day of birth.

1753. Would you say that they were mostly under 12 months, these cases of cruelty in the villages?—(Oh dear, no; they are distributed as in ordinary family life, at various ages.

Viscount Llandaff.

1754. As to Ireland: have you had any personal experience of the work of your society in Ireland?—Yes.

1755. Are you acquainted with the debate in 1890 on a Bill resembling the one that we are considering?—Mr. Stuart Wortley's Bill do you mean; yes, I saw him on the subject.

1756. You remember that the Irish Members raised the strongest objection to extending that Bill to Ireland?—I remember they did, but why I do not know. My own objection to the Bill was that it labelled the whole thing "illegitimate child," and that it required evidence to be given that would drag to light the shame of the mother. It appeared to me that it might have that result.

1757. The Second Reading debate was before the word "illegitimate" was put into the Bill?—Was it; it was a very bad amendment.

Lord Kinnaird.

1758. With regard to one or two questions asked you by Lord Thring, you would not admit that it is proved that there would be universal objection to registration?—I think that nothing is proved on the subject. I do not think we have more than evidence of probability, and my impression is that the probability is the other way.

1759. Then I understand that while you think that no Act probably would make it impossible that crime should be committed, you want to make it more difficult?—That is so.

1760. And that you are partly crippled for want of funds; if you had more funds you could put an agent in every district?—Yes.

1761. And you would rather that some grant in aid was made to you than that it was given entirely to a public authority to carry out?—I would rather that a public authority registered and looked to us to carry out the provisions of the Bill.

1762. Why would you not leave it to the local authority to carry out the Act?—Because I think it is a delicate thing to do, and it requires very special machinery for the doing of it wisely and well, and our machinery is specially adapted for the doing of it.

1763. I did not quite understand the figures you gave; you stated to the Committee that last year you dealt with 250 cases?—That is of nurse children.

1764. And you said that the average per year, for seven years, was 100?—About that.

1765. Is that number of 250 due to the fact that

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

that you are doing the work more efficiently?—That we have a larger number of inspectors; we had very few cases in the first year; we had only two inspectors in 1889, and we have 140 or 150 to-day.

1766. So that your figures do not show the proportion of cruelty, compared to what it was seven years ago?—They only show the proportion of detected cruelty now to what was detected seven years ago.

Viscount Llandaff.

1767. The 250 children are nurse cases only, I understand?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1768. What are these, in this list of convictions which you have shown us?—Almost all parents; they are not necessarily all married persons. There are many cases in which mothers are nursing their own children, illegitimate children.

1769. Now, in reference to a question which Lord Belper asked you, you said that though a nurse could get 6s. or 7s. a week for a child, it would be more profitable to make a big profit for a few weeks than to make a small profit of 1s. a week for the entire time that the child was with the nurse?—Yes; if I rightly understand your question I should say, yes; that it is more profitable to take 5s. a week for herself and use 1s. for the child for a few weeks, and then get another and do the same with that.

1770. Then we have heard that London is the only town which is efficiently worked by an inspector; do you maintain that most of the other towns are inefficiently worked, or do you take it that your officers take the place in them of the London inspector?—Our officers do the work, not of the London inspector, because we are not limited to the case of a child in a registered house. We deal with any child badly dealt with. In London there is a special officer to deal with these special houses only, in other parts of the land we deal with all houses.

1771. Have you ever made any public statement as to what proportion of English children are not properly looked after?—No; I should say that in all the country there is a residuum of character rather than population by which a child is not valued but rather hated as a nuisance, and in that the tendency to ill-treatment exists.

1772. If the old Act which has been in force for 25 years has been for the most part a dead letter, what difference do you think would a new Act of Parliament make; would it not share the fate of the old one?—If it was inefficient it probably would, but if it was an efficient Act, it would be enforced, as efficient Acts generally are.

1773. Who would enforce it?—As soon as it was passed, I should take the liberty to write to every county council and authority in England, calling their attention to it.

1774. But could you not do that now?—It is not worth doing.
(0.95.)

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

1775. You cannot protect children, you mean?—Not under the Infant Life Protection Act; you can protect them far better than under that Act by enforcing the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act; even in baby farms the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act to-day is the better of the two Acts for the children; but a great improvement will be made, and a prevention of the necessity of interference on the ground of cruelty, if we can get people who take nurse-children started in their business with credentials that justify public trust.

1776. And do you give it as your opinion that over a large part of England there is a great deal of preventible cruelty?—I think that all cruelty is preventible. The alternative before the mind, "Proper treatment, or a just forfeiture of liberty," is the cure.

1777. What would be the effect, do you think, if the Act were limited to illegitimate children?—I think it would be to brand the children when they come out in after-life. I think the sooner the fact that they are illegitimate is forgotten the better.

Lord Belper.

1778. I should like to ask you one question before we go to your Bill. I think I gathered from your general description of your views, that you would like to see this law extended, but would like to see it extended with very considerable reservations and exceptions?—Yes, I would.

1779. And not only special exceptions, which may or may not be possible accurately to define, but also general exceptions, which would be left to the criminal courts?—Certainly.

1780. And you would not like to see a Bill become law without providing for these exceptional cases?—No, I should not; there would be great hardships if it did not.

Chairman.

1781. Shall we go through your Bill now, the Bill for the Safety of Nurse Children?—I am quite at the service of the Committee.

1782. Perhaps you would like to say something first of all as regards the general lines of the Bill; looking at it, first of all, as to how it differs from the existing law and how it differs from the Bill which I introduced into the House?—I am afraid if I were to compare the three I should take a very long time.

1783. The first clause begins: "Subject to the opinion of the Court that in view of all the circumstances of the case it is in the interests of a child, and as in this section mentioned;" that is very vague, is it not?—It is necessarily so, I think, and the phrase is quite new to legislation so far as I know, and therefore it cannot be defined very well. But in the enforcement of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children I have so many times seen that people have been brought technically within the law and were punishable, who ought not to have been brought within the law; who, by mere accident so to speak, have been brought within it; and, dealing with these I never allow prosecutions; I constitute myself a sort of grand jury. I direct all the prosecutions
O 2 of

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

of the United Kingdom, and I disallow the prosecution of 25 per cent. of the cases sent up from the country, on the ground that while technically within the provisions of the Act, they ought not to have been, and they must not, therefore, be proceeded against. That is my reason for inserting the words you have read into an Act that is to be administered, probably, by another body.

1784. What do you mean by "another body"?—The County Council, at the present time, so it is proposed.

Viscount Llandaff.

1785. I understand the first section to mean this, that if a person receives for profit a child under seven years of age, and is proceeded against before a justice of the peace for that offence, receiving the child without being registered, the justice of the peace shall be at liberty, if he thinks that in view of all the circumstances the child is well off, to dismiss the prosecution?—That is so; that is the object of it.

Lord Thring.

1786. It is to give him a dispensing power, in fact?—It is; and it is to set up the interest of the child and not of the Statute itself. The predominant thing is not the Act but the child.

1787. He may over-ride the law?—He may say that it ought not to apply.

Viscount Llandaff.

1788. That is to say, that the general rule would work so much injustice in that case that it is not to be applied to that case?—That is so.

Chairman.

1789. Then we go on to Sub-section (a) which says, "Any person who shall retain or receive for profit any child under the age of seven years for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such child apart from its parent for a longer consecutive period than twenty-four hours;" that is practically the same idea as that which exists in the Bill which we have before us?—It is.

1790. Only it is extended to seven years. What do you mean by the word "retain"; do you mean retaining the child against the will of the parent?—No; it means to have and possess; it is the word, I think, which is used in the original Act.

Lord Belper.

1791. I should like to ask you the meaning of the word "profit" in your Bill?—It is defined at the end.

1792. We have two Bills before us, one which says "hire and reward," and the other, namely, yours, which says "profit." Which page is that definition on?—It ought to be in the definitions; but I see it is not in them. I will make a note of that point.

1793. Then as it is not defined, would you tell me whether you mean taking any hire or reward for it, or only taking such a sum as they can make a profit by?—No, I mean taking any money whatever in return for the care of the child.

Lord Belper—continued.

1794. I do not know whether you would not think the words "hire or reward" better than "profit"?—I think they are.

1795. It is not meant that you shall have to prove that the person made a profit?—No. Without a definition it is an unfortunate word to use.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1796. Will you give us your reasons for increasing the limit of age to seven years in this Bill?—We have just had two cases of children in a woman's care, both over five years old, in their sixth year, and they were badly treated and ran away.

1797. They came under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act?—They came under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, but the woman under the Bill I am now proposing would not have been allowed to take them without registration; that is the point; the object is not so much to deal with cruelty as to prevent its occurrence.

Chairman.

1798. Then you say in Sub-section (b) of Section 1: "Any person who shall retain or receive to maintain a child under the age of 12 years apart from its parents for a longer consecutive period than 24 hours, with a view to deriving profit either immediately, or at any future time, for any act or performance of the child, or from exhibiting the child?"—That is intended to deal with the acrobatic institutions for the training of children. They are taken in usually about six or seven years of age, and come out about twelve years of age, and this is to require them to take a license for the training of children and for keeping the place under supervision.

1799. Do you come across many cases of that description in which strict supervision is necessary?—We did years ago, but we have nearly driven the trade out of the country. I am told that it is chiefly conducted in Antwerp, and on the Continent in various places. There are a great many children sent out of England to be trained for acrobatic work in consequence of our interference with the training here.

Lord Thring.

1800. Suppose I take a child at five years old with the intention of deriving profit at a future time, when he is 21, from his performing the act of shoe-making; is that what you wish to prevent?—How could you make a profit on a boy over 16 years of age who was not your boy, when, by the common law, he is his own master?

1801. I take him and apprentice him, we will say, with a view of making a profit?—An apprentice is taken for the purpose of education.

1802. That is in the exceptions?—That is provided for in the sub-section.

1803. Then what is the meaning of the word "act"?—"Act or performance." I have taken the phrase, I think, from the Dangerous Performances Act, and I am dealing now with the training

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

training of children for the acts and performances before they are acted or performed.

1804. Then this clause simply means "dangerous acts or performances" in the mode of acrobats?—Not necessarily limited to dangerous performances, but to dangerous training; for instance, putting a boy to do the "splits."

1805. You must put in "dangerous" or some qualification, because the word "act" applies to every action of a boy?—

Viscount Llandaff.

1806. A farmer who takes in a boy with a view to having a boy to scare the crows would be within this Act? Would that be "deriving profit"?—I do not think so; he pays a wage for what the boy is doing, fees him; that would not be "deriving profit."

1807. The clause reads: "Any person who shall retain or receive to maintain a child under the age of 12 years apart from its parents for a longer consecutive period than twenty-four hours with a view to deriving profit either immediately or at any future time from any act or performance of the child, or from exhibiting the child." A farmer who takes in a boy to scare crows would come within that clause, would he not?—That case ought not to come within the clause, and it is not intended to do so.

Lord Thring.

1808. I only want to point out to you that this clause would require amendment in view of such a case as I put to you?—Surely the provision "subject to the opinion of the Court" which comes at the very beginning covers a case like that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1809. Would it not be much shorter to say that anybody who receives a child may be called before a Justice of the Peace to show whether that child is properly treated?—It is a matter of legal phraseology which I am not clever at. I am not responsible for the phraseology of this Bill.

Lord Thring.

1810. I only meant that these words could not pass in their present form and I asked what you meant; did you mean dangerous performances;—I mean more than that; I mean that though the performance is not necessarily dangerous, if the training for the performance is painful.

Viscount Llandaff.

1811. This is an amendment of the Prevention of Cruelty Act?—It is an extension of it and the title of the Bill is "An Act to amend the Law for the Protection of Nurse-children, and Children on Exhibition or in physical training."

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1812. As a general question on the Bill, are you not trying to mix up two very different sorts of offences together?—Yes; I do not like to treat either of them as offences; two different

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

sorts of business, but having a common point in the fact that the persons have helpless children in their care for profit.

1813. It would be more simply done if you kept the two things apart?—Possibly; there was in our Act of 1894 a provision similar to this, but not going far enough; it did not require registration; the only alteration made in regard to the acrobatic children I think was that parents were allowed to train without supervision. It was modified to permit a parent to train his own child.

Chairman.

1814. Then you oblige any person who takes any child as mentioned, to "register the same or cause it to be registered" within seven days?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

1815. You put seven days' deliberately?—It is convenient to allow a week.

1816. You think 24 hours too short?—Very much; the distance to the County Council for a woman in a village might be considerable. you see I am not thinking of London, but of the country.

1817. We have been told that people habitually evade the present law, by parting with the child before they have had it 24 hours?—That is true; but once a woman is registered that cannot occur again.

Lord Thring.

1818. I thought in all the Acts the great thing was to register the house before the child is received?—Most desirable.

1819. Here it is seven days after?—They are bound to do it by that time.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1820. They would have now to go to the Rural District Council, not to the County Council, to register?—Even the Rural District Council they are great distances sometimes.

Lord Thring.

1821. Is it not the great thing to register the house before the child is received?—The practical difficulties suggested in the discussion of this original Bill years ago was this: how can you expect a person in the first instance to register before she has had a customer.

1822. What is the good of the existing Act if the registration is not to take place before the child is received?—For the first child it is not any, but once registered the nurse and house would be under the supervision of the Council.

1823. It would, in fact, repeal the existing Act, requiring registration before reception of the children; do you mean that?—No, I do not. As to the details of this Act I am only prepared, I am sorry to say, to answer on the principal object and its provisions.

1824. There is the difference between taking evidence after a man is sentenced and taking it before; the Act requires, or the Bill before us requires, that before the children shall be received the character of the person shall be investigated,

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

tigated, the house shall be investigated, and every circumstance necessary to show that it is a proper place; surely if you allow the child to have been there seven days before this investigation takes place it will be quite a different thing?—Maybe; but many children are deposited there and then at these houses. Somebody comes; a child is brought; it is now or never; the nurse to be cannot say, "Go back again," and it is to meet those cases that the provision is put in.

1825. I only wish you to consider the inconsistency between the existing Act and your Bill?—That I should not feel quite fatal to it; I do not like the existing Act.

Chairman.

1826. Then you do not think it necessary that a person should register before taking the child?—Should register in the first instance do you mean? I do not think it would be practicable to enforce this before taking a child.

1827. That is practically the present Act?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1828. Then you rather think these registered houses would be carried on for the purpose of a profit?—Yes, partly that.

1829. Do not most people, when they start a business, start it on the chance of customers?—Yes, in ordinary business. As a matter of fact a great many people in distress come with a child; the woman wants to get rid of the child, to place it with somebody in the neighbourhood known to be willing to take a child. To meet these people and treat them reasonably, and not harass them at the very start, would be, I think, desirable. I would not object to the other if it were reasonable.

Lord Thring.

1830. You have told us that you wish houses to be registered in order that it might be stated in the advertisements that they were registered, and that these unfortunate people should know where to send their children; how on earth can a woman know where to send her child when you allow the place to be registered seven days after the child is taken?—There are a great many avenues to these nurses. I mentioned one, but there are a great many others. I might write an article on how children get into the nurses' hands. Granted that there is an objection to giving seven days in the first case, all subsequent children will come into a registered house. It is not seven days' notice with each child; if a woman takes 20 children in any year and goes on 20 years, once registered it is only in the first instance that the seven days' applies, and every other child enters a registered house.

Viscount Llandaff.

1831. The registration is to be renewed every year?—Yes.

1832. So that a child a year may go into a non-registered house?—Yes.

Chairman.

1833. If a house takes three or four children

Chairman—continued.

you would only register the first child?—The house would be registered from the first child.

1834. And then suppose it came to her taking five or six children?—If her house is registered for less than that number there would be a breach of the regulations, and the children might have to be removed to a place of safety. I have defined what the law has constituted "a place of safety," an union, hospital, surgery, or place of a like kind.

1835. Then you deal with the exemptions?—Yes.

1836. Your first exemption says that the section "shall not extend to any person who receives a child (a) for any reasonable and temporary purpose," who is to interpret that?—A court. Suppose I have an invalid child, and I send it down to a woman in the country for a week's convalescence; a thing common enough by my society; we send a child for a single week down to some person, a friend of the society, who is willing to take a child, but requires some payment for its maintenance.

Lord Thring.

1837. It should not come before a court at all?—It should not come before the court at all, and it would not in practical working; if the court has the discretion, the people who proceed will exercise their discretion before proceeding to the court.

1838. You mean where the people in the village think it is for a "reasonable and temporary" purpose there would be no proceedings taken at all?—I do not say the people in the village. Suppose we confine ourselves to London. Mr. Babey is the inspector; attention is called to the fact that a woman has a child for which she is receiving profit; the child is there, say, for hospital treatment, it is going back in a week or a fortnight; that is a case obviously not to be brought to the court, and the inspector under the Act would soon lose his situation if he brought it to the court.

1839. It is the discretion of the inspector then?—It is the discretion of the court, and the inspector knowing that exercises his judgment whether he shall bring it into court.

1840. Then should not the villages be inspected?—The inspector would be the person acting under this general provision.

1841. Supposing there is no inspector?—Supposing there is no inspector the authority for the enforcement of the Act would not exist, I suppose, except with the police.

1842. Then it would be in the discretion of an ordinary constable?—An ordinary constable would, as I understand, have no right to exercise discretion; he would have to bring it to the court; I may say that in administering our own Act of Parliament I am daily exercising considerable discretion, and have done so for seven years, and everybody seems to think it is successfully done; the difficulties which present themselves to your Lordship do not seem to me to arise at all, perhaps only because I am not a lawyer.

1843. I admit the benefit that your society has been, but I point out to you that whether

you

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

you leave or do not leave it to the discretion of an inspector or constable, is not according to my notion, a trifling matter?—Who is to interpret the word "wilful" in our statutes? A child has been neglected and is taken ill; who is to interpret whether it is by wilful neglect or not? Should we sweep all children suffering from disease into the Court, for the Court to exercise its discretion whether the child ought to have been brought to it. That is not the way. The discretion is exercised by the person who discusses with himself, Shall I take proceedings? Not till then does the Court decide whether the proceedings are wise or unwise, and in practical work whoever undertook to enforce this Statute, if suitable for the purpose, would see that it was not enforced when the purpose of the Act was obviously not to have it enforced.

Chairman.

1844. "Wholly or mainly for the purpose of education" is the next exemption?—It excludes institutions taking children, such as Dr. Barnardo's institution, and others; they would not object to supervision, but not under this particular Bill probably.

1845. Supposing this lawyer's wife you were telling us about had simply said that she was keeping these children partly or mainly for the purpose of education, sending them to school every day?—It would be for the persons entrusted with the authority to enforce this Act, if they were satisfied that the children were going to school every day and were thus brought into contact with ordinary outside life every day, so that nothing could be done harmful to them without the ordinary public having the chance to see, under those circumstances I should say there was no need to enforce the Act; but if it was a mere pretext, then it would be the duty of the authorities to bring up the case before the Court.

Lord Thring.

1846. I send a child to a London lodging-house keeper; I take lodgings for the boy and send him there for the purpose of his being sent to a day school, and the child is ill-treated by that lodging-house keeper; why on earth should he be exempted?—The lodging-house keeper then would come under another Act, the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; for that a lodging-house would not require to be registered.

1847. This is again an amendment of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—Yes, the protection of infant life is a part of the whole scheme; you cannot separate the main motive for what is now proposed from the main motive of the Society's Act.

1848. The Act may be always evaded where it is wished to be evaded, because almost every child may be alleged to be sent "wholly or mainly for the purpose of education"?—There are not many of these cases of ill-treatment by nurses except under five years of age, and the bulk of them are under three.

1849. Suppose a young child in the case I put is ill-treated at a school, why should that case be exempted?—There is no reason to put

(O.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

schools under this Act; the object of this proviso is to prevent the application of the Act in cases which would be technical and vexatious, and beyond the scope of it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1850. That is exactly the point on which you need to be very careful?—Most careful.

1851. And the gist of the difficulty in an Act of this kind lies in the exemptions?—It does.

1852. Therefore we are necessarily to look very carefully to the wording of these particular clauses, because it is there that the real cause of the difficulty lies?—Yes.

Chairman.

1853. We have to avoid the two extremes; making the Act unreasonably severe where it is not intended to be severe; and, at the same time, to avoid drawing clauses through which cases would slip which we want to catch?—My own feeling is that the first Bill before the Committee of your Lordships is drawn without sufficiently recognising these dangers.

Viscount Llandaff.

1854. You know, perhaps, that the witnesses who have appeared here for the County Council have said that even the exemptions in the Bill of 1890, which are much less large than yours, would render the Act nugatory; they would not care to accept it with them?—I do not know what those exemptions are.

Lord Thring.

1855. Supposing it were possible to amend entirely to your own satisfaction your own Act, the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, and supposing we could supply you with sufficient money to conduct your investigations as you liked, do you think there is any use in the original Act, or in this Bill at all?—I think this Bill of ours would be of very much greater use; it would be much more an indirect preventive of cruelty. The Prevention of Cruelty Act is a direct preventive of cruelty.

Chairman.

1856. We had got as far as sub-section (b); now (c) is "a hospital, or convalescent home, or place of the like kind"?—The object of that is to prevent unnecessary irritation by the enforcement of the Act.

Viscount Llandaff.

1857. Do you include an orphanage, for instance, in "a place of the like kind," with a hospital or convalescent home; you seem to confine it to places where there are sick children?—That is one exception; there are others you will find later.

1858. In Mr. Loch's list of institutions where children are taken, there are a vast number that would not be of the like kind with a hospital or convalescent home?—I should be strongly in favour of including in the exemptions any institutions conducted by responsible committees.

1859. Or responsible persons?—Well, "persons," I am in a little doubt about that.

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1860. Then

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

1860. Then (d), "into a place which is, or may be hereafter, under Government inspection, or is conducted under a committee with the authority of the Local Government Board, or under any Act in pursuance of the relief of the poor." That is more or less exempted under the present Act?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1861. "Hereafter," that would include all time?—Why should you repeal the Act by universal inspection?

Chairman.

1862. Then (e) "into any place under the regular supervision of a registered medical practitioner." That opens rather a large question?—Well, it is a desirable exemption where a medical man is attending constantly; and there are plenty of places that are private places conducted by excellent people who would not like to register; there are persons of fortune who desire to be kind to children and who have a nurse whom they pay so much a year to, and servants to take the children, and they would not like to be registered because they are not doing it (though receiving pay in some cases; not always) for profit in the common sense, but still they do receive hire or reward as the Act would be interpreted; and if a medical officer is regularly in charge of the institution I think that would be a sufficient ground for exemption.

Lord Thring.

1863. Surely you are aware that the investigations we have had have shown that a registered medical practitioner is not always a sufficient safeguard for child life?—I think if an Act of Parliament cast upon him the responsibility of exempting from a Statute, the influence of that fact would be to give him great seriousness in the doing of his work.

1864. You must be aware that in the hospital investigations and various others that we have had it has been shown that registered medical practitioners are not always desirable guardians of children?—That is quite true; I quite know that there are black sheep in all flocks, and that if a medical practitioner's certificate would necessarily exempt a place, perhaps in one case in one hundred he would not be worthy.

1865. But, of course, there are certain bad people who wish to evade the law; we know, and you are quite well aware of it, that institutions might get a registered medical practitioner who would not be a proper person to safeguard children and that he might evade the law?—Yes, I am afraid that is quite true, and that there are cases in which it would be very undesirable to leave it in his power.

1866. Then do not you think that that exemption is not quite right?—I wish we could make it obligatory upon the medical authorities to turn out a lot of scamps in England; I could give them a few dozen to begin with.

1867. I think you will admit that that is rather too wide a provision in your Bill?—It is wide, I admit.

Chairman.

1868. Clause 2; have you anything to say as to that?—No, except that there are three things that are required; that the person shall be suitable, that the house shall be suitable, and that the number of children for which the house is adequate shall be specified.

1869. But, then, by your previous clause the person does not get registered before taking a child, but takes a child and then gives notice?—Yes.

1870. Then supposing the inspector comes and finds the house unsuitable, the person must give up the child, I suppose?—Give up the child, or be liable to the penalty.

1871. In the first part of Clause 2 I thought you registered the house and the woman; the second part is as to the registration of the child?—There is a register to be kept at the house by the woman, according to this Bill, and she is to put in it the child's name, address, and the person from whom she received it; registration of the house and the woman is by the local authority.

Viscount Llandaff.

1872. The effect of this clause is that none but first-class people and first-class houses will ever get registered at all, is it not?—I do not think that "first-class" would be quite the term ordinary common sense would treat these cases as in domestic cases. If a house is a reasonable house for a family of five children, the next door neighbour perhaps having five, it should pass; I hope it would never be carried out on the line of having model institutions created.

1873. At any rate the ignorant nurses and the indifferent houses would never get registration?—I do not think they would.

1874. Then your view is that they would be shut out altogether from the nursing business?—Yes, and that a better class would take their place.

Chairman.

1875. There is a slight error in the drafting here; it cannot be right as it stands; "The Local Authority of every district shall," and then there ought to be (1) in a parenthesis, so that it would read "(1) Cause a register to be kept," and then, secondly, "Immediately on the registration of a child make or cause to be made?"—That is wrong; it is a matter of printing.

1876. Then Clause 3, that is practically the same as the Act?—The same substantially as the present Act.

1877. Then Clause 4, I think, is rather different?—Slightly different.

1878. The sub-section is rather different from the other in that it puts "name and address of the person from whom every child was received," I think it is rather more clearly defined in the other which speaks of the places where the person has resided for six months; you think it is advisable to be able to trace the persons, do you not?—If you mean their parents, no.

1879. The person who brings the child?—I think it is desirable to know who brought the child, but as little as possible to drag the parents into the case. I think the Bill you have your name

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

name to, states that the time and place of the birth are to be put in.

1880. "Shall state truly in writing the name, sex and age of the infant"?—Yes. It appears to me that we have nothing to do but to protect the life of the child.

1881. You have "the registered name, age and sex of every child received"?—Yes.

1882. Practically the same?—I do not go so far as to give the birth; there is a little further provision in your Bill.

1883. "The place and time of its birth and the place or places at which he has resided during the period of six months?"—If the place and time of birth were put down there would be probably some scandals as the result, which could not, as far as I can see, be of any advantage to the child. I am most anxious to avoid scandal in these things, and simply seek the welfare of the little thing that is entrusted to the nurse.

1884. Are you in favour of obtaining the sanction of the Local Authority before removing a child from a registered house, except in certain exceptions, as in the cases of relatives or guardians?—No, I should not interfere too much with them; if you do you will turn out of it the finest spirits; they cannot bear too much interference; the less the thing is interfered with the better; after the genuineness of the woman and the suitability of the house and the number of children are certified, with the supervision of the medical officer of health of the district, then as little as possible interfere with anything, and the more respectable people will then conduct the business.

Lord Thring.

1885. The second sub-section of that clause amounts to this: that if I take a child under a false statement I am responsible for the false statement unless I can prove that it was made without any connivance or consent on my part, or without any knowledge on my part that it was false; but I cannot possibly prove a negative?—I do not think, my Lord, you would go into this business. The women who do go into it do make false statements, there is no doubt; and the only object one has in this clause is to prevent deception which would end in disaster to the child.

1886. This clause would do exactly what I think you would wish not to do, deter honest persons from undertaking the business, because I, the keeper of the house, should be responsible and had up for a false statement unless I could prove what it is impossible to prove, that it is made without my connivance or consent or without knowledge on my part; therefore I should have to be had up before the magistrate to disprove a thing that I cannot disprove?—It would not be necessary that you should go before the magistrates if the authorities prosecuting in the case took into consideration what you had to say.

1887. I only wanted to draw your attention to it; I think it does exactly contrary to what you wish, places an obstacle in the way of honest people?—The more of such obstacles there are removed the better; I quite agree with you.

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Lord Thring—continued.

1888. So I think that had better go out!—But I do not see the point myself.

Viscount Llandaff.

1889. The person who takes a child would, under your Bill, be obliged to announce that he had got it, unless he was already a registered person?—Yes.

1890. Why do you want to double the machinery?—Not "unless," but if she is registered. The registered nurse would not have to comply with this.

1891. Whoever takes that child, if the child is under seven, under your Bill, will have to give notice at the register?—No, the entry would have to be made into the register kept by the woman.

1892. That is book-keeping; if your Bill is enforced you would get hold of a child in this new place by a notice from the person who takes it?—Quite so.

1893. I do not see quite what you gain, except correct book-keeping, by forcing the person who parts with the child to make these entries?—When a child is within a few weeks of death it is frequently transferred from one to another, and three or four persons then have it in order to divide the responsibility. The cause of death is what we want to trace, and to get back to the original person who for months, say, had it in charge. It is the subtlest business when criminal intent is in it that there ever was.

Lord Thring.

1894. Clause 5. The same remark applies to Sub-section 2 of Clause 5; I need not repeat it?—It is to prevent untruthfulness; there is nothing in it that is not practically provided for in the original Act.

Viscount Llandaff.

1895. There is no presumption in the original Act, but here you say: "he shall be deemed to have wilfully and knowingly given these false particulars unless he shows that the false statement was made" without connivance on his part?—That is the person who keeps the house.

1896. There is the presumption of wilful falsehood against him?—In that case.

Lord Thring.

1897. I consider it obviously unjust to make a man guilty of a crime committed by another person unless he can show that he was not privy to the crime?—I think it would be very unfair to do so, but is that actually the bearing of this? An entry is made of a false kind contrary to the Act, and it has been wilfully or negligently done; it is assumed that that has been the case until the man brings some proof that this document, or this letter that he has received, or statement that he has received in the presence of somebody, was an authority which a reasonable and honest man would accept. That is the object of the clause.

Viscount Llandaff.

1898. You do not by your Bill allow the defendant to give evidence for himself?—It

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would

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

would be a great defect if it was so; but he is permitted in Section 12, which applies, Section 12 of the Act of 1894.

1899. Yes, I beg your pardon?—That section provides for that. I may say that I attach great importance to the evidence of accused persons.

Chairman.

1900. Clause 6, "Power to local authority to cancel licence;" that is practically as in the other Bill?—Yes.

1901. Clause 7, "Obligations to give notice of death to coroner;" that is the law at the present moment?—Quite so. It recites a great deal of the old Act because it proposes to repeal it. The reason for doing this is, that I much prefer one Act.

1902. Clause 8, "Punishment of offences"?—This Bill requires a written authority, which differs from your own Bill. The person having power of entry must be authorised in writing to enter; he cannot go with a free hand to go where he likes, but he must have a specific authority for the purpose.

1903. You are talking of Clause 10 now, "Power of entry"?—Yes.

1904. I am, myself, I may say, going to bring up an amendment that the entry shall be by means of warrant?—Warrant! I think that is most undesirable.

1905. You have it under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act; you have right to enter under warrant?—Yes, but to get a warrant in this case brings such an enormous hammer to bear on a trifling thing. We only enter with warrants where we are satisfied that the crime is of a serious kind and is being concealed; but in dealing with the nursing of children where crime is not assumed that would be a most undesirable thing.

1906. But if the Act were passed it would then become an illegal thing to keep children in a house not registered?—Quite so; but if they are fat and happy, it ought not to be dealt with as a crime. I would not use a warrant to enter; it is such a serious thing for people to have their house entered by warrant.

1907. Who is it to be authorised by in writing?—By the local authority.

1908. Has the local authority power to compel a person to admit?—By this Bill it would have it.

1909. It is practically giving a new power to the local authority?—It is giving a new power to the local authority.

Viscount Llandaff.

1910. You have deliberately, in Clause 8, cut down the imprisonment to a month instead of six months, and the fine you raise to 10*l.* instead of 5*l.*?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1911. This would alter the provisions of the existing law relating to imprisonment and fine?—It would, and I think it very desirable that those provisions should be modified.

Chairman.

1912. You provide for entry by warrant in Sub-section (2) of Clause 10?—In Sub-section (2) of Clause 10; that would be on some information before the magistrate justifying such procedure; that would be on a genuinely criminal ground.

1913. I do not see anything more in the Act myself that calls for particular remark, except that I do not know whether the Committee have anything to ask you with reference to the "definitions" in Clause 15?—I would like to say a word if I might on Clause 14. I attach considerable value to all those provisions. In the cases in which we have proceeded under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act we have sometimes only had a child as witness, an assistant nurse, a child of seven perhaps, and her evidence has been momentous; it has been everything to link the crime and the criminal; but without the provision as to the evidence of a child of tender age, and without that presumption of age clause, and without the general provisions of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, we should not have been able to have convicted the people, because the main point in the evidence would have been excluded from the court. They are matters which have been given a great deal of attention to, and whatever the Bill is, they should be introduced.

1914. Have you anything to say on the definition clause?—No, I have not, except that I am sorry to find that "profit" is not defined, and I should say, for my own part, that your own phrase "hire or reward" is a better term to employ.

1915. We have no provision in the other Bill for removing the children?—No; when you close a house your Bill leaves the children.

1916. Do we now?—Yes. You have no provision for removing the children. You have no future place of care for them.

1917. I do not think the children are left there?—I daresay they are not, but in the Act no provision is made for removing them.

Viscount Llandaff.

1918. The workhouse is the place they would be removed to under the ordinary law, is it not?—The workhouse under the ordinary law for any child presenting itself, or any parent presenting a child; but an ordinary person presenting a child I do not think comes under the ordinary law.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1919. Could not the inspector take it to the workhouse?—He could take them, but the workhouse authorities are not bound to take a child from an inspector. We have had to get a special power to get magistrates' orders admitted into the union. Any parent presenting himself with a child, or any destitute child presenting itself, would be admitted.

Viscount Llandaff.

1920. Or anybody presenting a child of tender years found, say, in the street?—If it is found in

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

in the street the constable can take it under the Industrial Schools Act, to be dealt with temporarily; but he cannot take it to the union authorities to be dealt with by them permanently. In our Consolidated Act we got powers, in Section 11 I think it is, to compel unions to receive, with the sanction of the Local Government Board. The union authorities say, If persons could make ventures in public institutions, and, on finding they were a failure, cast the children on the workhouse, where would the parish rates be in some districts? If a person is found destitute in the street at any age a constable may take him to the union.

Chairman.

1921. Would not the ordinary law be sufficient on this point?—We have had a large experience of the ordinary law, and found workhouses shut by the dozen to us, and we went to Parliament with a brief justifying Parliament in passing a

Chairman—continued.

new section requiring guardians, when children were sent by magistrates, to be received. It was only in a few cases that that was necessary, because on the whole the guardians work amicably with us, and have always done so; but I think it very desirable that there should be some provision that it should be in the power of the authority, whoever it may be, legally to use the workhouse and at once.

1922. In Clause 16, you say: "In the application of this Act to Scotland"; does it apply to Ireland?—This Act is to be applied in the same way as the old Act. It is intended to apply to the United Kingdom.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1923. This Bill of yours now before us is called "Safety of Nurse Children"; you gave another title, I think, some time ago?—I spoke of it as an Act for the "protection of nurse children and of children trained for profit."

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been recalled, is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1924. You put in a return which was asked for the other day recording the legitimate and illegitimate births and deaths in Salford?—That is so, for a large number of years.

1925. From 1877 to 1894?—Yes (*handing in the return; see Appendix*).

1926. From which I see that of legitimate infants there were 121,816 births, and 21,366 deaths under one year; and of illegitimate infants there were 5,372 births, and 1,993 deaths; and the proportion of deaths to 1,000 births was, in the case of legitimate infants, 175, and in the case of illegitimate infants 371?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1927. But that is subject to the deduction which you referred to the other day as to the number of children who are registered at their birth as legitimate and at death as illegitimate?—Yes; I referred to a law which prevails almost universally through England and Wales.

1928. By a law you do not mean an enactment?—No, I meant to say it is what one really observes to be a law. My reason for putting that return before the Committee, in addition to the others which I have already put in, is, that I could not get out the figures when last I was examined in time for your Lordships. I cannot, and I am afraid you cannot, get any more information on that subject; it is complete as far as I know; and your Lordships will allow that the figures for those three towns give particulars of a large number of legitimate and illegitimate deaths in the aggregate; I think the figures are as reliable as they can be made.

(0.95.)

P 2

mothers'

7 May 1896.]

MR. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

mothers' meetings of their districts, to use all their influence to induce those they visit to attend regularly at their respective places of worship, and to send their children to school. In their weekly report they must (i.) mention general sanitary state of house visited. (a) Number of rooms and number of occupants. (b) Presence of bad smells; if present, are they such as to arise from deficient ventilation or from bad drainage? (c) State of the walls and floors. (ii.) Report upon general mode of living, especially with regard to personal and general cleanliness. (iii.) Report upon the feeding of children, especially of those under two years old. (a) Is the baby nursed by the mother, or partly nursed and partly fed by hand? If the latter, state upon what it is fed. (iv.) Report upon any case or cases of illness in the house. (a) Nature of disease. If contagious, when and how supposed to have been contracted. (b) How many of the family are affected? (c) Is there a doctor in attendance? If so, state how far and in what way they have assisted" (that is how far the district visitors have assisted) "the people in carrying out his orders with regard to sanitary precautions." Your Lordships will see that the rules laid down for the guidance of the district visitors are about as complete as they could be.

1931. There is an enormous amount of clerical work to be done, apparently?—An enormous amount.

Viscount Llandaff.

1932. These ladies have no right to enter any house?—And I think that is the secret of their success.

1933. That is what I thought. Do they meet with any difficulties practically?—If I might associate myself with them I would say that we did not go about as policemen.

1934. I mean, do they meet with difficulties, or are they admitted willingly to all the houses?—Very willingly.

1935. They come as friends, and there is no objection to their coming in?—That is so.

1936. There is no necessity to put a clause in the Act of Parliament giving them the right of entry?—No, if this were done there would be a difficulty at once.

1937. "Irrespective of creed and circumstances" you read. Do they visit the houses of shopkeepers?—As a rule they visit the cottages of the poor; and on the sixth page of this same report you will see the number of cottages in each district, that is to say the number practically of houses with less than four rooms, or with four or three or two rooms in each. The number of cottages your Lordships will see is given for each district in Manchester, and the number of visits paid to each of those cottages. There are 13 districts in Manchester, and the number of cottages in each of those districts is shown, and also the number of visits paid to the houses in each district.

1938. Then there are two visits to each cottage per annum?—Yes, it averages about that.

1939. Nineteen thousand cottages and 35,000 ordinary visits?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1940. And do these districts cover the whole of Manchester?—They cover the whole of Manchester. I beg pardon, that is not the case; they cover the whole of the poorer parts of Manchester. I am sure that the ladies would say that they wanted to extend their operations if they could; it is a question of money.

1941. May we practically take it that, speaking of the poor parts of Manchester generally, every house is thus being visited now?—As far as possible and as far as the visiting powers go.

Viscount Llandaff.

1942. Every house of the cottage class?—Every house of the cottage class; we specifically term them cottages.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1943. But it is a system which, roughly speaking, is co-extensive with the whole town of Manchester, the poor parts of it I mean?—I would rather say the poorest parts; I am afraid not all the poor parts. That is in contemplation and will be carried out we hope some day.

Chairman.

1944. Where do the funds come from; these people are paid salaries?—A portion of those funds are derived by subscriptions, and you will see that the various ladies subscribe a very considerable sum every year towards the payment of these women, and the rest is contributed by the Corporation.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1945. Can you give us roughly an idea what the Corporation pay to them in a year?—I am afraid I cannot give you the figures.

1946. In the balance sheet here those payments do not appear?—No, and I am not able to explain why; I am not quite sure about it.

Viscount Llandaff.

1947. Look at page 44; you see a donation there, "Lord Mayor of Manchester, Clarke and Marshall's bequest," but it is only 5*l.*?—That is since my time.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1948. But you speak with some hesitation as to whether the system is subsidised from the rates?—I know that it is, definitely.

Viscount Llandaff.

1949. But under what authority?—The work of the Ladies' Health Society Visitors is a sanitary work, and is done under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health, and as such of course can be paid for by the Corporation. It is definite sanitary work, and, if I may say so, is work of the very first possible importance from a sanitary point of view.

Chairman.

1950. And does it have a beneficial result in the death-rate of Manchester, so that it is less there than in other large towns?—The death-rate of Manchester is steadily falling; it has fallen in recent years to a lower figure than it ever reached before

7 May 1896.]

MR. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

before the last extension of the city; but that is probably to a great extent because of that extension.

1951. I am afraid we are getting a little wide of our subject, but I will put this question: Do these ladies come across many of these children that are put out?—I have no doubt they do.

1952. You do not know what their proceedings are when they do come across them?—Yes; their course of proceeding would be at once to communicate with the Medical Officer of Health. If it was a case to refer to the police it would be referred to the police; but we never used to like to do that if we could possibly help it.

1953. I believe there is one registered house in Manchester?—I cannot speak definitely on that point; there are a large number of houses in which children are looked after, and looked after satisfactorily in the way of charity; but that is not what your Lordship means, I take it?

1954. No; I mean under the Act?—I cannot tell you about that.

1955. I presume from what you told us the other day that the re-act on the Act is not administered as an Act in Manchester, is because of the efficient supervision which this large committee of lady visitors is able to give?—So far as I was concerned, whilst I was there as Medical Officer of Health, I found no necessity to put the Act in operation. I suppose in certain cases it must be in operation; I cannot say.

1956. Then this arrangement is purely a voluntary arrangement on the part of the inhabitants?—Entirely.

1957. Do you know if such a society exists anywhere else?—I believe that in Glasgow a certain number of health visitors have been employed for many years by the Sanitary Department; but there is nothing of the kind in England, so far as I know, except in Manchester and Salford.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

MR. THOMAS JOHN BARNARDO, F.R.C.S., is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1964. You are the founder of the homes which go by your name?—Yes.

1965. And you board out a considerable number of children at the present moment?—Yes.

1966. I believe about 1,900?—The exact numbers are 1,751.

1967. One thousand seven hundred and fifty-one boys and girls?—Boys and girls and infants.

1968. They are boarded out?—They are boarded out at present.

1969. All over the country?—Yes.

1970. And how many of these are under five years of age, and would come under the Bill?—448.

1971. That is about 30 per cent. of them?—Yes, a little less than that; and of that number 292 are under two years.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

1958. I understand you to say that in the Public Health Act there is enough to enable this machinery to be put in force anywhere?—I should think so, regarded in the light of sanitary work.

1959. About the cost, nothing appears in the balance-sheet about any contribution by the Corporation?—I am afraid I cannot explain that. I think I can put it pretty clearly before the Committee by saying that a definite number of the female district health visitors are paid by the Corporation, and they are, therefore, the servants of the Corporation.

Chairman.

1960. They are paid directly by the Corporation, and their salaries would not appear in these accounts, you mean?—I presume they would not; I cannot say that that is the reason why they do not appear, but of the facts I was mentioning I have accurate information.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1961. Are you speaking of a substantial contribution, not a mere question of 5*l.*?—No; the visitors I speak of are paid; they are the servants of the Corporation, but they are connected with the Ladies' Health Society in this respect, that their work is superintended by the ladies of the Health Society on behalf of the Corporation.

Chairman.

1962. I do not know whether you made it quite clear to the Committee whether your experience makes you in favour of the Bill as a whole, or against it?—I am, on the whole, decidedly in favour of it.

1963. You are in favour of an extension of the law?—Yes, I am sure that it is wanted; it is, I understand, a general Bill, and refers to the whole country.

Chairman—continued.

1972. You have careful rules with regard to the boarding out of your children, have you not?—Yes.

1973. And you exercise supervision over them?—Yes, very close supervision; I produce a copy of our rules for ordinary boarding out (*handing in the same*). You asked me if I boarded out all over the country, and I said, yes; that is not strictly true; that is true only as regards 137 of the auxiliary boarding-out scheme; 1,614, who are among the generally boarded out, are in these districts marked on this map, that is to say in the south and east of England; the 137 who are boarded out under what we call our auxiliary boarding-out scheme, are all over the kingdom, some being in Scotland.

1974. Do you find that you have considerable difficulty

P 3

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

difficulty in finding suitable foster-parents?—There is some difficulty but not such as opposes a real barrier to boarding out.

1975. Do you think that the provisions of the Bill would interfere with your being able to obtain respectable foster-parents?—If it is passed as now printed, yes.

1976. I think I may say on the part of the Committee that there is no desire to subject institutions which are responsibly and carefully managed, to registration and inspection as provided by the Bill?—The principal Act, which is referred to in this Bill, excludes in the 13th Section, absolutely, institutions established for the protection and care of infants; but even if that be carried into the new Bill it is not sufficient for our purpose, because if you demand the registration of those with whom we board out children you oppose an effectual barrier to our getting good foster-parents, and the better the foster-parents are, the more certainly will they object to registration and consequent inspection.

1977. Inspection by whom?—By the officers appointed by the Bill.

1978. Do you find that they object to inspection by local committees?—No, because the local committee is formed in the village or hamlet where the woman lives. The local committee have recommended her to us as a suitable foster-parent, and therefore they are regarded as her friends. That local committee generally consists of say the clergyman of the parish and of ladies who are well known, and their visits are rather acceptable than otherwise.

1979. Then is what you mean, that in your opinion the provisions of this Bill are not needed for such societies as yours?—That is so; and not only so, but that they ought not to be extended to those with whom we board out children.

1980. It has been suggested to us by the secretary of a kindred society to yours that the difficulty might possibly be got over by the society being certified or licensed by some central authority, by some Government Department, and that then the society so licensed should practically have a free hand under details to be settled by that Government Department; is that your opinion?—That might meet the case so far as societies like my own are concerned if freedom from registration was not to be obtained on any other terms.

1981. You would not object to that?—I would not object to that except in a case of this sort. Many of our institutions are already certified under the Local Government Board.

1982. Then they would be exempt?—They would be; but some of our institutions are not, and the Local Government Board would probably not certify them simply on the ground, say, that the fabric was not such as meets with their approval in the first instance. But it is good enough for our purpose; and these uncertified branches are under the same management as the certified branches; yet according to the Act we would not be able to board out a child from an uncertified branch.

1983. That is not quite the point. I want to know this: Would you have any objection to one of the Government Departments, either the Home Office or the Local Government Board,

Chairman—continued.

making inquiries into your system of boarding out, the *bona fides* and the status of your committee, your rules, and various other items to satisfy themselves as to the stability of the society. I am assuming that you are an unknown society which applies for registration; would you in such circumstances have any objection to submitting yourself to the Local Government Board in order to obtain a certificate?—It would depend very much upon what that would involve. If it was merely a question of registration we could have no objection; but it might involve such changes in administration, for example, as we would not be prepared to carry out. I could not say that on the face of the thing there would be no objection to registration under a Government Department.

1984. What do you mean by your "uncertified branches"?—Our whole institutions are voluntary institutions as contrasted with certified institutions, but being voluntary and not certified under the Reformatories Act or the Industrial Schools Act, we apply to the Local Government Board to certify some of our branches, and they have examined certain of our institutions and have issued their certificate in their favour, while others remain without certificates.

Viscount Llandaff.

1985. Then you have several houses, have you, scattered over the country?—We have 82 branches scattered all over the country, and some of these are certified. Our object in getting certified under the Local Government Board, which does not interfere with our administration, is to enable boards of guardians to transfer children to these branches and make payments for their maintenance which otherwise the Local Government Board would not sanction.

Chairman.

1986. Amongst those 82 institutions do you include any of the places that you have just mentioned to us where these children are boarded out?—No; children who are boarded out are necessarily not in institutions at all.

1987. I did not know what you called an institution?—A home having its children resident in it, and a resident staff appointed for the purpose of control and training and education.

1988. What is the average number you have in these 82 branches, in each?—They differ so much I could not give you an average number, because the smallest have but 15 girls and the largest have 480 boys. We are especially anxious that this Bill may not be permitted to check or hinder our boarding out system, because, apart from its other great advantages, the mortality and sickness of children boarded out is so much smaller than in the case of children brought up in any other way whatever.

1989. What age are the children when they generally come to you?—They come to us mere babes of even a few hours old up to great fellows of 17 years of age.

1990. Do you take them in at once without any inquiry?—Certainly not; our investigation is very keen and very thorough. We do not admit any unless absolutely destitute; unless there

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

there are no relatives of any sort upon whom a legal claim can be made for the child's support.

1991. Are your children, those that you have in your charge, mostly legitimate or illegitimate?—I would say mostly legitimate, but with a very large number of illegitimate.

1992. And what do you do in the case of an illegitimate child that is brought to you by the mother who wants to get a home for it?—We would first institute a searching inquiry into all the circumstances of the candidate. For example, if the child was under one year old, we would endeavour to discover the putative father, and compel the mother to apply for an affiliation order, and if she declined, we would decline to assist her, on the ground that otherwise our institutions might be made mere coverts for licentiousness. Suppose that a woman applies for an affiliation order and does not obtain it, or, having obtained it, obtains a small grant, a weekly grant for the maintenance of the child, we would then assist her in some adequate way to maintain her child.

1993. And then you put these children out with foster parents?—A large number of the children so admitted are placed out with foster parents.

1994. And, of course, the infants have to be hand-nursed, I suppose?—Yes; but I must inform the Committee that I have a home for infants as well. We have a large institution of our own, for infants under two years of age, which it would not be suitable to board out, infants which come to us, for example, subject to disease.

1995. Then you do not board out infants till they get to two years of age?—We board out infants at the very earliest age if they are such as could be boarded out; but to board out a child who needs constant surgical or medical care in a hamlet with a poor woman who has little knowledge of such cases would be unwise.

1996. And then, having boarded them out, you take every precaution to see that they are properly visited and fed and looked after?—Yes; if you refer to the rule book you will observe that the boarding-out rules involve a weekly visit by the local committee; but in addition to that we have our own visitors, properly qualified medical women, among whom all our boarded-out children are divided.

1997. What do you mean by "medical women"?—I mean educated, who are qualified as medical practitioners; and these ladies visit the cases and, with such experience as only a woman can employ in these matters, report upon the children, and that is independent of the report of the local committee. Such visits are paid at the very least twice in the year; I mean the surprise visits of medical women.

1998. Do you find that the foster parents object to the visits of these people at all?—Well, we have had objection raised, but it is generally overcome, because, not being bound by any hard-and-fast rule, we adapt our action to the particular case.

Viscount Llandaff.

1999. Does that mean that you do not visit those who object?—No; but we endeavour to convince them of the value of visitation, and to visit them as seldom as we can.

(0.95.)

Chairman.

2000. Have you any personal experience of the registered and unregistered houses under the existing Act?—No; I mean to say I have no experience of the necessity of registration, and have not made inquiries. To avoid trouble I have never placed out more than one infant under 12 months old in any one house, to meet the requirements of the principal Act.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2001. Would you do so if the Act allowed it?—No.

2002. It is not because of the Act that you abstain?—No; I would not in any case consider it right to place out more than one infant under 12 months old in any house. May I suggest that neither of the Acts, neither the principal Act nor this Bill, proposes to put any limitation upon the number of young children under two or three years who are taken into any registered house.

Chairman.

2003. I think that is left to be decided by the registering authority?—I know that you give discretion to the registering authority, but I thought that I might mention the point.

2004. Then you cannot speak from your own knowledge either of the advantages or the disadvantages of registration?—I can only say that as a member of the public taking an interest in the subject I have formed an opinion.

2005. What is your opinion?—My opinion is that registration would be of great benefit in the generality of cases, but unless registration is accompanied by some other provisions I can hardly see how the waste of infant life will be checked.

2006. You think, therefore, that in the generality of cases registration would do much good, but that you require considerable exemptions to protect *bona fide* charity; is that what you mean?—That is so; and that something more than registration will be needed if the waste of infant life is to be checked.

2007. What do you mean by "something more than registration"?—I mean that if a house is only registered, if the woman who seeks registration satisfies the authority who grants her registration, and she desires, at the first application, to be registered for, say, five or six infants, the moment that is done the door is opened for the waste of infant life to continue, as these children, who cannot be identified, who cannot in any way be marked so as to be known, may be changed over several times, and the fact, therefore, that the house is registered may rather give a facility for crime than otherwise.

2008. You are talking of cases like these Reading ones?—Yes; these crimes now before the public. I mean that a great criminal would perhaps find the Bill as it now is rather a help to the commission of crime than a hindrance.

2009. I do not quite follow you there. If a house was registered, registration implies also visitation?—Yes.

2010. If the person who visited the house was worth anything at all, I should think he or she would be able to detect before very long that a

P 4

rapid

7 May 1896]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

rapid change of infants was going on?—Everything would depend upon the area of their visitation and the number of infants in each house. Everyone knows that the illegitimate infants, the children of unmarried mothers, are generally in a very poor state of health; the change that takes place in two months is such as to make it impossible to identify them. On this subject I have closely questioned my own experienced helpers, and they say the changes that take place in two or three months in any young infant make it impossible for those who only casually see it to recognise it again.

2011. Have you any suggestions to meet those defects which you say exist?—Yes. The suggestion I would make would be, first, that the number under three years of age admitted into any registered house shall be absolutely limited by the Bill, not by the discretion of the registrar, to one, unless in the case of twins; then that the inspection of such registered houses where infants under the age of three years are, should be not less often than fortnightly, or at most monthly; and that the area for each inspector (who, of course, must be a woman) should be limited. The reason why I mention three years of age as the limitation is this: that after that they can talk, under three or under two years of age they cannot talk; and that is a very important element in the whole subject of identification.

2012. But your first proposal would not prevent a person, who was determined to commit crime, from taking in one child at a time and getting rid of it and taking another?—It would render detection, I think, much more likely and more rapid. An inspector who visits a house will, of course, take notes of her visitation, and such notes would comprehend a general description of the child.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2013. Could you or anybody give such a description of a child of 11 months old as would enable it without fail to be identified two months afterwards?—Not perhaps by others and if it were mixed up with other children; but I am supposing that the inspector is a woman, and that her visits are repeated and not less frequent than a fortnight or a month. I think then she could, and only thus can she, retain any clear conception in her mind of the personality of each individual child. I think if there was but one infant in each house and the conditions remained the same, it is possible that identification would be much more rapid.

Chairman.

2014. May I take it, then, that you are in favour of an extension of the law provided it does not interfere with your institution?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2015. Why do you think it is that the existing Act is not put in practice more widely in England than it is by the appointment of inspectors and so forth?—That has always been a puzzle to me. I do not quite know why. We have always wondered why the existing Act was not carried out more. I am afraid I cannot offer an opinion as to why it is.

2016. Have you come in contact at all with

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

problems connected with the Act, that is to say, in your work in so many places have you ever found yourself liable to be checked by the Act if you had been acting illegally?—I think if I had sought, for example, to place two where only one was permitted, I might have been brought in some way under the restrictions of the Act.

2017. Of course you might legally, but do you mean that it would have probably happened?—I think it is possible that I might have boarded out more than the number of infants permitted by the Act in houses which were not registered, and no opposition would have been offered to my doing so.

2018. You are speaking, of course, of outside London; you exempt London?—I am speaking of the suburbs.

2019. But in London the Act is in full operation?—I think in London it is more difficult; but we board out very little in London.

2020. Do you ever use registered houses?—No, I have never boarded out children in registered houses. We have made inquiries in a few instances, and we would have liked to use them, but they are not, as a rule, of a sufficiently good quality, and that is an important point; that the registered houses under the Act are not, I think, of as high a quality as houses which are unregistered and are available to us for boarding out; and I explain that by saying that the best houses will not register.

2021. And do you think that the fact that the best houses do not register at present is due to the fear of the foster parent lest by applying for registration she should be ticketed as a baby farmer; or do you think it is for some other cause?—I think it is more likely the fear of inspection and interference; it may also of course arise from a desire to avoid the odium of the term, but I rather think it is the shrinking from anyone coming into the house by right to examine it when they like.

2022. But you are speaking there rather conjecturally than from experience, because you tell us that practically, the Act being a dead letter elsewhere than in London, the question has not arisen?—No; but in some instances, shortly after the passing of the Act, inquiries were made by our people as to the effect of registration.

2023. What do you mean "our people"?—The people whom I have under my control, our administrators who seek out these foster-parents; and then we found a very strong objection to register on the score that they were not willing to submit to inspection; they were not willing to have an officer come into their house whenever he thought proper.

2024. Do you think that would equally apply to a lady, if the officer were a lady?—No, I think probably it would be less likely to apply to a lady.

2025. What they are afraid of is a man in uniform?—They are afraid of official inspection. The official character of it frightens a large number of people who would be very willing indeed to take children, and would be probably the best foster-parents.

2026. Under the boarding-out system, sanctioned by the Local Government Board, there is inspection of the houses where the children are boarded?—That inspection is very much like our

own

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

own inspection; that is to say, they send a medical woman, or some other qualified person, generally a lady, to inspect the houses where the children are, and subsequently to inspect the children themselves.

2027. And if similar provisions were made for such inspection as this Act contemplates, the objection to it would *pro tanto* disappear?—Probably; but there would be very great difficulties in doing it.

2028. In what direction?—In carrying out such inspection under this Bill the expense would be enormous. The Local Government Board not only sends its inspector but places out the children; consequently it selects a given area, and when the inspector has to go she only travels over a given area; but let it be supposed that no central authority had the placing out of the children, but that they were placed out by unmarried mothers all over the kingdom wherever they could get a foster-parent, that would involve long journeys for inspection, and there might only be one or two houses registered and to be inspected over a wide area.

2029. And therefore no proper inspector appointed, you mean?—That might come to be so because of the great expense involved. By this map you see we limit our boarding out to definite areas so as to render the cost of inspection less. The more widely we scatter the greater the cost; and if the placing out of the children were done, not by a central authority, but by women everywhere who desire to find a home with foster-parents, that difficulty would be increased immensely.

2030. Would you say that, speaking generally, we are right in believing that the huge majority of the children whose protection is contemplated in such legislation as this are illegitimate?—Certainly.

2031. What is the ordinary course in your experience of a woman, a girl, who has a child, and wishes to dispose of it properly and respectably; I mean one that is poor. I note your paper here, with this auxiliary boarding out branch; but what is your experience of what she ordinarily does now?—Her first effort is to get a foster-parent; that she does either by the recommendation of some one whom she knows or she advertises, or replies to an advertisement, and as in these cases secrecy and privacy is a large element in it, so far as her character is concerned, she prefers to reply to an advertisement.

2032. Have you made it part of your work at all to follow up advertisements?—I did a few years ago; I replied to every advertisement that appeared in four or five of the leading papers; and as I said, in answer to another question, I found out that in hardly one of those cases where the advertisement was issued, and we replied to it, were they people that we would place the child with under any circumstances.

Viscount Llandaff.

2033. Not fit, you mean?—Not fit, neither the surroundings nor the character. Then when a girl (to continue my answer to the Bishop's question) gets such a foster-parent, her first desire is to obtain relief from the burden of the child. She agrees to pay

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

practically any sum they ask; 4s., or 5s., or 6s. a week for the child, and does pay it for two or three weeks, or perhaps a month, or perhaps a little longer. She is then no longer able to pay, and she practically deserts the child, who is thrown upon the foster-parent. In some cases a sum of money would be paid down, but those are the exceptional cases, where the girls have been in a better position, and have not been either domestic servants or employed in factories or workshops. Then the foster-parent finds the child thrown on her hands; it is not properly paid for, and as a consequence it very often is not properly attended to, a kind of rough justice being meted out to it: "This child is not paid for, *ergo*, this child is not to be carefully attended to;" and even if there be other children in the foster-parent's house, I have known the child who is not paid for to suffer, while the others were properly provided for.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2034. To come back to your general view as to this proposed Bill; what are the directions in which you think that such legislation would be specially beneficial, because several of your previous answers have rather seemed to show that the benefit would be doubtful?—I have no doubt in my own mind that, generally speaking, registration would be a benefit. I think the benefit would be increased if the number of infants under three years of age to be admitted to any registered house were strictly limited by the Bill to one. And then I add what the Chairman has already said, that not only institutions like our own should be exempted from registration, but that the foster-parents we select should also be exempted from registration.

2035. The dislike to registration which you spoke of just now would of course have to be faced by a very much larger number of people if this Bill became law, and especially if there were such further restrictions as you have just now spoken of: do you consider that that objection would disappear in experience or not?—I am not quite clear what further restrictions I have suggested which would be a hindrance, except the limitation of numbers where a child was so young.

2036. That is it?—It is difficult to say whether in the working of it the objection to registration would disappear or not, so much would depend upon the way it was worked. It might be worked in the letter; it might be worked in a very aggravating form so as to create a strong feeling of aversion in a locality; for example, against registering at all, and if it did then it might be impossible to find a foster-parent in that locality because a prejudice would have been created against registration.

2037. We understood you to tell us just now that you would object to have the foster-parents you employed registered, because you would find it more difficult to get the best people to take children owing to their dislike to registration; but you recommend that for the country generally we should demand such registration. Should we not then, with the exception of those who come under your society and similar societies, deter those foster-parents who are now ready to take children respectably from doing

Q

so?

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

so?—I think you would, undoubtedly; I think you would generally lower the class and quality of the foster-parent throughout the country.

2038. You would deter the best class of foster-parents from assuming that position?—Undoubtedly.

2039. And you admit that that would be what would happen if we passed the Bill?—I think so.

2040. And yet you would still say, Go ahead?—Yes, because the advantages to be gained are even greater than the disadvantages to be feared.

2041. Will you expand that a little?—I think cases of cruelty and neglect due to baby farming would absolutely disappear. Limit the number of infants to one, and then apply registration generally, and the great mortality arising out of baby farming would disappear.

Chairman.

2042. There would always be babies to be farmed, would there not?—There would, but then they would be dealt with in the legitimate channels suggested by the Bill.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2043. Lord Thring suggests to me this: In order to save a few baby farmers you would condemn the average boarded-out child to worse foster-parents?—"Worse," of course, is a relative term. When one speaks of the quality of foster-parents one has necessarily to speak in respect to a very superior standard, but when the large mortality of illegitimate children is contrasted with the mortality of legitimate children one feels that the gain to be obtained by the registration of all would be a very large gain, and not a small one, even if it lessened the mortality of illegitimate children by only one-half.

Viscount Llandaff.

2044. But you ought to compare illegitimate and legitimate children put out to nurse; there is no difference then?—But the greater number of those who will be boarded out and who are taken into baby farms are not legitimate but illegitimate.

2045. What kills the illegitimate more quickly is the fact that they have no parental care, and are put under strangers and huddled about the country?—That is so; and especially when the payments by the mother cease as is often the case within a few weeks; this breeds indifference on the part of those who have them in charge.

2046. But I understood you to say that registration by itself is worth nothing; you must have inspection also?—Of course registration by itself is a mere word, except so far as it means some investigation of the character of the foster-parent beforehand.

2047. And you think no inspection is worth talking about unless fortnightly and over a small area?—Not exactly; I only suggested that for children who could not talk, those under three, with regard to whom identification is difficult; but a great many children are boarded out who are over three, and to whom such exact stipulations need not apply.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2048. You said just now that if the stringency of this law were extended and the law universally

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

applied, baby-farming would disappear (I do not press the exact words), but is it not the case that in the worst sense of that word, that is to say in the cases of children who are deliberately made away with, who are taken not for purposes of profit of a legitimate sort or a plausible sort, but deliberately to make away with them, those are not people who would come under any law, make it what you like—I mean they would evade any restrictions; the people who are likely to register are not the scoundrels who intend to murder the children, and that process of murdering would be apparently, as far as I can see, carried on where it is carried on now without much greater difficulty?—But if this Bill becomes law the foster-parents who accept children must register; if they accept children without registration they immediately bring upon themselves police surveillance, and the evil is checked shortly. A woman may perhaps receive and keep some three or four children for a week or a fortnight without registration, but you cannot contemplate her having them much longer, if this becomes law, without its coming under the observation of those upon whom the law has cast the duty of carrying it out; that is my answer.

Chairman.

2049. Are many nurse children, that is children rescued from baby farms, brought to you?—We have had some, but very few.

2050. Not many?—Not many; they have been chiefly brought to me through Mr. Waugh's society, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; we receive children from them continually.

2051. I understood Mr. Waugh to express an exactly contrary opinion to what you gave just now as to the effects of registration; I understood Mr. Waugh to say that he thought that if registration was extended it would tend to level up the class of baby farmers, and that we should have a better class and not a worse class?—Mr. Waugh can only offer an opinion and a conjecture, and it is possible that his opinion and conjecture are better founded than mine; nevertheless, I stand by my own view.

2052. You told the Bishop, I think, at the beginning of his examination that you had not had any experience of registered houses?—I have never visited children in registered houses.

2053. I am informed that you are now contributing to three children in registered houses?—It is quite likely; but if so this is an exceptional case, and an exception that has not come under my personal notice; it is dealt with as an exception.

Viscount Llandaff.

2054. Do you avoid registered houses?—No, I do not avoid them, but we do not need them; our system of boarding out has not rendered it necessary; registration, I take it, under the old Act, applied only to where more than one infant under 12 months was boarded out, but as we never board out more than one under 12 months in one house I have not found it necessary to have resort to registered houses.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2055. Do you consider the system of taking children for hire to be one which can be profitably

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

ably carried on if the children are rightly cared for?—Profitably by the foster-parents, do you mean?—Undoubtedly.

2056. What terms would you consider profitable?—Our average payment is 5s. 6d., but we pay 7s. for children under three, 6s. until the child reaches four, and after four, 5s. A child under three requires the care of one person, if it is to be properly attended to. At those rates there is undoubtedly a profit.

2057. Those rates, of course, are very high as practice goes?—No, we average 5s. 6d.

2058. What is the Poor Law average?—Five shillings, I think.

Chairman.

2059. And the Foundling Hospital is 6s.?—Yes. I know that in some country parishes, where the boarding out is done immediately round the local union, they get them at lower rates, 4s., and so on, but where I have inspected some of these justice has not been done to the children, in my opinion.

Viscount Llandaff.

2060. Four shillings, and 5s. for infants?—I think all round; they do not make a difference.

2061. I mean they only pay 4s. or 5s. for a child for whom you would pay 7s.?—Only in some cases; in those cases where they are boarded out immediately round the local union. I do not think I have stated the number I have boarded out. The total number we have boarded out since we began has been 3,841.

2062. How many years have you been boarding out?—We began boarding out in October 1886.

2063. You have got 1,751 boarded out now, and in all those years the total is what you have stated?—Yes, the total number is 3,841.

2064. It began on a small scale?—Yes, it began on a small scale; and as children remain boarded out until 14 or thereabouts, the changes are not very frequent.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2065. Why do you have so many institutions where the children are congregated, if, as I understood you to say and as others say, it is so much better for the children to be boarded out; is it on grounds of economy?—No, but because boarding out is not applicable to every child; it is only applicable to certain classes of children. For example, we have to consider in boarding out the age of the child, we have to consider its physical condition, and its relatives. The latter are often a great barrier; in some cases the relatives insist upon seeing the child so often in the year; those cases we cannot board out. Then, again, no boarding out is in our judgment of value unless it is begun before the child is seven years of age. Well, a great number of our children come to us over seven; consequently they are not eligible for boarding out.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered,—That this Committee be adjourned to Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 12^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH, IN THE CHAIR.

MR. HUGH PERCY DUNN, F.R.C.S., having been called in ; is Examined, as follows :

Chairman.

2073. You are a Fellow, I believe, of the Royal College of Surgeons of England?—Yes.

2074. And you are on the staff of the West London Hospital?—Yes.

2075. May I ask how many years' experience you have had as a medical practitioner?—I qualified in 1876 ; I took my Fellowship in the year 1880.

2076. I believe that you have been interested in this question of what is known as baby-farming?—I have.

2077. And you have been writing some special articles and making inquiries, I believe, on behalf of the "British Medical Journal"?—I have, at the desire of the editor, Mr. Ernest Hart.

2078. May I ask what sort of investigation you have made ; how you proceeded?—I first of all ascertained all the facts in connection with the former inquiry in 1871 ; I went carefully through the Blue Book of that date, and ascertained all that I could learn in respect to the inquiry then ; and subsequently I was appointed a Commissioner to interview certain gentlemen who had paid a good deal of attention to the subject, and from whom was thought that I could acquire information.

2079. When you say you were appointed a Commissioner, you mean that you were sent as a Commissioner by the editor of the "British Medical Journal"?—Yes.

2080. And what did you do then ; how did you get your information ; did you go and investigate any cases yourself?—No, I did nothing of that sort, because I found that when I went to Mr. Spencer of the London County Council a great deal of that ground had been covered, and it did not appear to be necessary then to make further inquiries beyond those that had been so admirably done by the London County Council.

2081. Therefore you have no personal knowledge of registered or unregistered houses?—No.

2082. And you have no personal knowledge as to the effect of registration?—No.

2083. You have read the Bill, I believe, which is before the House now?—I have, and I (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

incorporated it in my report in the "British Medical Journal."

2084. Have you got a copy of your report?—I have. It consists of six articles, beginning on the 22nd of February and going on to the 28th of March. I merely brought it down here to answer questions from.

2085. Speaking on the general principles of the Bill, are you in favour of the second clause of the Bill which provides for the extension of the provisions of the present Act to children of five years of age?—As the result of my investigations into this, I am decidedly in favour of the extension of the Act.

2086. Can you give any special reasons?—Well, I think it is proved by the investigations which I made from the chief constables of England, that the Act really is a dead letter in the provinces ; that is to say that under present circumstances there are only two registered houses in England apart from London.

2087-8. You made inquiries in the provinces?—Yes, after doing so in London. These are incorporated also in my report.

Chairman.] But the Committee have not had an opportunity of seeing your report, you will remember.

Lord Kinnaird.

2089. Did your inquiries extend all over England?—I made inquiries of the chief constables of about 28 of the largest towns in England.

Chairman.

2090. Did you see them or write to them?—I wrote to them ; I have their answers here.

Lord Kinnaird.

2091. Did you include Scotland?—Scotland, as far as Edinburgh only.

Q 3

2092. In

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

2092. In the first portion of your report you deal with the baby farming system and its evils, and you give its history; but I think the Committee are fairly well acquainted with the general lines on which baby farming is carried out. And you also give an account of the working of the Infant Life Protection Act in London, with which, I think, we are also familiar; and now, I think, comes your report on this Bill. With regard to the extension of the age, you say that from the information which you obtained in the provinces you found that the Act was to a great extent a dead letter?—That is so.

2093. How many registered houses have you come across in the provinces?—Only two throughout the provinces.

2094. Where were they?—One was at Manchester and the other was at Bath.

2095. Do you know how many children were kept in each house?—No information was given me upon that subject; it was only that the houses were registered.

2096. And, I suppose, they were registered by the ordinary local authority; there was no special inspector told off for them?—No.

2097. Have you got any remarks to make with regard to the numbers of illegitimate births in these large towns?—Yes; I made an analysis of the number of illegitimate births as recorded in the Registrar General's Report for the year 1894, which was the nearest that I could get to this date, and I made out that, excluding Manchester and Bath, the number of illegitimate children born in that year, 1894, in 27 of the large towns in England, was, approximately, 5,000.

2098. That list does not include London, I suppose?—It excludes London; and it also excludes Manchester and Bath, because there was a registered house in Manchester, and a registered house in Bath. To this large total the Infant Life Protection Act has been shown not to apply.

2099. How has it been shown not to apply?—Because, from the answers of the chief constables, I learnt that there were no registered houses in those towns.

2100. That does not necessarily show that the Act did not apply to them; it might point to the fact that the Act was not enforced?—But that comes to the same thing, almost, does it not?

Chairman.] No, I do not think it does at all.

Viscount Llandaff.

2101. So far as I have gone, and so far as the constables' answers have gone, they all say that the police make diligent inquiry, and that there is no evasion of the Act?—I refer to that in my report.

2102. For instance, I read this in one of the letters: "Persistent and regular steps are taken by the police to ascertain whether the Act is evaded. No cases of evasion are known to me"—Yes.

2103. Here, again, a chief constable writes, in reply to your circular, "I am only able to say that in Leeds some years ago the matter was

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

taken in hand, but it was found there was little or nothing to supervise or register, so that the matter may be said to have comparatively dropped. I have received a long letter from our medical officer of health, and from that it would appear that there was really nothing in Leeds to register"—But there were 435 illegitimate children in Leeds in 1894. The population was 222,154 in 1891, and in 1894 the births of illegitimate children were 435.

2104. Where do you get that figure from?—From the Registrar General's Report; that is to say, that 435 illegitimate children had no benefit from the Act.

2105. It does not follow that they were all put out to nurse?—That may be so; but it does not show that the Act was in force.

Chairman.

2106. If the extracts which Lord Llandaff has just read may be taken as fair samples, your inquiries may be taken to have resulted in showing that under the Act, so far as it goes, due inquiries were made in all large towns with regard to it; that is what you mean, is it not?—One conclusion that I formed with regard to the chief constables' letters was this: it would appear that no systematic inspection is resorted to by the police; that is to say, that no officials, as in London, are especially made responsible for the inquiries respecting the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act in the districts. So far as the two registered houses are concerned, no information was given with regard to the inspection carried out in the one at Manchester, while in the other it was stated that the house was visited by an inspector of police.

2107. But what I mean is this, that as far as you can gather from the replies that you have got to your questions to the chief constables, you believe that due inquiries are made by the police with regard to the existence or non-existence of baby farming in those towns in the provinces; that is what they say, is it not?—Well, the impression that I formed was that they did not know much about the Act; I may have been wrong in that impression; that was the impression I formed because their results were so entirely negative.

2108. But if they do make inquiries, and find that there is no evasion of the Act, that may point to the fact that, owing to the limited scope of the Act, there may still be a considerable number of children put out who are outside the limits of the existing Act?—That was the impression that I formed.

2109. And, therefore, that is the reason why you say that you would like to see the Act extended to children of five years of age?—That is so. Now I may also refer to this; I issued four questions; they are included in one of the letters; you will find, first, the number of licensed houses under the Act in the district; second, the system of inspection carried out; third, the cases of evasion of the Act known to the chief constable himself; and fourth, the defects in the Act, as proved by local experience of it.

2110. I have

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2110. I have the answer of the chief constable of Sunderland before me, and the answer was "nil" to all four questions?—Yes; I think I was justified in my conclusion; there are several others of the same kind.

Chairman.

2111. I see that there is one from Plymouth. Plymouth is a place, I should think, where there would be a great number of children put out. The chief constable says, "The Infant Life Protection Act has not been enforced in this borough, no circumstances having arisen to call for such action. We have an officer of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in the town, who works in conjunction with the police, and whose work undoubtedly acts as a deterrent to those who would, if they had the opportunity, infringe the Act." Here is another from Portsmouth. The town clerk says, "Your letter of the 27th ultimo to the chief constable has been handed to me, and, in reply, I beg to say that there are no licensed houses in this borough under the Infant Life Protection Act. There is, of course, therefore, no inspection of such houses. I understand, from the medical officer of health, that he has only heard of one case of evasion, and in that case the practice was discontinued before, in fact, the evasion was found out"—I should like to draw attention to the following answer as a perfectly unique one. This was a reply to the question of systematic inspection, and the answer was, "In strict conformity with the Acts of Parliament." I have not included it in this report, but the letter is there.

Viscount Llandaff.

2112. From what place?—I cannot remember without looking at the bundle. I may say that very few chief constables categorically answered the questions.

Chairman.

2113. Do you think that extending the necessity for registration to children of five years of age would interfere with such cases as have been mentioned before this Committee; cases of children whose mother dies, or the cases of children being sent home from India and other hot climates to England?—My view is this: That Indian children are usually sent over for purposes of education, and that that being the case they are generally over five years of age. I have had several friends, at all events, who have had children sent over from India to England for education; they have all been above five years of age. I do not think the Bill would interfere with them at all.

2114. Have you anything else to call attention to with regard to the reasons for the non-administration of the Act outside London?—My reasons are explained in this report.

2115. I should be glad if you would state them to us?—Perhaps I may be allowed to read the article.

2116. I think that would be the best thing?—"It is very evident, as may be gathered from a close scrutiny of the Bill, that much time and

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

care have been expended upon the details of its clauses. Moreover, there is evidence that the details have been elaborated by those who have had an intimate acquaintance with the defective working of the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872. In this connection the hope may be expressed that due weight will be given to these facts by those who may evince a disposition to amend the Bill when it comes to be discussed by the Legislature. Upon the whole, the alterations proposed are to be approved. The clause in which it is laid down that it shall be unlawful for any person to receive for hire or reward in that behalf any infant under the age of five years, except in a registered house, is excellent. In the principal Act it will be remembered that the corresponding clause permits a person to receive one infant under the age of one year, a privilege that has done more than anything else to render the working of the Act abortive. That is my opinion. Another important clause in the Bill is that which prohibits the transference of infants from persons who receive them for hire or reward to another person without the consent of the local authority. Obviously, the principal Act makes it quite possible for evasion to be practised in this respect. A few remarks may now be made with reference to certain details with which the Bill might have dealt with advantage. In the first place, the principal Act requires amendment in the clause relating to the holding of an inquest upon the death of an infant occurring in a registered house. The discretion of whether or not an inquest is necessary is in the hands of the coroner for the district, and if a certificate of death signed by a qualified medical practitioner, be forwarded to the coroner, it is open to the latter to give an order for the burial of the infant without further inquiry. The amendment, however, which the circumstances of the case seem to call for, is to make it compulsory for an inquest to be held in every case of the death of an illegitimate child living apart from its mother. The deterrent effects of those public proceedings could not fail to stimulate the baby farmers to do their best for their charges, so as to avoid official inquiry. It may here be observed that a clause with this provision forms part of the Infant Life Protection Act of Australia, passed in the year 1890, and the coroners of the district there are of the opinion that it has had a most beneficial effect in lessening the evils of the baby-farming system. Of course, in London such a clause might not be necessary, but it should be remembered that the amendments of the Act printed above are intended to apply to the whole of the United Kingdom, in parts of which it cannot be said that the coroners and the local authorities have shown as much vigilance in enforcing the Infant Life Protection Act as is displayed by the officers of the Public Control Department of the London County Council. But there is another point to which attention may be drawn. It is possible that the best results of the working of the Act would be obtained if the local authority in all cases save that of London were made to mean the police."

Q 4

2117. That

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2117. That is, the police to register the house and inspect it?—Yes.

2118. You think that would have a conciliatory effect?—It would have a deterrent effect. That is the kind of thing I want to point out.

Chairman.

2119. You mentioned an Infant Life Protection Act in Australia; there is an Act in force there, I believe?—Yes, passed in 1890; it came into force a few years afterwards.

2120. Do you remember what particular lines that Act is on?—It is a very much more stringent Act than we could have in this country.

2121. In what way more stringent?—As to inquests; as to the thorough inspection which is carried out in the baby farms.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2122. Have you a copy of the Act you allude to?—I have here a *précis* of the Act, which I took from an Australian medical journal.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2123. In what part of Australia is the Act in force?—In Victoria; I do not think it applies to the whole of Australia, though it is called the Australian Act. It was passed in Melbourne. It was passed by the Legislature in 1890, but did not come into force till January 1893; that is to say, it did not come into force till three years afterwards.

Chairman.

2124. Dealing with the question of inquests, I gather from what you said just now, that this Australian Act makes it obligatory on the coroners in Victoria to hold an inquest on every illegitimate child that dies apart from its mother?—That is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2125. Will you give us the *précis* of the Act?—The following is a brief summary of the leading features of the Act (my impression is that it is a *précis* of it): "No person is allowed to adopt or maintain a child, apart from its mother, for a longer period than three days, unless registered by the police under the Act. The chief commissioner of police keeps a list of all persons so registered, with a description of the house, &c. The term of registration lasts only until the last day of December in the year of registration, and a new application has to be made for each year, but no fees are charged either for registration or its renewal. The police have right of entry into these registered houses, and may take a medical man with them if they deem it necessary. Each nurse is bound to keep a roll in which she enters the name, age, sex of each child below two years coming under her charge, the date of admission, and full particulars of the person from whom the child was received. In case the child is removed from the nurse, the name, address, and signature of the person receiving the child have to be entered on the roll, together with the date of removal. A copy of each such entry has to be sent to the chief commissioner of police within three days

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

of the reception or removal of each child. The police have the right to ask for these rolls and inspect them, and, if they deem fit, retain them. Falsifying the roll or furnishing false particulars of any matter that is required to be entered in the roll is punishable under the Act. If, from information received, it seems advisable to the commissioner of police to remove a registered nurse from the roll, he is empowered to at once remove the children from her charge, and place them in the charge of the department for neglected children, and leave a notice at the registered house that the registration will be cancelled within ten days. The nurse may give written notice within seven days of her intention to appeal against this removal, if she deposits the sum of 20s. with her notice. The chief secretary then appoints a time to hear the appeal, and his decision is final. Every person registered under this Act is compelled to report the death of any of her charges within 24 hours at the nearest police station, and an inquest is held on the body of the infant. A death certificate cannot be received from a medical man or registered by the registrar for deaths when it applies to an illegitimate child living apart from its mother. No infant dying under three years of age while in the care of a registered person can be buried without the production of a coroner's certificate. It lies in the power of the chief secretary to give a written order for the Act not to apply in the case of a public institution for the reception of infants, or in any special case in which he may deem it advisable. The occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child is born is obliged to give notice in writing to the deputy registrar of births in the district within three days of the birth."

Chairman.

2126. Well, the principal thing that I observe there is, first of all, that they insist upon registration of children kept more than three days apart from their mother?—Yes.

2127. Whereas in our Act it is 24 hours apart from the mother?—Yes.

2128. Have you any opinion to express upon that?—I do not think that is a very material matter. I should say that 24 hours is a very much better limit than three days; a child may easily die within three days.

2129. And they put in this first clause that, "No person is allowed to adopt or maintain a child apart from its mother," and so on, but they do not put any age; and then further down they say, "Each nurse is bound to keep a roll in which she enters the name, age, sex of each child below two years." I take it then when they speak of a child they mean a child under two years?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

2130. What is the penalty of a breach of the Act; have you got that?—It was not included in this *précis*.

Chairman.

2131. I think you might read the rest of your analysis?—It will thus be seen that the chief features

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

features of this Act differ very materially from those constituting the amendments to the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872, which appear in the Bill published in these columns last week. Perhaps the most noticeable difference in this regard is the prominent position assigned to the police in the administration of the Australian Act. Practically the whole responsibility of the Act is placed in the hands of the police authorities. A plain clothes constable is told off in each district to see that the provisions of the Act are properly complied with. Moreover, the police are expected to take the initiative in the organisation of details, the adoption of which might seem to render the Act more perfect in its working. For example, it was found soon after the Act came into force, that the baby farmers displayed generally gross ignorance of the care and feeding of infants. The police accordingly applied to a well-known authority in children's diseases in Melbourne, who drew up for them a schedule containing full directions in respect to the care and culture of children. This schedule was printed and distributed by the police among all registered houses, and ordered to be hung in a conspicuous position in some room thereof. The administration of the Infant Life Protection Act by the police in Australia has undeniably added weight to the views already expressed in favour of the adoption of the same course being followed in the administration of the corresponding Act in this country. In London indeed, as was pointed out, no necessity exists for the police to assume any such responsibility, owing to the very admirable manner in which the Act is carried out by the Public Control Department of the London County Council. But there are strong reasons for the belief that in other centres, as well as in rural districts in the United Kingdom, the police alone can administer the Act."

2132. Will you give us your opinion as to the prevention of these cases; you might read the last paragraph?—"It will be further observed that in the Australian Act no age limit is mentioned, so far as this relates to the reception of a child or children; but in a somewhat indefinite manner it states that the names of all children under two years of age must be entered on a list with their age, sex, and date of admission, &c., into a registered house. In this connection a question arises as to what is done with regard to illegitimate children who are over the age of two years. The Australian Act contains another clause which refers to a somewhat important point, and that is the power of appeal against the cancelling of her license, which is afforded the baby-farmer. Possibly the granting of this concession really only amounts to a matter of form, nevertheless no harm would be likely to accrue if it were incorporated in the Amendment Bill which is now before the House of Lords. The next important point in the above Act is the clause relating to the holding of an inquest upon the body of every infant under three years of age, whose death occurs while under the care of a registered person. The Act, it will be observed, lays down that in these cases a death certificate from a medical man cannot be received or registered by the registrar for deaths. This (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

detail, from several points of view, can only be regarded as expedient. It appears also to be the rule of the coroners in Melbourne to hold inquests upon the bodies of illegitimate children, even when residing in the same house with their mothers, unless the infants are certified to have died from some disease not due to errors of diet."

2133. You do not, I suppose, know how many registered houses there are in Melbourne or in Victoria?—No, I have no means of getting that information.

Lord Kinnaird.

2134. Nor the number of illegitimate children?—I think it would be possible to make out the number, but it would be very difficult.

Chairman.

2135. Have you ever seen any report other than this one which you have quoted to us as to the working of the Australian Act?—No.

2136. You do not know of anybody of practical experience from there who could give us any evidence as to the actual working of the Act?—I should think some information might be obtained from the Agent General for Victoria; he certainly would have a copy of the Act, I should think.

2137. If an inquest were insisted on in the case of every illegitimate child that died apart from its parent, there would be an enormous increase in the number of inquests in the country?—There would; but a great many of such inquests might be necessary.

Viscount Llandaff.

2138. What is the cost of an inquest; there is, first, the fee to the coroner?—There is the medical man's fee, if there is a *post mortem*, of two guineas.

2139. The cost of summoning the jury?—I do not know what the jury get.

2140. The jury are 24, are they not?—Twelve; seldom more than 12. The coroner is paid by salary.

2141. Do they not get any additional fees?—No; his salary is based upon the number of inquests. When the salaries were fixed by the County Council for the new districts the coroners had to send a return of the number of inquests they had in their districts, and I think the salaries were based on that.

2142. Is the salary revised as the number of inquests increases?—I think not; that is beyond my knowledge.

Chairman.

2143. We have had some evidence given here in the course of this inquiry as to the subject of lying-in houses, and we have been told that it is the practice in these lying-in houses to send the children away to these professional baby farmers of the worst class; have you any experience of that yourself?—No, that has not been within my experience.

2144. Have you any evidence or opinions to give us with regard to these lying-in houses?—No direct evidence at all; my inquiry did not include

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

include any investigation with respect to these lying-in houses.

2145. It has been suggested that all lying-in houses that are habitually used for the purpose of confinement should be registered, with a view of keeping some sort of control, or obtaining accurate knowledge of the births that occurred; is it your opinion, as a medical man, that such a regulation would be much resented by the medical profession?—I do not see that it could be practically carried out.

2146. You do not think it could be carried out?—It could not be carried out.

2147. Why?—Because it would be impossible to define what a lying-in house is.

2148. There are a great many private lodging-houses to which people in the country come up for the purpose of confinement?—That is so to a large extent.

2149. Perfectly respectable and well-kept houses, which are attended by leading practitioners?—Yes, usually lodgings.

2150. Would there be any objection to registering those?—I think a lady who wanted to come and be attended by her special medical man in London would very much object to have the house that she went into submitted to any sort of supervision. The position of affairs is this: the hotels will not take such ladies; the proprietors object to children crying and so forth; the nursing homes will not take such ladies; they have objections of their own; and so there is nothing else left for these ladies who want to come to London to be attended by well-known obstetricians than to take private apartments; and what is done is this, they take rooms as close to their medical man as they can, and there they are confined; and these apartments are simply lodgings. The confinement takes place, the attendance is carried out, and the lady goes.

2151. Therefore you mean to say it would be very difficult to draw the line between a lodging-house keeper who takes in one lady for her confinement, and lets the rest of her house to other lodgers, and another lodging-house keeper who devotes her house to that purpose?—That is so.

2152. Can you suggest any way of ensuring a better supervision of the children that are sent out from the low-class lying-in houses?—My impression is that the way of meeting that evil would be by registering every still-birth. In these lying-in houses, according to my information and what I have read, it is possible clandestinely to interrupt the life of these children; and that was proved also in the evidence of the 1871 Committee. There is very strong evidence indeed there showing that those houses were the great source of infanticide, and that they were also the houses from which the baby farmers acquired the material for their trade.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2153. You have given us your experience, or what you were led to believe, in writing these articles; but have you any experience as a medical man of the subject at all personally?—Personally I have not.

2154. Have you had any experience from work or visiting among the poor, I mean any large

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

experience?—Not among baby farmers. In earlier days, about 1883, I used to attend some patients who were in a low class.

2155. The object of my question is this; as far as I gather the value of your evidence will depend really upon what knowledge it is based upon; you have put in the answers from the constables, from the chief constables, or rather you have shown us what these answers are, and you have told us that you have read up the Act and so forth; but you do not claim to be able to speak from any further knowledge; you merely speak as one who has looked into the question as any of us might?—That is so.

2156. You having looked into it and formed your opinion you tell us that you think that the Act ought now to be strengthened, because it is a dead letter everywhere else than in London. To me it would seem that it did not lead to that conclusion; it would rather seem that some new system might conceivably be wanted altogether, but not that you should strengthen an Act which even in its present form is not practically put into operation?—My answer to that would be that in London there are only a few registered houses, but the County Council inspectors have found out a very large number of unregistered houses.

2157. Then you do not base your opinion upon the fact that the Act is a dead letter in the provinces?—If there are such a large number of unregistered houses in London, and only a small number of registered houses, I should infer that there are a good many houses in the provinces, the existence of which is unknown to the authorities.

2158. What sort of houses?—Unregistered houses; that is to say, baby farms. I was told that there were 600 baby farms in England, out of London.

2159. Who told you that?—I think you will have the witness before you who gave me that information.

2160. When you or this witness say that there are 600 baby farms, what do you mean by baby farms?—That is what he told me; that is to say, houses in which children are continually received for hire.

2161. You might call anything a baby farm in which a single child is kept?—No, I should not be inclined to say that a single child being kept would constitute the house a baby farm.

Viscount Llandaff.

2162. Do you mean houses that ought to be registered under the existing Act, in which more than one child under 12 months is kept?—I could not say that.

2163. That is the point?—I could not say that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2164. Then, to come to another point, you said that inspection by the police would, in your opinion, have a deterrent effect; deterrent on what; on the reception of children, or on the maltreatment of children?—I merely meant on the reception of children.

2165. Exactly the conclusion that I should form, that the inspection by the police would have a deterrent effect upon the reception of children.

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

children. The children must still remain under present circumstances unhappily; they will go somewhere?—Women would not embark on baby farming if they knew that they had to be so thoroughly inspected. The point is, that if they knew that they were liable to be continually inspected it would not be a trade in which they would care to embark.

2166. Now look at it from the other side; there are a large number of illegitimate babies in England to-day; what is the proper mode in which, when this deterrent effect has been exercised, the mothers are to dispose of babies for whom it is increasingly difficult to find a home?—That involves a large question.

2167. The very question we are set here to consider; the babies exist, and they have got to be kept somewhere; what we have to try to do is to find a place where they can be put, where they can be properly seen to, and not either by carelessness or maltreatment die, and we want your help and the help of other witnesses in showing us how that is to be done?—I think that all those women who wish to conduct baby farms honestly will not object to registration, it is a perfectly legitimate trade if carried on legitimately; but this Act, I contend, allows dishonest women to conduct the trade dishonestly.

2168. Then, do you consider that the inspection by the police to which you have referred as having a deterrent effect would only be deterrent upon bad foster-parents, and not upon good ones?—That is my impression.

2169. Have you considered at all the point whether inspection by the police in such a way as you have described as prevailing in Australia would be a popular thing with the respectable foster-parents?—Well, I think I should have to be in Australia myself to answer that.

2170. Let us leave Australia out; do you think in London or England generally it would, or would not, be a popular thing for the respectable foster-parents to be constantly inspected by the police?—I think, if the police found that a baby farm was being properly conducted they would use all their tact in not making the Act disagreeable.

2171. But the ordinary policeman before he found that out must in the exercise of his tact pay a great many visits?—At first, in the exercise of his duty it would be necessary for him to do so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2172. With regard to your reply to the Chairman's question as to how this Bill would affect people sending children home from India, assuming that some are sent under five years of age, the people who took charge of them would have to be registered, would they not?—I do not think I could assume that from my own knowledge.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

(0.95.)

R 2

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

2173. You spoke with regard to these lying-in houses; with regard to those houses, there are many kept, are there not, by midwives, people of not very respectable character, but who keep them for the lying-in of women?—I do not think I ought to answer that question, not having any personal knowledge of the subject.

Lord Kinnaird.

2174. Do you think that medical men would or would not object to the lying-in houses that they attended being registered?—I think the medical profession would object to the registration of lying-in houses, that is to say, that if a lady wanted to come up and be attended by a practitioner I think he certainly would object having to send his patient to a house, then to find that that house was visited afterwards by a police officer or some other authority. It is a private matter altogether with reputable medical men attending ladies in confinement in that way.

2175. Then you think they are to be protected in a way which others in a different class would not be?—I said it would be impossible to give any definition of a lying-in house, and that I could not see the possibility of registration of such houses for that reason.

2176. You have given in Leeds 435 illegitimate births; how many of those, within your personal knowledge, ought to be in some registered house?—I could not answer that.

2177. Your investigation did not show that?—No.

2178. Did you form any opinion of registration as to whether children are protected under quite other Acts than the Infant Life Act; I mean you do not think, do you, that the chief constables in the whole of England would ignore the fact that a great many infants were not protected as they ought to be; if that were known by them to be the fact they would bring the Act into play?—Might I answer the question by reading this? "It might be well that the Legislature should call for a return from all the large towns in the kingdom, showing as nearly as possible the number of unregistered houses to which the present Act does not apply. If full details were forthcoming in this particular, including the number of the children received, their ages and the rate of mortality, the data would undeniably be of use in showing how far the need for some change in the Act was urgent, as would appear to be the case."

2179. Have you in your hospital many infants who apparently have been ill-treated?—I cannot answer that question without consulting one of the house surgeons. I have no doubt they would be able to say something on that.

2180. You would know it if there were many?—Yes, but I do not think that a person who ill-treats her child would take the trouble to bring it to a hospital. We do not get any cases of the kind, at all events within my experience.

12 May 1896.

[Continued.]

DEACONESS GILMORE, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2181. You are the head of the Deaconesses' Institution of the Diocese of Rochester?—Yes.

2182. And the Home of the Institution is in Battersea?—The Home of the Institution is on Clapham Common.

2183. The work lies in the poor parishes of Battersea?—Yes.

2184. Your work consists, if I understand it rightly, partly in personally visiting the houses of the poor, and partly in training other ladies who are going to be deaconesses, to do the same?—Yes.

2185. You have under your care a considerable number of probationers; ladies who are being so trained?—Yes.

2186. And the district in which your work lies is a characteristically poor one, including some of the poorest parts of Battersea?—Yes.

2187. The whole district in which your work thus lies, as I gather, contains about 20,000 people?—Yes; the people we work amongst; it does not entirely cover the whole of the parishes.

2188. And therefore you have a fairly complete knowledge of the life of the poor population over that large area?—Yes.

2189. Have you given any special attention to the working of this particular Act, or to the question of registration?—No.

2190. But without doing that you have been able to form, no doubt, some general opinion of your own as to the frequency or otherwise of the existence of nurse children in such districts?—Yes.

2191. You have placed in my hands a paper taking one division of that large district, containing 129 houses, or 256 families. In the case of that district you have tried, as far as memory serves or notes serve, to recall the number of nurse children whose cases have come under your notice within the last two years?—Nurse children who are not related to the people who have them.

2192. Not related to their foster parents?—Not related to their foster parents.

2193. And you find that 16 such children in that comparatively small district have come under your notice in this year and-a-half?—In about three years. That, of course, does not, I think, cover the number of children; because, of course, it would be exceedingly difficult for us to find out when there were nurse children in a house. You notice a baby there, and are told that it is a baby brought in for the day; you have no evidence to prove that that child is only there for the day; it is possible that it may be a nurse child. It is only when you see it constantly that you suspect that it is a nurse child. We may have had many more cases than that, but those are the cases of nurse children actually paid for and there as nurse children. It is quite possible that those cases which they told us were day cases were nurse children.

2194. Roughly speaking, all these children are illegitimate?—Yes, roughly speaking, I think nearly all; I do not remember any that were not.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

2195. And you do not include illegitimate children who were being nursed by their own relations, grandmother or mother's sister?—No, not even her own sister. The most common case is that of a girl in service; she comes home to her sister to be confined and leaves her child there.

2196. To a married sister?—To a married sister; that is a very common occurrence; oftener than with her own parents.

2197. And those are cases of receiving for hire, where the child would be received by a relation?—Yes.

2198. But still for hire?—Still for hire, generally speaking.

2199. What is your impression as to the advantage or disadvantage of making more stringent regulations about such children?—I think it is a most difficult question. I am afraid it would be constantly evaded in some way; they would find means to evade it.

2200. You mean that if registration were required they would find means to evade it?—Yes, judging as I do by the class of people who take these children. In several of the districts in which one works there is a very respectable artisan class, and among those you hardly ever find these children; if you do it is under exceedingly exceptional circumstances; and the class that we find taking them is the casual labourer class, and even lower than that; they move about so.

2201. You do not find nurse children among the artisan class?—Among the respectable artisan class, the upper artisan class, we do not.

2202. But they are among the poorer labouring class?—Yes.

2203. And the difficulty there is increased by the constant fluctuation and movement of that class?—Yes. In that district which I have given you I often find that there have been 30 moves in one month.

2204. Out of 129 houses there have been 30 movements in one month?—Yes.

2205. Now would you go on with what you were about to say?—I think they would evade it in that way by moving, because I know how difficult it is for the School Board people to trace them; they find great difficulty in these very degraded districts in tracing people; and I think in the same way you would find a great difficulty when the houses became registered; they would manage to evade it by moving to another part; and it is very difficult in London to trace them.

2206. That is to say, a house once registered, the occupant would be moving immediately somewhere else?—They give no notice to the police of their moving or to the Local Government Board if they wish to evade the law, and I fancy they could do it very easily. I know that they do it very easily with the School Board officer.

2207. Do you think that the process of registration would be unpopular with that class?—Not if it is done wisely, with, I should think, women

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

women visitors; but if it were done by the police I think it would be fatal to it immediately. In some of these streets which I give you there where these children have been found, a policeman could hardly go except two or three together; they could not go into places that would be perfectly safe for me.

2208. You mean that you would fear that the registration you mean would be a non-reality because it would be so evaded; or I will put it thus: Do you think that the endeavour to give increased stringency to the rule of registration is desirable or not?—Judging from what one sees of frightful neglect among these children I should think that something ought to be done, but what, it is impossible for me to say.

2209. In what way does that neglect come under your notice; is it deliberate ill treatment, or is it from ignorance or poverty?—Mostly from ignorance, and I think very often from poverty. I have found children taken at 3s. 6d. a week; it is perfectly impossible to keep a child for 3s. 6d. a week with any profit.

2210. And would that payment of 3s. 6d. a week in such cases be likely to be regular?—Constantly, not regular. For instance, I had a case of a woman with a child a little while ago; for five or six weeks she had nothing, she was keeping it herself; and we find constantly that these servants leave the children with these people; they pay for them for a few weeks, and then the foster parents never get anything more from them, in fact they vanish altogether. I know of several of those cases. There was a case of a child of eight years old; she was left in one of those lying-in houses that you were speaking of, a house of very bad character indeed, and I knew her before that age, but about that time I found out that she was a confirmed drunkard; she was sent to Canada.

2211. That is to say, you give that as an instance of the kind of neglect that has produced such an indifferent class of people?—Yes.

2212. You give here other instances. "Lodger's child died through neglect; woman reprimanded?"—Yes.

2213. Another case, "two nurse-children, one died at the age of nine months, weighing five pounds," and another case "Lodger's child starved, dead; aged two years, weighing seven pounds." Another "Baby starved; woman imprisoned." Now, are all these cases which you would describe as non-criminal neglect?—Some of them amount to criminal neglect, but how far it was through ignorance, or how far it was from any intention to do it, it would be almost impossible to say. I think in one case, the case of the woman —, it was intentional.

2214. Should you say, speaking generally, that wrong doing of the kind that has come under your notice was intentional, or that it was from poverty and ignorance?—Unintentional, very often through the woman who has the child being a drunkard. That I think is the commonest of all, the woman who has the child being a drunkard.

2215. And should you say that a large proportion of foster parents in whose houses you have found nurse-children were people who

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

could not properly have been registered under any well-administered Act?—Certainly, if you come to regard it as a matter of character. I have been asked occasionally by women (I dare say you know that they get children from the Lying-in Hospital and the Maternity Society), to write a letter for them, saying that they are fit people to have such children in their care. Of course in doing that I have always been most careful that they should be women, clean, and having a fair knowledge how to bring up children.

2216. The Maternity Hospitals, that is to say, who send their children to Battersea, apply to you for the character of the foster-parent, or the foster-parent asks you for a testimonial which she may take to the Lying-in Hospital?—Yes, that is what it really is; the woman asks me, and she takes it to the Lying-in Hospital; and they know that these children are to be had, and that the pay which they guarantee them is 5s. a week.

2217. Is that a common system in the district that you have to do with?—Yes.

2218. To receive the children at 5s. a week from the Maternity Hospital?—Yes; both the Lying-in Hospital and the Maternity Hospital.

2219. For what length of time does the hospital continue such payments?—I do not think the hospital finds the payments, but they guarantee that the servant whose child it is shall pay it, and they see that it is paid.

2220. For how long?—I cannot tell you how long.

2221. And do you think that unsuitable people obtain children in that way from respectable institutions such as the Maternity Hospital?—No. I have not found any evidence of that.

2222. Because they ask for some certificate of character on the part of the foster parent?—Yes.

2223. But if such certificate were required by the authorities before registration many of the foster parents you have known would be unable to obtain it?—Decidedly.

2224. And for that reason you would think it a good thing so far that there should be some system of registration if it could be properly worked?—Yes; but on the other hand one is very much afraid of increasing the evil of infanticide if there were greater difficulties put in the way.

2225. Do you consider that at this moment a girl in that district who has an illegitimate child finds it usually difficult to obtain a home for the child?—I think so.

2226. Would there be a competition among people to obtain the child at low terms?—If the girl is known in the district there would not be a difficulty, but supposing she comes as a stranger, as they do sometimes, to be confined in some poor, out-of-the-way place, then I think she would find great difficulty in getting the child taken in; it is then that one would have fear of its leading to murder.

2227. Then your general impression; you have told us that you have given no particular attention to the working of the Act?—None.

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2228. But

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2228. But your general impression is that some increased stringency in the system is desirable, though you are not prepared to say exactly what it ought to be?—No.

2229. Would that fairly represent your view?—Yes, that would fairly represent my view. It has been a matter of trouble that one sees these children constantly in these horrible houses with drunken foster parents, and in the most terrible surroundings. The Act of 1881 is practically a dead letter. For instance, I mean children living in a house frequented by prostitutes.

2230. You mean the Criminal Law Amendment Act when you say the Act is a dead letter?—Yes, the Criminal Law Amendment Act; it is practically a dead letter. We constantly find children in houses of this class, and they generally go to the same life of immorality. It was so in the case that I spoke of just now. That house was a very typical house; it was a house of ill-fame; but one could not bring it under the law; and yet we have known cases of girls who have been confined in that house, who have gone on living there lives of bad character; and girls have been taken there and drugged; and altogether it is as evil a house as you could possibly imagine. These children have been left behind by these girls in the house, and some of them have grown up there. The woman owns to about five or six houses altogether.

2231. And you would desire to see some system of registration in order to check the possibility of that?—For instance, in the case of that woman, when first I got to know her, I told her that my great aim would be to bring her in some way under the law if I could (but I have never been able to do it), and I let her know that we were watching her.

2232. How far do you consider that a change of the law in the direction of increasing the age is desirable; that is to say, at present, as you know, the law says that after 12 months there is no restriction upon the children who are taken in; is it in that way that you would desire increased stringency, or merely with regard to the registration, at all?—I think it is most necessary to increase the age.

2233. Do you think the wrong doing is often done to children more than 12 months old?—Yes, certainly older children, they are grossly neglected, if they are not absolutely made away with. Of course you have to consider, have you not, not only the children murdered but also the fact that they are kept in such a state that it absolutely unfits them for life hereafter.

2234. Of course we are considering at present the protection of life, but undoubtedly the other question is very closely allied to it?—Stringency in registering would improve the condition, would it not?

Viscount Llandaff.

2235. You have spoken of a large class of poor miserable people having only casual labour who take in foster children?—Yes.

2236. Have they children of their own?—Yes.

2237. Is there a marked difference between the treatment of their own children and that of the foster children?—No.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2238. Then it is the misery of a whole class we are dealing with, not merely the nurse children taken by that class?—No; the only thing is that these people are utterly unfit to have the care of these children.

2239. They are unfit to have the care of their own children, are they not?—Yes, they are.

2240. Take such a house of this bad character that you spoke of, nobody would dream of registering it?—No.

2241. What would become of the children there?—There would be no children in that house except these illegitimate children.

2242. You ought to take away the children and put them into the workhouse. How can we by any measure deal with those children?—Certainly you should take them out of such a house as that. We have two of those lying-in houses in that district, and I think that is the worse of the two; the other is nearly as bad.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2243. Are not the mothers there with their children?—I think the evidence goes to prove that the mothers were there a short time ago.

Viscount Llandaff.

2244. Do the women voluntarily keep these children?—I do not think the children were kept for a long time; what becomes of them we do not know. In the case of the other lying-in house, we have had grave suspicions for some years, and have not been able to prove anything; the woman there is a midwife, and the registration of midwives would be some help. These unregistered midwives often keep these lying-in houses.

2245. Where did you send this drunken girl you spoke of?—To Canada; she was sent away to Dr. Barnardo's Home, and then sent to Canada. That is one case.

2246. You suggest that we should pick out these illegitimate children, and leave these women with their own children?—In those two cases, neither of the women had young children of their own, they had grown-up girls.

2247. That is houses of ill-fame, but I was thinking of the larger class, casual labourers with children of their own. It seems a little invidious to pick out the nurse children for preferential treatment over the legitimate children?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2248. I will ask you this question: Would your argument be that we cannot help their having their own children, but, at least, we can prevent their taking other people's?—I should look upon it that they have their natural protectors; that the illegitimate child has no protector, its mother practically cannot protect it; therefore the State should step in and protect that child.

Viscount Llandaff.

2249. Where would you recommend us to send those children; you are to shut up the house, I understand?—Board them out under some system, or else in the country, where people could be properly inspected and visited.

2250. If

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird.

2250. If necessary, at the public expense?—Yes. Many of these girls who have children, do not get at the outside more than 12l. or 14l., or 15l. a year, and it is perfectly impossible for them to pay 5s. a week and buy clothes as well.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2251. Therefore, the payment must be what they can promise to give to the foster parent?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

2252. Have you formed an opinion of the least weekly payment that would keep a child in good condition under 12 months old?—I have never allowed anyone to take a child under 12 months for less than 5s. a week if she is to clothe it and feed it.

2253. The practical result would be that the State would have to take charge of all the illegitimate children who could not be provided for by the payment of that sum?—Yes.

Chairman.

2254. Do you think that that might tend to encourage immorality?—I am afraid it might in one way. You see, the great fear one always has of these people being watched, is that they will evade the law in some horrible way or other. I do not think we ought to make it more difficult for the unhappy girl herself to find a home for her child; it is already sufficiently difficult.

2255. Do you adopt then the opinion which Mr. Waugh I think expressed, when he said that he did not want to see baby farming suppressed; he only wanted to see it regulated?—Yes, certainly not suppressed.

2256. It is what you may call a necessary evil which you desire to regulate?—Yes.

2257. May I ask do you know the proposal in this Bill, to extend the Act to children of five years of age?—Yes.

2258. Do you think that that would be a good thing?—I am sure it would.

2259. From your knowledge of the poorer classes do you think that an extended system of compulsory registration in these cases would tend to raise or to lower the class of existing foster parents, because we have had two contrary opinions expressed. Some people think that registration would tend to bring forward a better class of people who would be willing to take children in?—I should hope so.

2260. Others, on the other hand, say that it might tend to prevent any respectable person coming in, and therefore you would have rather a worse class of baby farming carried on *sub rosa* than goes on at present?—I find this, that the respectable people have no objection whatever to the sanitary officer of the parish coming into their houses, but the disreputable class have an immense objection to his coming in.

2261. And those are just the people from whom you wish to rescue these children?—Yes; and that gives one the idea that they do not object to inspection if they are not afraid of inspection.

2262. Then these casual labourers you spoke of (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

of, how do they generally get hold of the children?—I cannot tell you.

2263. Do you think that they generally answer advertisements?—I think what happens is, that a servant girl comes to be confined in that district.

2264. But how does the servant girl know them; you spoke of servant girls who come as strangers to the district?—I remember one case in point of a girl who went into a room that was to be let; she came from the West-end of London; she knew nothing about the neighbourhood; all she wanted was to hide herself, and what she wanted when she left was to leave her child with some one and to go back to work. It would be known among the women in that street or in those few houses near, that she wanted to leave the child and that she had promised to pay a certain amount and to find the clothes. We got that girl into the Maternity Hospital.

Lord Belper.

2265. You do not mean that these places systematically advertise for children; but that when they are offered they take them?—When a girl has been confined these poor women know everything that is going on; one will say that she will take the baby. Some are naturally very kind-hearted with all their bad habits and drunkenness.

2266. They say that they are willing to take the baby; they have not made a system of taking babies or keeping them, or allowing them to die from starvation or neglect, but they are people who do it casually in different cases?—Yes.

Chairman.

2267. May I ask whether in the course of your visitations among the poor, or generally, you have ever come across any of these professional baby farmers?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2268. Have you noticed any respectable foster parents whose treatment of their children was unobjectionable?—Yes.

2269. About how many?—I could not tell you.

2270. Would it be dozens or a few?—A good many dozens.

2271. Do they do it for gain or pay chiefly?—A woman said to me once that they found that the 5s., although it is not much, coming in as it does in a lump, helps them to keep house; I am speaking of respectable women that one does really believe are tidy, decent women.

Chairman.

2272. But those respectable foster parents are the ones you say who would not have any objection to registration?—I think not.

2273. Or to inspection by anybody except the uniformed police?—They would not like the police going into the house.

2274. Do you know personally the two inspectors of the County Council that we have had here?—No.

2275. Do they visit in your district?—I dare-

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

say they do, but I have not the pleasure of knowing them.

2276. I did not know whether you might come across them?—No.

2277. Do you know whether they have any of the registered houses in your district?—I have not the least idea.

2278. You spoke of these children who are kept in these houses of ill-fame; are those children found out by the School Board officer?—Yes.

2279. They go to school?—Yes, pretty often; when they can get them there; it is a great difficulty.

Viscount Llandaff.

2280. They are able to summon them?—I should think the School Board officer could give evidence as to such cases being left behind.

2281. You spoke of the 129 houses which you visited, I understand, in a certain district, does that mean to say that that includes all the houses in that district?—Yes; you see I divide off the work for a probationer; she has to visit all the families in that district, and know fairly well all about them as far as possible.

2282. You never find any difficulty in getting admission to these houses?—No, never into that class of house.

2283. And do you think that even if the Act was extended it would still be possible to trace these children; to a certain extent you would find out sooner or later whether there were children in the house?—It is very difficult in a low neighbourhood like that to find out; it is very difficult for us to find out actually how many people there are living in those houses.

2284. You have an average of two families per house?—Yes, fairly.

2285. In some three or four?—Yes, but it is difficult to find out what people are actually living there; they take so many lodgers.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2286. This is a mere specimen section?—It is a mere specimen section where I should expect to find nurse children, and do find them.

Viscount Llandaff.

2287. Probably the worst?—Yes, quite; it is marked in Booth's map as very poor and semi-criminal, but I should mark it blacker.

2288. And yet even in that district you say there are a good many decent and reputable foster-parents?—Yes, very poor.

Lord Belper.

2289. I understand your experience is in London?—Yes.

2290. You have not had experience of the people who take children in the country?—No, I have no experience at all of country visitation.

2291. You could not express an opinion as to whether your remark that the respectable parents do not object to being registered would apply to the country?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2292. I gather your experience to be that these houses you complain of are past cure; they could not be inspected and made better?—No.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2293. You think there is nothing to be done with the children in them except to take them away?—I think so.

2294. I mean you cannot suggest any system of inspection for the purpose of instructing the foster-parents, and telling them how to take care of the children?—No; these houses are very difficult, except now and again, to do anything with.

2295. Those houses of ill-fame we must put out of the question?—I do not think such houses are uncommon.

Lord Kinnaird.

2296. You do not think there is anything special in those houses of ill-fame?—I expect there would be plenty of such houses.

Viscount Llandaff.

2297. Where children left by the former inmates are brought up by the subsequent inmates?—They have been left behind; there would not be many such.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2298. The Criminal Law Amendment Act does take care of such cases as that, or the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children does allow you to take them out, does it not?—But there must be some distinct cruelty towards the child before you could put the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act in force; even starvation is not enough unless it is a serious case.

2299. Can you possibly state how many of such houses there are in your own special district?—No.

2300. You mentioned two in this division?—Yes, in that small division; there are only about a thousand people in that district, it is a very bad district.

Lord Kinnaird.

2301. Have you a vigilant society in your district?—I do not think they are very active there.

2302. Do not you think that the illegitimate children brought up by relations are well looked after?—Yes.

2303. Speaking of the class of servant girls, those with first babies, they do not wish to be unkind to their children?—No, they are very fond of them.

2304. And they would be glad to find some home where they could put them safely?—Yes; we look upon it as a great means of reclaiming the girl.

2305. Then your evidence would be that the better class of artisans do not take these children?—No.

2306. They are mostly the more casual labourers of the worst class?—Yes.

2307. And you would not mind how stringent the law was with regard to them?—No.

2308. And the artisan would not mind how stringent it was?—No, I am quite certain that the visitation must not be by the police.

2309. The police you think they would object to?—Yes.

2310. The

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

2310. The County Council inspector you have not come across?—No.

2311. Do you think they mind Mr. Waugh's inspectors?—I have not come across them among these people.

2312. I do not know whether you have already given this clearly; do you think there is a great deal of cruelty, making a need for some extension of the law?—I am sure there is need for an extension of the law.

2313. Then as to your evidence with regard to the moving, of course London is the worst part in that respect?—Yes.

2314. And the law would be for the whole country, and you can quite imagine that excepting big towns you could easily follow the foster parent moving about?—Yes.

2315. So that your evidence on that point would not be a reason why you would not like the law strengthened?—No.

Chairman.

2316. There are several registered houses in Battersea (*handing a list to the Witness*); would you tell me whether any of them are in your district; do you know them?—I know Ingrave-street, but it is not actually in the parish; we have probationers and a deaconess working in that parish, but we do not know it from personal visitation, Simpson-street; I know that street, but I do not visit it personally.

2317. You do not know personally any of those names?—I do not know by personal visitation any of the streets in this list.

Viscount Llandaff.

2318. So that even you, familiar with the district as you are, do not know the registered houses?—No.

2319. But the places where those houses are, are places where a deaconess is at work, and more or less away from your immediate supervision?—She might know of those houses.

2320. But you know two of the streets?—I know the streets.

2321. It is suggested to us that registration gives an advantageous publicity if a girl wants to know where to send her child?—If the law was extended I should immediately go to the registration list, and see who was registered if I found a child was in the house.

2322. In your district, I understand you to say you would not register a single house?—I do not say that. Even in that very degraded part we have some poor decent people. I should not be afraid to put a poor girl's child there; a poor girl could only look for a poor home.

Chairman.

2323. I wanted to know one thing with regard to the case we have had named several times, of a man who goes away to work, whose wife is dead or has left him; or the case of a man whose wife is lying ill, and he wants to make some temporary arrangement for his children to put them out somewhere; can you say from your experience what the general method adopted in cases of that sort is?—They generally divide the children among their relations.

(95.)

Chairman—continued.

2324. You think they generally send them to their relations?—Yes, nearly always. When a young mother dies the baby is generally sent off to the grandmother, and within a few days I have known three children divided up among relations.

Viscount Llandaff.

2325. Then is some payment made?—It does not always follow.

Chairman.

2326. But there might be?—There might be. 2327. In the Bill that was before the House of Commons in 1890 relatives are excluded from the necessity for registration; but is it not a fact that the word "relative" is a very vague one amongst the poorer classes?—Yes, very much so. 2328. Very vague indeed?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

2329. What do they understand by it?—I do not know; it is very vague; they would hardly know the meaning of the word.

Chairman.

2330. It has been suggested, therefore, to define the word "relative" in the Act as meaning anybody within the degree of first cousinship; do you think some sort of definition of that kind would be useful?—It might be useful; it would not meet the case entirely; I do not know what would; I have known these people not know their own relations' names, but only their nicknames. That gives you some sort of idea how little they would know what the actual relationship was.

Lord Kinnaird.

2331. You cannot trust the names very much among the poor?—No; some people go by two or three names, and I have asked them sometimes why.

Chairman.

2332. Do you mean surnames or christian names?—Surnames. For instance, I have had a register come to me and I have been told, "It is our right name but we are always called so-and-so," "why?" sometimes it is a man who has come; he has worked with another man of that name; they have given it to him and he has kept it.

2333. What is the general practice amongst the poor in the case of a man who goes away for the inside of a week to work; for instance, in the case of a bricklayer, or a man engaged in the building trade who goes to a distance and comes back at the end of a week?—He leaves the wife and children behind.

2334. Suppose he has not got a wife?—I cannot tell you.

2335. We have been told that such a man rarely remains unmarried long?—It is very rare to send the children away; they get a woman to come in.

2336. Do they generally get some one to come in, or do they put them out?—Generally get some one to come in.

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2337. There

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2337. There is another very common case which must be familiar to you; a mother goes into a hospital for a week or a fortnight or a month; that is a very common event indeed; what would you say was the normal practice in such a case as that?—With little children they would send them to a friend or relation; with the older ones they would get someone to come in and do for them, send them off to school in the morning. Sometimes we help to find a woman who will do that for them.

2338. And there would you say that registration would be somewhat irritating. If a mother was going into a hospital and a neighbour was going to take her child for a day or two or a week and that required registration, would that be somewhat irritating?—I think it would be a great difficulty.

2339. A thing you would hardly wish to see enforced by law?—No; you would have to educate people very much to get them up to that point.

Lord Kinnaird.

2340. But if the law were properly carried out you do not think that suitable persons would mind, in order to protect the lives of children, putting themselves under registration and inspection?—I am quite certain that the good ones would not object if it was put before them in that way that it was done to protect the lives of children who had no protection.

2341. You think the Act must be stringent to be any good?—I am sure it must.

Chairman.

2342. When you talk of the respectable people who would not mind being registered, what class of people are they?—The poor labourers' families; they are perfectly respectable, but the man earns, say, at the outside a pound a week, and it is very difficult for those people to maintain a family at a pound; the wife gets another woman's child, at 5s. a week; that helps the whole resources; she says, "One amongst a number, the food that it has is not missed." If she has no little baby of her own, it is quite possible that she can do very well for the child; and in

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss MARIAN H. MASON is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2353. You are, I believe, the Local Government Board inspector with reference to boarding-out children?—Yes, beyond the union; beyond the union all the children must be placed under committees certified by the Local Government Board. The committees are committees of ladies; there may be gentlemen upon them, but there must be ladies. I have not the inspection within the union, but that beyond the union to which the children are chargeable.

Chairman—continued.

the case of respectable women I should not object to their having them in the least.

Lord Kinnaird.

2343. You mean that if we say Class 1 is the artizan, he does not take these nurse children, practically?—No.

2344. The second would be the class in which the bricklayer's labourer and people of that kind would come, and they might take them?—

2345. And Class 4 you would exclude altogether?—Yes, those would be the semi-criminal class.

Viscount Llandaff.

2346. There are illegitimate children in Class 4?—They would get them.

2347. Have you formed any opinion as to what sort of authority would be the best to administer this stringent Act that you are inclined to; would it be poor law officials or justices of the peace, or district councils; or what authority would you suggest as being the most sympathetic and likely to do good?—I suppose one must judge by the existing officers; our present sanitary officers, the medical officers, work very well with the people; they would come under the Local Government Board.

2348. They are popular with the poor, are they?—Yes, fairly popular.

2349. You would recommend, I suppose, either women or medical men to inspect these houses?—I should think the ladies would do it better; a thoroughly good type of woman, not a mere working woman; that would not do.

2350. On the other hand, I am afraid there is no existing body of ladies in the service of any of these local authorities; you would have to create fresh officers if you appoint ladies?—It would hardly do for a man to be always interfering with woman in bringing up children; a woman would do it so much better.

2351. I mean it would involve the appointment of fresh officers?—Yes.

2352. Is there any existing class of ladies of that description?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2354. A board of guardians that boards out children within its own union makes its own arrangement for inspection?—Yes.

2355. And if they board them out outside the union it devolves upon you to inspect?—Yes. Within the union, of course, they are also subject to the regulations of the Local Government Board, but they do not come within my inspection; that is to say, if the London children are sent, for instance, to Devonshire, or

to

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

to Westmoreland, or sent even to Middlesex beyond the union to which they are chargeable, then they come under, and their committee also comes under, my inspection.

Chairman.

2356. When were you appointed?—On the 2nd of November 1885.

2357. And you have been at work continuously ever since then?—Yes.

2358. And before that time you had, I believe, great experience amongst the poor?—Yes, that was why the Local Government Board asked me to undertake this work. I have lived amongst the poor people, the labouring people, the people of all classes, helping them all my life, and my family too; and then for some years I, at the guardians' request, inspected the children boarded out within the union for six unions out of the eight in Nottinghamshire, and I organised a staff of ladies to look after them under my supervision.

2359. At the guardians' request?—Yes, voluntarily.

2360. You also, I believe, drew up the manual of infant life protection?—Boarding out and infant life protection. I have put some cards on your table of the manual. It is not under my own name because officials may not publish in their own names. This (pointing to a book) is the manual; there is not very much reference to infant life protection, but it is just to show where it comes in, with boarding out. It is a manual for guardians and boarding-out committees.

2361. It is a manual of instruction for the guardians, not for the people you put the children out with?—No, for the guardians and for the boarding-out committees.

2362. Can you say how many children you inspect annually?—No, I never could say that, because I sometimes see the same child many times; sometimes I go to visit a child and it may be away, another time I see the child without intending to visit it; and I often settle myself in a district for a week or several weeks at a time, and while I am inspecting one committee, driving perhaps a distance 20 miles off, I am seeing the committee in the midst of which I am settled every day. It would scarcely be possible to say how many committees, and never possible to say how many children, I see, or how many times I see them.

2363. But you have an idea how many children you have on your books?—Yes, it is about 1,800, roughly.

2364. Does that include England and Wales?—There are no children actually boarded out in Wales beyond the union, not one. There were three, and now there are none. Those three have ceased to be chargeable. Wales is within my district, but as it happens there are no children boarded out there beyond the union.

2365. Is there any reason for that; there are some very populous towns in South Wales, large manufacturing districts?—No, I do not know of any reason why they should not.

Viscount Llandaff.

2366. In what district are the 1,800?—In England, all over England, nearly every county. (0.95.)

Chairman.

2367. Do you inspect the children themselves as much as possible?—Yes.

2368. Do you go to the homes when you go down to a district; you say you see the committees every day; you also see the children, I suppose?—Yes, I inspect the homes, and I inspect the children themselves most carefully; partly undressing them. I inspect every room in the house, and overhaul the children's stock of clothing, and put down every single garment they possess in my note book in case of reference.

2369. What weekly sum is generally paid to those who take the children in?—London and the larger towns pay 4s. a week for maintenance, 10s. a quarter for clothing, any schooling expenses there may be, about 10s. a year for the doctor for each child, and extra nourishment if they are ill, or any other expenses, cod liver oil, or any extra nourishment or anything else that they may want.

2370. And what profit is there to be made out of children paid for on this scale?—The country guardians, I should say, pay a little less, such as Nottingham and Plymouth; they pay about 3s. 6d. a week, and a little less for clothing; but I think the way to count how the profit is made is not by saying how much one person eats in a week; but if you take a labourer's wages, say 15s. a week perhaps (of course in some places they receive more, in others less), supposing that a man and his wife and three children have to live on 15s. a week, that gives 3s. a head all round. Out of that must come the rent and the clothing for the whole family, and the man's working clothes and boots and Sunday clothes, and perhaps the rate, besides the maintenance of the whole family. Then, if you put even one child into that family with 4s. a week, and 2l. a year for clothing, and the doctor and everything else besides paid for it, you must see that it is easier for six persons to live on 19s. a week besides 2l. a year for clothes, and the doctor, &c., than it is for five persons to live on 15s. And then there are cases where some of the foster-parents have nothing at all to live upon, and they simply live on the children.

2371. Do you find that the condition of the children varies very much with the amount that is paid for them?—No, I do not think that the amount that is paid for them has much to do with their treatment. I think a conscientious person will treat a child as well for 3s. a week as she would for 4s.

2372. Can you say anything with regard to the number of good homes and foster-parents?—It must be limited; it is quite impossible to find a very large number of really satisfactory homes. If you take, for instance, any village that you know, and go through it, either there is not enough room in the house, or else the people may not be suitable in character, or they have too many children of their own, or there is something else; so that when you come to take a village house by house, and ask which house you would put a child in, it is not very easy to find a large number of really proper ones. There are places in England, a great many places yet, where there are no committees, where homes might be found; but I mean taking each place, you cannot

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not

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

not place a very large number of children suitably in any one parish. You may perhaps have been told by voluntary societies that the number is almost unlimited; but I should like to point out that they are not tied as the Local Government Board are by rules. They make rules, but practically they make as many exceptions; and then they are not strict about having the children under committees; you see we are very strict about our committees; we must have three people at least to look after them, three people on a committee. We allow no boarding-out committee, no local committee, without at least three persons upon it.

2373. Three persons in the district, that is?—Yes.

2374. Not three people in the village?—No, three people in the area defined for the particular committee. But with reference to the voluntary societies, they do not follow that rule, and they just put the children out with somebody to look after them, an individual perhaps, and not a committee; and as far as I know, I think they have no radius, no area within which they must be placed; their supervision is very much less careful than ours; they scatter their children broadcast, but we do not; we have them in certain areas which we limit by parishes; and where we have a committee they are bound to be kept up to their number and to their duties.

2375. How many of these committees have you got under your control?—I could not say the exact number, but it is nominally between 150 and 160.

2376. That is committees?—Yes; but some of those committees are dying off; you see they have done their work, and they perhaps have only one child left; then others perhaps after they started have not been able to find homes, so that those committees are only nominal; it is nominally about 155 now.

2377. Why should they die off; there is always an everlasting supply of children to put out?—Yes, but the committees are not immortal; they sometimes die themselves; and then, too, the persons leave the neighbourhood sometimes, and those who succeed them in the same houses may not be interested in the matter, or competent, or capable.

2378. Do you find it difficult to get people to serve on these committees?—I do not find the committees.

2379. Who arranges that?—They start it themselves; anybody who has a desire to bring pauper children down to their neighbourhood to put into cottages may form a committee in their own place, and apply to the Local Government Board for sanction, for authorisation; they are formally authorised by a regularly drawn up form.

2380. What are the conditions required before they are authorised; must there be a certain number?—Yes, there must be three people, one of whom must necessarily be a lady. If it is one parish we consider three sufficient; if it is two parishes we generally do not think three enough; according to the number of parishes which they take in so we insist on the number of workers in proportion to the area. Then they have to report on the children to the guardians; they have to enter into an agreement first with the board of guardians from whom

Chairman—continued.

they propose to take children. This agreement, with the scale of payments, has first to be sanctioned by the Local Government Board. The committees have to engage to keep the regulations, and to visit the children at least once in six weeks, and report upon them to the guardians. They have also to send in returns every half-year to the Local Government Board of their own number, to show that they are still alive and looking after the children.

2381. Can you say anything as regards the motives of boarding-out committees?—Yes. With regard to the reasons why they take these children, some of them, of course, do it from interest in the children themselves; some of these people who live in the country are interested in London children, and have the children for their own sake; others have them for the sake of their poor people, quite avowedly, because their payments are a help to them. There are a great many motives; and speaking of the inspection of infants, I think you will have to remember that there are always those local motives to contend with in inspecting them. You will understand that I am seeking to help you, and I do not want to bring in any names, nor to bring any difficulties; but I could tell you of cases where really the children are paying the rents of the cottages. When we come to the question of the difficulties of inspection, the inspector has to contend not only with the homes in which the children are, but with the motives from which the ladies and gentlemen in the place have the children there. As I say, sometimes the payments of the children are actually paying the rent.

Viscount Llanduff.

2382. Like the pig?—Yes, only that the pig is the property of the tenant and not of the landlord. In the case of the children the children are the property of the landlord, which increases the difficulty.

Chairman.

2383. Then with reference to these voluntary societies, do you often in the course of your inquiries come across children that are put out by the various societies?—Yes, constantly.

2384. Do you find that as a rule they are pretty well looked after?—Yes, some are; but you see I cannot answer so certainly for them as I can for my own, because I undress my own, and I have no power to undress others. Therefore, if they are neglected, if they are dirty, or if they are beaten, I should not know it so long as their outside was tidy.

2385. But have you come across many cases in which they are not, in which they are palpably badly looked after?—I think you cannot talk of palpably, because outside appearances are so deceptive; there are very few palpable cases. I sometimes find children placed by voluntary societies or persons in comparatively large numbers in the houses; they do not keep to the regulations as we do as to numbers; professedly they do, but they make many exceptions.

2386. Do most of the voluntary societies that you know of have a local committee of some sort, or local individuals, to look after children that they put out?—Yes, local individuals; but I know none that have real committees.

2387. You do not know any voluntary societies that

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that simply put their children out and do not bother to look after them afterwards?—No; they have someone to look after them, though not a committee. Then, in speaking of why the ladies and gentlemen take children, I should say that they do it to help their poor people sometimes, and sometimes they do it even to help an old servant. I could find you cases where the old servants are provided for in that way.

2388. And are the children well looked after in those sort of cases?—Some are, some are not; but when they are not it is very difficult to get them away from an old servant.

2389. What do you do when you go round?—I report on every case indifferently, whether good or bad; I report on each child in each case; and whether the committee will remove the child of their own accord entirely depends upon the particular committee. Some are quite ready to do it directly they know the facts; others say, "That was my housemaid, and I trust her entirely."

2390. What happens then?—It depends upon the board of guardians, whether they take the part of the housemaid.

2391. It depends entirely upon the board of guardians, does it?—The Local Government Board sometimes say that they think the children ought to be removed, but as a rule they leave the responsibility to the board of guardians. I report to the Local Government Board both on the committees and on the children. My report on the committees is confidential, but the report on the children is forwarded to the board of guardians, and they have to act upon it.

2392. I suppose you find a great deal of difference between committees; you find some very much better than others?—Yes, very much.

2393. And where the committees are not so good, I suppose you find the children in a worse condition?—Yes, undoubtedly.

2394. Therefore, we may say that the well-being of the children depends to a very great extent upon how they are looked after, after they are put out?—Altogether.

2395. Even in the case of respectable foster-parents, if they are not properly looked after they may be apt to neglect the children, you think?—Well, some people, some of the foster-parents, look after the children thoroughly well and conscientiously, even though the committee may not be looking after them; but then there are others who do not, and of course you do not know till you prove them which will turn out good and which will not, and those of whom you would least expect it sometimes are those that fail you.

2396. At what sort of age do you generally put these children out?—No earlier than two, and nominally no later than 10, years of age, but the elder age is rather elastic.

2397. And you have some rule, I fancy, with reference to the number of children which the foster-parent already may possess; you do not put a child into a house if there are already a certain number of children in it, do you?—No. From every source there must be no more than five; you cannot put one of the poor law children into a house where there is more than one other boarded out from some other source; that is to say, you cannot put a poor law child into a house where there is more than one nurse baby.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

2398. Families sometimes increase?—We do not make a rule that they shall not increase, but we only say that when the boarded-out children are first put there, there must not be more than a certain number of children. That rule was made in consequence of the number of children that we found boarded out voluntarily, especially by Dr. Barnardo; there were such a number of his children placed in the same houses that I inspected. The rule was made in 1889, in the last boarding-out Order, that there should be a limit to the numbers who might be boarded out from other sources; before that, I once found a home where I saw six children besides those I had to do with boarded out in one house, and I heard that these were not all; I do not know where they all came from.

2399. Do you find that in houses like that, even when they are well looked after, there is considerable mortality, merely from the fact of there being an unusual number of children on the premises?—You see I do not follow the careers of those children whom I have nothing to do with, so I could not say.

2400. But when you go round to inspect a certain house that you have perhaps seen before, I suppose you compare your notes on that occasion with the notes on the previous occasion?—You see, since 1889, I have not found them in my houses except now and then, so that there has been practically scarcely any overcrowding since 1889; and in those few cases either the poor law children or the others have been removed, so that I have not seen the house again under the same conditions.

2401. And what do you find is the general attitude of foster-parents towards inspection?—I have been now inspecting more than ten and a half years, and I do not think I could say that I have found 12 foster-parents who have resented inspection.

2402. By you?—By me; and in every case where they resented my inspection they had very good reason for not wishing me to find out the facts. Even those who are not doing right do not resent it openly, because they know it is right; and those who are doing their duty are always rejoiced that you should inspect. My difficulty is to get away from the place without inspecting everything belonging to the foster-parents themselves, and without seeing the people that I have known before. Even when their children have gone, I continually have to pay them friendly visits, because they would be hurt if I did not. For instance, I was spending one Sunday at Amptill, where there was a committee, in order to inspect committees further off; and the Amptill children saw me in church, and waited outside the church, and asked me to come and see their foster-parents, because they said they would be hurt if they heard I was there; so I had to make a visit on Sunday to see them.

2403. You know that it has been raised as an objection against an extension of the present law that it might interfere with the work that is done by these voluntary societies if they were included in it. It is said that if all the foster-parents with whom they put children had to be inspected they would find it very difficult to get the more respectable class of foster-parents to take the children in; do you think that is correct?—I think that would entirely depend

s 3

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

depend upon who the inspectors were. For instance, within the last year I had a case where children were boarded out with a foster-parent who was rather a grand lady. She made no trouble about my inspection, but she said she would not stand the visits of "paltry people," as she called them; she told me there was not a "real lady" in the parish whom she would admit; there was a committee which boarded out there, and I understand that a lady they put on was turned out with ignominy.

2404. That is rather an exceptional case, I suppose?—Yes, it is; but at the same time they always tell me they will only have real ladies; they discriminate; they are very particular.

2405. And therefore you think that an inspection is much better carried out by a woman than by a man?—I do not think that a man can carry it out; in the case of girls he cannot, he might in the case of boys; but I find that you cannot know the facts unless you see the children's necks and arms and feet, to see whether they are kept clean or not; and you cannot tell whether they are beaten by asking questions, because no one would tell you, least of all the child.

2406. Do you find many cases which you have come across, cases of ill-treatment like that?—Yes, a good many.

2407. And beating?—Yes.

2408. What do you do then?—Then I report it like the rest; I have no power to take the child away; I wish I had.

2409. Have you thought over the best method of carrying out inspection under this Bill, if it became law?—I do not know very much about how the local authorities are found to act, but I believe that they do not do all they should do, do they?

2410. The evidence that has been given before us rather tends to show that the local authorities do not pay so much attention to the existing Act as they might?—That was what I wanted to answer. I think the reason is that it is because they are local, they are so much afraid of giving local offence to their neighbours; that is the difficulty of inspection; that is the difficulty with the boarding-out committees of ladies; they are very often afraid of offending their neighbours, and as I was saying, some of these nurse children are put with the people by the ladies themselves. I gave a case in this report (*pointing to a report*) of such a child. There was a child boarded out in Devonshire; it was a case near Plymouth; the foster-parent was sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude for manslaughter of a baby; two or three children had died in that house, and there was one child who was boarded out under a committee; as a matter of fact the ladies of the place had helped that woman; the very same ladies who had supervised my boarded-out child had actually put these nurse children with the same woman in order to maintain her, and they took her part when she was sentenced, and declared that she could not have ill-treated the child; they would not receive any evidence, they would not believe it. She is in prison now doing her time.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2411. What sort of age were the children?—These children were all under one or two years.

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

2412. They probably came under the existing Act?—They did.

2413. Was the house registered?—No, the house was not registered.

Chairman.

2414. How does that case bear upon your objections to the local authorities as inspectors?—Because the local authorities are interested; I mean the committees themselves, who put the children out, are interested in the person they put the child with; and you see the local authority does not like very much interfering with the interest of the local neighbours.

2415. You do not think, therefore, that the inspectors should be local people?—I think that it is a good thing to have a local supervisor, and I would not destroy the local authority; but I think that there should also be an inspector from a distance, from a centre, who should also inspect as well as the local authority; so that she should be behind the local authority. I mean that there should be someone for the local inspector to fall back upon and to support her.

2416. It has been suggested by some that the police are the proper people to administer the Act; is that your view?—No, I do not think the police are, because I do not think that many respectable people would like the police inspecting. I think that there should be a woman appointed, and I think that there should be a central woman behind that woman; that there should be a local supervisor made responsible, and there should be a central inspector behind the local supervisor to strengthen her hands.

2417. When you say a central woman, you mean a person appointed either by the Local Government Board or one of the Government Departments?—I should say by the Home Office, because she would have the police behind them in the case of emergency, and because the object is not the relief of the poor, but the detection; and I think that the inspector should either be appointed by the county council or by the Home Office direct; I am not sure whether even the county council would not be too local.

2418. There would hardly be enough work for a separate inspector for each county council, would there?—If not, two or three counties might combine to appoint one.

2419. Then it has been suggested that the local medical officer of health might visit the children?—I do not think that would be a good plan; because they have their private practice. I have the very highest opinion of doctors; I think they are most devoted and most good; but when it comes to a matter of reporting upon a child, I find them quite ready to certify for one of their own ladies that a child is all right, when I have found it in a state very much the opposite. I mean that they do that if the lady who has placed out the child is a patient.

2420. All this evidence that you have now been giving deals more or less with the children when you have found them out; of course, part of the Act, you understand, is discovering the children in these homes, finding them out?—Yes.

2421. And

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

2421. And therefore that would be another argument against the medical officer of health; he would be hardly the proper person to engage in the detective work of finding out the children?—No, I do not think he ought to be; I think it ought to be some one unprofessional and independent; an independent local inspector or supervisor, and an independent central one.

2422. You see the work which your committees do is really only one-half of the question; your committees simply look after the children when once they are put there?—No, they place them.

2423. They find out the homes for them, you mean?—Yes.

2424. But what we want to find out is the proper authority for administering this Act, more especially in the rural districts, and that local authority will have to find out children that are kept in unregistered houses and insist upon those houses being registered if they come within the Act, and then look after the children after they have discovered them?—Yes; then I think that should be a person, a woman, quite independent of anything else.

2425. Do you think a woman is a proper person to go round and do the detective part of the work and find out where children are?—Yes. I do not think a policeman, to begin with, could get in, and I do not think a local policeman, above all, is the person; I think it should be a woman, and a woman who is independent; but at the same time, I do not think she should be the sole authority, because I think, even for a woman, it would be most difficult to interfere with the neighbours; it would be a most unpopular task, in any case, where they are doing wrong, I mean; where they are doing right, I am sure she would be welcomed.

2426. Another difficulty, of course, which arises is this, that supposing you had an inspector, a lady inspector if you like, told off to look after a certain district and make inquiries, if she went into a village, you know how people get known in a village, when they know them once they know them again?—Yes.

2427. Supposing she went on a second voyage to that village inquiring about children being kept at any unregistered houses, if there were any such, the children would be very soon hidden out of sight before she got there?—Yes; and that is an additional reason for not leaving the inspection to a local inspector alone. She would be better known by sight than one from a distance. But in the country I think you could generally find out from someone whether there is a baby in the place. I had one case where a woman would not let me go upstairs and see the room; she refused; I thought the children ought to be removed, and I recommended it, but the guardians did not carry it out. I let two years pass, and then I went again, and this time I took the chairman of the board of guardians with me as a witness; that woman kept me waiting for about a quarter of an hour before she let me go upstairs; meantime I saw two nurse children in the house, but she must have hidden some others away. I was certain

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

there were some others, and I got to know about it afterwards.

2428. You think that the fact of a woman having a nurse child in a village is generally pretty well known to her neighbours?—Yes, nearly always; the neighbours, in a village, will always know it, almost.

2429. Therefore it is easier to find them out in the country than it is in towns?—Much. Those nurse children I was speaking of last had also all been placed there by the ladies themselves individually, and they had not told each other.

2430. Your evidence rather tends to point to this, that your local committees require just as much looking after as anybody else?—My whole life is spent in looking after them. I am speaking now of those that concern your point; many of the committees do their work excellently, and many of the foster parents are excellent.

2431. You are in these remarks talking of certain individuals?—Yes; I am only speaking of those that concern your point.

2432. Do you think it would be in any way possible or feasible for your existing committees to undertake any work under this Act?—I think some would, but most would not, and they are too local. They would be afraid of giving offence, and would not inspect thoroughly. It is all I can do to get them to inspect thoroughly the children whom they place out themselves, and for whom they are actually responsible, for this reason. They are so needlessly afraid of giving offence.

2433. Are these children that are put out by the poor law authorities mostly illegitimate?—No, they are orphans, or deserted, for the most part; they are all nominally orphans or deserted; but the term orphan is very widely extended to mean a child of a parent who is bed-ridden or in prison; in fact, it takes in almost all the permanent children.

2434. Therefore they are not classed as being either legitimate or illegitimate?—No.

2435. May I ask whether you are generally in favour of the Bill which we are considering; I am presuming that you are acquainted with the provisions of the Bill?—I have not read the whole Bill through, but as far as I know its provisions, I think it is very much wanted. I understand that you propose to raise the age.

2536. We propose to raise the age to five years?—Yes.

2437. And do you think that any hardship would be caused by the provisions which apply this registration in the case of a child only kept 24 hours away from its parents?—I think it would be almost impossible. The mother goes away for perhaps one night, and might put the child with a neighbour; it would be hard if she could not do that.

2438. And gives the neighbour something to look after it for her?—Yes; I think a week would be better.

2439. Then perhaps you are not aware that the objection to that proposal is, that the people that we wish to get at very often do not have the children in their own house; sometimes but a very short space of time, sometimes not at all,

s 4

and

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

and they simply act as intermediaries and pass the children on?—Yes.

2440. And, therefore, in a week's time the child might be passed on to three or four different people and all trace of it be lost?—I have not thought enough about what should be done, but I think the fact that the person has the child should be declared and registered, though the house itself need not be registered; if you see what I mean, that the fact that she has had the child should be registered, although her house should not be a permanently registered house. The fact should be notified, I mean.

2441. To whom; the local authority?—To the local authority, perhaps.

2442. Therefore, you mean to say that you are more in favour of a mere notification from the person who takes the child in than the actual registration of the house?—I think it would be scarcely possible to register every house where a woman takes in a child for one night for a friend.

2443. That sort of thing is very common, I suppose?—Yes, and often quite harmless. If a mother has to go away she must leave her baby with somebody; and then there are cases where you cannot exactly say whether the nurse children are paid for or not; I know many cases where a mother places her child with somebody on payment, and she practically deserts it and pays nothing for it, and the woman will take to that child and bring it up as her own without having a penny for it; I know numbers of those cases, most deserving people; and those would be most difficult cases, because you could hardly say whether the woman was paid or not; still they might be registered; and I am sure such women would only be too glad to welcome inspection to show what they had done for the child, and they desire that it should be known.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2444. Have you considered, speaking generally, the advantage of increased stringency as proved to your satisfaction?—Yes.

2445. The evidence you have given us, of course, has been mainly drawn from, if one may use the word, the professional experience you have had in the last 10 years; but speaking generally, with your knowledge of the life of the working classes as a whole, do you think that that increased stringency would inflict much hardship or not?—It would inflict, I should almost say, no hardship at all on the working classes.

2446. Even the registration of children up to five, or as one Bill proposes seven, years?—No, I think not. Perhaps I might give you another case. One of my foster parents (it was at Axminster, and we have published the case) was a farmer, a churchwarden, communicant, everything; he was considered the parish model; they took a child four years old and beat it continuously; no one knew till at last one day its screams attracted the neighbours, and they found it tied by the thumbs to the bedpost, its thumbs almost cut through, and beaten so as to be a mass of bruises. They were, I think, both sent to prison; but all the other foster parents whom I visited in that neighbourhood hailed me as a

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

deliverer, because they said, "You can certify for us that we are doing our duty; I am so glad you have come," they said, "because you can certify that we are doing right by our children."

2447. Why do you think it is that the Act is practically a dead letter in England outside London?—Because I think London is a large enough area for the inspector not to be local.

2448. And do you think that if arrangements were made for a non-local inspector the authorities who have at present failed to put or decided against putting the Act into operation would at once put it into operation?—No, they would not unless they were obliged to; but as far as I know what the present authorities are, I do not think they are the right people. I am not sure whom they now are.

2449. The district councils who have the power under the Act of appointing an inspector, but who neglect to appoint an inspector; and without saying that they do not administer the Act, practically they do not do so because they appoint another agent to do it?—I see.

2450. It would hardly seem obvious that your objection to a local inspector would set that difficulty right?—I think apparently they do not take enough interest in the matter, and I do not think they would; I do not think for the most part they care who have babies in their houses; I should not say the district council of my own neighbourhood would trouble themselves at all about it; I am not sure whether they are even aware that they have got the power.

2451. Let us put it like this: you know what the present law is; the proposal now before us is that that law should be made more stringent in two directions; first, that it should be forbidden to take, without registration, even one child, while at present you are allowed one and no more under 12 months; and, secondly, that the age should be raised from 12 months to five or seven years; I do not follow how that Act, if it became law to-morrow, would mend matters, from your point of view?—No; but I think the district councils do not take enough trouble. I should appoint a central inspector, with county council inspectors under her, to see that the district councils appoint their own, and carry out the Act. The district councils are too local to act by themselves.

2452. Then if you were given power to-morrow to set the present wrongs right, as far as the law could, it would not be by passing such a Bill as is now proposed?—I would pass the Bill, but I would not give it to the district council to administer alone.

Viscount Llandaff.

2453. To whom would you give it?—Supposing you gave it to the county council, or to the Home Office, then it would not be local. I am quite sure that 99 out of 100 district councils would not care; they do not know that they have got it, and if you told them, they would not trouble about it, and whom would they be able to find? I do not know any local persons who would do it or who could do it alone. I will take my own district council; I am quite sure that there is no one that the district council could find.

2454. But

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2454. But you do think that such an Act is wanted?—I do; but I think that it cannot be carried out by too small localities alone and unsupported.

2455. Your recommendation would be: Pass some such Act as is now suggested, but give the administration of it to the authorities of a larger area?—Quite so.

2456. And you do not think that there would be a hardship in either of two directions, either the case of the mother who is temporarily absent, or the case of the widower, let us say, whose children are left without a mother?—No, not if the mother might only notify the fact that she left her child, without putting it in an actually registered house, because you might not find one registered house in the parish, and yet she would want a woman to take care of her child. I think those cases should be notified, but certain houses also registered.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2457. In country parishes, to whom should she notify?—She might notify to the local inspector. I think she should be obliged to notify to the local inspector.

Viscount Llandaff.

2458. She must notify to the authority that has the administration of the Act?—She could notify to the local inspector, or to the clerk to the district council, or to whoever appoints the inspector.

2459. You suggested the County Council or Home Office?—Yes; but I think you might appoint some one in the place to whom she should notify. I have not had time to think of that. I think that would not be an insuperable objection.

2460. Then to pass to another point about the amount of payment, have you a large experience of illegitimate children boarded out by others than the guardians; I mean not professional experience, but have you observed it much?—Yes, a great deal.

2461. What do you consider is the minimum payment for which such a child in the country can be properly received?—Some parents pay, I think I have known, as little as 1s. 6d. a week; some 5s.; 2s. or 3s. is the average for babies; 5s., perhaps, for bigger children.

2462. But what do you consider is the minimum sum for which such a child can be properly done for?—That is most difficult to say, because they live so much on their wages and the produce of their garden, and it depends upon whether the person who has the child keeps a pig, or whether she has a garden. It is impossible to fix a sum in money, because it all depends upon the particular circumstances.

2463. That is all in the country?—I am only speaking of the country; I have no experience of London.

2464. Do you think that, speaking generally, a girl who has an illegitimate child in the country, whose home is in the country, finds a difficulty in respectably disposing of it?—That depends rather upon what you mean by "respectably disposing of it." They are not always places that I should put the children in; I find them (0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

sometimes in very undesirable places; and so long as the baby is very young it takes up no room, and it does not matter where it is put so far as space goes, so long as it is well nursed, I mean well fed. I am speaking of little children, babies, because they only want milk.

2465. Have many instances come under your notice in which a girl has been honestly put in a difficulty as to finding a home, even if she was ready to pay for it, for her baby?—Yes, often, because there are not so very many suitable people to take them. There are so many girls who have been in difficulties, and that is why some of the ladies I have mentioned have helped them. And they have done it partly to help the mother. In some of these cases these ladies have done it not merely for the woman who receives the baby, but for the parent who places it.

2466. Do you think that that would be remedied in any way by an increased rule of registration?—No, I do not think that would touch the matter one way or other. It would not help you to find homes, only to see that the children were properly treated when they were in the homes.

2467. Might it not increase the difficulty of finding the homes?—No, I do not think that.

2468. Are there not a great many respectable working people who would be quite willing to take in a child, not as a common business, but occasionally once in a way, if you like, who would entirely refuse to be registered for that purpose?—I do not think many.

2469. Is it not a very much more formal step on the part of a respectable couple in a small country village to go to the County Council and ask to be registered to take in a child, than quietly to take it in without saying anything about it?—You have not given me time to think to whom they should notify it. You ask me all in a moment a thing you have been considering yourselves for some months, but I will think it over and think to whom you might notify. I think they might be registered and inspected by a local authority, but the inspection should not be only local; the inspector should have an authority from a distance.

2470. I do not follow that; you have not quite met my point, which is, would there not be many a quiet couple who would be ready enough to take in a child in an emergency, but who, if they were obliged officially to have their house registered for that purpose, would say, We do not want that registration implying inspection?—No, I do not think so. You would only propose to register that house if the child remains, say, over a week. I think the fact should be notified that the child is there, and that it should be liable to inspection; but I do not see that the house need be registered as a house for infants. The fact that a particular infant is in a house ought to be registered locally, and then it should be liable to inspection by the local and central inspectors; but it would not be necessary that that house should be for all time registered as a house for babies.

Chairman.

2471. But that would imply when the place came

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12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

came to be inspected, when it was found to be unsuitable or overcrowded, that the inspector ought to have the power of taking the child away?—Yes, quite so; anyone registered as having a baby in the house ought to be liable to inspection, but I do not think it necessary that the house should be a registered house for babies.

Viscount Llandaff.

2472. The Lord Bishop put to you the case of decent people who want to take a child permanently, but would rather go without the child than go through the formality of registration?—I do not think it would often happen; I think that these decent people would be quite willing to submit to it.

2473. They would like the inspection of somebody sent down from the Home Office, you think?—I do not think they would object if they were doing their duty; I do not find that they do so myself. I never find that they object to my committees' inspection, if they are doing right. I have seldom had a complaint of anyone doing it carefully and kindly.

2474. Is there not a great difference between the inspection of a neighbour, who comes in the light of a friend, and the inspection of an official who comes from the Home Office?—I think it does not matter if it is done kindly.

2475. You think that an official is as friendly as neighbours?—Yes, and possibly more so. I think it should be an official who would do it in a friendly way; but if you send a policeman down or a rough person, or a "paltry person," as I was told, that is an objection; but it entirely depends upon who she is, and how she does it. You might send someone either from the village, or from a distance, who would set them all up in arms. It is not the fact of an official lady's call or inspection that would make them angry.

Lord Belper.

2476. You think they would not object to the mere fact of registering, having their names sent to the local authority, so that everyone could see them?—No; I think they would regard it only as permission to have the child.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2477. But you have drawn a clear distinction between two things; namely, on the one hand, notification to the authority that a child is there, in the same sort of way as an infectious disease is notified, and, on the other hand, registration of the house as a place for the reception of babies?—Yes, I meant that.

Lord Belper.

2478. If that is to lead to anything else, it must mean that the fact that the child being there is registered; you may not call it registration of the house, but at all events the result would be, that the local authority must put that name and address on some sort of a register to which people can refer?—If the child is only there a night or two there can be no grievance, because the child would be gone when the inspector came.

Viscount Llandaff.

2479. I understand you to confine your recommendation of a notice that the child is there to the transient case, not the permanent one?—Yes; it would be merely the fact, in case there should be any question afterwards as to what had become of that child; you would be able to trace it and know where it was; for instance, in such a case as those Reading cases, you would be able to trace the child by the fact of its being notified.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2480. In your experience in the country, does a girl who has to find a home for a baby usually have to pay?—Yes.

2481. Or frequently obtain a home with relations without payment?—I think she always pays; she always professes to do so; she always pays at first; sometimes it is with relations that she puts the child, her mother or her sister; but even with a sister she pays, as a rule.

2482. That is what I want to get at; would you or would you not exempt those people from your notification; I use the term notification rather than registration; ought a sister to be registered if she takes an illegitimate child?—Scarcely; and yet there are cases where, of course, the sister's object is to get rid of it. I think that is a very difficult point. I think it is a point that wants a great deal of thinking over, because in the first place, in most instances, the sister would be the kindest, but on the other hand it is the sister who would more wish than anybody else, perhaps, to get rid of it; so that I think it would want very careful thinking over to say on which side the balance lies.

2483. You would not be prepared at present to speak as to where you would limit the need of registration?—Not all in one moment.

Lord Kinnaird.

2484. A respectable woman who was not in any way a criminal would be afraid to do anything to bring herself within the law?—No; I think it is so easy to get rid of a baby, that it does not require any science; you have only not to give it enough milk, and it is gone.

2485. You think they are getting to know that?—I think everybody knows it; too many of them know it. I think nature tells you that if you put the feeding bottle outside the cradle the child will not last long; I mean I could not give a hard-and-fast opinion about it, because I think that, as a rule, the sisters would be kind, and are kind; but there are cases where sisters, like the mothers, are only too glad to get rid of the babies.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2486. But with all the possible drawbacks you are in favour of some fresh legislation for the protection of infants?—I quite think that there ought to be such legislation.

Viscount Llandaff.

2487. I have not quite gathered the extent of your experience; did your inspection extend to the whole of the 155 committees that board out children?—Yes.

2488. And

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2488. And that is the total of the committees, as I understand, in England and Wales?—Yes.

2489. Do you remember the number of unions?—Yes, but that has nothing to do with the number of unions.

2490. No, I know, but I wanted to know how many unions adopt this system?—I should say, speaking roughly, between 40 and 50.

2491. How many unions are there in England and Wales?—I think the number is 647, or it is very nearly that; and of those I should say between 40 and 50 board out beyond the union.

2492. Then why are there 155 committees; is there more than one committee for a union?—Yes; they are not committees for a union. If I might give you an example, there is a committee at Windermere, a committee of local ladies there; they receive children from, I think, six different London unions and I think one country one. There is, again, a committee at Sidmouth in Devonshire; that receives children from three London unions.

2493. I do not want the details; there are then 40 or 50 unions out of the six hundred odd which adopt the boarding-out system?—Yes, outside their union.

2494. Then you say that those unions contribute 1,800 children in all?—Yes.

2495. We should have to deal with a number something like 20 or 30 times that if we extended this Act?—You would.

2496. We should have to deal with the great bulk of illegitimate children in the country?—Yes.

2497. And a great number of the orphan and deserted children?—Yes.

2498. It is not fair to ask you what the number would be?—I have not the least idea; you would know better than I should; but I think for that you would require an inspector for each county almost.

2499. A central inspector you mean for each county besides the local supervisor?—Yes; I would make the local supervisor responsible for at any rate informing the central inspector of any children who might be put out to nurse in the local supervisor's district.

2500. Now you have told us that some of your committees practically use this boarding out system to benefit the poor people in the neighbourhood, or even to benefit their own old servants?—Yes.

2501. About what proportion of the 155 comes under those two categories?—Well, I should say that taking those who use it to benefit the people, almost half or one-third.

2502. May I take it as a rule that where the boarded-out children are sought for in order to benefit the people, those people are poor and they are in a miserable condition of life?—Some are miserable, but by no means all; even when they are pretty fairly off, a boarded-out child or two, that is 8s. a week say, and 2l. a year for dress for each child, besides other things, is a great advantage to them.

2503. Do you find that in those districts under those committees the children do less well than under the really philanthropic ones?—Yes, on the whole; but I think the motives are mixed.

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Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2504. The mixed motive does not hurt the child, you think?—No, not always. In nearly all of them, in the first instance, they take the child for profit; but they say, "We are paid for this, and we ought to do right by the child," and they do their duty. You cannot imagine that they would take a child from love that they have never seen and as to which they do not know what it is like; nor that they would simply take it for company when they have got children of their own.

2505. Now, in all your experience, in 10 years how many criminal cases have you come across?—Do you mean by criminal, where the people have been sent to prison for ill-treatment of a child; or where they have been convicted of crimes independently?

2506. No, I mean when convicted of some crime connected with the child; wilful neglect or wilful injury done to the child; how many criminal cases of that sort have you known?—You mean of persons sent away to prison?

2507. Take those first; how many cases of conviction have you known?—You are asking me, you see, to run over 10½ years in a moment.

2508. Give it me approximately?—Four.

2509. Are there more numerous cases where you have suspected criminal conduct?—There are cases where I think if an inspector of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society had found them, he would have prosecuted them; but I do not prosecute; I only report and recommend that the child shall be taken away, but I think if other people had seen what I have seen, they would have prosecuted.

2510. In the class of parent you employ, is that sort of conduct, cruelty or wilful neglect, common or uncommon?—It is not uncommon.

2511. About what is the proportion?—I am always afraid of stating figures, and "cruelty" and "wilful neglect," you see, are a matter of degree and opinion.

2512. I will tell you why I ask the question: yours is a picked class of foster-parents?—It is.

2513. If there is a large proportion of those people who in your experience are guilty of cruelty or neglect, the question is, what precautions should we have to take with regard to others not belonging that picked class?—Exactly, I understand.

2514. Can you give me any idea of the sort of proportion in which cruelty or neglect has existed, in your opinion?—As to what I call a bad case of neglect or cruelty, when I am going round inspecting every day or every other day, I find a bad case of that kind about once a fortnight; perhaps one in every 15 or 20 cases.

Lord Kinnaird.

2515. How many cases do you inspect in a day?—Sometimes I have inspected as many as 30 in the day; sometimes I inspect only one.

Viscount Llandaff.

2516. There is one case in 20 then of the boarded-out children where, in your opinion, there has been cruelty or neglect?—Yes, where I think the child ought to be removed.

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2517. Do

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2517. Do you recommend the removal of one child in 20 of those you inspect?—Yes, I should think perhaps about that.

Viscount Llandaff.

2518. That is the severest condemnation of the boarding-out system I have heard?—I think it wants the utmost care; but then if the child is moved you may find a better home for it. I would not stop the system for that, but I would move the child.

2519. But in your case you have first the selection and supervision by a local committee then the approval by the guardians, and lastly the supervising examination by the Local Government Board?—Yes.

2520. And that is the result you are landed in, that one in 20 turn out unfit?—I think so. I think the system is excellent. Nothing is so good as the system when the child is in a good home; but it does require the utmost care, because even the local people are deceived as to the people they put the child out with.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2521. And you are sometimes deceived in the local committees, I suppose?—Yes, sometimes. But not much. I know them too well. I try to keep them up to the mark, and also I let them put anything on my broad shoulders that they like.

Viscount Llandaff.

2522. Your inspection is in the country?—Yes, but I have had children boarded out by a committee even in the town of Birmingham itself.

2523. Have you met with much difficulty from the foster parents disappearing, changing their residence and going away?—No, because the committee and the guardians are bound to let us know every alternate three months where the children are. Before that regulation was made I used to have a great deal of difficulty, but in 1889 we issued a new order, and by that the guardians are bound every April and October to send us a return of the children with their foster parents' names and addresses, and the committees have to do it in January and July.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2524. I suppose it might be possible that if you took an average of 100 homes where the parents are with their own children you might find one case in 30 where a child would be almost better off if you placed it somewhere else. Your standard, I mean, of what is required for a child is a high one; there are many homes in which that standard is not reached by parents for their own children?—I take the poor people's own standard; I go by what they think or what they say.

2525. I am not sure that you understand me. I am speaking of this, that human frailty being what it is all the world over, there are a certain number of homes where people dealing with them according to what anybody who is a wise judge would think desirable, and you might find one home in 30 which might seem to you to be conducted in a way which, if the children were nurse children, you would think required

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

removal?—In that sort of case I do not think that the people generally ill-treat their own children in the way that they would ill-treat or neglect a nurse child, but I should certainly say that such a large proportion of the men drink that I think other people might be better in charge of their children, because of their moral character, taking them all round, and of course the children I inspect are supposed to be with those of good moral character.

2526. That is to say the drunken father who is left responsible for his children would be condemned by you as a foster-parent?—Quite so; for a child under the Government you would not choose that man; but at the same time the wife of the drunken man would very likely take care of her own children and treat them well.

Viscount Llandaff.

2527. Among the local authorities suggested for administration are the poor law authorities; are they suitable for the administration of such a Bill as this, do you think?—I would rather not have those children in communication with the poor law.

2528. The poor law and the police should be excluded altogether, you think?—Yes; but the police should be in reserve in case of resistance to the inspector.

2529. The poor law authorities have a medical staff ready to hand; but you think, as I gather, that they are too busy with their private practice?—The doctor is in a very awkward position when he has to report upon a child placed in a house by one of his own patients, or even in the house of one of his patients; there are so many ins and outs, you see.

Lord Belper.

2530. I rather want to understand what your proposal is; I rather gather that you, in the first instance, would suggest that anybody who takes in a child into their house should have to notify the fact to some conveniently near authority; we will not now specify what the authority is?—Yes.

2531. That that authority should not have any powers of inspection, but that the powers of inspection should be given to some central authority, either a department of Government or possibly the County Council?—Yes. That there should be central authority and inspection behind the local.

2532. Have you yourself formed any opinion as to which you think would be the best authority for the purpose of inspection. I do not want to press you on it if you have not?—You see my hands have been very full, and I had only two days' notice; but if you like I will think it over and let you know; but I think there should be no smaller area than a county.

2533. I understand you think it should be at all events something in the form of a central authority, so that no local influence could come into play?—Yes, and I do not think anything else would be fair upon the local people; you must expect them to have human motives.

2534. You think there are no places or districts where there would be an objection to that

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

that sort of notification and to inspection by a central authority?—I think there are no places; I do not say there are no individuals, but no places where that feeling would be generally held.

2535. Not in the country?—No, I am sure there would be no general feeling against it; I could not say no individual feeling, but I am sure no general feeling.

2536. Do you think that the necessity for such an inspection is larger in the country districts than it is in the populous places, or the reverse?—I do not know so much of populous places; but I should say that there would be a good deal more necessity for inspection in populous places, because there the neighbours know less of what goes on. And for the same reason, the inspection by local authorities is more difficult in the country districts than in populous places, for neighbours know each other too well.

2537. Most of your work lies in country parishes?—Yes, and most of my life has lain in country parishes too.

2538. But you are strongly of opinion that there is a necessity for such inspection in country parishes?—I think so.

2539. Therefore you would not like to see an extension of the present law which would make exceptions with reference to them?—Oh, no.

2540. And I rather understand that you would like to see an even larger discretion given to such inspectors with reference to the question of the child being removed or of any child being put in that house at all, a larger discretion than ever would be given under regulations such as the County Council have issued?—I am afraid I do not know enough about the regulations that the County Council have issued.

2541. I mean that they issue certain definite regulations; they do not register a house unless they consider that the house comes within those regulations?—Yes.

2542. But I rather understand that your suggestion is that the inspector should have a very large discretion, and that without being able to say that a house is not within the regulations, he should be able to say "I do not think the child is being as well looked after here as he ought to be, therefore I shall remove him to another house"?—Yes, in cases where ill-treatment or cruelty is found.

2543. Practically it would give a very large discretion to the inspector?—Yes.

2544. I rather gathered from your evidence that that was the view you took, that a house might not be an improper house for a child to be in, but that it might be found out that he was not looked after as well as he ought to be; in that case you think the inspector might require removal?—That is so much a matter of degree. The inspector might have too high a standard; and if the parent was satisfied that the child was tolerably done by, it would be rather difficult to interfere.

2545. I did not mean to suggest that the inspector should do it with a high hand; but there is the greatest difference between a hard and fast rule and discretion?—Yes, there is.

2546. And as far as your experience goes, you

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Lord Belper—continued.

would like to see discretion come into play?—Yes, I think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

2547. You said that the number of satisfactory houses in the country was limited?—Yes.

2548. Can you give us any sort of estimate how many satisfactory houses you could find throughout England?—Scarcely; because one place is so good, and another is so bad, as a rule. Sometimes when I go to a village, I am surprised at the number of good ones that I find in one place.

2549. Do you think there would be any difficulty in finding homes say for 100,000 children instead of 1,800?—You mean boarded out. Yes, very great difficulty.

2550. I have not calculated the number of children we should have to deal with under this Act, but they would be extremely large?—But you see, you would not have to place them; they are placed already; you have not the responsibility of placing them.

2551. We should have to find proper places and houses?—If you took them away.

2552. We should have to put them into houses fit for registration?—Yes. I think you will not find a very large number. But I do not understand that the authority who took them away would have to find more than a temporary place of refuge for them.

2553. It has been represented to us by many witnesses that the supply of good foster parents is practically unlimited; that you can find as many as you want?—Well, that is really not the case.

Chairman.

2554. In the cases of children who are boarded out in the country in the holidays, they do not have much difficulty with them?—They only put them out a fortnight at a time; and then, too, they crowd them a great deal, not as much as they did, because owing to my reports the principal society asked me to recommend them a lady as inspector, and she now inspects the homes and sees, as far as she can, that they do not put too many in one home; but, at the same time, they have not the regulations that we have, and I know places where they put a great many in, in the summer; there are so many different societies and agencies who send holiday children out; some of them use very unsuitable places, and I hear continually that they crowd the villages. That is temporary, you see, and I do not think you can compare the two, and it does not matter so much if they crowd for a little time.

Lord Kinnaird.

2555. Do you think that there would be a difficulty in getting houses for the children boarded out if the number were greatly increased?—Yes, there will be certainly a great difficulty in getting proper homes for a very large number; but there are districts in England quite untouched, and where you might find new centres for a great many more.

2556. And if they take them to a certain extent for profit the price might affect it?—I do not think that would come in at all; the price is high enough already.

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2557. It

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2557. It is almost a condition of this Bill that you should find these proper houses in every district; you would not expect a poor girl with an illegitimate child to go to a distance to find a home for it?—I did not understand that the authority should find a home.

2558. But they are to register the home, and the homes must be there to be found by somebody; it is proposed that every place where a nurse child is permanently taken in should pass the ordeal of registration, and be a fit and proper place, therefore, for a child to be taken to?—Yes. But I do not think that the fact of registration should carry with it any certificate of fitness of the house or home. It should be clearly understood that registration merely places them under inspection in order to provide, as far as possible, for the actual safety of the child.

2559. By the necessity of the case you must have it somewhere in the neighbourhood of the mother who has just had the child?—You would be able to find more homes for young babies than you would for older children; that is to say, if they are only temporary, because the mother will take them by-and-bye; they do not go there for good; and besides you can put a little baby in a place where you could not put an older child; it sleeps in a cradle beside the mother; you do not want a separate room for it; you do not want to divide the boys and girls when the children are so very young; so that you would have less difficulty in finding homes for very young children than you would for older ones; and, moreover, if the foster-parents take care of the child, I do not think that their character signifies so much, if it is only for a baby. You cannot attempt to have too high a standard, and I think you might be satisfied with a lower standard where the mother puts her own infant into such a home temporarily. It is impossible for any authority to find or choose homes for people's own children, or to make themselves responsible for their fitness; all they can do is to protect the child's life.

2560. These registered houses, if this Bill becomes law, must be scattered pretty well all over the country?—They must certainly.

2561. The mothers of these children would not have to go long journeys to find a place where to put their children?—No, certainly not; I should have them everywhere that I could.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. CROWDER, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2562. I BELIEVE you are a guardian?—No, my husband is a guardian; I am not. I am one of the honorary secretaries of the Charity Organisation Society and a Board School manager in St. George's-in-the-East.

2563. And you have had considerable experience among the poor of that district?—Yes, some 11 years. I have been about there constantly.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

[I should make it quite clear that I did not mean to recommend the *substitution* of central for local inspection, but the strengthening and enforcing of local inspection by central. I should propose the appointment, as at present, of a paid inspector by the district council, but also the appointment of a paid inspector by the county council, in order to ascertain whether the district councils have made these appointments, and to see that the inspectors of the district councils do their work. I would also suggest the appointment of one paid central inspector by the Home Office, to supervise, in the same manner, the appointments of the county councils, and the work of their inspectors. The placing of children in each district should be notified to the inspector of the district council, who should be responsible for the district, and should report to the county inspector; and if local circumstances make it difficult for the local inspector to carry out particular inspections, she should apply to the county inspector to carry them out in her place. The county inspector should be able, in the same manner, to call in the central inspector. I would have it most clearly understood that the fact of registration of houses does not carry with it any certification of their fitness, but only places them under inspection which shall, as far as possible, provide for the safety of the children. It is not possible either to find an unlimited number of satisfactory homes, nor to prevent the placing, by private persons, of children, especially if their own, anywhere they please, except so far as to prevent gross neglect or ill-treatment. The Government, by official inspection, cannot be responsible for more than this. The Government do not board out these children, nor find the homes, and cannot undertake more than the protection of the children from injury. With regard to the classes for exception, a register might be kept, at the Home Office, where each should be entered. I would not allow voluntary or philanthropic societies to be generally excepted under the Act, but they should be registered separately in the register to be provided for in the Act. Forms of return, with the names and addresses of the children and foster parents, like those furnished to the Local Government Board every three months, should be filled in by the district inspectors, and forwarded by them to the county inspectors].

Chairman—continued.

2564. Can you give us any opinion with reference to the points of this Bill?—The general opinion of those I have spoken to, and my own opinion, is that it is too interfering; that it would hinder many acts of kindness and help that neighbours show to each other now by taking children in time of sickness or other special circumstances.

2565. Because they would object to being compelled

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

compelled to register, you mean?—For temporary cases they would not be inclined to take the trouble; they would feel that there was a sort of law against them, that they could not do it without permission, and they would make that an excuse probably for not assisting their neighbours.

2566. Are you in favour of the extension of the age of children to be registered to five years?—I really do not know that if they had to register at all it would matter much continuing it up to that age.

2567. You have not thought that matter over?—No. Five years of age is rather high; it would interfere with the sending away of children to convalescent homes or sending them away to friends in the country, which we do in a poor district like ours. We continually send them at the age of three, and it would be inconvenient to have to register them. I often send them to persons at the seaside whom we know.

2568. I suppose in the same way as is done in connection with the Country Holiday Fund?—Yes, I do not personally work on it, but I generally take the children who are not quite suitable to send away in that way, perhaps children who are too young for the Country Holiday Fund, and who want a longer time; and we often send a child away for three or four months.

2569. You pay so much per patient?—Yes.

2570. And do you have it supervised while it is away?—I generally send it to some person in the country who has been recommended to me by a lady living at the place.

2571. And that lady would look after it?—She would look after it sometimes more, sometimes less; but she would recommend somebody who was personally known to her to take the child.

2572. You heard the proposals put forward by Miss Mason with reference to the notification; do you see any objection to the woman in such a case notifying that she was taking in a child in the same way as a person would have to notify that she had got measles in the house?—I think it would hinder in many cases acts of kindness among neighbours. We find widows apply to us, and they tell us that a neighbour or a relation, a cousin or a married sister, has taken one of the children for them during the time of their distress; and such a requirement would very much hinder them, I think, especially if they were of a little better class. I think you would find generally that those of a lower class are accustomed to being visited by district nurses and other visitors; they do not seem to mind how much inspection they have; but the minute you reach rather a better class they resent interference; persons like the parents of old servants; and servants themselves even in my employ, have told me that their parents have often had nurse-children, and they tell me they would not have them if they had to be inspected. I have asked them whether if relations or persons of that class had nurse-children they would submit to inspection; and they say absolutely no, that they would not take the child on those conditions; and one of them knows the practice well; her mother has (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

had such a child, and she says it has grown up like one of themselves.

2573. We had one case of an old servant mentioned by Miss Mason; that was a most necessary case for inspection?—Yes, it may have been.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2574. You are speaking entirely of London, are you not?—This particular case was in the country; the relations live a little way out of London. Many of these poor people in St. George's-in-the-East would choose a friend who lived a little more on the outskirts of London, St. George's being absolutely town. If they had a relation a little way out of London, that would be the one they would select; probably one in a little better circumstances than themselves.

Chairman.

2575. We had a witness from Poplar, a member of the County Council, who is strongly in favour of this Bill, and he scouted the idea of any resenting of the interference; can you give any reason for what you suppose to be likely to be the feeling?—I think the higher the class you go to the more self-respect they have, and the less they would like to feel that all their private affairs were known.

2576. Which would be the highest class, Poplar or St. George's-in-the-East?—I meant the higher the class of person who takes the child in. The St. George's-in-the-East people would resent inspection very little; but then we are in and out of their houses and bed-rooms. They do not seem to have any objection to inspection; but they are not the higher class people; those people like a little more privacy.

2577. But we have been told by two witnesses to-day that the better class rather welcome inspection?—I think the last witness was speaking of a better class, though a very poor class.

2578. If the inspection was by a lady, she said?—I think the last witness was speaking entirely of a class earning very small wages; a very poor class, though no doubt very respectable; as I understand your Bill, it would apply to all.

2579. We could not distinguish one class from another?—It would reach a much higher class than at present comes within the Act; it would apply to relations, too, would it not.

2580. That is a matter to be settled; the present Act does apply to relatives; but your objections to the Bill are limited to a general fear that it might stop benevolent action?—Yes, and make it exceedingly difficult for persons to know where to place their children when they could not keep them themselves; it would add to the difficulty instead of making it less; and speaking of the particular class you wish to deal with, it would almost make it impossible for some of them to find homes for their children.

2581. That objection, if it is a valid one, would apply equally to other things; I mean it would be a universal objection if it was proved to be a valid one?—Yes.

2582. Have you come across any of these people who take in children for hire or reward?—Not those who do it regularly as a practice,

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

or as a living; but a few who have taken children in, and in those cases they have been exceedingly kind and careful of the children; I am talking of infants. The only case of unkindness to a nurse-child that I have seen was in the case of a child who would have been too old to come under this Bill, a school child; there the payments were very irregular; the father had charge of the child and in the result they were unkind.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2583. What has been the nature of your experience as a worker; you have spoken of your being secretary to the Charity Organization Committee; but besides official work of that kind you have had a great deal to do, I believe, with the actual work of visitation?—I visit every case almost that applies for relief.

2584. That applies, you mean, to the Charity Organization Society for relief?—That applies to the Charity Organization Society for relief. I go into their homes and visit every room in their house and see their children.

2585. That has been for a great many years? Ten or 11 years.

2586. And during those 10 or 11 years you have had a very large experience of the working-class homes in the district of St. George's-in-the-East?—Yes, certainly.

2587. The children whom we have to consider are in large proportion illegitimate?—Yes, I understand so.

2588. You must have seen during that time a very large amount of the difficulties from one point of view and another in regard to the disposal of illegitimate children?—Not so large an experience as you would think, perhaps. Somehow or other the children become absorbed in the family; the grandmother perhaps takes the child, and it is not till you visit it once or twice that you know that it is not of the family.

2589. But that child, as a matter of fact, is being received for hire?—Yes.

2590. And that child would come under the Act if it were passed without the exemption of relatives, and they would require to register it?—Yes.

2591. And your view would be that the grandmother would resent very much having to register it?—I should think she would not take it if she had to produce it for inspection. I should almost say that these homes would never pass the inspection that a country home would pass. They treat the child as a part of their family; but there are a great many homes in St. George's where the treatment of the children would not pass any inspector.

2592. And you think that what you have described by what seems to me a happy phrase as the absorption of these children into the ordinary family life of the neighbourhood, would be hampered by a system of detailed registration?—Yes, I certainly think it would.

2593. And I gather that you think that the people who would object to it would be the upper-class, more than the lower-class of foster-parents?—Yes, I should say they would object

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

to it mostly; but I should think that relations would always object.

2594. Do you find an objection felt to the Act about notification of infectious illness, and so on, which implies inspection?—It is the doctor who notifies that.

2595. There is such a thing taking place, in that case, I mean?—They do not like it when it results in the child being taken away sometimes; but they are often very grateful when the child is taken away. I think they would resent it more in a higher class. Now and then they complain "you have taken away my child."

2596. Do you think that in the district in which you have had so large an experience there is, as a matter of fact, much difficulty for the mother of an illegitimate baby in finding a place for it?—I should say there is difficulty; I think there always is. I have been speaking to Miss Steer, who has a large experience in that way, and she says it is very difficult indeed, because most of these mothers in that district are weak lethargic girls, and not worth very high wages, and therefore they earn in wages if they go to service only about 14*l.* a year, and they are called upon to pay away 12*l.* a year for the support of their child.

2597. That is the fact as it is?—They cannot all do it, and therefore it is very difficult for them to find homes for their children, because they are not prepared to pay the full price.

2598. And would your idea be, that if a foster parent was required to register she would be entitled to insist more strictly on getting her money?—I suppose she would, and it would make it more difficult certainly; it would be more of a process to be gone through.

2599. But, on the other hand, you admit that it would be a better protection to the children?—Yes; I should think it would when they were taken, but then what would you do with those who did not get taken; would they be driven to the workhouse, where they certainly never thrive. The question is, what would become of the mother who could not get her child taken care of for her by a weekly payment.

2600. The alternative, I suppose, would be the mother having to find a home for her child where the people are ready to take it for an inadequate payment; that is one alternative; or the other is the workhouse?—Yes.

2601. And of those two alternatives which do you consider the worst?—Well, it depends how inadequate the payment is.

2602. What would you call a totally inadequate payment; or rather, what would you call a minimum adequate payment?—Five shillings is the proper payment, and that is what institutions give; and Miss Steer and other people would always pay that for a child; and I understand that out of that people are supposed to clear about 2*s.* or 1*s.* 9*d.*

2603. That is to say, that the child can really be kept for 3*s.*?—Three shillings and threepence, they put it down that the child is able to be put out for; that is, exclusive of clothes.

2604. Who puts it down at that?—Miss Steer, who has had an immense experience of that class.

2605. Do

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2605. Do the mothers for whom such agencies as Miss Steer's care find, as a matter of fact, difficulty, even with their help, in getting homes for their babies?—She has great difficulty in getting homes for them; because you are talking of very young infants. There is not much difficulty in finding a home for a child of three or two and a half years, but up to two years old it is very difficult; people do not like the responsibility. Most of these children are very delicate.

2606. Even for the sake of the 5*s.* payment, which Miss Steer guarantees in some way or other, there is difficulty in finding a home?—Yes; because these people are not actuated only by the desire to gain money; they want to do the best they can for the child, and these children are often delicate. We give credit to the human good feeling of the foster parents towards the children.

2607. Who are "we"?—I mean by "we" St. George's-in-the-East; the workers among the poor that I know there. We think that the evil of the treatment of these children is somewhat exaggerated.

2608. You put it a little time ago that they are treated very much as other children, and absorbed into the general life of the neighbourhood?—A great many are.

2609. Then, of course, the homes that Miss Mason described were country homes of a different class from those you are speaking of; they are homes where they ought to be well treated?—Yes; Miss Mason must have a very high standard, I think. I know some of the homes she spoke of in the country. Miss Steer rather told me that the great difficulty is that these unfortunate girls have not the means to pay properly for their children for the first two years; that they have to make a most tremendous sacrifice of everything that they receive in wages for the sake of their child; and she considers that the object of every institution, or of anything that is done by law, should be to try and help the mother, by encouraging her to make that sacrifice, and not to take the child absolutely off her hands if she fails to make it.

2610. And do you consider that if this Bill becomes law it will have that effect?—I think the suggestion was, that if the child was not in a proper home it was to be taken charge of by some other authority.

2611. I do not think anyone has suggested that the mother should be relieved of such responsibility as she can bear in the matter, but merely that we should not allow the child to be put into an intolerable home owing to the mother's inability to pay for it?—Of course we are against her paying a sum down; but we think that the course of legislation should be to encourage the mother to keep herself in touch with the child as much as possible, and so the maternal feelings would become more and more developed, and she would watch over the child herself.

2612. But in what way will the legislation proposed hinder that?—I thought there was a provision of that sort if the child was not properly cared for.

(0.9*s.*)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2613. But, roughly, the gist of your evidence and your opinion is, that on the whole the hardship or inconvenience caused by making the Act more stringent would be greater than the advantage that would result from it?—Exactly so; making it so stringent that it would interfere with the action of neighbours towards each other too much, and would interfere with the relations assisting each other.

2614. Then, if the Act did pass in any such form you would be very strongly in favour of an exemption clause for relations?—Yes.

2615. You would admit, I suppose, that you would wish to protect an illegitimate child which was not with relations, but you would consider that we might go further in the protection of an illegitimate child not with relations than we should think it necessary to go where it was with relations?—Certainly.

Lord Belper.

2616. I rather understand that your view is that a great deal of the insufficient nourishment, to use no stronger term, that is provided for children, is not owing to the carelessness so much or the cruelty of the people with whom they are put, as to the very small amount of payment, and the inadequate payment, that is given for the purpose?—Yes.

2617. And you say that so many servant girls, I understand, if they were to give sufficient for the child would be giving practically about the whole of their wages?—Yes.

2618. It is clear that they cannot do that?—Yes.

2619. And therefore they give what they can?—Yes, and very often that is not enough, unless there is a kindly relation who will help the child.

2620. Therefore, you think that any system of registration which would keep a control over these houses would not effect its purpose unless there was some payment made to supplement the mother's payment?—I am not speaking of houses where they take more than one, but where they take one. I should think they did it more out of kindness for the mother than for gain, or what they would get out of the payment.

2621. You think that that kindness would not be given in the same way if they were forced to register?—Yes, and also I believe in better class persons it would prevent their taking children, especially in cases where, after the child is two or three years old, they get so fond of the child as to keep it and adopt it. That cuts off the ground that supplies these cases. Personally I should know more of how it affects an ordinary person, a widow or widower suffering from temporary illness, say, who sent their children to a neighbour in the country.

2622. Generally speaking, you are afraid of its interfering with natural kindness and assistance given by a neighbourly friend?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2623. Only when that assistance is given for money?—Very often there is a small payment.

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2624. Not

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper.

2624. Not a *quid pro quo*, but a small payment is made and they give a great deal more than the actual money they receive?—Yes; sometimes the mother says, "I will clothe it," but she does not pay the whole expenses.

Viscount Llandaff.

2625. Supposing this Bill be enlarged in the way suggested, it would cover a vast proportion of the illegitimate children born in the country, I take it?—Yes.

2626. They are largely put out as nurse children?—I suppose they are, in the domestic servant class. The working girl that goes to the factory leaves her baby to be cared for by day, and when she goes home she has it with her at night; or she might work at home; that would be what you would call the lowest class.

2627. However, in the class that you come across, I suppose the poor girl naturally has her child in secret, as far as she can; she hides herself somewhere for her confinement?—Yes, if she has any self-respect.

2628. Of course it is vital that she should find some place where she can place the child as quickly as possible?—Of course those who have no sister or no one to take care of them would go to the workhouse infirmary.

2629. Then the child would remain in the workhouse?—No, the mother would have to take it away when she left.

2630. What was in my mind was this: you say it is difficult now for her to find a home?—So I understand, because the people are so afraid of the responsibility of having the care of an infant.

2631. It will become more difficult if this Bill passes?—Certainly.

2632. Because you weed out a great many houses which now do take them in?—Yes.

2633. And this girl would have her difficulty

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

of finding a place increased?—It would drive mother and child more into institutions or work-houses.

2634. Or to worse still?—Or to worse still.

2635. Surely it would not be a benefit to the class we are dealing with, unless you get these registered houses dotted all over the country, and easily accessible to everybody?—No.

2636. Do you believe that in your region it is possible to have a number of picked places?—I think a great many of them would resent being registered, who do not do for a child what we think ought to be done. They would generally do as well for nurse children as they do for their own.

2637. You put a scale that a poor servant girl could not possibly reach, 5s. a week?—Some of them who earn 14*l.* a year could for two years go on paying 12*l.* a year for the child; and Miss Steer feels that very often there ought to be more feeling shown to these poor girls who have taken such immense pains for their children. Instead of all this registration, she wants to raise the tone of these girls themselves, and increase the sympathy of their relations towards those who have done their utmost for their children.

2638. Have you got any houses in St. George's-in-the-East where they take any babies in as a business, if I may so call it?—Not that I am personally acquainted with. Where they take in one child perhaps, but I am not acquainted personally with anywhere they take in more.

2639. Is that done for the sake of the profit, or from a mixed motive?—A little bit of both; partly for profit I should think in the case of most of them; the people very often call them by their own name, so that it may be some time before you became aware that they are really nurse children.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Friday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 15 Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.

Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord KINNAIRD.

Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH, IN THE CHAIR.

Mrs. HARDIE, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2640. I BELIEVE you are the President and one of the Secretaries of the Ladies' Health Society, Manchester?—I am chairwoman of the working committee.

2641. May I ask how long you have been connected with it?—Since, I think, 1880; 16 years.

2642. And would you mind telling the Committee what the particular relation of this Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association is to the town authorities, how you work the association, I mean?—The association began first as a voluntary one entirely, and about six years ago, I think it was, it occurred to the corporation that as we were working on lines of which they approved, and which they had tried themselves unsuccessfully, it would be a good thing if we could to a certain extent amalgamate and work together. That gave rise to our connection with the corporation.

2643. Are you the oldest voluntary society of the kind in England?—We are the only one, as far as I am aware; I mean working on our lines.

2644. Working on those particular lines?—Yes; there has been one started in Leeds during this last year, but they have no connection with the corporation, and they have only one health visitor; it is an experiment.

2645. What is your particular connection with the corporation; do the corporation find any of the funds?—Yes, the corporation find the salaries of six health visitors. The idea on our part was originally that the corporation should find half, and that we should find half; however it has generally been that we have found more than the corporation. At present we have either 13 or 14 visitors, and the salary of six of those is paid by the corporation.

Viscount Llandaff.

2646. Under the Public Health Act, is that?—I do not know. I believe under the authority of the sanitary committee of the town council. (0.95.)

Chairman.

2647. How is this society organised; do you have district committees in different parts of the town?—We have not committees, but lady superintendents; one lady superintendent at least for each health visitor, possibly with one or two other ladies to assist her, but she is responsible. We have a central committee which meets once a month when cheques and subscriptions are paid, and the various subjects that come up before us are discussed by the ladies of the working committee. I think you have seen a copy of our report; a list of the working committee is given there. Each lady manages her district entirely on her own lines, subject to fulfilling certain rules, very simple rules.

2648. And your health visitors are all salaried?—All the health visitors are salaried.

2649. May I ask what you pay them?—Fourteen shillings a week.

2650. And how many have you?—We have 14 in Manchester, and six in Salford. I may say that we did not begin in Salford at the same time as in Manchester. It was two or three years later before we worked with the corporation there.

2651. I take it, then, that the health visitors are told off to certain districts, that they have certain duties to perform in the matter of visiting houses, and inquiring into the sanitary state of those houses and the state of the people, and that then they report to the central committee. I take it that that is the general way in which it is organised?—Yes; they fill up every day a record of the visits they have made. Might I show you one of the forms filled up; it would give a clearer idea, and a more rapid idea than anything that I could explain (*handing in some forms*). They send in those report sheets every day to the medical officer of health of Manchester, possibly two or three; and I may say that this gives a very imperfect idea and does very little justice, in fact, does not do justice at all to our health visitors. It has always been a difficulty with us to get them to do justice to themselves.

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

If they call at a house they do not put it down as a visit unless there is something specially said or done, and besides that, they work very often much longer than their appointed hours. Their agreement with us is for six hours every week-day except Saturday, and I am quite sure there is not a woman among them but devotes a great deal more time than that to the work; and she is at the beck and call of the people at all hours as a labour of love, which it is, quite as much and more than a salaried affair.

2652. They are all women, are they not?—All women.

2653. You have a column here, I see, for "Remarks as to Sickness, Overcrowding, &c.," and in this column I see you have remarks about the condition of the children that you find in these houses?—Yes; of course if they come across anything abnormal it is put down. At the back of the sheets you will observe that there are often remarks made, but those are more for the ladies. I do not think that the medical officer of health takes much notice of anything that is put on the back. These reports go into the town hall; they are posted every day, and at the end of the week they are returned to the lady superintendent of each district for her inspection. Of course she sees her health visitor at least once a week, and sometimes oftener; but these are handed to the lady at the end of the week, and they are returned in three months to the town hall.

2654. Have you seen the Bill which is before the Committee with regard to the Protection of Infant Life?—No, I have not.

2655. Are you acquainted with the particular points at issue?—I do not know that I am particularly.

2656. You know that there is an Act that was passed in 1872?—I am aware of that.

2657. For the purpose of preventing anybody from keeping more than one child under 12 months of age apart from the mother, for hire or reward, in a house that is not registered; you know that?—I do not know the number, but I knew there was something of the kind.

2658. Then the authorities in Manchester have never specially brought the provisions of this Act to your notice?—No; I do not think that it was necessary in our work; and in the condition of the poor in Manchester I do not see how it would apply very well. If a woman goes out to work, and has a child to leave behind her, if she has a mother, the child goes to the mother, as a rule, or to an aunt; failing relations, it goes to some neighbour, as a rule. There are two *crèches*.

2659. That is a different question; you are talking of children only put out for a day?—I am speaking only of children put out for a day.

2660. I am referring to children put out to nurse for a longer period than 24 hours?—There are not many of those in Manchester. We talked it over the other day; we were speaking of that, some of the members of the working committee, and we arrived at the conclusion that it hardly touched the people among whom we worked, the lower classes in Manchester; it seemed to apply more to people in a higher grade of society (unless they were domestic

Chairman—continued.

servants) who wished to hide something. It concerns merely the mill hands and working people of Manchester, who marry so very young that really there is nothing there for them to hide of that kind, or to lead them to wish to put out children.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2661. No illegitimate children?—I do not say that there are not any, but there are comparatively few, I should think; and if there are any they are taken care of by their relatives.

Chairman.

2662. Do your health visitors pay any special attention to the condition of these illegitimate children whom they may find in houses when they are going round?—Not specially more than to others, but they look after all the children as much as they possibly can.

2663. But your visitors have not practically paid much attention, or have not had their attention called to the existing law with reference to the registration of houses?—No, I am not aware that they even know of the registration of houses. But might I just consult these few notes that I took from the women the other day.

2664. Certainly?—There is one remark made here by one of the health visitors in one of the lowest parts of Manchester, where there are a great many lodging-houses, very large lodging-houses indeed, and they say that there the mortality is very great indeed. I dare say that there there is also a tremendous deal of illegitimacy among the people.

2665. When you speak of mortality, do you mean infant mortality or general mortality?—Infant mortality; for that matter I might say general mortality, but I am speaking of infant mortality at present. Frequently the mothers there are in prison, or may have to go to the workhouse; in that case the other dwellers in these lodging houses will take over the children, and will even hide them; I believe they do the best for them in their ignorant way; so that the children are not a bit the worse because their mothers are away. We find that there is some ill-treatment, principally due to ignorance, and intemperance, practised as much by the mothers as by the care-takers. In fact, we find that there are two principal causes of infant mortality; the one, perhaps, results from the other. The great one, and it is one which applies both to intemperate people and to ignorant people, is the bad feeding of the children, the improper feeding of the children; but that is very largely caused, very often, by intemperate mothers. That is a second great cause, the intemperance of the mothers, and the consequent carelessness.

2666. Do you find that the people in Manchester in any way resent the visits of your health visitors?—It is the very rarest thing that they do, and if it occurs at all it must be in a new district that we have begun, or where strangers have come for the first time. Our women go as friends, we keep as much as possible the official aspect out of view; in fact, it would, I believe, quite nullify the good effect that we have on the people if they thought that we went

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

as inspectors. Our women go as friends, and as servants of the Ladies' Health Society.

2667. Yes, but I suppose it is generally known that your society has a very close connection with the corporation, and with the sanitary authorities?—Yes, it is known, especially among the better classes, but we never bring it forward any more than we can help. Still the poor people will often complain to the health visitors; if there is anything wrong in the sanitary arrangements of the houses they will draw their attention to it. I think in some of the sheets which I have handed in you will notice remarks on over-crowding, and on the babies being badly fed.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2668. "A little baby who lodges with its mother in this house is very much neglected," that is the entry in one case?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

2669. Who says that with regard to that particular baby?—The visitor has discovered it in some way or other, or has seen with her own eyes that it is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2670. Here is another such case: "Reported a case to the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society. The mother is hardly ever sober; she has a baby eight months old, which is shamefully neglected; her husband is a jewel-case maker, and she receives in all 2l. every week, and I do not think they have a blanket in the house"?—Yes.

Chairman.

2671. I suppose your health visitors are practically powerless to do much good in cases of that sort unless they can prove actual cruelty to children which brings it under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act?—Yes; we rely on that society for doing anything for us in such cases.

2672. Do you find that they work cordially with you?—We do, but we endeavour as little as possible to come into collision with the people, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children have met us in a very friendly way. Our information is given to them, and they undertake to find witnesses apart from us; our information is given not publicly but privately. If the people got the idea that our women were going about spying it would do great injury to their work. Might I show you the cards in regard to the deaths, especially of children, which are issued by the corporation, and which our women have to fill up; this side, you will see, is filled in by the medical officer of health or his assistants, and this side is filled in by our women. I should like to put these in (*handing in some cards*). See Appendix.

2673. Do you notify every death you come across?—No; so many of these are sent to each health visitor; whenever a death has been notified at the town hall, if the medical officer of health wants the information, he sends to the visitor a card filled in on one side at the town hall, and the other side she fills up herself. (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

I have marked them, and you will see the questions she has to reply to. It places in the hands of the medical officer of health the full details as to the causes of death and all that sort of thing, as a family history in many cases.

Viscount Llandaff.

2674. Why are some of these cards pink and some of other colours?—Because they distinguish the different ages and various little matters. These are a few suggestions for the ladies, privately distributed among ourselves for the guidance of beginners in the work, and so on (*handing in a printed paper of suggestions*).

Chairman.

2675. I see the first of the suggestions in the paper relates to the sale of soap?—Yes, we sell as much soap as we can in Manchester; we get it at a cheap rate in Manchester; we do not in Salford, we have to buy it and sell it again. The corporation both supply us with carbolic powder, and with linewash and brushes. They also have supplied us at various times with these papers, as regards the feeding of children, for circulation (*producing the same*), and our health visitors use them very extensively. We can always get as many as ever we like to apply for. There are other papers which have been given to us to make use of in various emergencies, in case of epidemic or anything of that kind, which our women circulate and leave; these also I should like to put in (*handing them in*).

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2676. The health visitors, I gather, circulate different papers giving information upon sanitary and other matters that would be useful in those houses?—Yes, and very specially with regard to the care of children.

Chairman.

2677. Do you find as a rule that the visits of your health visitors result in the children being better looked after?—Decidedly; I am not good at figures, but I believe the population of Manchester alone is over 500,000, and it must be remembered that there are only 14 health visitors; we should want four times as many to do what we would like to do. Naturally, they do not get over their districts in the regular routine more than at the outside three or four times in the year, and many times not perhaps quite so often as that.

2678. You mean they do not get to the same houses more often than that?—Except in special cases which they are particularly interested in looking after. We have mothers' meetings in each district once a week, where sanitary subjects are taught much more than in the general run of mothers' meetings; and if any of those women are ill, or their children ill, or in want of any particular care, the health visitor visits them of course a great deal oftener.

2679. Can you account for the very high infant mortality in Manchester, if you take all these precautions, because it is very large?—It is very high in some particular parts of it. If

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

you go to the better parts on the outside of Manchester, I believe the mortality would perhaps prove to be rather low.

Lord Kinnaird.

2680. That makes it worse in the other parts?—It makes it worse in certain parts.

Chairman.

2681. And I suppose that these worse parts are the very places to which you devote much attention?—As much as we possibly can we do.

2682. You do not trouble yourselves about the better parts?—Not at all.

2683. Therefore the efforts of your society have not been very successful in the way of checking infant mortality?—I do not know what the efforts of our society may have done specially, but I understand that the rate of infant mortality has fallen very considerably during the last years in Manchester; but we still find that there is plenty to do. One great cause in Manchester, I think, of the infant mortality is the very youthful marriages that they make. In Manchester a boy and girl are practically independent of their parents almost directly they leave school; they earn such good wages, and the first thing they do is to get married, totally ignorant of the duties they take in hand. And the children live in unhealthy neighbourhoods; the air is saturated with smoke and chemical vapour. The work to keep a house clean in Manchester in the poorest parts must be, I should think, three times what it is in London in any part; and that joined to the intemperance, which I am sorry to say in the lowest parts prevails so much, causes, I think, the great rate of infant mortality. But of course there are very respectable working people in some places, and it would be a scandal to include the whole of the working population in those remarks.

2684. You say that they marry very young in Manchester?—They do.

2685. What sort of age?—Oh, you will have boys and girls of 15, 16, 17, and 18.

2686. Marriages at those ages are frequent?—Very frequent; especially the lower you get among that class of people the more marriages there are.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2687. I am rather interested in the evidence you gave as to the small number of illegitimate births, because it is with illegitimate children that we have mainly to do in considering the protection of infant life which such an Act as is now contemplated would encourage. In the evidence Dr. Tatham gave us we are told that in the years that he referred to there were 2,807 illegitimate births, and of these 1,099 died under the age of one year; does that surprise you in connection with what you have just told us?—No, not at all. The mortality in the low parts of the town is very great among all classes both illegitimate and legitimate, and if there must be any difference I should suppose that the mortality would be greater among the illegitimate, not because the caretakers neglect them, but because their parents neglect them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2688. You say, "if there should be any difference." According to Dr. Tatham's evidence, which he qualified owing to certain particulars, but still, taking it roughly, the proportion of legitimate infants who died under one year was 174 per 1,000, and of illegitimate infants 392 per 1,000?—Yes.

2689. That is a contrast, you observe; more than double?—Yes, but I think that the statistics of the births of the legitimate children include the births in all the better classes, not only in the lower parts of the town, both the better-class working quarters, and the residential parts; and there the children are, as a matter of course, well taken care of. There are some parts in Manchester, Angel Meadow, one portion of Ancoats, parts of Hulme, and Deansgate, where there is a very low moral tone altogether; those people think less of it, naturally, than the respectable working people would do. These are places where rents are high, but where these people are obliged to live; but respectable working men get away from those places as fast as ever they can. If they go there it is only as a temporary thing, or because of sickness or some reason like that, which causes them to live there; but their neighbours are too uncongenial for them to live there any longer than they can help; and I think it is there that the great death-rate of illegitimate children would take place.

2690. Well, however we explain it, and wherever the locality may be, it is clear that there are in Manchester, as elsewhere, unhappily, a large number of these illegitimate births?—Yes.

2691. Do you think that, as a rule, the mother of an illegitimate child does find in those neighbourhoods, we will say, any great difficulty in discovering a home or foster parents for her baby?—They do not appear to find much difficulty; there is always some old woman ready to take a child for 5s. a week; in some parts of the town, for 2s. 6d. or three shillings a week.

2692. There is always some old woman you say ready to do it. Are those old women people who seem to you, I will not say ideal nurses, but are they sufficiently good usually to do well by their charges?—Usually they are, as well as they know how, and quite as well in many cases as the mother would do by them. In reading this little paper in my hand I notice that I say here, "In Angel Meadow, in Ancoats West, and in Deansgate there are great black patches, showing a death-rate of upwards of 40 per thousand." (When I say "these black patches" I must inform you that that refers to a map that was published in one of Dr. Tatham's books. In reading this paper I had this map enlarged in order that these black patches might be seen.) "And that is the average of the best and worst parts of each district put together, for, taking Angel Meadow for instance, what do you find? Here is a diagram of that district divided into sections, and in none do you find the death-rate under 45, whilst in this section just behind Miller-street it is 58.4. And in one way even that is not the worst, for the deaths in two large lodging-houses, if included, would bring it up to over

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

over 80. Very justly, Dr. Tatham has not included those, as the deaths in them take place among tramps and strangers to the city. And if you look at the map you find that irregularly, up and down the whole of Ancoats in Hulme, and in Deansgate, the black shows in almost as large areas."

2693. That does not refer to children particularly; that is the general death-rate?—That is the general death-rate; but of course the children figure in it very largely.

2694. But speaking generally, do you consider that any system of registration, either what the present law nominally enforces or what is contemplated under this Act, is desirable, or do you think it necessary?—We consider it desirable; it could at least do no harm and it might be useful in other parts of the country, and we might find it useful.

2695. If I understood rightly, the purport of your evidence, taken with what Dr. Tatham told us, is this: "What is proposed by this Act is not really necessary in Manchester, because we can do better. We have got a system at work there which covers the ground roughly, and practically gives us, at all events, what the existing law could give us if it were enforced, and a great deal of what would be even if the law were more stringent?"—I think that would have to be somewhat qualified, for various reasons. In the first place this society of ours is entirely voluntary, and a cessation of subscriptions would stop it at once. Also, it is within the power of the corporation to change their minds and withdraw the sympathy, if you call it so, that they give us. It is simply a perfectly voluntary thing which might be brushed away at any moment; therefore, I think that the law would be very necessary in view of that if nothing else.

2696. And if the law, as here sketched, were to become law to-morrow, and it was put in force, do you yourself see reason to think that much hardship would result?—No hardship whatever that I can see; but I do not know what the Act is.

2697. What is proposed, roughly, is this, that no one shall be allowed to take a nurse-child, even one nurse child, under the age of five years, except in a house registered for the purpose, certain large exceptions being given to charitable institutions?—These people you must remember are very poor; would registration involve a money payment?

2698. No, absolutely no payment for procuring registration; but registration involves inspection, and what we want to get at is, will such registration, with the consequent inspection that follows, be a hardship to foster-parents, people who ought to be allowed in a free country to take children by whom they mean to do well?—I think in the lower classes it would be no hardship at all. I do not think their feelings are so very keen that they would feel hurt by inspection; and if they were, I think that the child's welfare ought to be the first interest. But I do not know that it would always be possible to enforce it. For instance, a child might be sent to an aunt or a grandmother only temporarily, as long as the mother was at work; she might have work only

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

for a month; she might have work only for a fortnight; and I question in such a case if the woman receiving the child would think it worth while to register, and it would be very difficult to check it.

2699. That is a very important point; then you consider that even if registration were desirable or practicable with regard to the permanent care of such children, it would be undesirable or unworkable with reference to the temporary care of them?—Well, I do not at all say it would be undesirable, but I think that possibly it might be difficult.

2700. The Bill proposes that for any period longer than 24 hours there must be registration?—Well, if you could get it drilled into these people's heads, I do not see where the hardship comes in. The difficulty would be to get it into their minds.

2701. And you would not be afraid of difficulties arising from the inspection, from their resenting it?—I think that they are a law-abiding people, and when they know that a thing is the law, they are willing to submit to it. I suppose it would come in as something under the same category as the school board and school inspector. Of course we all know that very often the parents evade that law; they will keep a little girl or boy at home to take care of some other children, and the inspectors have a very lively time in looking after those boys and girls; and it is to be expected that the same thing would occur with this.

2702. You have in Manchester, I suppose, some large lying-in hospitals or institutions where women are confined?—Well, there are, of course, the workhouse hospitals, very large workhouse hospitals, but I think there is only one, as far as I am aware, where they take in women for confinement, unless it is an abnormal case; they take them in abnormal cases, but there is only one I think which takes them in in the natural course of things.

2703. Then you have no special experience of difficulties which such institutions as that might find, or those who visit there might find, in discovering suitable foster-mothers for illegitimate children whose mothers have to go to work?—That hardly comes within the category of our work, but from what I gather from other ladies who have visited in the workhouse hospitals where such cases are more certain to occur, and where the death-rate is extremely high, there is serious difficulty because of the expense, not that other working women would not be kind and good to them, and take them in; but where is the money to come from to pay for them. The real mother when she goes to work barely makes money enough for her own living.

2704. And she has to pay what she can to a foster-parent who will take the child?—Yes, to a foster-parent who will take the child.

2705. Do you think that registration would make it more difficult for her, by cutting off, so to speak, the supply of foster-mothers who would be prepared to take the child very cheap?—I do not think that it would, but I do not know sufficiently about it to say exactly. If it is of any value to you, I can tell you what the rates

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15 May 1896.]

MRS. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

are that these poor people generally pay for a child going out.

2706. Will you please do so?—In one district, for instance, in Regent-road, one of our health visitors stated that, among the people she visited, she only knew one house where they take in three children. I was asking the women very particularly if they knew of any houses in their districts where the people take in more than one, and this woman who really knows the district very well, says she only knows of one house, and this person takes in three children, and they are the children of her sister, who goes out to work. Then in another district there is one where the grandmother takes in two illegitimate children.

Viscount Llandaff.

2707. Of her daughter's?—Of her daughter's; and she is paid 2s. and 2s. 6d. for them per week. Of course there is less given to her, being the grandmother, than there would be to a stranger. In the same district where this sister takes the three children, there is another child cared for by a blind girl, she gets 5s. a week for taking care of this child, and provides whatever food it gets. She had one before, which died. She is very kind to the child and very fond of it; it is a servant's illegitimate child. Then I find that 5s. is about the highest rate that is paid. In Hulme the prices are 2s. 6d. to 3s. per week, and sometimes milk is given with it; that is to say, the mother pays for the milk; and it is a very common occurrence, if the child is young, for the mother when she comes out of the mill to come to the house and nurse her child in the middle of the day. Yes, I find that these sums, from 2s. 6d. to 5s., are what is paid.

2708. I gather from your evidence that you have not much experience of what are commonly called baby-farms, that is, places which make a business of taking these children?—No, almost none; whether that is owing to the nature of our work I cannot tell, but I do not think there is much baby-farming, properly so called, in Manchester.

2709. You say that you think registration and inspection would be no hardship to the lower classes; do you mean by that the classes who inhabit those two or three black districts that you so graphically described to us?—Yes, in the first instance.

2710. Do you think those are people likely to get registration?—Not if they can help it, certainly.

2711. But you are aware that in London and, I suppose, everywhere else, there would be strict conditions as to the state of the house, the capacity of the foster-parent to take care of children and so on, conditions that would exclude, I should have thought, these lower classes?—Well, they have a wonderful knack of slipping out of things.

2712. What would be the good of registration if it were to be slipped out of; the object of registration is to secure a sanitary house with almost ideal surroundings for these nurse children?—That is not possible, I think, in

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

Manchester, as far as I can gather; but I think, you know, that there are degrees of poverty and of morality, and if you come just a shade above the very lowest, I think that there would be no difficulty at all about the registration; and it would be for the inspectors, I suppose, to judge whether a house was suitable or not. I cannot tell what the result would be, but I certainly think it would be no hardship, and I think it would be a very desirable thing. We all think that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2713. What does that mean, "We all think that;" that is an important point?—Perhaps I am speaking a little too generally; but those members of our working committee whom I have consulted think it would be very desirable.

2714. They are in favour, in short, of such a Bill, as far as they have understood it, as is now proposed to Parliament?—Exactly.

Viscount Llandaff.

2715. On the other hand, you said that official inspection would nullify all the good you do?—Yes, but we should not inspect; we should have nothing to do with it.

2716. But there must be official inspectors?—Yes; but our women would never be allowed to inspect in that way.

2717. Would not the inspection of these official inspectors come under your condemnation, that official inspection would be resented by the people, and be disliked by them?—We should not care to run any risk, and I do not see that that comes within our province at all. The inspector very probably might inform the lady superintendents, and we should endeavour to keep the people up to the mark.

2718. Then do you think that the visits of official inspectors, appointed under this Bill, would not be resented by the people whose houses they visited?—To a certain extent they might be; I am not prepared to say that they would never be resented.

2719. Would they not be habitually resented by all the more decent people?—I do not know that they would.

Lord Thring.

2720. I should like to ask you a question or two; I do not quite understand the gist of your evidence; I do not think you quite understand what this Bill proposes to do. Registration means this: that no person shall keep more than a certain number of children in a house unless the house is registered?—I understand that.

2721. Before the children are kept the house has to be registered?—Yes.

2722. Before the children are kept the occupant of the house must apply for registration?—Yes.

2723. Whereupon the official authority examines this house, and, above all, ascertains that the person who wants to keep the baby is competent to keep a baby, and understands how to treat a baby, and is a proper person to keep it; and that the sanitary condition of the house

is

15 May 1896.]

MRS. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

is proper and good for the baby; do you follow me?—Yes.

2724. Now, I will assume that this Act is passed; what happens in Manchester: do you imagine that in these black patches they will apply for registration, because that is the question; they have got to apply?—I do not think they would unless they were obliged to do so.

2725. You cannot oblige them to apply; do you imagine that if they applied from these very bad places they would get registration; in other words, would the foster-mother in most of these places be competent to feed the child, when not one mother in 100 knows how to treat her child; do you think that they would apply for registration, and get it?—I do not think they would in most instances, in fact.

2726. We have this fact, that in Manchester, in these black patches, the people would not apply; and if they did apply they would not get the registration. Therefore, where are the babies to go who are now kept in these insanitary places?—That is what I do not know.

2727. I thought that would be your answer; but I want to draw your attention to your evidence, because you tell us that the foster-parents are hardly ever cruel, that they treat their nurse children as well as they treat their own children?—Yes.

2728. Then you tell us that in the case of Manchester we need not go into that question of rescue work in the ordinary sense, because there is very little of that required; but how would you deal with the great mass of Manchester children who are now maintained in houses which could not possibly get registration, if you pass an Act saying they shall not be kept except in registered houses; how would it be practicable?—I do not know.

2729. Then with respect to these poor foster-parents, what you have told us is that the foster-parents do their best. You also tell us, virtually, that the majority of these foster-parents are not very competent to keep the children. If you exclude the majority of the foster-parents, where are these unfortunate women who now get their children put with their friends and neighbours to keep them?—That is what I do not know; but I would like to draw your attention to the fact that I do not think these people who at present take care of children take any worse care of them than their own dissipated mothers would.

2730. The foster-parents are not cruel, you say; they do their best for the children, but they are very often incompetent?—Yes.

2731. If we strike out the incompetent foster-parents, which is one of the objects of this Bill, where are they to go to?—Might I ask, would you consider the foster-parents capable of taking charge of the children if they were on a par with the mothers themselves?

2732. Certainly not, according to the Act; the mothers themselves are, *ex hypothesi*, very often incompetent; the Act requires that the foster-parents should be competent?—That is where the difficulty comes in. I do not see how you can demand a higher state of competency

(0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

from the foster-parents than you can demand from the parents themselves.

2733. Then let us go a little further; I am not in the least degree wishing to puzzle you in any way, but do you not see that we are in this dilemma; you cannot by an enactment provide competent foster-parents or sanitary houses; no Act in the world will make a competent foster-parent or sanitary house; they cannot be created by legislation; then, if we pass the Act, do we not inflict a great hardship on these poor people who, at all events, exist and maintain their children somehow, and who, if we passed this Act, would not be able to maintain them anyhow?—No.

2734. And to maintain them somehow is better than doing it nohow?—That seems to me the difficulty all along. The only thing is this, that my experience is very narrow and simply applies to Manchester and Salford, I cannot in the least tell how it would apply to London or to other towns.

2735. Then I wanted to ask you one other question; you said, and I daresay it is so, that yours is the only society of the same nature, except one or two; you are aware that there are in London what they call ladies' societies for the protection of friendless girls, and the Pimlico Ladies' Association for taking care of friendless girls; the object of those societies is this: they find that a poor girl has gone wrong, we will say in service; she is either going to have a child or has had one immediately before; they take the mother and put her in a home and they keep the child near her in order to keep up the supervision, if possible, of the mother over the child, and not trench upon the maternal instincts; they then do their best after a time to get this mother into service and reclaim her character; now, in order to do that it is necessary to have a good foster-mother; next to have a home for the mother; lastly, that it should not be publicly known that this particular child belongs to this particular mother; now, supposing that that were made a difficult thing, would not it be a great hardship on those poor mothers who could not recover their character?—Yes, I think it would be if these ladies took every care as to the homes into which the mother would be introduced, but I think that also it might be a hardship for a mistress to have a young woman of immoral character introduced into her family, perhaps among young children, without knowing something of her previous history.

2736. Pardon me, it is a rule of the society that these ladies never conceal from the person who takes the girl her error?—That would be right.

2737. Then in time the woman re-establishes her character, and perhaps does not fall back for all the rest of her life?—That is perfectly right.

2738. Then does it not come to this, that the Bill is, I will not say impossible, but one extremely difficult to work in Manchester supposing we passed it?—I think it would be.

2739. And what good would it do in Manchester?—There is a great deal of suffering and sin in Manchester.

2740. How would it relieve the suffering?—
X Well,

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Well, I do not know. As I say, our work is limited, and is of a precarious nature to this extent, that various things might do away with it.

2741. Supposing we wait to bring in the Act till your society is abolished, that would suit you very well, would it not?—There is no objection to the Act at all; I do not see that it would touch us at all; but I think that it would be very difficult to work.

Viscount Llandaff.

2742. Assume this, that the local authority are not to register any house unless they are satisfied that such house is suitable for the purpose, and unless they are satisfied, by the production of certificates, that the person applying to be registered is of good character and able to maintain the infants; how many of these people who take foster-children in Manchester would satisfy those conditions?—Very, very few I should think; they would hardly be worth mentioning. If I might say so, it appears to me that the standard you propose is very high.

2743. You say that very few foster-parents in Manchester would come up to that standard?—I should say very few.

2744. I suppose your suggestion would be that we should take the people who do not come up to that standard and give them good advice and improve their houses as much as possible?—That is just what we are doing every day.

2745. And that is what you would like the official inspector under the Bill to do?—I am afraid you must leave me an open mind as to that Bill; I do not feel prepared to give any opinion on it. We are a very old-fashioned, simple-minded sort of people and really know nothing about Acts of Parliament.

Lord Kinnaird.

2746. You mentioned that the corporation had done some work in this line and have not succeeded; what did you mean by that?—The corporation for a great many years had felt that the work of the male inspectors did not do all that they require; for instance, women would not complain to men of things or explain to men things which they would to a woman; therefore, about 16 or 17 years ago (I cannot be quite sure as to the time) they engaged a woman as an experiment, and they laid down their own rules, which were (I do not know) perhaps something similar to ours; but she was more in the capacity of an inspector pure and simple. The result was that at the end of nine months at the outside she could bear it no longer. The constant seeing of so much sin and suffering and dirt, without any outside influence to uphold her, without any power to relieve suffering, was too much for her, and she resigned her position. About a year afterwards our society engaged that woman for us, she did most admirable work, but she was obliged to give up owing to ill-health. We found her full of tact and consideration and liked by the people. The reason of her giving up with the corporation was this, as I tell you, because she found it such an overpowering experience.

Viscount Llandaff.

2747. But why was it more overpowering under the corporation than under you?—Because in our case she had a lady superintendent behind her. In a case of extreme poverty, or deserving people (very often undeserving, but at all events suffering people), the lady steps in and helps, and the lady also communicates a spirit of encouragement, and the woman has her fellow-workers, whom she meets occasionally, and when things get too bad for her she can always go to a lady superintendent for advice and for sympathy and seek help. On that occasion the Corporation forgot this; I suppose a new series of town councillors had arrived in Manchester, and so on; and they knew nothing of this past experience, but again they found the very same thing, the same difficulty, and they applied to us for advice and again they started an experiment and engaged two visitors. These women kept books and filled in the forms for the corporation, whatever they were, but they very soon found that it was done in a very perfunctory manner. It was simply a means of earning their bread, and the Corporation found it so useless that again it was given up, and it was on the cessation of this that their connection with us began.

2748. I do not quite gather what the case is; we heard some days ago that there was no need for the corporation to do the work which the inspectors of the London County Council are doing, because your society did it; now, what I gather from your evidence is that your society is a philanthropic society?—It is so.

2749. And you have further told us that you would not like your visitors to pry into too many questions, because it would interfere with their work?—Yes.

2750. They will not find out crime?—Yes, they know all the people and all the people know them, and it is wonderful how they know everything that goes on without any questions. It comes to them naturally.

2751. I do not like to ask you again questions on figures, but your evidence makes the figures of Dr. Tatham worse, because he says that taking the whole of Manchester the percentage of deaths among illegitimate children is 392 per 1,000. Now you say, "Oh, it is only a small part of the district which we work;" therefore, if you take it in your black district, probably that number would get up to 500 or 600; do you think that something should be done to stop that, because there is no more reason that an illegitimate child should die of smoke or the fumes of chemicals, is there, than a legitimate child?—No.

2752. Therefore, taking even Dr. Tatham's figures, which are appalling, does not something want to be done more than merely friendly visits and friendly advice?—There certainly wants something to be done; the difficulty, it appears to me, is how to do it.

2753. Which side do you take, because on this question there are two clearly different opinions; all acknowledge that there is something wrong; but some think that it is so difficult to get at and that Acts of Parliament fail so much, that they would do nothing; others say they would pass an Act even if it is not carried out, in order to

try

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

try and stop it; which side would you and your committee go with, those who try to do something, or those who sit still?—I think we have always to try to do the best we can; and so as you say it might be well to pass an Act even if it did not succeed, at least to try it.

2754. Do you prefer any other existing authority better than making a new one to carry out this; would you like to give it to the medical officer of health, for instance?—I could give no opinion on that.

2755. Your committee has never talked over that subject, what authority they would give it to; because it is a pity to multiply authorities in these days, is it not?—Most certainly.

2756. Perhaps the local authorities, either police or sanitary, or county councils, might have powers which they could put in force, delegated to them?—Yes; I think that the medical officers of health have so many duties that they have hard enough work to get over what they have at present.

2757. I do not know whether it is fair to ask you this question; it was hinted that the charge for making houses sanitary would fall on the tenant; that would not be the case in the least, would it; it would fall on the landlord; supposing that an Act was passed that no child should be brought up in an unsanitary house, somebody would have to provide a house of the same rent?—I may say that in certain parts of Manchester a great deal of property has been pulled down, owing to railway extension, and so on, and in the near neighbourhood no other houses have been built, and the people simply do not know where to go to, and the result is that it is increasing the overcrowding in some places.

2758. Then with reference to the foster parents, if this Act were passed, if incompetent people living in insanitary houses could not take in a child, do not you think that a number of competent parents would gradually grow up to take charge of these children. If you could send your 14 ladies to tell these women of a number of people who would be willing to take them in, making some profit, could you not help them?—We could advise them to find out proper people.

2759. And, therefore, would it not be possible if this Act were passed, that gradually a better class of foster parents would grow up?—Possibly; it would be very largely a question of money it seems to me.

2760. If there was a sufficient demand the supply would grow up; is that what you mean?—No doubt if it was made to the interest of the foster parents.

2761. If it could not be done for 5s.; then 5s. 6d. or 6s. would produce it?—Yes, it would pay the people.

2762. Do you not see a difference between giving a licence to a foster parent to take in these children, and bringing in an Act to force a parent to be a good parent?—You cannot force a parent in that way.

2763. But you can propose that anyone who is going to make profit of it shall do it efficiently?—Yes.

2764. Do you think that it could be done for (0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2s. 6d.?—You must remember that in the instance in which I gave you that figure, that was the grandmother.

2765. I thought you said old women would take them in at, from 5s. to 2s. 6d., or 3s.?—From 3s. to 5s.

2766. I took down your first answer as being, that old women would take them in for, from 5s. to 2s. 6d., or 3s.?—I believe it was in an exceptional district, I said 2s. 6d. to 3s. In Hulme, it is a very poor district.

2767. And you said that grandmothers would take them cheaper?—This grandmother did. I do not know that you could infer a great deal from a single case.

2768. Do you think that the evil is great enough at present to call for a stricter supervision which might even cause some hardship to a few parents. Which side do you take; there are two; some are for liberty, allowing this to go on; others want to try and stop it, even if it gives some hardship to a few, and they believe that the intelligent working people will not object to try to stop this awful mortality. Do you take that view, or would you be afraid that there would be an outcry against it?—I am afraid I have not considered it enough to answer, yes or no.

2769. Do you think that there is much crime with reference to the treatment of illegitimate children in Manchester, making away with them?—I do not think that there is straight out deliberate crime of that kind. I think the Manchester people as a rule are fond of their children, and I believe I noticed in some evidence of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, that they found not nearly so much cruelty practised in Manchester and in Lancashire generally, as in London.

2770. What is your relation to this Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society?—Nothing, except that we co-operate with every society that will help us in any way.

2771. If there was a case that you did not want to bring your visitors into trouble about, would you hand over that case to the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society?—We should; we report to them frequently.

2772. Could you say how many you have handed over to them?—I could not; I have a very bad head for figures; but I do find from my practical knowledge of the state of various parts of Manchester that my experience always coincides with figures when it comes across them. For instance, I may refer to Dr. Tatham's statistics; I could have told him the worst part without figures at all.

2773. You said that in Manchester you have large workhouse hospitals where many of the mothers go to be confined; you said that the mother cannot afford to pay for the child such an amount as 5s.; what happens to those children born in a workhouse hospital?—A large proportion of those born in the workhouse hospitals belong, of course, to immoral women, and they go out with them, and the children get battered and knocked about, and they come back again to the workhouse just to be nursed up again, and a large number of them die.

x 2

2774. Would

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2774. Would you not rather that they should be kept there instead of being allowed to go out and brought back to die?—What are you to do? These children are the women's children; when the mothers go out you cannot keep the children; we have reported in many cases to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and in many cases it is difficult for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to work. Take the case of a drunken mother; as long as the father does his very best, and places enough food before these children by hook or by crook, the mother may neglect them in every other way, and allow them to grow up in immoral habits, and all the rest of it, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children can do nothing.

2775. If it could be shown by figures which are given by public authorities that other towns, with something of the same conditions as Manchester, by applying certain Acts have improved their infant mortality, and illegitimate mortality, if London could show it by figures which could not be broken down by any cross-examination; then do not you think that Manchester would set to work to bring her mortality down to the others?—I am quite sure of that; there is nothing that we more desire in Manchester.

2776. You would be glad of an Act that would help you to such a result, would you not?—Most certainly.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. BOSTOCK, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2781. You are one of the health visitors of whom we have heard from Mrs. Hardie?—Yes.

2782. And you have worked under the Ladies' Health Society for how long?—Six years.

2783. Where?—In Ancoats.

2784. A very poor district?—Yes; but we have poorer parts in Ancoats, south.

2785. You live in the district in which you work?—Yes.

2786. Do you know about what, roughly, the population of the district in which your work is?—About 1,500 houses, I believe.

2787. Will you give us some particulars of your domiciliary visits to the poor cottagers?—We go to them in the first place and bring them disinfectant powder, ask them about the state of their drains and that sort of thing, and we speak about their children, especially if we find infants in their house, and ask them what they are fed on; and if they cannot read we sit down and read this paper to them, call again and find out how the children are going on.

2788. You make special note, I suppose, of any bad cases that come under your notice?—Yes, we do.

2789. If you find children in a bad condition you go and pay another visit?—Yes, perhaps the next day.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2777. Do you think it would be any good to compel the grandmother and sister you spoke of to register?—It appears to me that it would be a hardship in those cases decidedly.

2778. You would make an exemption of children put with their relatives?—I should think so decidedly because who else would take an interest in them if their own relatives would not.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2779. Would you use the word "relatives" in making an exemption; because we were told by someone that these people hardly knew what relatives were?—I think, speaking of the class that go to work, that is somewhat of a libel.

Chairman.

2780. I think we have asked you all the questions we can think of, and I think I may safely say on behalf of the Committee that we all should like to compliment you on the excellent way in which you have given your evidence; and it has been most interesting; and I think we may also compliment you and your fellow workers in Manchester on the good work you are doing now?—Thank you, my Lord; I may say that we are exceedingly proud of our health visitors. For very little remuneration they do a very noble work.

Chairman—continued.

2790. Do you find as a rule that your visits have a good effect upon the parents?—The people are always glad to see us again.

2791. And they do not resent your coming?—Not in any case that I know of.

2792. And do they look upon you as being connected in any way with the sanitary authorities?—They nearly all seem to know it, but they do not mind.

2793. Do you ever have to report them to the sanitary authorities, or to call the attention of the sanitary officer to the bad state of things in their houses?—Yes; but it is in some cases the neglect of the landlord, and the tenants are rather glad that we do this, because it gets the work done.

2794. And then you pay these visits to the houses, and then you send in these reports, I take it, that Mrs. Hardie has put in?—Yes.

2795. Do you visit all the 1,500 houses in your district?—Yes.

2796. Are you able to get round them pretty often?—Well, not to them all very often, because I go three times in one week to one house, or to five houses in one street. If they are pretty fairly tidy people we do not get to them under three months. Living in the midst of the district we know the people so well that

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. BOSTOCK.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that we soon find out where it is necessary for us to go to them often.

2797. Do you keep in touch with the corporation inspector and with the medical officer of health?—We report to the medical officer of health.

2798. You report to him as well as to your own committee?—The forms go every night to the medical officer of health, and we receive those death-cards that Mrs. Hardie has handed round, and I have got one here filled in. This is a child whose mother died in child-birth and left twins, and one of them is dead; these are the questions which we ask (*handing in a card*).

2799. Then what do you do when you receive notice of a death; do you go and make enquiries and fill up these cards?—Yes, it shows how the child is being fed; whether it is being neglected or not.

2800. How do you deal with cases of sickness and overcrowding, and destitution?—If they are overcrowded we report the case, and sometimes the inspectors come and have them removed.

2801. And cases of destitution and deserted children?—We do not meet many deserted children. If they are very poor we try to get some benevolent people to give us something to help them. Often our ladies give us something to relieve these very poor people; we never come across a child that we think is starving without they do something.

2802. Do you distribute charity at all?—We are not bound to distribute charity, but if we meet a case of direct poverty, we help them.

2803. From what fund?—The ladies give us that; sometimes we go to the District Provident Association, and they give a little help; or we might apply to the workhouse for them.

2804. Do you come across any cases of what are known as nurse-children?—Not many; there are some children put out to nurse, but they are not badly cared for.

2805. Are they generally taken in by people who have got children of their own?—Yes, or sometimes the grandmother. Often, in our experience, the wife goes to work, and the child is left in the care of the grandmother; that is often our experience.

2806. That is not what I mean by nurse-children; I mean principally illegitimate children who are put out: the children of domestic servants and others who cannot have the children with them; do you come across many cases of them?—Not many.

2807. Have you ever had your attention called to the Act which is in existence for the registering of houses in which more than one child of under 12 months is kept?—No, I have not.

2808. You do not know of the existence of the Act?—No.

2809. You do not know anything with regard to the necessity or otherwise of registering houses in which such children are?—No.

2810. So that when you go round you do not pay any attention to the question of registration?—No, I have not done so. We always advise them for the best what to do under the circumstances; to take care of the children of course.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

2811. I see, in a report I have got of yours, you say this: "There is something appalling about the dense ignorance, even among affectionate well-meaning mothers, on this all-important point, namely, infant feeding; but many, especially young mothers, in first cases, are willing to listen and learn"?—Yes; that is why I say we sit and read this paper to them; they are so ignorant that they could not read it, and they would not understand it unless I explained it thoroughly.

2812. I have three of your reports in my hands; your reports to the officer of health, I mean; and I see that out of 18 houses you only report two as dirty?—Well, I should be in a very tidy street that day.

2813. The streets are Newby-street, Kirk-street, Stone-street, Johnson-street, Russell-street, Thompson-street, Junction-street; are those very tidy places?—Stone street especially has just been improved; the houses were very bad before.

2814. The other streets, are they among the bad part of Ancoats?—They are principally improved streets.

2815. I only find two that you report as dirty?—I have some much worse.

2816. You say you have not many foster-children?—Not many in our district.

2817. Are they mostly legitimate or illegitimate?—We have very few illegitimate children.

2818. You have no people then who make a livelihood by taking in nurse-children?—Yes; we have a few cases where they take a child in, charwomen principally. They perhaps keep a big girl to look after it while they are out one or two days in the week; but we have no case where they are badly neglected.

2819. The few cases you have then are fairly well taken care of?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2820. If there was a bad case in the district, would you be sure to know of it?—Yes, I think so.

Lord Thring.

2821. We have often been told that infants are usually killed by ignorance, not by intentional neglect?—I think that is the case, especially in the feeding in some cases.

2822. And, I suppose, improper feeding?—Yes.

Chairman.

2823. Do you think that improper feeding takes place more frequently with regard to these illegitimate nurse-children than with legitimate children living with their mothers?—No, I do not think so.

2824. But the proportion of the death-rate of illegitimate children is very much larger than the death-rate of legitimate children?—Very few of these things have come to my notice.

Lord Kinnaird.

2825. Would the evidence you give be very much the same as that given by other visitors in different parts, or would some come across these cases

x 3

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. BOSTOCK.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

cases of nurse children more than you do?—We meet with rare occasions of the sort.

2826. How many would you meet with?—We meet possibly with a case once in a month of a servant girl's child, something of that kind, put out to be nursed, but we do not meet cases where they distinctly ill-treat them.

2827. Would the sentiments of the people be against ill-treatment; would some people in the neighbourhood come and tell you if there was any cruelty?—Yes, they would come to us because they would know that the name would not be divulged, that their names would not be heard of in the matter.

2828. You said that you can only go over your district three times in the year; but you can get to all the houses that it is necessary to visit as often as you wish, cannot you?—Time does not permit us to get round very often; if we know of an extreme case we go to it.

2829. There is no reason to go to a street where all is going on well?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2830. Have you ever been refused admission?—No.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been re-called; is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2835. You want to hand in something, I understand?—Two forms which you asked for on a previous occasion; one is the form of the medical certificate of the cause of death, and the other is a copy of the death register.

2836. This is the ordinary certificate that is given?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

2837. Would you like any addition to be made to this form?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2838. The registrar asks the name of the parent in the registration of death?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

2839. Could you fine them if they refused to give it?—I am not aware that anything of that sort has been done.

2840. You have the power to do it?—The power, I told you of, the last time I was here.

Chairman.

2841. Since you gave your evidence the other day has anything further occurred to you by which you can offer any satisfactory explanation of this very high death-rate amongst illegitimates in Manchester as compared with legitimate children?—I have looked over my evidence and nothing further occurs to me at present. It is a very difficult subject, as your Lordship must know, of course.

Chairman.

2831. If you do go to a house, what is the way you proceed; do you knock at the door?—Yes, and I carry a bag of disinfecting powder; where we are known we do not need to carry that with us; I only mean in the case of a strange householder.

Lord Kinnaird.

2832. You come to them as an official to that extent?—They do not regard us as officials; they come to us in any difficulty. If a child was in a fit some mothers would rush to me about it.

Chairman.

2833. You do not think that the people have any objection really to ladies coming and doing the work that you do?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2834. And I suppose they know that you give help as well as disinfectant powder?—We have a very good mothers' meeting once a week, and the ladies come and get 150 of the women there, and give them a good talking to; they get to know us, and of course they get to know the ladies, and they like them.

Chairman—continued.

2842. You still think that it is partly owing to the deaths being registered better than the births?—Yes, I feel certain of that.

2843. So that you think that the actual proportion is not really so large as it appears?—I think it is not, and I think I have very good grounds for that conclusion.

Viscount Llandaff.

2844. We have heard another suggestion from Mrs. Hardie, namely, that the illegitimate births are mostly in the lowest class of the population of Manchester; consequently that they are less well cared for than the other children?—Unfortunately the illegitimate births do not take place exclusively amongst the very lowest of the population, and Mrs. Hardie, I think, mentioned cases in which they did not; it is a sad thing to be obliged to own that it is so. I understood Mrs. Hardie to say that some of those illegitimate children were the children of servant girls who, of course, reside in the better parts of Manchester.

Lord Kinnaird.

2845. Do you think that the charge of making the houses sanitary would fall upon the inhabitants of those houses?—No, it would fall on the owners of the houses, of course.

2846. And it would not necessarily raise rents?—I do not think it would, except very exceptionally.

2847. It

15 May 1896.]

Mr. J. F. W. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

2847. It is only structural sanitary alterations that would fall upon the owner?—Structural alterations I am speaking of.

Lord Kinnaird.

2848. Internal structural alterations included?—Yes, altogether.

Lord Thring.

2849. Does the owner whitewash?—As a matter of fact he often does.

2850. I fancied that the ordinary whitewashing and cleansing out of drains would fall upon the tenant?—As a matter of practice, in tenement property that is very largely done by the owners in Manchester.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. WETHERED, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2855. You are a member of the Committee of the Paddington and Marylebone Association for the Rescue and Care of Friendless Girls?—Yes.

2856. And also a member of the Committee of the London Diocesan Council for Rescue and Preventive Work?—Yes.

2857. And to-day you have an additional authority as representing a large meeting of rescue workers and ladies interested in the care of friendless girls, who have, so to speak, deputed you to represent them to day?—That is so.

2858. And you have handed in here a list of the delegates who were present at the meeting in question when this Bill was under consideration?—Yes.

2859. There were delegates from 18 different associations in London and the neighbourhood, all of whom are connected with associations of this character for the protection of friendless girls?—Yes.

2860. And engaged more or less directly in rescue work?—Yes.

2861. And therefore you really represent a large body of opinion upon the subject of the arrangements possible or necessary for the care of the children of such girls?—Yes.

2862. I think you would like me to read, as summarising the points that you wish to emphasise, a letter that you have written to me?—If you think it would make my evidence clearer.

2863. "I am sending you a few typical cases to explain how Clause 2 would practically injure one of the most important branches of our rescue work, and in my opinion would increase child murder and suicides by making it so very difficult for friendless girls to find suitable nurse-mothers. Many girls are bitterly ashamed of the first false step. Now shame and despair, without time to consider, drive girls to suicide and to child murder; and the publicity and difficulty of finding suitable nurse-mothers would intensify these feelings; and, again, friends who are now

(0.95.)

Lord Kinnaird.

2851. And the landlord would have to do it in order to keep a tenant?—Or in order to comply with the requirements of the sanitary authority.

2852. And the proper working of the Sanitary Act would not be a hardship on the working men occupying those houses?—I do not think it would be a hardship.

2853. Somebody else would do it in order to get their rent?—Somebody else would do it in order, I would rather say, to comply with the requirements of the sanitary authority; that is the great lever.

2854. The sanitary authority is not harder on the poor people than on others?—No, certainly not.

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

ready and willing to give a girl they know a helping hand by receiving her child, would utterly refuse to allow themselves to be registered as receivers of illegitimate children. We, rescue workers, are trying most earnestly to raise the moral tone of these girls, and to encourage them in every way to take up the responsibilities of motherhood. In many cases no better inspector can be found than the mother, and the closer the tie between the mother and the child the better. In the Act of 1872, based on the Report of the House of Commons Select Committee of 1871, Clause 2 seems to have been drawn up with a view to meet the cases I have described; and now it is proposed that this Clause should be repealed, and a rigid one with no elasticity substituted. The London workhouses are realising the importance of voluntary work. Our association was asked by the Marylebone Guardians to send a worker to their lying-in ward, and we have now a workhouse-aid committee. There are at least 13 workhouses in London helped in this way. The Act does not deal specially with the adoption of babies, with a sum paid down, and yet this is manifestly the root of baby farming in its worst form. No registration or inspection could be too stringent for this class of case. The financial side seems also to be ignored. Registration will not attract nurse-mothers unless it makes the payment more secure. Who will be responsible for this? If the State, then surely that means making vice easy, and encouraging the very sin we are all trying to check. It is quite right to make the mothers pay, and as a rule there is no difficulty about this, but the wages are often inadequate. It would be well if more men could be persuaded that they are responsible for their children. Who will be the inspectors, men or women? It is evident that the only efficient inspection of babies would be the inspection by well-chosen women. Whether the Act was administered by the police or by any other authority the actual inspection should be by women?"—

x 4

2864. "We

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2864. "We have just had our annual ladies' meeting. The Bill proposed by Lord Denbigh was fully discussed. I forward the two resolutions proposed and unanimously carried. I can now say when I give evidence on Friday that it will not only be in my private capacity, but as the representative of the most experienced lady rescue workers in London." That is the letter which describes your views?—Yes.

2865. The resolutions are these: Resolution No. 1: "We, the delegates from the above-named associations" (which are all named here, 18 of them) "gathered together in council, 13th May 1896, desire to record our belief that the proposed repeal of Clause 2, in the 'Act for the Better Protection of Infant Life' (25th July 1872) and the substitution of Clause 2 in Lord Denbigh's Bill, would be highly detrimental to the interests of infants necessarily separated from their mothers, because it would cut off the supply of more respectable nurse-mothers, who would refuse to be registered, and would thus increase the danger of suicide, desertion, and infanticide." The second resolution was, "That it ought to be rendered illegal for institutions or individuals to adopt one or more infants or children on the payment of a lump sum of money unless such institutions and individuals are registered and inspected"; and then there follows a list of all the ladies who were present; and this you desire to put in because it shows the representative character of the meeting?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

2866. That may be considered as representing the views of the Pimlico Ladies' Association?—Yes, I think so; there were six representatives from Pimlico; the Duchess of Bedford did not come herself; the six members who were there came as representatives, and they helped to draw up these resolutions.

2867. Their evidence would be probably the same as that of yourself?—I do not know that, but we are entirely at one on this subject.

2868. But what you say, as far as you know, represents the views of the Pimlico Association?—Yes; but you might be glad to have somebody else as a witness.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2869. One of the points you desire to emphasize to us to-day is, that there are two kinds of nurse-mothers, and you want to draw out the difference between them?—Yes.

2870. Will you tell us that yourself?—May I take one of my cases to illustrate the two? The two distinct classes of foster-parents are nurse-mothers, and baby-farmers whom we all want to aim at. I think this clause would interfere with good nurse-mothers without checking the evils of baby-farming. I will take a typical case from my own experience, "Ellen C—", a girl of 21, with first child a month old, no friends, no money; in her despair tried to smother the child. I visited her and took her and the child straight to our Refuge. On investigating the case I found she had good past characters; so, after a few weeks, she was placed with a lady who was told

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

her history, and the child with a very good middle-class woman. Ellen, with a little help, pays for her child. Once a month, when she has a 'day out,' she spends it with her child at the nurse-mother's, and is devoted to the child. This nurse would certainly not submit to being registered, nor would the husband allow it." So that, in that case, the girl would have lost the opportunity of placing the child with a very suitable woman; and she would also have lost a very good friend in the nurse-mother. This child is inspected by me and by our matron, and by the mother herself.

2871. That is one case?—That is one case. That is an instance of a nurse-mother, I should say, who loved children and wanted to have a child, but could not quite afford to keep a child without some payment. In most cases we should arrange for 5s. a week; but if the girls arrange they can make any arrangements they like. There is one nurse-mother taking 3s. a week because she is a friend of the girl's. Now, for my next case, "Beatrice S—", age, 18. "This is a young dressmaker who had a child, and herself found a nice young couple to take the child, and for a time she paid for it; then she went utterly wrong, and came under my care. I found that the best chance of reforming her was to send her to a two years' home, but the child was the difficulty, as the foster parents said they would not keep him without payment." (It is expensive to pay for a child in a home and to pay for the mother in the penitentiary at the same time; our funds do not allow of it), "Dr. Barnardo said he would receive the child free during the two years the mother was in this home on condition that he was told when she went to service, and that then she should contribute towards its support. This was arranged. After I had put the child with Dr. Barnardo, the foster-mother came to the Refuge, miserable at having given up the child, and stated that her husband offered to have it back and adopt it altogether. I feel so strongly against cutting a mother off from her child that I made it a stipulation that they should only have the child on Dr. Barnardo's condition, viz., that when the mother earned wages she should make some payment for the child. These people certainly would not allow themselves to be registered as this Act proposes, and many of such kind homes would be shut to these poor children." It was a great responsibility to take the child away from Dr. Barnardo after I had placed it there, and I asked the woman what would happen if she died, and she said, "If I die my sister has promised to take it"; and she said that she cried all night because she saw the little cot empty. That was a real case of mother's love, and I felt it better to take the child from Dr. Barnardo and put it with her. I could give many such cases. This next one is rather different: "Fanny P., a girl aged 22; first fall with good previous characters; I sent her to the Main Memorial Home, 49, Burton-crescent; she was received there before her confinement, and taken back again with her child when discharged from Queen Charlotte's Hospital. Fanny was placed in service and the child boarded out with one of the staff

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

staff of nurse-mothers. The payment of 5s. a week in this case is entirely paid by the mother herself." (She can earn 20l. a year; she is a cook.) When wages are less than 20l., 1s. a week is given from a fund for that purpose. The nurse-mothers are most carefully chosen; they bring the child, if possible, once a week to this home to be paid, and are inspected by a lady who is a trained nurse, and the mother of the child is encouraged and expected to come as often as she can to see her child. About 50 nurse-mothers are on the books at this moment. Mrs. Bonham-Carter tells me in the last six years she has had only two cases of babies thrown on her hands, deserted by their mothers.

2872. On the list of nurse-mothers you refer to, there are about 50, you say?—Yes.

2873. Those nurse-mothers always keep in touch with the child's actual mother?—Yes.

2874. And to that point you attach the greatest importance?—The greatest importance.

2875. There are only two cases within these six years of failure on the part of the actual mother to keep in touch with the nurse-mother with whom the child is placed?—Yes; of course that number 50 is liable to be increased or diminished according to the demand.

2876. Then are any of the nurse-mothers registered?—Yes, there are some of them registered under the old Act.

2877. Have you any reason to think that on this list of 50 nurse-mothers there are some who are taking more than one child under 12 months old?—Yes, certainly.

2878. They are therefore registered?—They are therefore registered; but they are a lower class of nurse-mothers than the others. Mrs. Bonham-Carter tells me that her better nurse-mothers would refuse to be registered; it would shut the door to her work considerably. Then I have another case of a girl of 20 sent to Miss Darling, 61, St. Charles-square. (Ours is a refuge, and we pass our girls on.) The child has been placed out from there, and the nurses there are most carefully chosen and inspected. Miss Darling says the proposed clause would hinder her work sadly. "Mary C., sent to 31, Arbour-square" (another home in connection with our work, and they are kept there for six months, which is very desirable if you want to keep a mother and a child rather longer together). I have a letter from Miss White (Honorary Superintendent) which I should like to read.

2879. I will read it for you. This (pointing to a letter) is the letter from Miss White. "Dear Mrs. Wethered, Thank you for letting me see the resolutions passed at the meeting of the Rescue Associations with regard to Clause 2 in Lord Denbigh's Bill. I most cordially agree with what is said in those Resolutions. I have had, as you know, an experience of 10 or 11 years in rescue work, and I have devoted a great deal of time to the finding of good nurse-mothers for illegitimate children. I do not know of one single case of cruelty in all these years, and scarcely any of neglect; I feel sure that if all houses have to

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Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

be registered where illegitimate infants are it will greatly hinder a most important part of rescue work; I have long thought that it is not the weekly or monthly payments which are the temptation to nurse-mothers, but, as you say, sums of money paid down and children adopted"?—Yes.

2880. Have you any more cases?—This one only, of a girl aged 26. She had very bad companions in London, so it seemed better to send her out of London, and I sent her with her child to Miss Bell's Home in Eastbourne. There is a laundry attached to it and an admirable system of boarding out in connection with the home. I have not had time to write to Miss Bell, but I feel sure she would agree with us. I could multiply homes and illustrations.

2881. What you are afraid of in the case of such registration is that the better class of foster-parents would be afraid to register because of the inspection which would follow registration, and of, one might also say, the stigma that would attach to them?—That is what I should be afraid of. I do not think they would be afraid of voluntary inspection; we all inspect them; but they would not like the stigma of receiving illegitimate children, nor the official inspection.

2882. If by any means we could adopt a system of registration which carried with it no stigma, and avoided anything like the appearance of what would be vulgarly called baby-farming, that objection might possibly be obviated?—No, I think not; there are so many practical difficulties. For instance, I wanted a nurse-mother for a child in a great hurry, and I wrote to a woman I knew; she said she could not take it, but her sister would, and we sent the child to her. The child proved to be a very crying child, and a short time afterwards the husband appeared at the Refuge, and said he was very glad for his wife to have a child, but he could not stand having his nights disturbed; he was a working man on the line, and if his wife was to have a baby he must ask me to get one that did not cry. I wanted this child, who was delicate, to go to this woman, because I knew it would be well taken care of. I have now given them a child of a year old, which I hope will not disturb them. They kept the crying child temporarily till other arrangements were made.

2883. So that what you are afraid of is not inspection, but the stigma?—Yes, registration, which means both.

2884. Have you considered at all whether any system short of what would be ordinarily called registration, such as merely giving notice to some authority that there was such a child in the house, would meet the case?—No.

2885. Of course we do give notice, or notice is given for us in all of our houses when there is infectious disease, and so forth; has it occurred to you that a similar notice, something short of what might be called registration, might meet this case?—I think it would not. There is a natural love for babies in many women,

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

and constantly when they have no children of their own the wife arranges to have a baby in her care and the husband is willing if it does not put him out; but if he thought it was necessary to have registration he would not consent. And a great many of our girls are very superior and their one idea is to hide it, and that is a good feeling to foster.

2886. That is another point; let us keep to this point now. In some of the letters that you put in the phrase was used "registered as a house for taking illegitimate children." That one can obviously see would arouse the strongest objection on the part of almost everybody; but there might be some form of registration far short of that which is no greater stigma than notice that there has been scarlet fever in one's house. You still think that, however modified in its form, there would be on the part of the man, if not on the part of the woman a radical objection to intimations to any authority?—I think there is a widespread objection to an official inspection.

2887. Now comes the point you mention; you say you do, as a matter of fact, register?—Yes, we enter the names and addresses of our nurse-parents in our books. A nurse mother when she takes a child from us would not mind my going down to see the child. I can go whenever I choose. Our matron would run down perhaps in the evening just in time to put it to bed for her. The mothers themselves spend as much time with the children as they can.

2888. You wish to show here how important it is to keep up the mother's personal care and charge over her infant?—That is the chief point.

2889. But that does not directly interfere with registration?—No, but you would get a different class of person under the proposed registration. The nurse who asks to be registered does so because she wants to make a livelihood. It means that she is taking in more than one child for the money's sake. That person ought to be inspected; but those people who take a child because of their love for the child, or for its mother, are on quite a different footing.

Viscount Llandaff.

2890. You could not distinguish them in an Act of Parliament?—It would be difficult; in our work we distinguish between these different kinds of nurse-mothers, and there are the nurse-mothers found by the girls themselves.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2891. You think that the nurse-mother who takes in a child, or children, for profit, ought to be, we will not say registered, but inspected, supervised?—Certainly, I think that we should apply the registration to those cases.

2892. But the registration at present is only children under 12 months of age, and you would

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

not, I presume, limit it to that?—No, but I thought, under the present Act, you could take one child, but not two, without registration.

2893. Yes, certainly?—I should keep to that, I think the old Act was better. If you only give 3s. 6d., or 4s., or 5s. a week, there cannot be much profit made.

Viscount Llandaff.

2894. It has been suggested to us that a woman can spend 1s. only out of the 5s. for the child, and it will probably die in a month, and then she will get another?—I have not met with them. It may be so in some cases.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2895. But that class of cases has not come under your notice?—No, because a weekly payment, to a certain extent, means supervision or inspection.

2896. Then still keeping to the point of the manner of registration, what would you say to a plan whereby such an association as any one of those to which you have referred was obliged itself to be in some way registered, and that then powers were given to the ladies of that association to supervise the nurse-parents?—That would suit us, because we should not mind being registered; but it would not meet the case of the nurse-mothers found by the girls without the association.

2897. No, except so far as the girl if she was in touch with your association could intimate to you the home she had found, and that over that home would be cast the protection of your association?—Yes, but then there are a great many girls who find nurse-mothers without being in touch with any association.

2898. Are those safe?—If there is a cousin or somebody belonging to them they need not come to us at all.

2899. But I am afraid you must admit the fact that a very large number of illegitimate babies are put in quite unsuitable homes where they may die. We want in some way or other to protect them; you say that lest we should interfere with a girl who is going to find a suitable home, we must not make a law which would interfere with one that will find an unsuitable one?—We must be sure that the law would do what we want to do. I do not think the proposed clause would do so.

2900. Still you want inspection?—We want inspection, but the best sort of inspection.

2901. You are strong upon the point that the inspector must be a woman?—Absolutely. I think inspection of babies should be carried out by carefully chosen women. It is ridiculous to have anything else; a man, as a rule, cannot even nurse a baby, and it is absurd to suppose that he can inspect it.

2902. In London at this moment there is a gentleman who has been inspecting babies for, I forget how many years, 20 years?—That is probably not the kind of inspection that I mean.

2903. Then

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2903. Then you wish to say something about the financial side?—It seems to me that these people will only register if you guarantee payment, and who is going to pay? They would not take a child without some certainty of being paid.

2904. The argument of some people is that if there were a great number of registered houses a girl who wanted to find a proper home would find it much easier to find one?—A penniless girl would not; they would not take her child.

2905. In your notes you have put down "How to check baby-farming"?—We consider that all institutions and individuals who receive children for a lump sum should be registered and inspected. If a woman can get a child with 5l. and then kill that child and get another with 5l., there is a distinct object in getting rid of it.

2906. Your wish is that we should if we can legislate so as to prevent the taking of a lump sum?—Yes.

2907. Have you at all thought of any process by which we shall be able to find out whether a lump sum is paid?—That will be one of the difficulties. I think adoption of babies with payment without registration should be made illegal, and when advertisements are seen in the papers asking for a child to adopt, that person ought to be visited and asked for credentials. Constantly girls have brought me these advertisements and shown them to me, and I have always said "have nothing to do with that." I should like to read a bit from a lady's note who has taken this up a great deal: "I answer advertisements and ask if I may call, not giving my name or proper address, but the name and address sent to me by some person anxious to help in some small sort of way; they appoint a time to see me, and you can gather from what you see, and from the woman herself, quite enough to condemn her if you wish. My relieving officer can only tell me of cases, but I have very often used my knowledge to reclaim the woman from her awful crimes and I have, under God, been the means of persuading several women to give up their awful trade, and they are now respectable members of the community. I should not care to specify cases; that would not be fair on those who have sought God's blessing, and found it."

Chairman.

2908-9. By "her awful crimes" she means what?—The making away with the children.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2910. You have written here "Who are the most likely people to carry out the law"?—I have not thought that out, but it occurs to me that the Poor Law officials might afford a better machinery than the county council; and if they were in touch with voluntary associations like ours, the law might be more efficiently carried out and, working together, we might make a strong body of inspectors, and help to enforce the Act.

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Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2911. What you mean is inspectors who should be partly under the supervision of the Poor Law authorities, and partly volunteers?—Yes, like the lady whose letter I have quoted.

Chairman.

2912. You stated just now that you thought there would be great objection to registering only one child?—Yes.

2913. But do you feel equal objections to raising the age?—No; I have not thought that out, but I think it would be desirable.

2914. You know, I suppose, that the present Act applies only to cases where there is more than one child of under one year of age?—Yes, that is how I understood it.

2915. So that if a person keeps one child of under one year with half-a-dozen of over one year, there is no necessity for them to register?—Yes, I should like to alter that.

2916. Therefore, when you said just now you would like to see the old Act remain as it is, you had not got that in your mind?—No, I was not thinking of the age.

2917. Do you see any really practicable way of drawing a legal distinction between what you call a nurse-mother and a baby-farmer?—Yes, I think the one to whom a weekly sum is paid is a nurse-mother; I think the one to whom the lump sum is paid down is the baby-farmer.

Viscount Llandaff.

2918. It is not the one child or the two children, but the lump sum that makes the difference?—Yes, because that is the temptation; if you can go on piling up 5l., 10l., 30l., you get a very large income.

Chairman.

2919. But have you considered the question how you are to find out whether a child has been paid for by a lump sum, or whether it is paid for by weekly payments?—It is very difficult, but if it was illegal to do it I think it would be possible to set to work and find it out.

2920. How would you find out that it was not a mere instalment of a weekly payment? These professional baby-farmers are very ingenious people, and they have the reputation of being able to evade the law if you give them a loophole?—They will probably do their utmost to evade it.

2921. And, therefore, if you simply make it illegal to accept a lump sum with a child, it would be very simple to say, "We have received 10l., but we are going to receive 5l. next month"?—It would be difficult to prevent that sort of thing, and there might be cases where a lump sum paid down was perhaps the best way of doing it.

2922. I think we are fully alive to the fact that most of the worst cases of professional baby-farming are traced to lump sums; I do not press

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

you on the point; I think we are rather anxious to find a satisfactory way of stopping it?—I think that a lump sum down ought to be struck at. I think it would be a pity to injure the enormous amount of good rescue work with the possible idea of getting at the baby-farmer. I do not think the proposed registering of these one-baby cases would do it.

2923. I take it your only hostility to the Bill is that it would interfere with the good work done by your society and similar societies?—A great deal more than merely the effect on our societies; it is the girls themselves that I am thinking of. I think you would be making it so hard for them; they would be driven into a corner. I think this clause would tend to drive some girls to suicide and to child-murder. By our association, and associations like ours, no doubt it would be considered objectionable, but it is the girls themselves I am thinking of.

2924. But the girls themselves generally obtain foster-mothers for their children through these advertisements, do they not?—In some cases, but not generally.

2925. Generally privately?—Yes, through friends, relations, and chance acquaintances, and in many other ways.

2926. How do you generally proceed in your questions?—We have been at work for 15 years, so that we have a very large circle of acquaintances, and people know us. When nurse-mothers apply for a child we make preliminary inquiries, personal inspection of the house, take up references, &c.

2927. Then there was another thing I remember in your evidence. You said you generally tried to keep the mothers in touch with the children after you have put them out?—Yes.

2928. That is exactly the contrary policy to that of the Foundling Hospital; they lay the greatest stress on the necessity of entirely cutting off the mothers from the children?—They have never done any rescue work on our lines. We try not only to save the babies, but to reform the mothers.

2929. I was only remarking on the fact of the difference of the two policies?—We endeavour to develop the mother's love for the child. In the first beginning they think of the shame and disgrace. As a rule child-murder takes place in the first few weeks. After that the mother's love springs up, if it has not already shown itself.

Viscount Llandaff.

2930. You spoke of 50 nurse-mothers, were those 50 in houses in connection with your Paddington Association?—No, in connection with the Main Memorial Home.

2931. There are more than 50 nurse-mothers employed by all these associations you mentioned?—Hundreds; that is only one home.

2932. Of your 50, you said some were registered, how many?—Mrs. Bonham-Carter did not tell me that. We have a refuge, an open-all-

Chairman—continued.

night refuge; we get our girls in all sorts of ways, mothers and babies are only one branch of our work. When we have got these we have to sort them; I can only send Mrs. Bonham-Carter girls who have previous good characters, and are likely to do well.

2933. What does Mrs. Bonham-Carter represent?—The committee and the management of the Main Memorial Home.

2934. You said that the registered houses amongst those 50 were of a lower class?—Yes, because they are the class of women who want to make a living out of it; it is perfectly legitimate; I do not mean that they are not nice women, but they are women who are taking the children with the hope of adding to their income.

2935. Have you ever had any cases of insuring the children you put out with nurse-mothers, by the nurse-mother?—No, it is done, but I have never known it.

2936. Would it be as objectionable as the lump sum, in your opinion?—Well, very near akin to it.

Lord Thring.

2937. You said, I think, in answer to the Bishop, that the nurse-mothers did not object to inspection; I presume you meant inspection by ladies, such as yourself; voluntary inspection?—Yes.

2938. But would they be equally content with official inspection?—I think not.

2939. Then your opinion with regard to the Bill generally, is, as I understand it, this; that there are at present a number of nurse-mothers who are not prompted by gain, but by maternal instinct?—Yes.

2940. And those are the very best class of nurse-mothers, and you think that the Bill would in fact exclude that class?—Yes, it would to a great extent.

2941. Then you said that you thought the guardians were better than the County Council?—That is my impression.

2942. I will not press you; have you had much experience of country guardians?—No, only in London. The relieving officer seems to know so much about everybody.

2943. But have you had much experience of country guardians?—No; I did not begin rescue work until I came to London.

2944. Then you are not at all warm on that question?—No, it was simply an idea that came to me, whether it was possible the best people have not been chosen to administer the Act. I only threw that out as a suggestion.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2945. Your reason was that the guardians have already officers going round?—Yes, ready to hand.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2946. If I understand, while you are hostile to the idea of this Bill, in so far as it insists upon

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

upon the registration of every foster parent who keeps even one child, you are not at all hostile to the raising of the age where registration is necessary?—No, nor to having registration where two children are kept.

Viscount Llandaff.

2947. Have you had any experience whether the existing Act has done much good in London?—I do not know that it has made any difference; I think they would be just as good without it.

2948. The good ones as good and the bad ones no better?—Yes, I think so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2949. You do not think it is because they are inspected that they are good?—I do not think so, but inspection helps to keep them up to the mark.

Viscount Llandaff.

2950. Have you formed any idea why there are so few houses registered in London; do you think there are many that evade the present Act?—Yes, I think so.

2951. In spite of all the care that the London County Council take to find out the houses, you think that many escape?—Yes.

2952. Have you come across many cases of houses with more than one child under 12 months that do not register?—I should not like to assert it positively. I have heard of several cases from a trustworthy source.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2953. In your opinion there must be a great many more than 41 houses that ought to be registered?—Yes.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss STEER, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2962. You are the honorary superintendent of the Bridge of Hope?—Yes.

2963. What is that, a rescue institution?—It is a sort of general mission in Ratcliff Highway chiefly for the rescue of women and children.

2964. It is the Bridge of Hope Home?—Yes, or mission.

2965. And it is established in Ratcliff Highway?—Yes.

2966. For that purpose?—For the purpose of helping the women and children there.

2967. Have you been many years connected with the work?—Just 17.
(0.95.)

Chairman.

2954. Still, that is only an opinion; you do not know it as a matter of fact?—I have not gone into that.

Viscount Llandaff.

2955. We have had evidence that considerable trouble was taken by the officers employed by the London County Council to find out all the houses?—I still think that the Poor Law guardians would be the more natural people to carry it out, because they have got more local machinery that they could use; but that is only my private opinion.

2956. All the cases that you have mentioned that have come under your immediate notice would be very difficult to trace if they did not register; take the girl who picks out her friend, there would be nothing to assist in finding out that case?—Nothing.

2957. Unless the officer went from house to house?—Yes, and had the truth told him.

Chairman.

2958. Is it not very desirable, in the cases of these unfortunate girls, to conceal in some degree the fact of their misfortune?—Yes, most important.

2959. Therefore, while you wish your society to have great powers of inspection, practically you take care to conceal the poor women who have fallen into these difficulties?—Yes, so far as I can do so conscientiously.

2960. And you attach great importance to the possibility of that concealment?—Yes, there are many cases in which it is necessary.

Viscount Llandaff.

2961. You have not said a word about Section 3; would you approve of sending to gaol for six months a girl who would not give her true name and address?—Most certainly not.

Chairman—continued.

2968. So that you have got considerable experience?—Yes.

2969. Are you acquainted with the proposals of the Bill which is before the Committee?—Not fully. I think I understand the general intention.

2970. I may ask you this: do you know that the present law only insists on the registration of houses in which more than one child of under 12 months of age is kept for hire or reward apart from its parent?—Yes.

2971. And our proposal is to extend the Act to any child up to five years of age?—Yes, I think I understand as much as that already.

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2972. And

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

2972. And the reason is that it is believed that there are many houses in which such children are taken in which are now outside the scope of the present Act, and which it would be very desirable to bring under some sort of regulation and control?—Yes.

2973. Have you any views to offer the Committee on that point as to whether it would be desirable or not to extend the Act in that way?—I think it would be desirable to extend the Act so that all children taken in by other than relatives should come under registration. I do not see any objection to it. I board out several children; I am constantly boarding them out with foster mothers; we always have several children boarded out with foster-mothers.

2974. Have you to find homes for these children?—Yes.

2975. I suppose all of them illegitimate children?—Yes.

2976. And do you think that some sort of control over the foster-parents would interfere with your obtaining suitable homes for the children?—It is somewhat difficult to obtain good foster-mothers for the children because respectable women are afraid. These children are very delicate and difficult to bring up, and I have found a difficulty in getting respectable women to take them, and I think we never do get them except when we will be at the back of the woman to superintend and provide doctor's expenses and that sort of thing.

2977. Then when you have boarded out a child in this sort of way you exercise supervision afterwards?—Yes, always.

2978. How do you do it; have you any committee?—Yes, of workers in the mission. With regard to the children, the children are brought to us one week usually and we usually visit them the next.

2979. Are the children boarded out in London usually?—In the suburbs of London, usually, where we can get at them.

2980. What sort of amounts do you pay?—Five shillings a week, and provide them with clothes and medical expenses. I always pay the women well, because I expect the children to be well cared for. I do not think the women can take care of the children for profit for less. Of course, if they wish to retain it out of kindness, they can do it for 3s. a week; but to do it for any kind of profit they cannot do it well under 5s. a week.

Lord Thring.

2981. And you clothe them and find them medicine?—We always clothe the children. The foster-mothers are usually very kind to the children; some of them err through ignorance, but it is generally through ignorance, I think. When the payment comes regularly there is no temptation for them to ill-use the child.

Chairman.

2982. Have you any experience of the regular professional people who take in children of this

Chairman—continued.

class, who take them in for lump sums?—No, I have always so discouraged it.

2983. Have you ever come across such in the course of your work among the poor?—No, I have not come across people who do it in that way.

2984. Therefore, you have no knowledge of the actual working of the system?—No, not when a certain sum is paid down at the time, I have never come across that. I think that with the class of foster-mothers that take the children and do badly by them for 2s. or 3s. a week, it is simply a matter of poverty; the mother is unable to afford a larger sum. When the mother is able to pay 5s. a week, or when she is helped to pay 5s. a week, the child is better looked after; we can get a better class of foster-mother to look after the children in such cases, and there is no difficulty or danger about it. It is where a mother is left alone, and has nobody to help her, and has not enough money to pay for it, that the child is neglected, owing to the smallness of the sum she is able to pay. I have occasionally rescued a child when the mother has not been able to pay for it, or has only been able to pay a small sum, and then I have found that the child has been neglected.

2985. You do not keep the children at all in your mission home for any length of time, I gather?—I find that babies do not get on so well by putting them together several in a house; I prefer to board them out, because they get on better.

2986. Do you board them out at once after they come to you?—When they are three months old, usually; I generally keep the mothers till that time, if possible.

2987. Do they come to your home to be confined?—No.

2988. You do not take them till afterwards?—No, I do not take them till afterwards; I generally take St. George's and Whitechapel workhouse cases.

2989. People who have gone to the workhouse for the purpose of being confined, and you take them afterwards for the purpose of trying to reclaim them?—Yes.

2990. There is a certain class of lying-in houses which have been mentioned to this Committee; do you know anything about them?—No, I do not send any cases to those lying-in houses; I send them to the hospitals.

2991. Some of these women come to you before their confinement, and ask for your advice?—Yes; I very often have to pay for boarding them out before they are confined.

2992. What class of women are they, as a rule?—Nearly always domestic servants, those that I have to deal with; sometimes they are young women in shops; sometimes of a little higher class, but usually domestic servants. I always take the mother's wages, or a portion of the mother's wages, and assist her in paying for the child.

2993. You do not find that the foster-mothers, when

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

when you put children out, object to the visits of your committee?—No, not in the least.

2994. Do you think that the people whom you put your children out with would object to notifying the local authority in some way, or being registered?—I should think they would not, because I am careful that I have thoroughly respectable people, who, I should think, would be glad to be recognised.

2995. You do not think that the respectable people would object to being registered?—I should think not.

2996. Have you ever asked any of them?—No, I have not; of course, excepting this, that when I have given a second child under 12 months of age to a woman, I have had to say, "Are you registered; can you take the child?"

2997. You do sometimes send a second?—I have occasionally done so; I do not often do it.

2998. Have you come across any of the registered houses at all; do you know any of them?—Oh, yes. Of course some of the foster-mothers I have, have been registered; because they may already have had a child from somewhere else, when I have given them a child, and I have found that they have been registered.

2999. Do you communicate at all with the officers of the County Council who administer this Act?—No; we visit these women to see that the children are well kept.

3000. But when a woman tells you that she is registered, do you do anything for the purpose of verifying her statements?—No, I have not. That has not occurred lately, because I have been careful to give only one little child to a woman.

3001. What do you mean by "lately"?—The last five or six years. I am quite sure it is largely a question of money. It is because the mothers cannot afford to pay properly for the children that they get a low class of women to take them, who are not very conscientious. I know that that is the reason; I feel sure in my own mind that that is the reason why they do it. When they are obliged to put out a child, and can only afford 3s. or 4s. a week, they must get anybody to take it. Of course it is extremely likely that there would be a higher average of mortality among these children than among other children, because they are generally much more delicate, and everything is against them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3001*. Roughly speaking, how many children might you have at a time boarded out?—I should think about a dozen at a time. When I get a baby three or four years old I take it into one of my cottage homes.

3002. Do you exercise supervision over them from the time of their first boarding out, if that is early after birth, to three or four years of age?—Yes, unless the child is adopted. It is sometimes adopted by the foster-parent. Sometimes the mother marries or takes away the child for some (0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

reason or another. As long as we help to pay for the child, we supervise it.

3003. You spoke of the larger number of the mothers with whom you have to deal, being domestic servants?—Yes.

3004. Do you attribute that fact to the larger number of the young women being in domestic service, or to the fact that such things are more likely to occur with those who have gone into domestic service?—You see if such a thing happens to a girl who is in domestic service she cannot go on with her work, as a factory girl can; the factory girl can have her child at home and look after it and yet go on with her work.

3005. You mean that you have to do with cases of domestic servants, but it does not necessarily follow that you are having, so to speak, a fair average of illegitimate children?—I think that that accounts for our having the domestic servants in our homes. It is only from what we hear that I can speak, but we hear that more domestic servants have those children than any other class.

3006. Did you hear the evidence that Mrs. Wethered gave a little while ago?—No.

3007. Mrs. Wethered was speaking very strongly, from obviously a large experience, as to the objection which many of the foster-parents with whom she has had to do would certainly have to registration of any sort or kind: your experience differs from hers?—Yes, of course. I work in the East-end, and I do not think there would be much objection there. I cannot see that it would be well to register every home for one child, because so often a relative will take a child; and as I think some one said this morning, you will very often find a grandmother or an aunt who will take a child for 2s. 6d. a week; that just pays her out-of-pocket expenses, and she gives the care of the child for nothing; and in those cases I think registration would be found difficult. But I know how difficult it is to make exceptions. I think everybody having the care of two children should be registered.

3008. Do you desire to change the existing law?—I think it might be prolonged till the child is five years old, not limited to 12 months.

3009. Of the two aims which the Bill has, firstly to prohibit even a single child being kept under 12 months of age, and secondly to enlarge the limit of age up to five years, you would be clearly in favour of the second?—When there was more than one child.

3010. Only when there was more than one child? Would you not register a house where there was only one child if it was two years old?—So many poor people you see are willing to help a mother of an illegitimate child in that way. Sometimes if they have no children of their own they will not mind helping a girl by taking one child. I do not suppose they would make a business of it and take two children, but it is often the case that they will take one child perhaps for less than 5s. if they know the girl; they may be relatives, and it would be very difficult to register a house under those circumstances, would it not?

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3011. Of

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

3011. Of course much depends upon what you mean by registration; if registration means being placed upon a list which is open to inspection, and which gives the impression of such registered houses being what were described to-day as places for receiving illegitimate children, many people would object who might not object to merely having to give an intimation to some authority of the fact that they had a child who was not their own?—But to give notice that they have a child who is not their own even for 24 hours, seems to me rather stringent.

3012. You would object to that; you would wish a longer period than 24 hours named in the Act?—Yes.

3013. But suppose that period to be named, let us suppose that a week is named, what do you say then?—I perfectly well see all the danger of it, and the objection to it, that many a relation or a friend will take a child while the mother goes to the hospital for instance, or to a convalescent home, or has to be absent for some reason or another; they will often take a child for a few weeks, perhaps for nothing, or for only a very little payment.

3014. If for any kind of payment, that would come under the Act directly?—Yes, of course.

3015. We wish to see which way the balance of your judgment inclines; would it be a good thing that registration should be required there, or would the harm be greater than the benefit?—I think they might leave the registration for one child alone; but I think when it comes to more than one child the question of profit comes in, and then I think the house ought to be registered, and the people ought to be looked after.

3016. I quite see that you speak guardedly, but your general impression is that it is in that way that the Act wants strengthening; that we should register every house in which more than one child was kept, even if the children are anything under five years old?—Yes; but I think there is great difficulty in requiring registration if there is only one child.

3017. Do you attach much weight to the importance or desirableness of keeping the mother in touch with her child?—A great deal; it is everything to do that as far as possible.

3018. You would regard the system of the Foundling Hospital and such institutions as being on a mistaken ground, therefore?—As only fit for exceptional cases; all those places are wanted for exceptional cases.

3019. But speaking generally, I mean?—Speaking generally I should say keep the mother in touch with her child. It is so very difficult for that mother herself when in a situation, and perhaps only having a day's holiday once a month, to see or supervise her child.

3020. I am not clear about the class of people who are the foster-parents that you are familiar with?—They are generally widows, single women, women with daughters; sometimes a woman who has brought up her own family and has a girl of

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

13 or 14 years of age for whom she is glad to have a little occupation at home.

3021. Do you find many cases in which a married couple with a family of their own desire to take a nurse-child?—Sometimes, especially where it fits in with the other children.

3022. Where there is a big girl, you mean, who can mind them?—Yes, sometimes there is a big girl who can mind them, and a little child that comes in is well taken care of.

3023. In such a case would you still feel that 5s. is the least for which such a foster-mother could profitably, or suitably, keep a child?—I should never, myself, offer less than 5s.; I could not conscientiously do it.

Viscount Llandaff.

3024. Do you find in your experience that the mother contributes towards that 5s.?—Always gladly. It is only that they pay, according to their wages, 2s. to 4s. a week; it is always willingly given, and I think it is wonderfully well kept up. I have very few cases of desertion; of course occasionally I have such, but not often.

3025. You have told us two things; in the first place you have said that the foster-mothers are usually very kind?—Yes.

3026. And that where there was neglect of the children, it was because they had not enough money paid to them to enable them to do their duty by them in fact?—Yes. I do not come across those foster-mothers much; because I always see that they are paid; but I believe that to be the case.

3027. I do not quite see how these large provisions of this Bill would help that difficulty of cases of neglect and injury to the child through poverty; how would this Bill help that?—I do not know. I think it looks over the fact that poverty is at the bottom of it all; the mother cannot afford it, and that is how it all happens.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3028. You would not mend that by legislation?—No.

3029. You must not expect too much even if you pass such an Act as this?—The Act would do something.

3030. That opens up the question of affiliation?—Until some way is found of money being regularly paid to help the girl, I do not see how it is to be dealt with. A girl with 14l. a year cannot pay properly for a child; that is why we give so much time and money to subsidise the mother's wages.

Viscount Llandaff.

3031. Would not the result of the Bill be this, that foster-parents who only get 2s. 6d. would be excluded from registration, and those children would have to go to the workhouse?—Yes; the mothers would have to go with them.

3032. I understand

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3032. I understand your opinions to be that the maternal instinct is so strong that women as a general rule only wish to get rid of their children when they cannot afford to keep them?—Generally speaking.

3033. And that when they can afford to keep them they do their best to have them well kept?—I think on the whole they do wonderfully. Of course there are exceptions to the rule.

3034. Therefore, it would not be expedient to do away with places where women who cannot afford to keep their children at the 5s. limit could get them taken in at a lower limit?—I should think it would be a very good thing to do away with such places, excepting in the case of relations, or when it is done from kind feeling.

3035. How would these poor women who only pay 2s. 6d. a week, find a home for their children then?—They would have to go to the workhouse.

3036. You think that would be the proper remedy?—No, I do not; but it might awaken more public sympathy.

3037. You mean that a society like yours, might, as the result, get more assistance?—No; what I mean is, that I think the girls might be helped more individually, by individual ladies.

3038. By charity, in fact?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3039. Do you think all your foster mothers would pass the ordeal, if I may use the phrase, of registration?—I think so.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. ALFRED SPENCER, having been re-called, is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

3045. IN the evidence of Mr. Rudolf, the Secretary of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, he stated that a home for infants was handed over to the society by Lady Derby, and that this home was registered, but that the society found that the aggregation of a number of infants in one home was seriously injurious to the infants, and had therefore broken up the home; Mr. Rudolf stated that the home was in the north of London, and was registered under the Infant Life Protection Act; can you give the Committee any information as to this home?—I have ascertained from Mr. Rudolf that the home was situated at 143, Carlton-road, Kilburn. This road is now called Carlton Vale, and the greater part of it (including the site of what used to be the home), is not in London but in the parish of Willesden, in the county of Middlesex. It is, therefore, not registered or known to the Metropolitan authorities. Formerly the home was under the jurisdiction of the (0.95.)

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

3040. If the mother has to go to the house, it prevents her hiding the fact of the child's illegitimacy?—Yes. Of course there are difficulties everywhere.

3041. And it is very difficult to balance the difficulties?—Yes. I should like to say that I think, when a girl has been in court, and when a certain sum has been adjudged to her, it ought not to be left to her to get the money. That is where I think the present law is very weak. You see if the magistrates had the money paid into court that difficulty would be met.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3042. You mean in an affiliation order?—In an affiliation order. There is the difficulty. It is not difficult to get the affiliation order, but when you have got it the difficulty is to get the money. We have had to pay 2l. or 3l. to try and get the money back, and then it does not pay the legal expenses; the man leaves off paying again, and we have to institute the same sort of thing over again.

Viscount Llandaff.

3043. Have you any cases where the father contributes to the payment?—Yes, sometimes the whole 5s., sometimes he pays 2s. 6d., and the mother pays 2s. 6d.; but we see that the child is cared for.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3044. Do you insist on an endeavour to obtain an affiliation order?—No, not in all cases, because sometimes they plead so very earnestly that we should not try it.

Chairman—continued.

justices of the Kensington Petty Sessional Division for the county of Middlesex, and if registered it would have been registered by that authority.

3046. In one of the former Committees the police put in evidence with regard to the number of infants found dead in the street, picked up dead; have you ascertained the number of dead bodies of infants found in the Metropolitan and City Police District during the year 1895?—I have. The return which was presented before the 1871 Committee gave 276 as the number which were found by the police in the year 1870. I present returns prepared, respectively, by the Commissioners of Police for the Metropolis, and the City Commissioner of Police, which show that the dead bodies of infants found in the Metropolitan and City Police Districts during the year 1895 was 231, of which there were 118 males and 109 females, and in four cases the sex was unknown.

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3047 Do

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3047. Do you mean infants under one year?—No, merely infants; they were probably quite young infants in every case.

Viscount Llandaff.

3048. Is there anything to show whether they died a natural death or not?—No, there is nothing to show that in the returns. I think it may be taken that in all cases they were young infants, they are simply given as dead bodies of infants.

3049. Does it merely show that the people wanted to avoid the expense of burial, or that the infant came into their hands in an improper way?—The return given does not supply that information.

Lord Thring.

3050. What does "found" mean?—As far as I know, it means found either in a street, or in some place to which the police have access.

Viscount Llandaff.

3051. There is many a mother who would drop a dead child in the street, but who would not contribute to its death?—I do not think it necessarily follows that these children have been made away with.

Chairman.

3052. Your evidence was not clear upon the point of the actual number of infants under one year, received in registered houses in London. The numbers you gave were infants Mr. Babey found at the houses on successive visits, and there was a certain amount of duplication. Can you now give the Committee the actual number of infants under one year received in those houses, and also the number of deaths of infants under one year, that took place?—I find that the number of infants under one year received in registered houses in London from the 1st of January 1887, to the 31st of March 1896, was 694; that the number of deaths of infants under one year in registered houses during the same period was 137, being a death-rate equal to 197 per 1,000, or 19·7 per cent.

Viscount Llandaff.

3053. I should like you to contrast with that the deaths of infants during the same period under one year, not in registered houses?—The inspector in the course of his duties is brought into contact with unregistered houses, and he does obtain what information is available as to the deaths of infants under one year. Those deaths I have already given in evidence, so far as they have been ascertained by his inquiries, and they amount to 285 per 1,000 or 28·5 per cent.

3054. That is, infants put out for hire in unregistered houses?—Yes, infants under one year.

3055. But you cannot give me the total deaths in the same area, and for the same period, of infants under one year, everywhere?—I do not think I can answer the question; I do not believe the information is in existence.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

3056. I wanted to know the normal death-rate of infants for the same area and the same time?—I quite understand. As far as we do know it, the general death-rate of all infants under one year is about 16·3 per cent. I think that is given in my evidence before, as the death-rate of infants under one year in the County of London. That was for the year 1893, but it does not vary very much from that in the different years. I think you might take it that the average rate is something between 15 and 17. The death-rate which I have now given you at registered houses is 19·7, and the death-rate at unregistered houses, as far as it has been ascertained, amounts to 28·5; but while the figures are, I think, accurate as regards the general death-rate of infants, and also the death-rate at registered houses, they are not accurate as regards the unregistered houses. That rate is probably very much in excess of the figures I have given you, because we have only ascertained that number by inquiry, and there must have been a great number of deaths that we could not ascertain.

Lord Thring.

3057. It seems to me that the excess of deaths in unregistered houses over those in registered houses has no bearing upon our investigation, because we have been told over and over again now, that the children in the unregistered houses are the children of poorer people, and that the children in those houses are worse fed, and that whether they are worse fed or not, they do not die in a larger proportion than the foster parents' own children, and that they die, not because it is intended that they should die, but because the foster parents often have not the capacity to do well for them?—Probably the greater death-rate is due to incapacity of some kind.

3058. How can you bring up that incapacity by registration; you cannot make people competent by registration; you cannot make the pay given them higher by registration. Do you not see what I mean; the registered houses are selected houses, a higher class of houses, the people are competent; whereas in unregistered houses they may or may not be competent; and therefore the children often die from the incapacity of the foster parents because the poor mothers cannot afford to pay more for them. That is not susceptible of remedy by legislation?—I think that a certain amount of capacity both of the person and in the house ought to be a primary condition of the permission to take in infants for hire. I am not speaking now of isolated cases of single infants, but where two or more infants are taken for profit. I do think that there should be some reasonable provision made so that they should have a fair chance of being reared.

3059. You say that where they are kept for profit, two or more (those being the very conditions we have been talking about), the houses should be registered; we all agree to that?—Quite so; but the Act falls short by limiting the age of the child to one year.

Assuming

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Assuming that the principle of the Act of 1872 is right, so far as the limiting of the Act to cases where two or more infants are kept, that is to cases where, *prima facie*, there is a trade being carried on in infants, then I say there is no reason in stopping the operation of this principle at the age of 12 months, and that it is quite desirable to extend the protection that the Act gives up to five years, when the Education Acts step in, and, in a sense, take the child under their wing.

3060. The difficulty in my mind has been, all through, this: confine yourself to the case where one infant only is kept; we are told that a child is kept well or ill in proportion to the money that can be paid for it; we are further told that when sufficient money is paid, and the child is not well kept, it results from the incapacity of the foster mother. Now, supposing that we make a rule that every house shall be registered where one child is kept, that would exclude a great number of places where the foster mother is incompetent, would it not?—It would prevent the registration, you mean, of those places where the foster mother is incompetent; probably it would do so.

3061. Then, what are we to do with those children who otherwise would be with incompetent people?—These questions that you are now raising I propose to deal with at a later point in my evidence, and I should prefer to answer the questions in their proper place; because you will see that I have formed a conclusion which I think will answer your questions.

Chairman.

3062. Now, on another subject, Mr. Babey gave the Committee the number of persons registered from November 1878 to March 1894, but these numbers were those of persons actually on the register from year to year. Can you now tell the Committee the number of persons who actually registered in London since the passing of the Act of 1872, and the periods during which each person was registered?—Yes. The number of persons who have actually registered, and the periods of registration as distinct from the registrations granted from November 1872 to March 1896, are as follows. There have been a total of 255 persons registered under the Act in the metropolis. The Committee were anxious to know the periods during which they were on the register; 147 were on the register for one year; 53 were on the register for two years; 18 were on the register for three years; 18 were on the register for four years; four were on the register for five years; five were on the register for six years; two were on the register for seven years; two were on the register for eight years; two were on the register for nine years; two were on the register for 12 years; one was on the register for 13 years, and one was on the register for 16 years. And at the present time out of 41 persons that are now on the register, two have been on for one year; eight have been on for two years; five have been on for three years; two have been on for four years, and one has been on for five, six, seven, eight, 12 and 13 years respectively.

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Chairman—continued.

3063. When you say 255 persons, do you mean houses or persons?—I mean persons, not houses. The Committee particularly desired that it should be persons, because it was the number of persons who actually placed themselves under registration that you wanted to get at. The same person may have registered two or three houses, going from place to place.

3064. You do not count in there re-registration of the person?—No, not at all; my figures show how many distinct persons have been registered under the Act.

3065. You informed the Committee, in reply to Questions 10 to 15, that 24 houses had from time to time been struck off the register, and Lord Llandaff asked you if you could state how many were "for serious neglect and how many for unfitness of the house, and so on"; are you prepared to give that information now?—Yes. I find that in two cases the persons were struck off the register by order of the magistrates, under a power given by Section 9 of the Act. The remaining cases were struck off by the local authority under Section 7; three for serious neglect, six because the registered person was incapable of providing the infants with proper food and attention, and 13 because the houses became unfit for the reception of infants. I want to qualify that last number of 13. I find that of the 13 struck off because the houses became unfit, in 12 instances the registered persons gave up keeping more than one infant and reduced the accommodation in their houses. In the answer to Lord Llandaff's question I said that I thought about 25 per cent. of the whole cases were struck off because it was the desire of the person. It is really more than that; it is about 50 per cent. There are actually 12 cases out of 24 cases that were struck off at the desire of the registered persons, where they gave up keeping more than one infant and reduced the accommodation of the house. That gave us the opportunity of striking off on the ground of reduced accommodation.

3066. Then Mr. Babey's evidence was not altogether clear as to what course has been taken where cases of serious neglect came to the knowledge of the Council's officers, but where no infringement of the Infant Life Protection Act was found to exist. Can you give the Committee any further information on this point?—The invariable course taken in such cases has been either to give information to the police, or to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and in one case to the Reformatory and Refuge Union, 32, Charing Cross. I find, on searching the records, that about 12 such cases have been handed over to the police, one such case to the Reformatory and Refuge Union, and six to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and those are all that I have any actual record of; but there may have been others.

3067. Then it has been stated that the Council has made regulations compliance with which is necessary before the house can be registered under the Infant Life Protection Act; can you give the Committee any information on that point?—There are no regulations relative to registered

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15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

gistered houses, and every application is dealt with on its merits. It is considered desirable that in a registered house there should be a cubic air-space of at least 400 feet in respect of every adult, and 250 feet in respect of every infant living permanently in the house; but there is no regulation on the subject, and houses are registered with less accommodation than this where there is a fair amount of ventilation, and if in other respects the house of the applicant is suitable. The only thing in the nature of a regulation in connection with registered houses is the bye-law which the local authority is required by Section 3 of the Act to make, fixing the number of infants who may be received into each house registered.

3068. Then Mr. Babey mentioned a number of cases in which infants had been received for lump sums, and had then been immediately passed on to some other person, and he was asked whether he found out these cases in sufficient time to have stopped the trafficking taking place, or to trace the people, and prosecute them. Do you desire to add anything on this point?—I wish to make it clear to the Committee that wherever there was evidence as to cases of this sort taking place on a considerable scale the police were at once communicated with, in order that the people should be punished if sufficient evidence could be brought home to them, but that in only three of these cases was it possible for the police to get evidence sufficient to ensure conviction.

3069. What were these persons charged with?—They were charged with obtaining infants, money, and clothes under false pretences, the false pretences being that they would adopt the infants or provide for their future welfare.

3070. Were any considerable number of infants traced to any of those persons?—In one case 34 infants were received in this way by a clerk and his wife named Roadhouse, who were convicted and sentenced to periods of 18 months' and 12 months' hard labour respectively. It was shown that with the 34 infants they had received 219*l.* in money, and jewellery to the value of 32*l.*, besides clothing. In another case 30 infants were traced to a woman named Passmore, who was sentenced to nine months' hard labour, and she was known to have received 150*l.* with 14 of the infants. In a third case a woman at Wolverton was known to have received 24 infants in this way, with at least 80*l.* in respect of two of the infants, but sufficient evidence could not be obtained, and she was not proceeded against, although at the instance of a coroner's jury, at an inquest on the body of one of the infants, the case was sent to the Public Prosecutor. There are records of many other cases where a less number of infants were traced to people.

3071. Clause 5 of the Bill is included to meet cases of this description; have you considered the suggestion made by Lord Llandaff as to the desirability of adding the words "for hire or reward" after the word "person" in the third line of the clause?—I have given the matter very careful consideration, and have come to the conclusion that if that alteration is introduced

Chairman—continued.

into the clause it will not meet the whole of the cases it is intended to meet. The instances which I have just described to the Committee included cases where the trafficker did succeed in disposing of some of the infants without any agreement to pay money, and I remember that, in one case where an infant was thus passed on to some one to take charge of it for love, the infant was found abandoned in the garden of a house in the Marylebone-road, whence it was taken to the workhouse and died within a fortnight. I also point out that if the words "for hire or reward" were added, it would be a most difficult matter to prove "hire or reward" in cases of collusion between the parties. Lord Llandaff made another suggestion, that the words "or guardian" should be added after the word "relative" in the fifth line; and I think the addition of these words would probably meet the difficulty and remove the reasonable objection that was expressed to the clause in its present form. I think that would meet his Lordship's objection.

3072. Then you have heard the evidence given, and have doubtless noted the objection to some of the provisions of the Bill now before the Committee?—I have.

3073. Can you indicate briefly what those objections are, and in what way you suggest that they should be met?—I think the objections given in evidence may be summarised as follows:—(1) General objections to registration, and the consequent increased difficulty in providing homes for illegitimate infants. (2) The objection of neighbours or friends to register when they merely take charge temporarily of children while their parents are absent at work or for other purposes. (3) The objection of persons who receive an infant from an organised society or through a boarding-out committee and are therefore under some kind of supervision. (4) The objection to register of persons who receive children sent from India for purposes of health and education. I think those four heads briefly summarise the whole of the objections to registration that have been given before the Committee in evidence. I have considered very carefully in what way those objections could be met, and I have come to the conclusion that the proposal to limit the Act to illegitimate children that was included in the Bill of 1890 would not meet the case; and that in addition to that it would be almost impossible to administer the Act with a limitation of that kind on account of the great facility there would be for evasion. I have also come to the conclusion that the whole of those objections would be practically met if the Act is limited to two or more infants; that is to say, if, instead of extending the operation of the Act, as is proposed by Clause 2, to the keeping of single infants and to the keeping of infants up to five years of age, the Committee simply limited the extension of the Act to the raising of the age of the child from 12 months to five years, they would find that all the valid objections that have been urged before them would have been met. And although I am unable to-day to speak with the authority behind me

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

me of the London County Council, whom I represent, for my own part I do say that, having regard to the nature of the evidence, the experience of the witnesses, and generally to all the objections which have been so well put before the Committee, I am in agreement with the view that it will be politic in the first instance to limit the Act to the keeping of two or more infants. I do see, and see very clearly, the great hardship that would be worked by the extension of the Act to one infant, and I have formed the opinion that on the whole it would do more mischief than good. In the first place it would put the very greatest difficulties in the way of mothers who desire to do well by their offspring, and those difficulties would be almost insuperable, and there would be, therefore, a largely increased inducement to crime. That, I think, is a very potent reason; one that the Committee cannot possibly ignore. Then again, I think that where only one infant is taken it never, or rarely ever, is taken as a means of profit; as a trade. On the other hand, directly you get two infants, directly two infants are taken for hire or reward, it then does become more or less a trade; and no doubt that was the reason why the Committee of 1871 recommended that the Act should be limited to the taking of two or more infants. Another reason, and from my point of view an overwhelming reason, has presented itself to

Chairman—continued.

my mind why the Bill should not apply to single infants. You have heard in evidence what happens even within a limited area, within the experience of some of the visiting ladies. I have the evidence of Deaconess Gilmore in my mind for the moment. In a small area in Battersea she found, I think, 16 infants, each placed out singly, and placed out more or less with friends or neighbours, being kept for hire. In none of those cases were the infants placed out by any machinery of which we could possibly have cognizance; that is to say, they were placed out often through friends, sometimes through relatives, sometimes through local shopkeepers, but in no case through any agency with which a public authority could come into touch; and I confess that I feel it would be impossible for any local authority, in a place at any rate like London, or any of the other large cities, to keep in touch with the keeping of one infant. And therefore, on that ground alone, I ask the Committee to consider whether it would not be better to omit the single child. On the other hand, I think that there is a reasonable chance, a strong initial probability, I may put it, of our being able to ascertain where anything like a trade is carried on, where two or more infants are taken.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH leaves the CHAIR, and the LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER takes the CHAIR.

Witness.] One of the points that has been brought very prominently before the notice of the Committee over and over again by the witnesses representing organizations of some kind or other, is the desirability of exempting the infants boarded out by those organizations; and that proposition has my fullest sympathy. But I think that if you limit the application of the Bill to two or more infants, any special exemption of that sort will not be necessary; because I do not think that a single case has come before you where the institution was not careful only to board out one infant at a time. But should you think it necessary to provide a special exemption for such cases, then I venture to suggest that the proposal which has been thrown out by members of the Committee is a very workable one, viz., that the society itself should be registered by the Local Government Board; that, having been registered, it should issue certificates to the persons with whom it boards out infants, and that those certificates should exempt those houses from the operation of the Act. I think the Committee may find that an exemption of that kind may not be necessary; but should it be necessary, I see no objection to its taking that form.

Chairman.

3074. If the Bill were limited to the keeping of two or more infants under five years of age, what proportion of nurse infants would it bring in, and what proportion would it (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

leave out?—Taking the year 1894-95 I find that during that year a total of 497 infants were found at unregistered houses in London; that of that number 234 infants were boarded out singly, and therefore would not come under the extended Act if the single cases were exempted; but that 263 were infants that were kept at houses where two or more were taken, and which would come under the operation of the extended Act. Of course I realise quite well that the 234 single infant cases do not represent probably a tithe of the actual cases which exist, and as to which we have no means of ascertaining any particulars, but taking those cases that we are brought into contact with, that is, the cases where infants are advertised for, where there is more or less a trade, as it were, done in those infants, I say that of that total number of 497 rather more than one-half would come under the Act if you raised the age from one year to five years, without extending it to one infant. I have also thought it desirable to consult the inspectors as to their experience of the treatment of infants at unregistered houses where two or more are taken, and at unregistered houses where they have only found one, and their experience is that the treatment of the single cases is almost invariably better than where two or more are taken; and their opinion is that on the whole it may be said that the single infant receives as much care and attention as the average of the children of the

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

the poor; and that view coincides with the view put before you by other witnesses. I am very glad to be able to give that amount of official confirmation to those views. The inspectors state that they have rarely found a single infant case improperly treated or neglected, but that that neglect and ill-treatment had been frequently found where there were several infants kept. I do not mean that that neglect or ill-treatment amounted to criminal neglect and ill-treatment, I refer to cases where the neglect and ill-treatment fell short of that.

3075. Have you any suggestion to make as to the enforcement of the Act specially in districts outside the metropolis?—I have carefully considered that question and I have found it probably, on the whole, the most difficult question in connection with this rather difficult subject. I have come to the conclusion that probably the only authority that could reasonably be expected to enforce an extended Act would be the authority under the present Act, the district councils. I believe that it will be found, or at any rate can be made, an effective authority. It must be remembered that the change from the police and the justices in petty sessions to district councils was made as recently as the Local Government Act of 1894, and the change has, practically, been in operation only a little over a year, and the district councils have really hardly had time yet to ascertain and put into force their full powers in all directions. District councils immediately in the neighbourhood of London, with whom we have come most into contact, are in three cases, I know, taking active steps, though I think I may say that the local authorities generally rather despair of doing any effective work under what they believe to be a very limited and defective Act. In London we have been in touch with various authorities in connection with this Act, that is to say, we have been in touch with the police, we have been in touch with the registrars of births and deaths, we have been in touch with the Poor Law organisation, and we have been in touch with the sanitary authorities; and, on the whole, we are disposed to think that the sanitary organisation is the one likely to be brought more directly in contact with cases under the Act than any other organisation, and I think it is the fact that in the rural districts and wherever district councils have authority, they have a sanitary organisation which could be utilised and could be made effective for putting an extended Act into force. I have heard with the very greatest interest the evidence of the valuable work that is being done by voluntary societies, and not only in Manchester and in London, but in other places. The evidence before your Lordships is conclusive that an immense amount of such work is being done, and it appears to me that it would be well if the fullest advantage could be taken of the voluntary organisations that exist in almost every direction; and therefore I venture to suggest that there should be some permissive power to the local authorities under the Act, to delegate some portion of

Chairman—continued.

their duties under the Act to voluntary societies, and to make payments or contributions to these societies somewhat on the system that is in vogue in Manchester. I believe that something of the sort is already done, with a certain amount of success under other Acts. I believe it to be a fact that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are to a certain extent subsidised by some local authorities.

Viscount Llandaff.

3076. You must have some special provisions for the control of expenditure out of public money?—If you are going to make any use of voluntary agencies, you must in your Bill make some provision to delegate the work of inspection, but not of registration, as that should be reserved in the hands of local authorities. Some system of delegating to voluntary associations the work of inquiry and inspection arising under the Act might be usefully adopted in some districts. The point arises whether, if you do anything of that sort, it would not be desirable to place some central supervision in the hands of the Local Government Board. I have already suggested that societies the houses of which are exempted from the operation of the Act, should be registered by the Local Government Board; and in that case the same organisation might be utilised for giving a power of supervision and sanction to any arrangement between local authorities and voluntary societies. You may think it desirable to only give assent to the payment of public money to voluntary agencies when the arrangement has received some sort of central sanction.

Chairman.

3077. Then with regard to giving notice of death to the coroner, have you any suggestions to make?—Section 8 of the present Act provides that the registered person shall give notice to the coroner of the district within 24 hours of the death of an infant "so retained or received." I think that provision is valuable and should be retained; but the Infant Life Protection Act, which is in force in Victoria, Australia, goes further than that, as it is stated to provide that an ordinary medical certificate of death shall not apply to an illegitimate child living apart from its mother, and to require that before any such infant under three years can be buried a coroner's certificate must be produced. The registered person is compelled to report the death of any of her charges within 24 hours at the nearest police station, and an inquest is held on the body in every case. I do not suggest anything so stringent as that, as I think a discretionary power should be given to the coroner, as we have found that in the great majority of cases in London the coroner has been satisfied that an inquest is unnecessary. The Committee may, however, consider it desirable that notice should be given to the coroner of the deaths of all illegitimate infants apart from their mothers, as that might afford some safeguard.

3078. And

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

3078. And has your attention also been called to the provisions in the Australian Act with regard to the registration of the births of illegitimate children?—Yes; the occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child is born is obliged to give notice in writing to the registrar of births within three days of the birth. Such a provision might prove valuable, especially with regard to lying-in houses, but it might be difficult in case of failure to prove that the occupier knew that the child was illegitimate.

Chairman—continued.

3079. How far does the Australian Act cover institutions; have you noticed that?—The Act provides that the Chief Secretary may exempt a public institution for the reception of infants or exempt any special case where he deems it advisable. In this country institutions are exempt, but it might be desirable to give power to the Local Government Board to exempt infants boarded out by an institution where satisfied that such infants receive proper supervision.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned.

(0.95.)

Z 4

Die Mercurii, 19 Junii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mrs. ABRAHAMS is called in ; and Examined, as follows :

Chairman.

3080. You have taken a very active interest, I believe, in some Roman Catholic rescue homes, known as St. Pelagia's Homes?—Yes.

3081. And are you, practically, the founder of them?—The Lord Cardinal Manning was the founder of them.

3082. And you have managed the homes, and had the general supervision?—Yes, ever since they began.

3083. Will you tell me where the homes are situated?—The first home is at Church-row, Limehouse; the second one was started at Stepney Green, and is now at Highgate; the third one, which is to correspond with that, and take off the little children, is at 68¹/₂, High-road, Tottenham; and the fourth is in the other diocese, across the water, at Rotherhithe.

3084. I believe each home is under the care of some nuns?—Yes.

3085. About how many?—There are nine at Limehouse, seven at Highgate, three at Tottenham, and four at Rotherhithe.

3086. At how many of these homes do you take children in?—At two, at Highgate and Tottenham.

3087. Do you keep the children there with the mothers?—Yes.

3088. Up till what age?—At Highgate till one or two years of age. We oblige them to stay for one year, but many of them stay for two years, and at two years old the children are drafted from Highgate down to Tottenham.

3089. And you find situations for the mothers?—Yes.

3090. For the first two years, I believe, no payment is made at all?—No, not any; it is a charity.

3091. So that it would not come under the definition of children being taken in for hire or reward?—No.

3092. But after two years, I believe, the mothers pay a certain amount?—Yes, a little out of their wages; that is just to prevent pauperism.

3093. About how much do they pay?—If they have 20*l.* a year then they pay 5*s.* a week, and if they have only 12*l.* a year they pay 12*s.* a month. Of course they cannot afford much.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

3094. Your Tottenham Home is really the only one of your homes in which children are kept apart from the parents?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3095. The mothers stay with them at Highgate?—And so they do at Tottenham, a few of them.

3096. And do they pay while in the house?—No, they do not pay anything at all while in the homes. There is no payment till the girls go out to service, and then a small charge is made from their wages.

Lord Thring.

3097. I think you told us the homes were free for two years?—Yes. The mothers sometimes do not go out till the children are two years old.

3098. Is it free to the mothers and children? Yes, completely free.

3099. You keep the mother and her child for two years?—Yes, most of them for two years; one year certain, but mostly for two years.

3100. For nothing?—For nothing.

3101. Does the mother do anything?—She does the work of the home, to support it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3102. They earn the money by washing, I see?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

3103. They work for the society?—They really work for themselves; of course the houses must be supported somehow.

3104. What I mean is, that while these mothers are in the house they work for the benefit of the house?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3105. And earn money for the house?—Yes.

Chairman.

3106. The homes at your Limehouse branch have only been going for eight years, I think?—Eleven years. The Limehouse has just completed its eleventh year now, at the end of May.

3107. I see the Limehouse branch earned in 1886, 6*l.* 17*s.*, and in 1894 it earned 1,643*l.*?—And last year 1,875*l.*

A A

3108. How

19 June 1896.]

Mrs. ABRAHAMS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3108. How do they earn it?—We have a large laundry.

3109. And that laundry is worked at a profit?—For their profit, yes.

3110. I am not wishing at all to derogate from the charity; I only wish to know how it works. You keep a large laundry in which the women in your house work, and thereby earn this money?—Yes.

3111. And practically they earn their living?—Yes, at Limehouse they do quite earn it. They do not at the others.

Viscount Llandaff.

3112. You have no children at Limehouse?—No, not at Limehouse.

Chairman.

3113. Tottenham is the only house in which any of the children are kept apart from their parents?—Yes.

3114. And after the age of one or two years the parents contribute a small sum towards their maintenance?—Yes, when they go into service.

3115. And therefore these children would come under the definition of children taken in for hire or reward?—Yes; but not under the late Act. At Highgate, where the children are, they do not earn anything like what they spend.

3116. The children at Tottenham are not taught in the home, are they?—No, they go to the Mission School; 23 of them are going now.

3117. Have you ever considered the question of registration?—No, because there has been no need.

3118. But have you ever considered whether it would be disagreeable to you to be registered or not; you have no desire to be registered?—I do not think it would matter one way or the other really.

3119. You do not put any children out with their parents, I believe?—No, not any.

3120. But you keep them in the Tottenham Home until they are of a certain age?—We have not made any plans yet, because they are all so young; the home itself is young; the children are only seven or eight, the oldest of them.

3121. And you have not yet made arrangements about putting them out?—No.

Lord Thring.

3122. What is the minimum age of the children in your home?—A fortnight old.

3123. You take them a fortnight old and keep them till eight or nine?—We shall keep them

Lord Thring—continued.

later than that, I think; but we have not had time to decide yet; they have not grown.

3124. Do you take them older?—Yes.

3125. What is the maximum age you take them at?—The oldest child we ever took was, I think, six when she came to us; but the children are mostly from the Highgate Home, which was started first, and this was a sort of home to help the other, to take the children when they grew older.

Viscount Llandaff.

3126. The Highgate Home, I understand, is chiefly a rescue home?—Yes.

Chairman.

3127. These homes are not managed by a committee in any sense?—No. You see the religious have charge of them, and they have their own management.

3128. Therefore each house is practically under the sole control of the reverend mother?—Yes, except for visits that we make ourselves every week.

Viscount Llandaff.

3129. Whom do you mean by ourselves?—My husband and myself. My husband is, however, too much occupied to go every week. We have managed the accounting part ever since the homes have been started; we go for that chiefly, and to watch over them and see them.

3130. You represent the bishop, I suppose?—We have been appointed managers of the homes by the late Cardinal. Anything that happens outside the work that the religious can do we do for them.

Lord Thring.

3131. Whom are you responsible to?—To the Cardinal.

3132. The Cardinal is the real head?—Yes.

Chairman.

3133. The accounts are audited and published every year?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3134. You said you would not object to registration; do you think your sisters would like inspection?—I do not think they would mind it. I do not see anything to be gained by it. They are institutions, but if there were to be any point made of it I do not think they would make any objection at all.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned.

A P P E N D I X.

LIST OF APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.	
Papers handed in by Mr. Spencer, 24 April 1896 - - - - -	PAGE 189
APPENDIX B.	
Paper handed in by Mr. Spencer, 24 April 1896 - - - - -	194
APPENDIX C.	
Paper handed in by Mr. Spencer, 24 April 1896 - - - - -	195
APPENDIX D.	
Papers handed in by Mr. Spencer, 24 April 1896 - - - - -	196
APPENDIX E.	
Paper handed in by Mr. Spencer, 15 May 1896 - - - - -	200
APPENDIX F.	
Paper handed in by Mr. Spencer, 15 May 1896 - - - - -	201
APPENDIX G.	
Papers handed in by Mr. E. De M. Rudolf, 30 April 1896 - - - - -	202
APPENDIX H.	
Paper handed in by Dr. Tatham, 5 May 1896 - - - - -	207
APPENDIX I.	
Paper handed in by Dr. Tatham, 7 May 1896 - - - - -	208
APPENDIX K.	
Paper handed in by Mrs. Hardie, 15 May 1896 - - - - -	209

A P P E N D I X.

APPENDIX A.

PAPERS handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 24 April 1896.

No. MCXCVIII.

AN ACT to make better provision for the Protection of Infant Life and for other purposes.

20th December 1890.

BE it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly of Victoria in this present Parliament assembled and by the authority of the same as follows (that is to say) :—

1. This Act may be cited as the Infant Life Protection Act 1890, and shall commence and come into operation on the thirty-first day of January One thousand eight hundred and ninety-one. Short title and commencement.
2. The Acts mentioned in the Schedule to this Act to the extent to which the said Acts are in and by the said Schedule expressed to be repealed are hereby repealed. Repeal. Schedule.
3. In this Act, unless inconsistent with the subject-matter or context—
 "Chief Commissioner" shall mean the person for the time being holding the office of Chief Commissioner of Police. Interpretation.
4. After the commencement of this Act, no person shall in consideration of any payment or reward at any time made or given or to be made or given to such person or to any other person on behalf of such person retain in or receive into his or her care or charge in any house any infant under the age of two years either—
 (a) for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infant apart from its parents for a longer period than three consecutive days; or
 (b) for the purpose of adopting such infant—
 unless such person be registered as the occupier of such house and such house be also registered under this Act. Houses where infants received or adopted to be registered.
- Any person offending against the provisions of this section shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.
5. The Chief Commissioner shall, subject to regulations to be made as hereinafter provided, cause a register or registers to be kept in which shall be entered the name of any person who being the occupier of any house applies to have the same registered for the purposes of this Act. Register of persons and houses to be kept.
 Opposite the name of any person so registered in any such register shall be entered particulars of the situation of such house, and such other particulars with respect to such person and such house, the calling or occupation of such person, and if she be a married woman the calling or occupation of her husband, as may be directed by regulations to be made as hereinafter provided.
- Every such registration shall unless cancelled under the provisions of this Act remain in force until the thirty-first day of the month of December next following the making of such registration and no longer unless the same be renewed. Registrations may be renewed during the month of December in which the same expire, and all such renewed registrations shall unless cancelled under the provisions of this Act remain in force for one year from the expiration of such month of December in which the same are made. No fee shall be charged or taken for the making of any registration or renewed registration under this section. When registration to be renewed.
 The person in whose charge such register shall be kept shall give to the person so registering a certificate under his hand of such registration or renewal which shall in all matters be *prima facie* evidence of such registration or renewal.
6. The Governor in Council may at any time and from time to time make regulations for all or any of the following purposes (that is to say) :—
 For prescribing how many registers shall be kept under this Act, and where the same shall respectively be kept :
 For prescribing the mode in which applications for registration under this Act shall be made, the mode in which registration shall be effected, and that in which entries shall be made in registers kept under this Act : Power to make regulations.

For directing what particulars as to the persons and houses registered; in addition to those hereinbefore required, shall be inserted in such registers:

For arranging houses registered under this Act into classes in such manner as to the Governor in Council seems fit, and for fixing the maximum number of infants to be retained in or received into houses of any particular class:

For regulating the inspection from time to time of such houses and infants:

Generally for giving effect to and carrying out the provisions of this Act.

Any such regulations may impose a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds for any breach of the same, and any such penalty may be recovered before any two justices on the information of any member of the police force.

All regulations made under the authority of this section shall within two weeks of the making thereof be published in the Government Gazette.

Inspection.

7. The Chief Commissioner or any member of the police force authorised in that behalf by the Chief Commissioner, and accompanied by a legally qualified medical practitioner if the Chief Commissioner or such member of the police force (as the case may be) think fit, may from time to time, subject to regulations made as aforesaid, inspect any house registered under this Act, and any infant or infants retained in or received into any such house.

Chief Commissioner may refuse to register.

8. The Chief Commissioner may refuse to register any person applying for registration under this Act or to renew any registration unless he be satisfied by the production of certificates, or if he think fit to dispense with certificates by the production of any other evidence, that the person applying to be registered or for a renewal of registration is of good character and able to properly nurse and maintain any infants retained in or received into his or her care or charge in such house; and the Chief Commissioner may refuse to register or renew the registration of any house unless he be satisfied that such house is suitable for the purpose for which it is to be registered, and situated in a suitable locality.

Registered persons to keep a roll containing certain particulars.

9. Every person registered as aforesaid shall keep a roll, in which shall be forthwith entered by such person the name sex and age of each infant under the age of two years retained in or received into the care or charge of such person for the purpose of being nursed or maintained apart from its parents for a longer period than three consecutive days or for the purpose of adoption.

Every person registered as aforesaid shall forthwith also enter in such roll opposite the name of each infant the date at which such infant was so retained or received, and the names and addresses, calling or occupation, of the parents of such child and of the person or persons by whom such infant was left or from whom it was received, and if any such last-mentioned person be a married woman, the calling or occupation of her husband.

If any such infant be at any time removed from such registered house, whether before or after attaining the age of two years, such registered person as aforesaid shall forthwith after such removal enter in such roll the time of such removal and the names and addresses calling or occupation, of the person or persons by whom such infant was so removed.

Every person registered as aforesaid shall cause the person from whom any such infant is received or by whom any such infant is removed to sign such entry, and shall forward to the Chief Commissioner a copy of each such entry within three days of the reception or removal of each infant.

Roll to be produced.

Every roll kept in pursuance of the provisions of this section shall be at all times produced when the production of the same is demanded by any member of the police force in charge of a station if of the rank of senior constable, or by any member of the police force being a sergeant or of higher rank, and may be by him examined and perused, and if he think fit by him retained.

Penalty for neglecting to produce roll or to keep it in proper form.

If any person registered as aforesaid neglect, refuse, or omit to produce any such roll kept by him or her in pursuance of this section forthwith on being so required, or if any such person neglect, refuse, or omit to keep such a roll, or to insert therein all the particulars by this section required, or to obtain such signature thereto, or to forward a copy of such entry to the Chief Commissioner within three days of the reception or removal of each infant, such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall be liable on conviction before a court of petty sessions to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.

Forgery of certificate, &c.

10. If any person make any false representation, or forge any certificate, or make use of any forged certificate knowing it to be forged, with intent to obtain the registration either of such person or of any other person under this Act, or falsify any roll kept in pursuance of the provisions of the last preceding section, or furnish false particulars of any matter which is required to be entered in such roll, such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.

Names may be removed from register.

11. If at any time it be made to appear to the Chief Commissioner that any person registered as aforesaid has been guilty of neglecting, or is incapable of providing the infants retained in or received into the care or charge of such person with proper food or attention, or that the registered house of such person has become unfit for the reception of infants,

infants, or if for any other reason it appears to the Chief Commissioner desirable in the public interest so to do, he may strike the name of such person and such house off the register, and the registration thereof shall be thereby cancelled.

Ten days' previous notice in writing of his intention so to do shall be given by the Chief Commissioner to any such person whose name is about to be struck off the register and such notice may be given by leaving the same at the registered house of such person, But the Chief Commissioner may at the time of giving such notice order the immediate removal of such infants from such registered house to the care of the Secretary of the Department for Neglected Children who shall then be charged with the care of such infants until the removal of such infants by their respective parents or guardians or the return of such infants to such first-mentioned registered house; and the said secretary may recover the cost of the removal maintenance and clothing of and medical attendance on such infants from their respective parents or guardians.

Any such person on receiving such notice may within one week give notice in writing to the Chief Commissioner of his intention to appeal, and when giving such notice shall deposit the sum of Twenty shillings with the said Chief Commissioner. The Chief Commissioner shall thereupon refrain from striking off such person's name from the register, and shall inform the Chief Secretary of such notice of appeal. The Chief Secretary shall thereupon fix a time for the hearing of such appeal, of which due notice shall be given to the Chief Commissioner and person appealing; and the Chief Secretary shall at the appointed time proceed to hear the Chief Commissioner and the person appealing or their representatives and shall determine the appeal, and if he decide that such person's name shall be struck off the register the Chief Commissioner shall strike it off accordingly and the registration thereof shall be thereby cancelled, and the sum of Twenty shillings deposited as aforesaid shall be forfeited and paid into the consolidated revenue, but otherwise the same shall be repaid to the person depositing the same.

Any infants removed by order of the Chief Commissioner under the authority of this section and not restored to the custody of their parents or guardians shall if such registration be not cancelled be returned to the care or charge of such person as aforesaid, and the decision of the Chief Secretary on such appeal shall not be subject to review in any court of law and shall be final and conclusive.

12. Every person registered as aforesaid shall within twenty-four hours after the death of an infant under the age of three years in his or her care or charge other than his or her own children give or cause to be given notice thereof to the police officer in charge of the nearest police station, and thereupon an inquest shall be held upon the body of such infant.

Notice to be given of death of infant; inquest to be held, and report made to Chief Secretary.

It shall be the duty of the coroner holding such inquest to inquire not only into the immediate cause of death, but into all such circumstances as may throw any light upon the treatment and condition of the infant during life, and into any other matters into which in his opinion it is desirable in the interests of public justice that he should inquire; and the coroner after holding such inquest shall report to the Chief Secretary the cause of death, and shall in such report make such remarks with respect to the matter as to him seems fit.

No infant dying under the age of three years whilst in the care or charge of a person registered as aforesaid shall (unless such infant be the child of such person) be buried without the production of a certificate under the hand of such coroner authorising such burial.

If any person registered as aforesaid neglect refuse or omit to give notice of the death of an infant in accordance with the provisions of this section such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.

13. The name of every person convicted of an offence against this Act shall, if such person be registered under this Act, be at once removed from the register and the registration of every such person and of the house of such person shall be thereby cancelled.

Offenders against certain provisions of this Act not to be registered.

No person convicted of—

- (a) retaining or receiving into his or her care or charge any infant under the age of two years without being registered as required by this Act; or
- (b) neglecting to give notice of the death of an infant as required by the last preceding section—

shall at any time thereafter be registered under this Act.

14. The Chief Secretary may at any time by writing under his hand order that the preceding provisions of this Act shall not apply in any particular case where he is satisfied that an infant is a near relative of the person in whose care or charge it is retained or received, or where for any other reason he is satisfied it is undesirable or unnecessary that the provisions of this Act should apply; and he may by any such writing as aforesaid

Exemptions from operation of Act.

said order generally that such provisions of this Act shall not apply to any institution of a public nature established for the reception of infants. All such orders shall before being issued be recorded in a book to be kept for the purpose in the office of the Chief Commissioner: Provided that any justice of the peace may suspend in any particular case the operation of the preceding provisions of this Act for the period of eight days to enable such order to be obtained from the Chief Secretary.

Houses in which women are received for treatment to be registered as private hospitals under Health Act.

15. Every private hospital house building or place where women or girls are habitually received or lodged for the purpose of obtaining medical or surgical treatment or care, or of being nursed, or for the purpose of being waited upon for any disease or complaint peculiar to females, shall be deemed to be a private hospital house building or place in which persons are received and lodged for medical or surgical treatment or care within the meaning of section one hundred and fifty-eight of the Health Act 1890, and shall be registered in manner required by the said Act, and shall come within the operation of any regulations made under the said section, and regulations made under the said section may provide that the Board of Public Health or any person whose duty it is under the regulations to register private hospitals may refuse to register, and the Board of Public Health may refuse to renew or may cancel the registration of any private hospital if they consider after due inquiry the premises or the situation thereof unsuitable or the management or sanitary regulation unsatisfactory.

Certificate of Chief Commissioner to be *prima facie* evidence.

16. A certificate in writing under the hand of the Chief Commissioner that any private hospital house building or place is a private hospital house building or place required by the last preceding section to be registered in manner provided by section one hundred and fifty-eight of the Health Act 1890 shall in any prosecution for not registering the same be *prima facie* evidence of the fact that such private hospital house building or place is such a private hospital house building or place as aforesaid.

Penalty for neglecting, ill-treating, or exposing children. See No. 233, s. 23. See 31 & 32 Vict. c. 122, s. 37.

17. If any person wilfully and without reasonable excuse neglect to provide adequate food nursing clothing medical aid or lodging for any child in his or her care or custody or wilfully ill-treat or expose any child, or cause or procure any child to be neglected ill-treated or exposed, then if such child being a boy be under the age of twelve years, or being a girl be under the age of fourteen years and if any such neglect ill-treatment or exposure have resulted or appear likely to result in causing bodily suffering or permanent or serious injury to the health of such child such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction thereof before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding twelve months or to a penalty not exceeding Fifty pounds.

Notice to be given of birth of illegitimate child within three days by occupier of house. In country, notice may be given not later than one week.

18. The occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child is born shall within three days of the birth of such child give notice thereof in writing to the deputy-registrar of births and deaths for the district; but if such house or place be not situate within any city town or borough then such notice may be given either to the deputy-registrar or to the officer or constable in charge of police at the nearest police station, and may be given at any time within one week of the birth of such child.

If mother occupier, notice may be given not later than three weeks.

If the occupier of such house or place is the mother of such newborn child, such notice may be given at any time within three weeks of the birth of the child.

If any notice under this section is sent by post, it shall be posted at such time as to allow it in ordinary course of post to be delivered within the time hereinbefore specified.

Nothing in this section contained shall be construed to repeal or otherwise affect the provisions of the Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act, 1890.

Notice to be given within three days of the death of an illegitimate child under the age of five years.

19. The occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child under the age of five years dies, or to which the body of an illegitimate child who has died under the age of five years is brought, shall within three days of the death of such child give notice in writing of such death to the deputy-registrar of births and deaths for the district; but if such house or place be not situate within any city town or borough then such notice may be given either to the deputy-registrar or to the officer or constable in charge of police at the nearest police station, and may be given at any time within one week of the death of such child.

In country, notice may be given not later than one week.

If any notice under this section is sent by post, it shall be posted at such time as to allow it in ordinary course of post to be delivered within the time hereinbefore specified.

Nothing in this section contained shall be construed to repeal or otherwise affect the provisions of the Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1890 nor the provisions of this Act hereinbefore contained, whereby persons registered under this Act are required to give notice of the death of an infant in their care or charge.

Penalty for omitting to give notice of death of infant or of birth as required.

20. If any person wilfully or negligently omit to comply with the provisions of the last two preceding sections, such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction thereof before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.

21. If

21. If it be made to appear to any justice on information laid before him on oath that there is reason to believe that any person is offending against the provisions of this Act in any house or place, or that any of the provisions of this Act except those contained in section eighteen are being infringed in any house or place, such justice may issue his warrant authorising any member or members whatsoever of the police force to search any house, place, or premises therein named, at any hour of the day or at any hour of the night, not later than ten of the clock for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is or has been therein or thereon an infringement of the provisions of this Act.

When information on oath, warrant may be issued to search premises for infringement of this Act.

22. If any person adopt or take over the entire care and charge of any child under the age of three years from its parents or guardians, such person shall within fourteen days of so doing give or send notice thereof to the Chief Commissioner, and such person shall in such notice state his or her name and place of residence and occupation and the name and age of such child. If any person neglect, refuse, or omit to comply with the provisions of this section, he shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months or to a penalty not exceeding Fifteen pounds.

Registration of adopted children.

Nothing in this section shall excuse any person from making any other registration required by any other provision of this Act or from any penalty for omitting so to do.

23. Any person who causes any child under the age of fourteen years to take part in any public exhibition or performance whereby, in the opinion of any court of petty sessions, the life or limbs of such child is or are endangered, and the parent or guardian or any person having the custody of such child who aids or abets such first-mentioned person therein, shall severally be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable for each offence to imprisonment for a period not exceeding twelve months or to a penalty not exceeding Fifty pounds.

Penalty for employment of any child in dangerous performances. 42 & 43 Vict. c. 34, s. 3.

Where in the course of a public exhibition or performance which in its nature is dangerous to the life or limb of a child under such age as aforesaid taking part therein any accident causing actual bodily harm occurs to such child, the employer of such child whether the parent of such child or not shall be liable to be proceeded against by presentment, indictment, or information for, and to be convicted of an assault, and on conviction shall be liable to be imprisoned for a period not exceeding twelve months or to a penalty not exceeding Fifty pounds, and in addition if such employer be not the parent of such child, the court before which such employer is convicted on such proceedings may award as compensation a sum not exceeding One hundred pounds to be paid by such employer to the child or to some person named by the court on behalf of the child for the bodily harm so occasioned; provided that no person shall be punished twice for the same offence.

Compensation for accident to any child.

24. Whenever any person is charged with an offence against the last preceding section in respect of a child who in the opinion of the court trying the case is apparently of the age alleged by the informant, it shall lie on the person charged to prove that the child is not of that age.

Evidence of age. 1b. s. 4.

25. Where any person has been committed for trial for the murder or manslaughter of any child under the age of five years, or for unlawfully and maliciously wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm upon any child under the age of five years, or for negligently doing or omitting to do anything whereby grievous bodily injury has been caused to any child under the age aforesaid; a law officer may, if he be satisfied that having regard to all the circumstances of the case it would be advisable in the interests of justice that such person should be tried by a special jury of twelve men, certify the same in writing to the Prothonotary of the Supreme Court, and thereupon application may be made on behalf of Her Majesty to a Judge of the Supreme Court for an order for such person to be tried by a special jury, and such Judge shall make such order accordingly and as of course.

Provision for special jury on certificate of law officer.

SCHEDULE.

Section 2.

Number and Date of Act.	Short Title of Act.	Extent of Repeal.
54 Vict. No. 1079 - -	Crimes Act, 1890 - -	In Section 23 the words "whereby the life of such child shall be endangered or the health of such child shall have been or shall be likely to be permanently injured."
54 Vict. No. 1098 - -	Health Act, 1890 - -	Part VII.

(0.95.)

B B

APPENDIX B.

PAPER handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 24 April 1896.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

RETURN showing NUMBER of HOUSES REGISTERED under the Infant Life Protection Act in the County of London; the Number of Infants under One Year received at such Houses; and the Number of Deaths of such Infants during the Years 1883 to 1895-96, inclusive; and similar Information as to Infants kept at Unregistered Houses so far as it came to the knowledge of the Local Authority.

Year ending 31 December	Registered Houses, under the Act.					Unregistered Houses, not under the Act.					
	Number of Registered Houses.		Number of Infants under 1 Year.	Number of Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.	Number of Inquests held on Bodies of Infants.	Number of Infants received for Hire.	Number of Infants under 1 Year.	Number of Infants between 1 and 2 Years.	Number of Infants above 2 but under 7 Years.	Number of ascertained Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.	Number of ascertained Deaths of Infants 1 Year and over.
	Registered during Year.	On Register at End of Year.									
1883	39	37	141	27	3	280	115	64	101	29	25
1884	47	51	160	28	2	297	91	38	78	31	26
1885	42	35	164	31	1	294	120	66	108	31	27
1886	34	25	132	30	4	314	101	63	150	43	31
1887	25	19	103	26	—	365	113	76	176	40	34
1888	33	29	101	8	2	296	118	48	130	42	37
1889 (1 January to 31 March)	7	4	20	7	1	83	37	15	31	19	1
1889-90 (1 April to 31 March)	23	21	112	16	2	393	171	69	153	45	11
1890-91	22	15	83	11	1	279	136	48	95	42	15
1891-92	15	11	59	9	—	310	146	72	92	39	10
1892-93	21	16	72	8	—	345	160	59	126	39	12
1893-94	22	21	50	11	—	260	125	63	72	33	10
1894-95	50	38	121	12	1	510	275	84	151	55	12
1895-96	54	41	154	21	2	565	262	87	116	73	22
	434	343	1,502	253	19	4,501	1,970	852	1,579	561	273

Public Control Department,
21, Whitehall-place, S.W.

Alfred Spencer,
Chief Officer.

APPENDIX C.

PAPER handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 24 April 1896.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

RETURN showing the NUMBER of INQUESTS held in London on Legitimate and Illegitimate Children in the Years 1893-94-95.

DISTRICT.	1893.								1894.								1895.							
	Infants (Legitimate).				Infants (Illegitimate or Unknown).				Infants (Legitimate).				Infants (Illegitimate or Unknown).				Infants (Legitimate).				Infants (Illegitimate or Unknown).			
	Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Western	72	74	32	35	26	19	4	2	69	45	33	31	21	27	—	2	87	77	38	40	30	26	1	2
Central	172	151	89	80	40	32	2	3	163	129	68	53	39	36	8	2	174	144	91	66	41	38	7	1
Westminster	33	19	12	9	10	9	—	2	22	23	14	9	10	12	—	—	28	27	15	8	12	12	1	1
North-Eastern	173	155	98	61	25	11	1	1	189	121	69	53	11	16	3	2	181	168	74	69	16	19	6	2
Eastern	231	181	106	89	3	3	—	—	210	177	134	83	5	2	—	—	258	192	121	108	4	2	—	—
Liberty of Tower	2	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	2	2	2	2	—	—	—	—	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—
Southwark	29	22	13	15	2	5	1	—	21	30	15	14	1	4	2	1	21	23	29	25	2	2	1	—
Duchy of Lancaster	3	2	1	1	3	1	—	—	6	2	3	2	1	—	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	2	—	—
South-Western	72	77	50	31	20	27	3	2	64	65	55	37	23	21	1	1	78	83	42	43	24	23	6	4
Southern	64	50	21	32	14	11	1	1	71	70	27	21	12	19	1	1	82	59	36	29	20	15	2	1
South-Eastern	41	58	21	27	18	15	3	—	55	44	28	17	13	12	—	—	41	48	27	22	11	13	1	2
Penge	2	2	1	—	—	1	—	—	1	1	1	1	3	—	—	—	3	2	—	—	3	1	—	—
TOTALS	894	796	452	331	162	137	15	11	864	712	448	333	138	149	16	11	967	830	475	402	167	155	25	13
	1,690	833	299	26	1,576	778	287	27	1,797	877	322	38												

Public Control Department,
21, Whitehall-place, S.W.

Alfred Spencer,
Chief Officer.

APPENDIX D.

PAPERS handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 24 April 1896.

(1.)

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

APPLICATION for Registration under the Act, in respect of Premises within the County of London.

To the Clerk of the London County Council,
Spring Gardens, Charing Cross, S.W.

Sir,
I hereby make application for the registration, under this Act, of the house situate at _____

for the keeping of* _____ infants _____

I forward herewith a Certificate, showing that I am a person of good character, and able to maintain infants for hire or reward.

Signature _____

Date _____ 189

*Insert in the space the number of infants you desire to be registered for.

(2.)

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

PUBLIC CONTROL DEPARTMENT.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT, 1872.

CERTIFICATE in pursuance of Section 4 of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872.

We, the undersigned, do hereby certify that _____
residing at _____

in the parish of _____ within the limits of the County of London, is a person of good character, and able to maintain infants received for hire or reward, for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants, apart from their parents, in a registered house, pursuant to the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872.

NAME AND DESIGNATION.	ADDRESS.

To be signed by a Justice of the Peace, or by a duly qualified medical practitioner, or by a minister of the Established Church or of a registered place of worship, and also by two rated householders who are not relatives of applicant.

Section 6 of the Act provides that "if any person shall make false representations with a view to being registered under the Act, or shall forge any certificate for the purpose of the Act, or make use of any forged certificate, knowing it to be forged, or shall falsify any register kept in pursuance of the Act, he shall be guilty of an offence against the Act."
Section 9: "Every person guilty of an offence under the Act shall be liable to imprisonment for not more than six months, with or without hard labour, or to a penalty not exceeding five pounds, as a Court of Summary Jurisdiction may award, and shall in addition be liable to have his name and house struck off the Register."

(3.)

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

Madam,
THE London County Council have had under consideration your application for the registration of your house,

in the Parish of _____
under this Act, for the keeping of _____ infants, and I am directed to inform you that the application has been granted, and that the house in question has been registered for one year from the

The Council have made a bye-law which will permit you to receive and keep infants until the date of the expiration of the registration in

I enclose herewith an abstract of the provisions of the Act relating to registered houses, and also a book, in which you must enter the name, sex, and age of every infant under your care, the date upon which you received it, and the name and address of the person from whom you received it; and whenever an infant is removed from the registered house you must also enter the date of such removal, and the name and address of the person removing it.

I am, &c.
(signed) *H. De la Haake,*
Clerk of the Council.

To _____

(4.)

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

ABSTRACT of the Provisions of the Act relating to Houses Registered for the Keeping of Infants.

PERSONS keeping for hire more than one infant under the age of one year, are required to register their premises (if in the County of London) with the London County Council. Section 2.

The Council may refuse to register any house unless satisfied that it is suitable, and unless satisfied by the production of certificates that the person applying is of good character, and able to maintain the infants. Section 4.

If the Council register a house they may fix the number of infants who may be received into it. Section 3.

Registration is for one year only, and must be renewed annually; no fee is charged for registration. Section 3.

The person registered shall enter, in the book supplied for the purpose by the Council, the name, sex, and age of each infant kept, with the names and addresses of the persons from whom it was received, and of the persons who remove it. Section 5.

If any registered person fails to observe the provisions of this section, or to produce the register when required, such person will be liable to a penalty of 5*l.*

If any person makes false representations with a view to being registered, or forges or makes use of any forged certificate, or falsifies the register, such person will be liable to imprisonment or fine. Section 6.

The Council may cancel the registration on proof of serious neglect of the infants, or incapacity to provide them with proper food and attention, or of the unfitness of the house. Section 7.

In case of the death of an infant kept upon registered premises, notice shall be given to the Coroner of the district within 24 hours of such death. Section 8.

Every person breaking any of the above provisions will be liable to six months' imprisonment, or to a fine of 5*l.* Section 9.

Forms of application for registration or information relating to the Act can be obtained on application to me at this office.

Spring Gardens, Charing Cross. *H. De la Haake,*
Clerk of the Council.

(5.)

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

PERSONS registered under this Act are required to provide the Infants entrusted to their care with proper Food and Attention, and the following Suggestions as to the care of Infants are intended for the information and guidance of the Persons so registered in the County of London.

Suggestions as to the Care of Infants at Registered Houses.

- Clothing.** Infants require warmth ; their clothing should be warm, but not tight.
- Air.** They should have plenty of fresh air. The windows of the room in which infants are kept should be opened freely, but care should be taken to keep them out of draughts. Infants should be sent out whenever the weather is fine.
- Cleanliness.** Infants should be washed all over with warm water daily, and their bodies should be thoroughly dried afterwards.
- Food.** An infant should be fed with warm milk and water from a feeding bottle.
- A newly-born infant requires about half a pint of good milk during the day and night; this quantity must be gradually increased up to three months old, when one pint is enough.
- An infant when six months old requires a pint and a-half of milk daily; and when a year old, two pints.
- How milk is to be prepared.** At first the milk should be mixed with an equal quantity of water ; but when the infant is a month old, two parts of milk should be put to one of water.
- If milk disagrees with an infant it should be boiled before using, and a tablespoonful or more of lime water should be added, instead of an equal quantity of warm water.
- Each bottleful should have a little sugar put into it—a small lump or half a small teaspoonful.
- In hot weather, when fresh milk turns sour very quickly, condensed milk may be used instead, in the proportion of a full teaspoonful to a teacup of water, or two teaspoonfuls to a large breakfast cup ; the milk should be stirred until it is thoroughly dissolved in the water.
- Unsuitable food.** Give the infant no other kind of food until it is six or seven months old. Most of the deaths from hand-feeding are due to the practice of giving gruel, arrowroot, cornflour, and other kinds of food which infants cannot digest, and which, therefore, do not nourish them.
- See that the bottle draws easily, and is clean ; it should be rinsed out with warm water every time it is used. The tube and cork should be kept in clean water when not in use. If the bottle is not quite clean the milk will turn sour and the infant will be made ill.
- Regularity in feeding.** During the first six weeks the infant should be fed regularly every two hours during the day ; after that age about every three hours. During the night it does not require to be fed so often.
- An infant soon learns regular habits as to feeding. Never give it the bottle merely to keep it quiet. If an infant is sleepless or fretful it is ill, and medical advice should be obtained.
- Feeding when 7 months old.** When a child is seven months old it should have one or two meals a day of milk slightly thickened with scalded bread, nursery biscuits, or with one of the prepared infants' foods.
- This should be given out of a bottle, and should be made thin enough to pass through a sieve or strainer.
- The child should still have, besides this, plenty of milk.
- Sleeping.** An infant should never sleep in the same bed with its nurse ; cots or bassinets should always be provided.
- Soothing draughts.** All soothing medicines, sleeping draughts, cordials, teething powders, &c., should be avoided, as they may do much harm, and should never be given to infants without medical advice.

(6.)

NOTICE TO THE CORONER.

Note.—If Notice is not sent to the Coroner within 24 hours after the death of every infant upon registered premises, the person registered will be liable to imprisonment or fine.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT, 1872.

NOTICE to the Coroner for the _____
district of the County of _____

Pursuant to Clause 8 of the above Act, I hereby give you Notice that an Infant, named _____, died at the premises in my occupation, registered under this Act for the keeping of Infants, and situate at No. _____ in the Parish of _____, at _____ o'clock,

I enclose the certificate of the medical practitioner who attended the infant, and request, in the event of your being satisfied by such certificate that there is no ground for holding an inquest, that you will be good enough to return the same to me with an intimation of your decision, in order that the body may be buried.

If no medical certificate is given, this part must be struck out.

Signature _____

The person registered.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 189 _____

APPENDIX E.

PAPER handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 15 May 1896.

RETURN showing the Number of Dead Bodies of Infants found within the Metropolitan Police District during the Year 1895.

Division.	January.		February.		March.		April.		May.		June.		July.		August.		September.		October.		November.		December.		Total.		REMARKS.		
	Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.			Total.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.		M.	F.
A.	3	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	7	4	Also two bodies, sex unknown, found in March and November.	
B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	3		
C.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3		
D.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3		
E.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3		
F.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3		
G.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2		
H.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2		
I.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2		
J.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2		
K.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2		
L.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2		
M.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2		
N.	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	8		
O.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	8		
P.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
Q.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
R.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
S.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
T.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
V.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
W.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
X.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
Y.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
Z.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	8		
TOTAL	6	8	6	8	8	11	8	8	8	20	8	11	14	9	12	13	9	6	10	8	11	10	5	6	116	107			

SUMMARY.

Males	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	116
Females	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	107
Sex unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	227

Metropolitan Police Office, New Scotland Yard, }
28 April 1896.

W. Davis, Superintendent.

APPENDIX F.

PAPER handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 15 May 1896.

RETURN showing the Number of Dead Bodies of Infants found in the City Police District during the Year 1895.

Division.	January.		February.		March.		April.		May.		June.		July.		August.		September.		October.		November.		December.		Total.		REMARKS.
	Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Total.		
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
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C o

APPENDIX G.

PAPERS handed in by Mr. E. DE M. RUDOLF, 30 April 1896.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND INCORPORATED SOCIETY for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays.

Office:—Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W.

- 1.—Name of Foster Parent _____
Postal Address _____
- 2.—State how far distant from the residence of the Supervisor - } _____
- 3.—Is the Foster Mother a Communicant of the Church of England? - - - - } _____
- 4.—What is the occupation of the family? - - - - } _____
- 5.—What is the income of the family, and from what sources? - } _____
- 6.—Of whom does the family consist? - - - - } _____
- 7.—Number of children in charge of, or belonging to, and living in the family? - - - - } _____
- 8.—How many rooms in the house? _____
- 9.—Are there any lodgers? - - _____
- 10.—What provisions will be made for sleeping of Child, as to bed and room? - - - - } _____
- 11.—Name and distance of proposed Day and Sunday Schools - } _____
- 12.—What payment per week will be required? 5s. a week is the maximum sum allowed; see Regulations - - - - } _____
- 13.—Whether boys or girls? - - _____
- Signature of proposed Supervisor _____
Postal Address _____
Nearest Railway Station _____
- Report on above Application by Incumbent of Parish. | Report on above Application by Lady Referee.

REGULATIONS to be observed in Boarding out Children.

1. Children shall not, save in special cases, be boarded with relations or with persons in receipt of relief out of the poor rates.
2. Children shall not, as a rule, be boarded out at a later age than seven years, and in no case at a later age than 10 years.
3. Children shall not be boarded out in any house where the father is employed in night work; and in every case the foster parents should be by preference persons engaged in out-door, not in sedentary labour.
4. Not more than two children, save only in the case of brothers and sisters, shall be boarded out in the same house at the same time; and in no case shall the number of children boarded out in the same house exceed four.
5. In no case shall a child be boarded out with foster-parents who are not members of the Church of England.
6. Before receiving any child to be boarded out with them, the foster-parent shall sign an undertaking in duplicate, which shall, in addition to any other matter which may be agreed upon, contain an engagement on the part of the foster-parents, that, in consideration of their receiving a certain sum per week, they will bring up the child as one of their own children, and provide it with proper food, lodging, and washing, and endeavour to train it in habits of truthfulness, obedience, personal cleanliness, and industry as well as in suitable domestic and out-door work; that they will take care that the child shall attend duly at church, and shall, while boarded out, between the ages of 4 and 12 years, attend a school, unless prevented by sickness or other urgent cause, during all the usual hours; for instruction thereat; that they will provide for the proper repair and renewal of the child's clothing and that, in case of the child's illness, they will report it to the lady or gentleman under whom the child is boarded out; and that they will at all times permit the child to be visited by any person acting on behalf of the Executive Committee.
7. On the delivery of the child to the foster-parents or foster parent, an acknowledgment shall be given in the form provided for the purpose.
8. In no case shall the weekly sum to be paid to the foster-parents for the maintenance of a child inclusive of lodging, clothing, school pence, and fees for medical attendance, exceed five shillings.
9. No child shall be boarded out in a home distant more than a mile and a half from a Church school.
10. In choosing the home, especial attention should be paid to decent accommodation and the proper separation of the sexes in the sleeping-rooms. Children over seven years of age should never be allowed to sleep in the same room with married couples. It is compulsory that each child should sleep in a separate bed.
11. No child shall be boarded out in a house where sleeping accommodation is afforded to an adult lodger.
12. Great care should always be given to providing the children good ordinary clothing.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND CENTRAL SOCIETY for providing Homes for Waifs and Strays.

Means adopted:—(1) Boarding out in Families; (2) Establishing Small Homes; (3) Emigration.

Offices:—32, Charing Cross, S.W.

Hon. Secretary:—E. de M. Rudolf, Esq.

Assistant Hon. Secretary:—R. de M. Rudolf, Esq.

Clerical Deputation Secretaries:—Rev. H. D. Barrett, B.A.; Rev. J. Goddard, M.A.; Rev. J. Grosvenor Monro, M.A.

FORM of Undertaking by the Foster-Parent.

"I,* _____ of _____ * Name and address.
foster parent, do hereby engage, in consideration of receiving the sum of † _____ † Sum.
per week, to bring up ‡ _____ as one of my own ‡ Name of Child.
children, and to provide _____ with proper food, lodging, and washing, and for the
proper repair and renewal of clothing, and to endeavour to train _____ in habits of
(0.95.) D D truthfulness,

§ Name of Child.

truthfulness, obedience, personal cleanliness, and industry, as well as in suitable domestic and out-door work; to take care that the said child § _____ shall attend duly at church, and shall, while boarded out between the ages of 4 and 12 years, attend Day and Sunday schools, unless prevented by sickness or other urgent cause, during all the usual hours for instruction thereat: in the case of the illness of the

|| Name and address of Supervisor.

said child to report it to || _____ and at all times to permit the said child to be visited by any person specially appointed for that purpose by the Executive Committee.

Signature _____

Address _____

Witness _____

Name _____

Address _____

Date _____

I _____

of _____

hereby acknowledge that I have this day received _____

aged _____ years from the Church of England Central Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays, on the terms and conditions contained in the annexed Rules.

Dated this _____ day of _____

Signed _____

Witness _____

Address of Witness _____

CHURCH OF ENGLAND INCORPORATED SOCIETY for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays.

(Means adopted:—(1) Boarding out in Families; (2) Establishing Small Homes; (3) Emigration.)

Patron:—Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.

Patronesses:—

H.R.H. The Princess Christian.	H.R.H. The Duchess of Albany.
H.R.H. The Duchess of Connaught.	H.R.H. The Duchess of York.

H.R.H. The Duchess of Teck.

Presidents:—

His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.
His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York.

Chairman of the Executive Committee:—The Lord Bishop of Wakefield.

Vice-Chairman:—The Lord Bishop of Bedford.

Deputy Chairman:—Lieut. General R. W. Lowry, C.B.

Secretary:—E. De M. Rudolf, Esq.

Hon. Assistant Secretary:—R. De M. Rudolf, Esq.

Secretary's Assistant:—H. M. Fowle, Esq.

Over 2,250 Children now under the Care of the Society.

Head Offices:—Church House, Dean's Yard,
Westminster, S.W.

Dear _____

WITH reference to your application, I beg to state that the Church of England Incorporated Society for providing Homes for Waifs and Strays is constantly asked to take the illegitimate child of a domestic servant, who will pay a certain amount out of her wages towards its support. Certainly as regards the child, and frequently as regards the mother, pity would suggest that the case should be accepted. But the voices of justice and prudence must be heard as well as that of mercy, and, therefore, the executive having thoroughly discussed the question in all its bearings, determined that such cases should only be taken on a guarantee, given by some person not the mother of the child, that 4s. a week would be paid, and that the child should be taken back if this payment ceased. The obvious danger of offering a premium to sin, by making it easy for parents to get rid of their children, must be faced and prevented, and experience shewed that when a child was taken, promises of payment were broken, and the mother not frequently disappeared when she had "got rid" of her child, and even a second illegitimate child would most probably appear when it had been found that the burden of the first had been without much difficulty transferred to others. Such failure of payment or desertion by the mother often entailed on the Society the support of a child for 12 years or more, and from an economical as well as from a moral point of view such cases must be received with great caution. The payment desired is, of course, less than that for which either the society or the mother can place it out satisfactorily, but here "mercy rejoices against judgment," and we are not unmindful of the difficulty which attends the path of one who has a character to regain and the duty of a mother to fulfil. Though it is usually almost impossible to cause a father to pay for his child, the society recommends that in every case affiliation should be attempted. Such legal proceedings may be taken before the birth of a child, and must not be delayed later than a year after its birth. No heed should be paid to the promises of the father; and the reluctance of the mother to give evidence should be overcome in the true interests of her child and herself.

Yours faithfully,

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the CHURCH OF ENGLAND CENTRAL SOCIETY
for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays.

Dr. to (Name) _____

(Address) _____

For maintenance of _____ aged _____

for 13 weeks from _____ to _____

boarded out with _____

at _____ per week - £. _____

Received the above amount,

(Name) _____

(Date) _____

Certificate to be signed by the Supervisor of the Child, or some responsible person on his or her behalf.

I certify from my personal knowledge that the above-mentioned child has been properly fed and clothed, that it attends regularly day and Sunday school and that its health is _____

(Name) _____

(Address) _____

(Date) _____

Note.—This Claim, when duly filled up, should be forwarded four times a year to E. De M. Rudolf, Esq., Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, London, S.W., two weeks previously to the date when the payment shall become due. Should payment be required in advance, it can only be for one month at a time.

No child shall be removed from a foster parent without notice being given to the secretary.

APPENDIX H.

PAPER handed in by Dr. TATHAM, 5 May 18

BIRTHS.—ENGLAND AND WALES.

1845—1894.

Y E A R.	Total Births.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Children Born out of Wedlock to every 100 Births.
1845	548,521	505,280	38,241	7.0
1846	572,625	534,096	38,529	6.7
1847	539,965	503,840	36,125	6.7
1848	563,059	526,312	36,747	6.5
1849	578,159	538,825	39,334	6.8
1850	593,422	553,116	40,306	6.8
1851	615,865	573,865	42,000	6.8
1852	624,012	581,530	42,482	6.8
1853	612,301	572,628	39,763	6.5
1854	634,405	593,664	40,741	6.4
1855	635,043	594,260	40,783	6.4
1856	657,453	614,802	42,651	6.5
1857	663,071	620,060	43,002	6.5
1858	655,481	612,176	43,305	6.6
1859	689,881	645,130	44,751	6.5
1860	684,048	640,355	43,693	6.4
1861	696,406	652,249	44,157	6.3
1862	712,684	667,462	45,222	6.3
1863	727,417	680,276	47,141	6.5
1864	740,275	692,827	47,448	6.4
1865	748,069	701,484	46,585	6.2
1866	753,870	708,369	45,501	6.0
1867	768,340	723,163	45,186	5.9
1868	786,858	740,520	46,338	5.9
1869	773,381	728,690	44,691	5.8
1870	792,787	748,050	44,737	5.6
1871	797,428	752,653	44,775	5.6
1872	825,907	781,141	44,766	5.4
1873	829,778	786,617	43,161	5.2
1874	854,956	811,853	43,103	5.0
1875	850,607	809,794	40,813	4.8
1876	887,968	846,374	41,594	4.7
1877	888,200	846,045	42,155	4.7
1878	891,906	849,806	42,100	4.7
1879	880,389	838,200	42,189	4.8
1880	881,643	839,101	42,542	4.8
1881	883,642	840,522	43,120	4.9
1882	889,014	845,859	43,155	4.9
1883	890,722	848,076	42,646	4.8
1884	906,750	864,084	42,667	4.7
1885	894,270	851,477	42,793	4.8
1886	903,760	860,922	42,838	4.7
1887	886,331	844,197	42,134	4.8
1888	879,868	839,138	40,730	4.6
1889	885,944	845,317	40,627	4.6
1890	869,937	831,525	38,412	4.4
1891	914,157	875,376	38,781	4.2
1892	897,957	860,376	37,581	4.2
1893	914,572	875,684	38,888	4.2
1894	890,289	851,946	38,343	4.3

MORTALITY of LEGITIMATE and ILLEGITIMATE INFANTS in the City of Glasgow (1873-75), and in the City of Manchester (1891-94).

CITIES.	Legitimate Infants.		Illegitimate Infants.		Deaths	
	Births.	Deaths under One Year.	Births.	Deaths under One Year.	Of Legitimate Infants to 1,000 Legitimate Births.	Of Illegitimate Infants to 1,000 Illegitimate Births.
Glasgow, 1873-75 - -	56,698	8,613	5,288	1,509	152	286
Manchester, 1891-94 - -	65,446	11,371	2,807	1,099	174	392

UNCERTIFIED DEATHS in LONDON in 1882-3-4.

A G E S.	Total Uncertified Deaths.	Medical Attendant refused Certificate.		Attended by			No Medical Attendance.
		Altogether.	Made Informal Statement.	Unregistered Assistant.	Unregistered Practitioner.	Midwife.	
Under 1 - - -	1,580	19	109	186	185	414	667
1-5 - - -	495	13	38	38	100	-	249
5-60 - - -	546	20	43	24	78	1	380
60 and upwards - -	456	14	25	10	37	-	370
All Ages - - -	3,020	66	215	258	400	415	1,666

APPENDIX I.

PAPER handed in by Dr. TATHAM, 7 May 1896.

MORTALITY of Legitimate and Illegitimate Infants in the Borough of Salford (1877-94).

BOROUGH.	Legitimate Infants.		Illegitimate Infants.		Deaths.	
	Births.	Deaths under One Year.	Births.	Deaths under One Year.	Of Legitimate Infants to 1,000 Legitimate Births.	Of Illegitimate Infants to 1,000 Illegitimate Births.
Salford, 1877-94	121,816	21,366	5,372	1,993	175	371

APPENDIX K.

PAPER handed in by Mrs. HARDIE, 15 May 1896.

District.	No.
ANCOATS - - - - -	10

Address, 1, J— street.
 How long ill? From birth.
 Householder, Daughter of.
 Father alive. Mother dead.
 Nursed by grandmother.
 Neglected or not? Not.
 Fed on cows' milk in bottle.
 House. Through—clean.
 Rooms in building: 2 up, 2 down.
 Rooms occupied by sick family: 2 bed r., 2 living r.
 Occupants (ages): f. 66, m. 30, m. 6, f. 4, m. 1½ yrs.; m. 4 weeks.
 Others in sick room (number): 4
 Vaccination. No.
 San. con. of premises, see p. of Report Book.
 Buried by family.
 Registered by Mr. W—, Dist. Visitor.
 Was inf. feeding leaflet given? Yes.
 Did visitor leave one? Yes.

Disease.	Age.	Hospital.
Marasmus - - - - -	1 month.	—

Under 1 year of Age.

Reg. No. 185. Date of death, 6th May.
 Place of death, 1, J— street.
 Name, D. S. V—. Sex, F. Age, 1 month.
 Rank, daughter of a general labourer.
 Prev. residence, 1, J— street.
 Reg. C. of D., Debility from birth.
 Week ending 9th May 1896.

Visited Thursday, 27th February 1896. M. C—, Health Visitor for No. 3, Hulme District.

Address.	Name of Tenant.	How long Here?	First Visit or not?	Number of Rooms in House.	Number of Inmates in House.	CONDITION OF HOUSE.			Remarks as to Sickness, Overcrowding, &c.
						Dilapidated (Yes or No?).	Dirty (Yes or No?).	Improved since last Visit (Yes or No?).	
No. 57, S—street	B—	5 yrs.	Not	4	8	No	No	Yes	Mother is ill with bronchitis.
No. 30, " "	H—	2 yrs.	Not	5	11	No	No	No	Two children very ill here with inflammation of the lungs.
No. 32, " "	M—	5 yrs.	Not	5	7	No	No	Yes	
No. 34, " "	A—	5 yrs.	Not	5	5	No	No	Yes	A little baby who lodges with its mother in this house is very much neglected.
No. 44, " "	S—	16 yrs.	Not	4	3	No	No	Yes	
No. 37, A—street	R—	2 yrs.	Not	4	3	No	No	Yes	A little baby who lodges with its mother in this house is very much neglected.
No. 39, " "	M—	2 yrs.	Not	4	11	No	Yes	No	

N.B.—The Medical Officer of Health wishes to receive this form by first post, whether it contains one entry or several.

(0.95.)

D D 4

Visited Wednesday, 18th March 1896.

M. C.—, Health Visitor for No. 3, Hulme District.

Address.	Name of Tenant.	How long Here?	First Visit or not?	Number of Rooms in House.	Number of Inmates in House.	CONDITION OF HOUSE.			Remarks as to Sickness, Overcrowding, &c.
						Dilapidated (Yes or No?).	Dirty (Yes or No?).	Improved since last Visit (Yes or No?).	
No. 15, P— bldgs.	B—	6 yrs.	Not	4	9	No -	No -	Yes -	A young man ill here; bronchitis and other complaints.
No. 13, "	F—	3 yrs.	Not	4	7	No -	No -	Yes -	Mother very ill with bronchitis.
No. 11, "	K—	2 yrs.	Not	4	8	No -	No -	No.	—
No. 16, "	B—	4 yrs.	Not	4	6	No -	No -	Yes.	—
No. 14, "	C—	1 yr.	Not	4	7	No -	No -	Yes -	A boy is ill here.
No. 12, "	T—	4 yrs.	Not	4	8	No -	No -	Yes -	A baby 3 weeks' old is suckled by its mother.
No. 10, "	A—	2 yrs.	Not	4	8	No -	No -	No.	—

N.B.—The Medical Officer of Health wishes to receive this form by first post, whether it contains one entry or several.

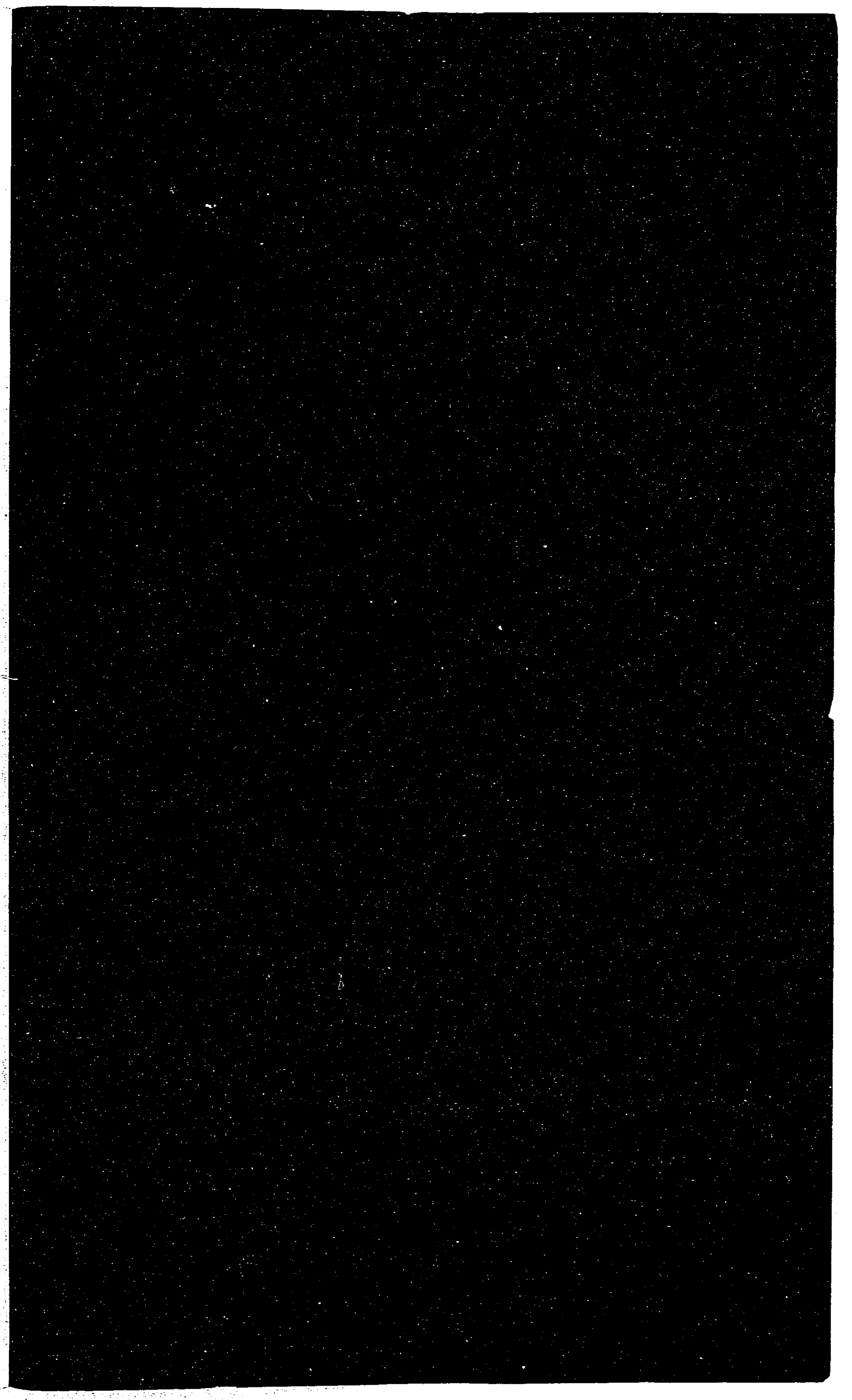
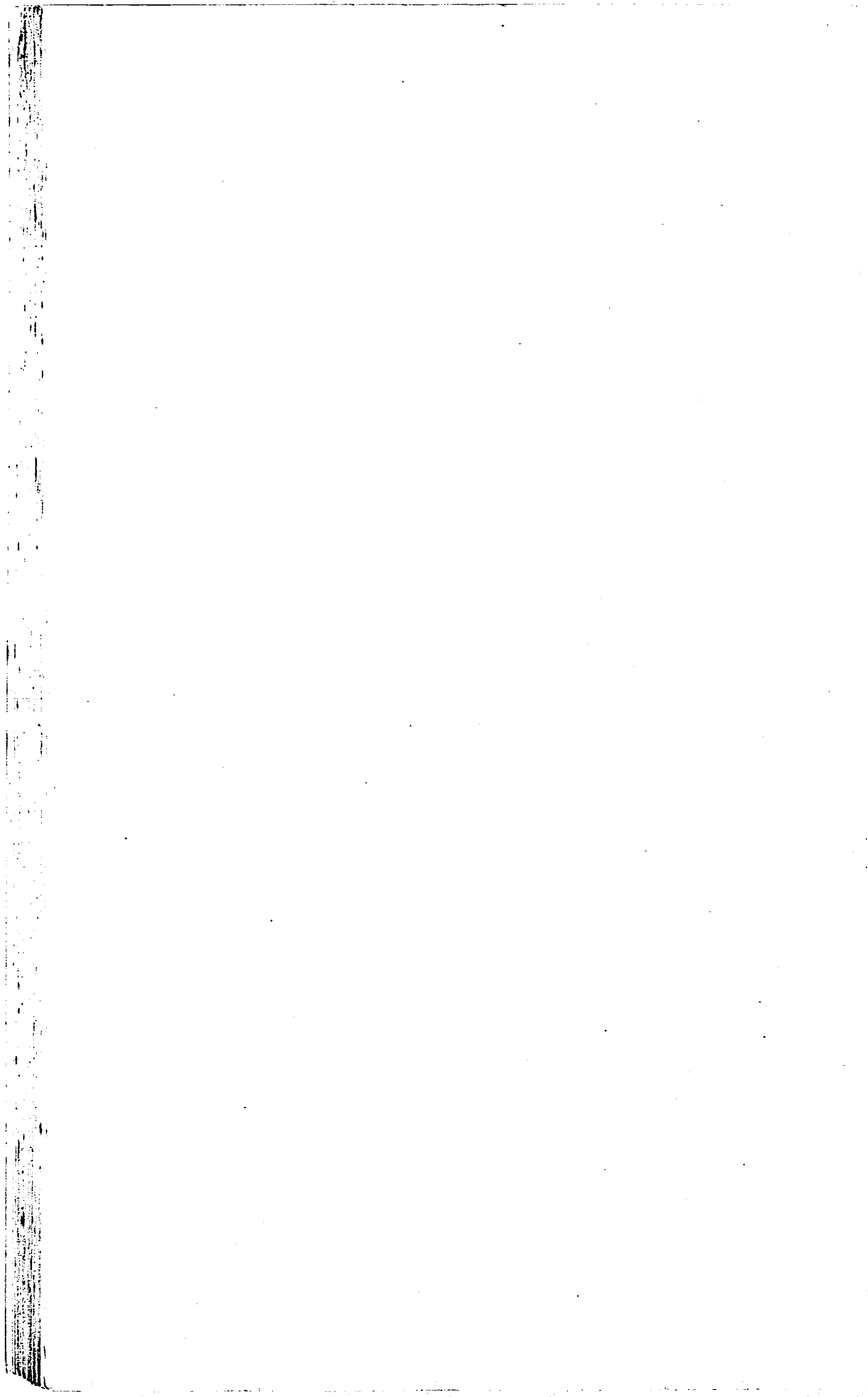
Special Reports, if any.

Reported a case to the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The mother is hardly ever sober. She has a baby eight months' old which is shamefully neglected. Her husband is a jewel-case maker, and she receives in all 27. every week, and the children nor herself has changes, and I don't think they have a blanket in the house. Visited Mrs. —. Washed her and made her bed, allowed her a syphon of soda-water and some milk.

LADIES' HEALTH SOCIETY.

Bye-laws and Suggestions for the Guidance of the Lady Superintendents.— Passed, 7th March 1894.

- 1.—THE sale of soap in the districts shall be conducted on ready-money principles, the lady superintendents alone ordering and paying for the same. The health visitor shall render her superintendent an account weekly of soap sold, and if she has given any away shall state the names of the recipients and the weight given.
- 2.—The lady superintendent shall present an account at the monthly meeting of the soap received from the Corporation and the profits derived from the sale thereof, and the way in which they are expended.
- 3.—The Manchester lady superintendents shall return the health visitors' reports regularly every quarter to the medical officer of health.
- 4.—In order to preserve the energies of our health visitors in a state to do justice to our work, they are required, when on full time, to engage in no fatiguing employment, such as midwifery, sick-nursing, &c.
- 5.—It is strongly advised that the health visitors' hours for visiting be from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., or from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., the morning hours to be specially observed. It is also recommended that the morning hours be devoted to house-to-house visitation, so as to avoid missing any part of the district, and the afternoon hours to cases specially reported, sick visits, &c.
- 6.—For the guidance of the lady superintendents, the minimum number of house-to-house visits to be recorded for the medical officers of health is fixed at 12 per day, allowing 240 working days a year.
- 7.—The health visitors shall have as holidays a fortnight annually, as well as Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, the four Bank Holidays, and two other days at Whitsuntide.
- 8.—Children's holiday forms should be taken out by lady superintendents in their own names and signed by them, not by the health visitors.
- 9.—Any lady superintendent in doubt as to her course in exceptional circumstances should take the advice of the Committee before deciding.
- 10.—Lady superintendents not being able to attend the Committee should notify the same to the secretary.
- 11.—It is advised that a supply of ventilating boards be kept by the lady superintendents and their use urged as much as possible.
- 10.—In case of change of address of either lady superintendent or health visitor, the lady superintendent is responsible for communicating it to the secretary at once.



Brought from the Lords, 10 August 1896.

R E P O R T.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.]
AND
SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL
[H.L.]

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,

11 August 1896

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

And to be purchased, either directly or through any Bookseller, from
EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, EAST HARDING STREET, FLEET STREET, E.C.,
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JOHN MENZIES & Co., 12, HANOVER STREET, EDINBURGH, and
90, WEST NILE STREET, GLASGOW; or
HODGES, FIGGIS, & Co., LIMITED, 104, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN.

343. [Price 1s. 10d.]

Under 1 lb. 6 oz.

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INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.]
AND
SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL
[H.L.]

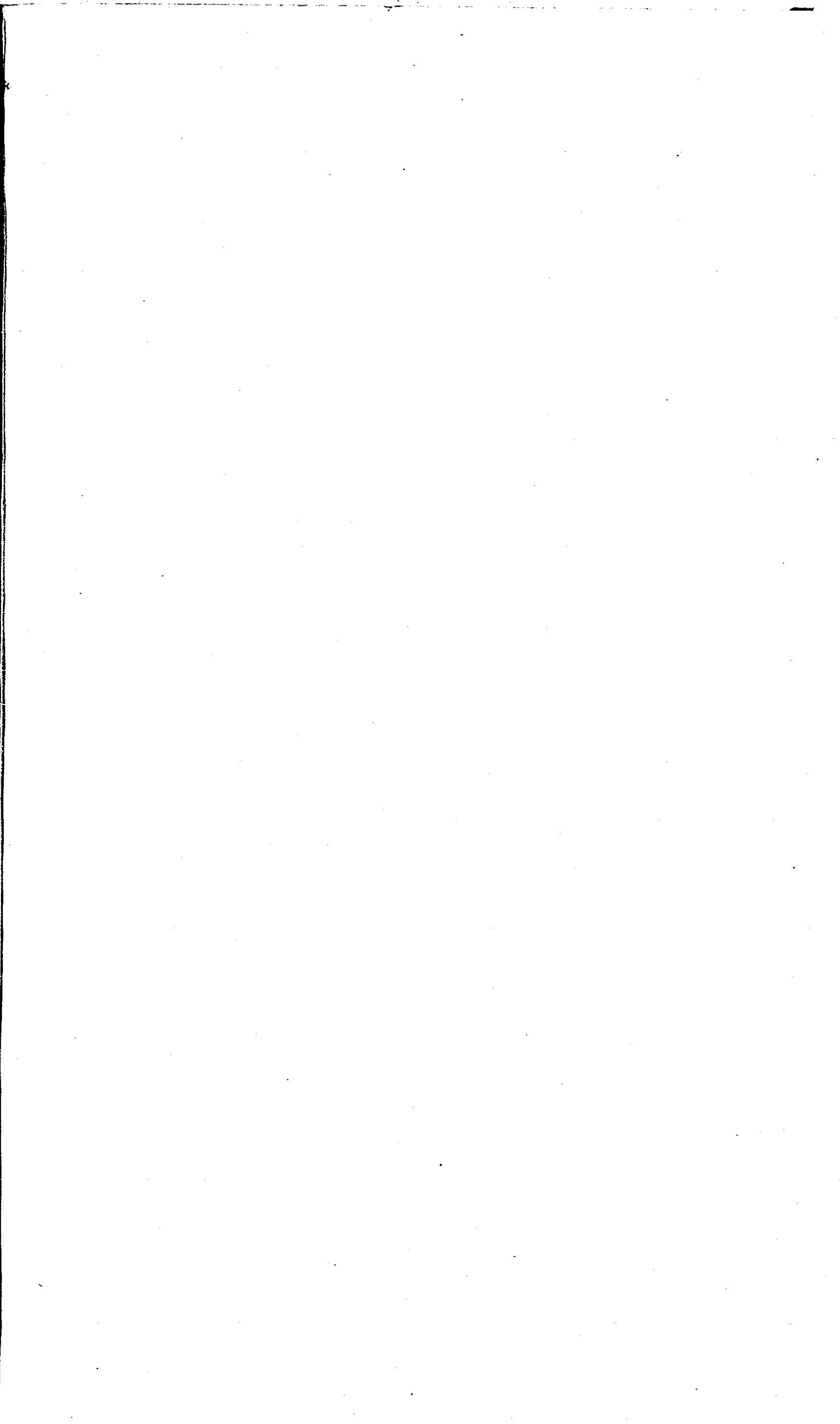
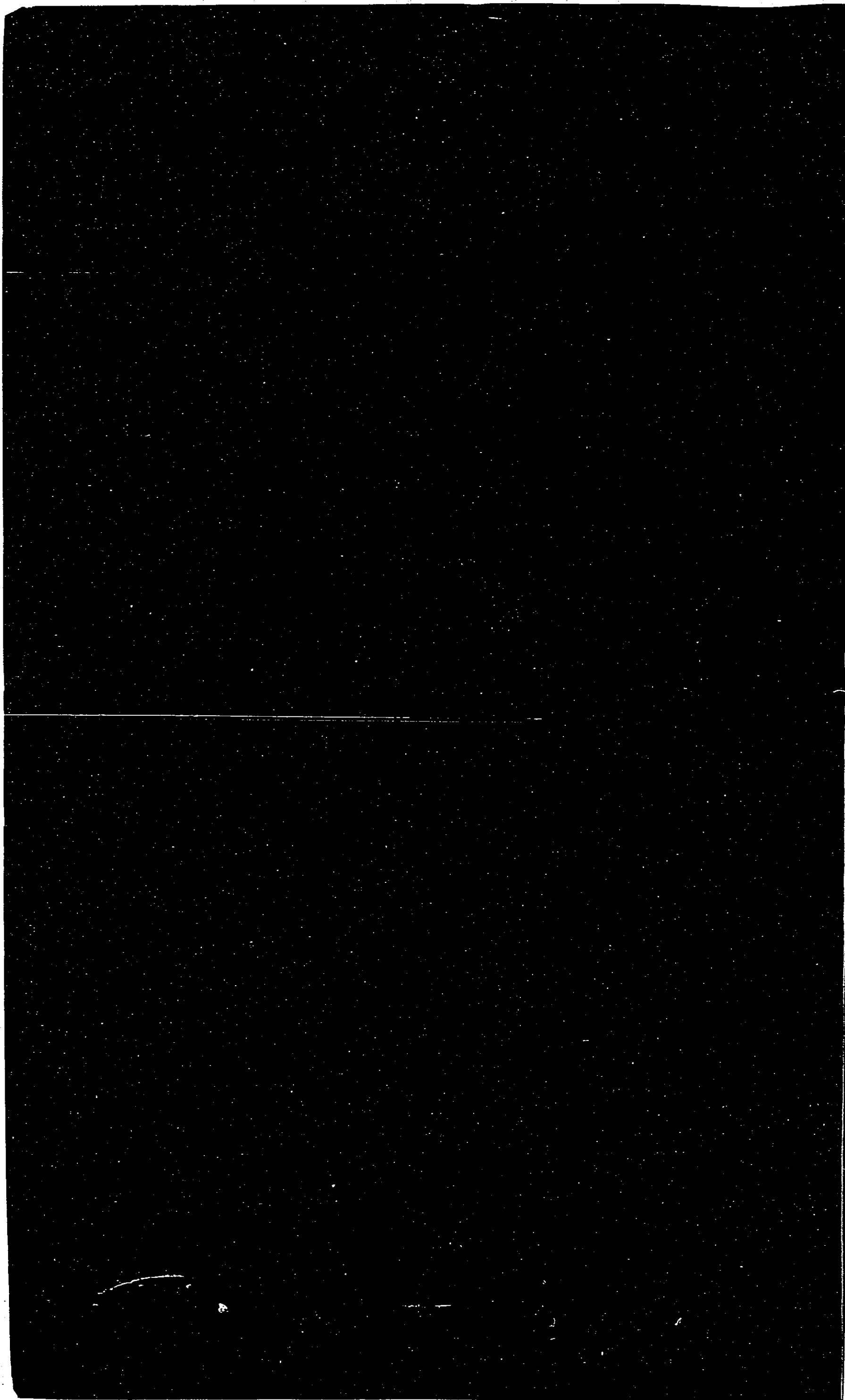
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Under 1 lb. 6 oz.



Brought from the Lords, 10 August 1896.

R E P O R T

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

ON THE

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.]

AND

SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL [H.L.];

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

AND

AN APPENDIX.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
11 August 1896.*

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HODGES, FIGGIS, & Co., LIMITED, 104, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN.

REPORT	- - - - -	p. iii
PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE	- - - - -	p. iv
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE	- - - - -	p. 1
APPENDIX	- - - - -	p. 187

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R E P O R T.

BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to consider the INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.], and the SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL [H.L.], and to Report to the House.

ORDERED TO REPORT,

THAT the Committee have met, and have considered the said Bills, and examined Witnesses, and have ordered the Infant Life Protection Bill [H.L.] to be reported to your Lordships, with amendments.

That they have incorporated in the said Bill certain of the provisions of the Safety of Nurse Children Bill [H.L.].

That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Safety of Nurse Children Bill [H.L.].

And the Committee have directed the Minutes of Proceedings, together with the Evidence and an Appendix, to be laid before your Lordships.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Die Lunæ, 9° Martii, 1896.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to Order), and referred to a Select Committee.

Die Jovis, 19° Martii, 1896.

The Lords following were named of the Committee :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Kinnaird.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Reay.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	Lord Thring.
Lord Belper.	

The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

Die Martis, 24° Martii, 1896.

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to Members of the Committee, and to such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order.

Die Jovis, 23° Aprilis, 1896.

The Lord Reay discharged from serving on the Select Committee, and the Earl of Buckinghamshire added to the Committee in his place.

Die Lunæ, 4° Maii, 1896.

SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to Order), and referred to the same Select Committee to which the Infant Life Protection Bill [H.L.] stands referred.

LORDS PRESENT, AND THE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT EACH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE.

Die Martis, 24° Martii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Reay.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Belper.	

The Order of Reference is read.

It is moved, That the Earl of Denbigh do take the Chair.

The same is agreed to.

The course of Proceeding is considered.

It is moved that the Committee be an open one.

The same is agreed to.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Friday, the 24th of April, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 24° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaird.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of the 24th of March last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Mr. *Alfred Spencer* and Mr. *C. Luzmoore Drew*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Monday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Lunæ, 27° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaird.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Friday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Mr. *Alfred Spencer* (re-called), Mr. *Samuel Babey*, and Mr. *A. Braxton Hicks*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 30^o Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Bishop of Winchester.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Belper.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Monday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Mr. *Braxton Hicks* (re-called), Mr. *E. De M. Rudolf*, and Miss *Isabel G. Smith*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 5^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaid.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Thursday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Dr. *John F. W. Tatham*, M.D., Mr. *William Crooks*, Mr. *Wynne Edwin Baxter*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 7^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaid.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Tuesday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Rev. *Benjamin Waugh*, Dr. *John F. W. Tatham*, M.D. (re-called), Dr. *Thomas John Barnardo*, F.R.C.S.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 12^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Bishop of Winchester.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Belper.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Kinnaid.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Thursday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Dr. *Hugh Percy Dunn*, F.R.C.S., Deaconess *Gilmore*, Miss *Mason*, and Mrs. *Crowder*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Friday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 15^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Bishop of Winchester.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaid.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Tuesday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Mrs. *Hardie*, Mrs. *Bostock*, Dr. *John F. W. Tatham* (re-called), Mrs. *Wethered*, Miss *Steer*, and Mr. *Alfred Spencer* (re-called).

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Friday, the 19th of June, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 19^o Junii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Bishop of Winchester.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Belper.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Friday the 15th of May are read.

The following Witness is called in, and examined, viz. : Mrs. *Abrahams*.

The course of Proceeding is considered.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 25^o Junii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaid.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Friday last are read.

The course of Proceeding is considered.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Tuesday, the 7th of July, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 7^o Julii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.
Viscount Llandaff.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.

Lord Belper.
Lord Kinnaird.
Lord Thring.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Thursday the 25th of June are read.

It is moved that the Infant Life Protection Bill [H.L.] be considered.

The same is agreed to.

The Title is read and postponed.

The Preamble is read and postponed.

Clause 1 is read, and agreed to, with an Amendment.

The remaining Clauses of the Bill are read, and disagreed to.

The following new Clauses and a Schedule are read, and inserted in the Bill :—

"2—(1.) Any person retaining or receiving for hire or reward in that behalf more than one infant under the age of five years for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents for a longer period than 48 hours, shall within 48 hours give notice thereof to the local authority.

"(2.) Such notice shall truly state the name, age, and sex of such infants, the name and address of the person receiving the infants, and the name and address of the person or persons from whom the infants have been received.

"(3.) If any such infant is removed from the care of the person who has received the infant for the purpose aforesaid, such person shall forthwith give to the local authority notice of the removal, and of the name and address of the person to whose care the infant has been transferred.

"(4.) If any person who has retained or received any infant as aforesaid omits to give the said notices, or any of them, or knowingly or wilfully makes or causes or procures any other person to make any false statement in any such notice, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

"3.—(1.) It shall be the duty of every local authority to provide for the execution of this Act within its district, and for that purpose it may appoint female inspectors and may appoint or authorise in writing other suitable persons to execute the provisions of this Act, subject to such terms and conditions as may be stated in such appointment or authorisation.

"(2.) Any local authority may combine with any other local authority for the purpose of executing the provisions of this Act, and for defraying the expenses of such execution.

"(3.) Any inspector or other person duly appointed and authorised in writing by or on behalf of the local authority may inspect any infants referred to in any notice given under this Act, and the premises in which they are retained or received in order to satisfy himself as to the proper maintenance of such infants or to give any necessary advice or directions as to such maintenance.

"(4.) If any person retaining or receiving such infants refuses to allow any such inspector or other person to inspect such infants or the premises in which they are retained or received, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

"(5.) If any such inspector or other person is refused admittance to any premises in contravention of this Act, or has reason to believe that any infants under the age of five years are being kept in any house or premises in contravention of this Act, he may apply to any justice of the peace, who, on being satisfied that there is reasonable ground for believing that an offence against this Act has been committed, may grant a warrant authorising such inspector or other person to enter the house or premises for the purpose of inspection or of ascertaining whether any offence against this Act has been committed, and if the occupier of the house or premises or other person obstruct any inspector or other person acting in pursuance of such warrant, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

"4.—It shall be the duty of the local authority to give public notice of the provisions of this Act by the publication of an abstract thereof, or otherwise as a Secretary of State may direct.

"5.—(1.) Should

"5.—(1.) Should any infant, in respect of which notice is required to be given under this Act,— Removal of infant improperly kept.

"(a) be kept in any house or premises which are so unfit as to endanger its health; or

"(b) be retained or received by any person who, by reason of negligence, ignorance, or other cause, is so unfit to have its care and maintenance as to endanger its health;

any inspector or other person appointed for the purposes of this Act may apply to the local authority for an order in writing directing him to remove such infant to a workhouse or place of safety until it can be restored to its relatives or guardians or be otherwise lawfully disposed of.

"(2.) Any person refusing to comply with an order under this section upon the same being produced and read over to him, or obstructing the inspector or other authorised person in the execution thereof, shall be guilty of an offence under this Act, and the inspector may apply to any justice of the peace for an order directing the removal of the child, and such order may be enforced by any police constable.

"(3.) The master of any workhouse shall receive into the workhouse any child brought there under such order, and such child shall be maintained in the workhouse until it can be otherwise disposed of.

"6. In case of the death of any infant respecting whom notice is required under this Act, the person having the care of such infant shall, within 24 hours of such death cause notice thereof to be given to the coroner of the district within which the body of such infant lies, and the coroner shall hold an inquest thereon unless a certificate under the hand of a registered medical practitioner shall be produced to him certifying that such registered medical practitioner has personally attended or examined such infant, and specifying the cause of its death, and the coroner shall be satisfied by such certificate that there is no ground for holding such inquest. If the person having the care of such infant shall neglect to give the notice in this section mentioned he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act. Notice to coroner.

"7. Every person guilty of an offence under this Act shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.*, or to imprisonment for not more than six months, as a court of summary jurisdiction may award. Penalties.

"8. All expenses incurred by or on behalf of the local authority in and about the execution of this Act shall be defrayed out of the local rate. Expenses.

"9. Any offence under this Act may be prosecuted before a court of summary jurisdiction in manner provided by the Summary Jurisdiction Acts. Prosecution of offences.

"10. Any monies arising from penalties under this Act shall, notwithstanding any provision in any other Act, be paid to the local authority, and be applied to the purposes to which the local rate is applicable. Application of fines.

"11. Every notice by this Act required to be given to the local authority, shall be in writing, and shall be sent by post as a registered letter to the clerk of the local authority, or to such other person as the local authority may appoint, or be delivered at the office of the local authority. Notices.

"12. The provisions of this Act shall not extend to the relatives or guardians of any infant by them retained or received as aforesaid; or to any person receiving any infant for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infant under the provisions of any Act for the relief of the poor or of any order of the Local Government Board made under such Act; or to hospitals, convalescent homes or institutions established for the protection and care of infants and conducted in good faith for religious or charitable purposes. Exemptions.

"13. The terms "local rate," "local jurisdiction," and "local authority," mean in reference to the districts mentioned in the first column of the Schedule to this Act, the rate, jurisdiction, and authority mentioned in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th columns of the said Schedule, and such Schedule shall be deemed to be part of this Act. The term "place of safety" shall mean any suitable place, the occupier of which is willing temporarily to receive such infant. The term "relatives" shall mean and include the parents, grandparents, and uncles, and aunts by consanguinity or affinity of the infant retained or received as aforesaid, and in the case of illegitimate infants the persons who would be so related if the infant were legitimate. Definition.

"14. This Act in its application to Scotland shall be subject to the following provision, the sheriff shall be substituted for a justice of the peace, the procurator fiscal shall be substituted for the coroner, and an inquiry by him into the cause of death for an inquest, and poorhouse shall be substituted for workhouse. Application to Scotland.

"15. The Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, shall be repealed from the date of the commencement of this Act. Repeal.

"16. This Act shall commence on the first day of January One thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven. Commencement of Act.

THE SCHEDULE referred to in the foregoing ACT.

ENGLAND and WALES.

DISTRICT.	Local Rate.	Local Jurisdiction.	Local Authority.
County of London -	Rate or fund applicable to the payment of the general expenses of the Council.	Area of the County of London (except the City of London).	London County Council.
City of London - -	Consolidated Sewers Rate -	Area of the City of London and the liberties thereof.	Common Council.
Boroughs - - -	The borough fund or borough rate.	Area of borough.	Council.
Other Places - -	The district rate - - -	District of the District Council.	The District Council.

SCOTLAND.

DISTRICT.	Local Rate.	Local Jurisdiction.	Local Authority.
Counties - - - -	The county general assessment.	Area subject to the county general assessment.	Justice of Peace.
Burghs, Royal or Parliamentary, not subject to the separate jurisdiction of police commissioners or trustees.	The revenue or common good of the burgh or any rate leviable by the town council.	Area of the burgh -	Town Council.
Burghs and places where police commissioners or trustees exercise the functions of police commissioners or trustees under any general or local Act.	Any rate leviable by the commissioners or trustees, or any fund belonging to them.	Area within the boundaries of the burgh or place as defined under the general or local Act.	The commissioners or trustees.

IRELAND.

DISTRICT.	Local Rate.	Local Jurisdiction.	Local Authority.
Towns corporate - - - -	The borough rate or borough fund.	Area of borough -	Town Council.
Towns having commissioners appointed by virtue of an Act made in the ninth year of the reign of George the Fourth, intituled, "An Act to make provision for the lighting, cleansing, and watching of cities and towns corporate and market towns in Ireland in certain cases" - - - -	Any rate leviable by the commissioners - - - -	Area of town - - -	The commissioners.
Towns having town commissioners under the Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854 (17 & 18 Vict. c. 103), or under any other local Act - - - -		Area of town - - -	The commissioners.
Townships having commissioners under local Acts - - - -	- - - -	Area of township -	The commissioners.
Places in Ireland not included in the foregoing descriptions.	The grand jury cess -	Area of petty sessional district in which the place is situate.	The petty sessions for the district in which the place is situate.

The Preamble is again read, and agreed to.

The Title is again read, and agreed to, with an Amendment.

Ordered, That the Lord in the Chair do report the Infant Life Protection Bill [H.L.], with the Amendments, to the House.

It is moved to resolve "That it is not expedient to proceed with the Safety of Nurse Children Bill [H.L.]."

The same is agreed to.

Ordered, That the Lord in the Chair do report accordingly to the House.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

	PAGE
<i>Die Veneris, 24° Aprilis, 1896.</i>	
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -	3
Mr. Clifford Luxmoore Drew - - - - -	21
<i>Die Lunæ, 27° Aprilis, 1896.</i>	
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -	29
Mr. Samuel Babey - - - - -	31
Mr. Athelstan Braxton Hicks - - - - -	43
<i>Die Jovis, 30° Aprilis, 1896.</i>	
Mr. Athelstan Braxton Hicks - - - - -	57
Mr. E. De M. Rudolf - - - - -	59
Miss Isabel G. Smith - - - - -	67
<i>Die Martis, 5° Maii, 1896.</i>	
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -	75
Mr. William Crooks - - - - -	83
Mr. Wynne Edwin Baxter - - - - -	89
<i>Die Martis, 7° Maii, 1896.</i>	
The Rev. Benjamin Waugh - - - - -	95
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -	115
Mr. Thomas John Barnardo, F.R.C.S. - - - - -	117
<i>Die Martis, 12° Maii, 1896.</i>	
Mr. Hugh Percy Dunn, F.R.C.S. - - - - -	125
Deaconess Gilmore - - - - -	132
Miss Marian H. Mason - - - - -	138
Mrs. Crowder - - - - -	150
<i>Die Veneris, 15° Maii, 1896.</i>	
Mrs. Hardie - - - - -	155
Mrs. Bostock - - - - -	164
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -	166
Mrs. Wethered - - - - -	167
Miss Steer - - - - -	173
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -	177

Die Veneris, 24° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl DENBIGH.	Lord BELPER.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.	Lord KINNAIRD.
Viscount LLANDAFF.	Lord THRING.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.	

THE EARL DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

MR. ALFRED SPENCER is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

Chairman—continued.

1. WILL you tell us, please, your official position?—I am the chief officer of the Public Control Department of the London County Council.

2. And how is the London County Council concerned in the subject of infant life protection?—The London County Council is the local authority under the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872 for the county of London.

3. And has the administration of the present Act been carried out under your direction since then?—Yes; the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act has been carried out in London in my department and under my direction for the past 18 years, since the year 1878.

4. Will you describe briefly the provisions of the existing Act?—The first section of the existing Act deals, amongst other things, with the local authorities, and the local authorities named in the Act are set out in the First Schedule to the Act. For England the local authorities in counties, except the metropolis and City of London, were the justices in petty sessions; but this jurisdiction has been transferred from the justices to district councils by the Local Government Act of 1894, Section 27, and, therefore, in counties, except London, the local authorities are the district councils. In the metropolis the local authority is defined to be the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that jurisdiction was transferred to the London County Council by the Local Government Act for England and Wales of 1888, Section 40, Sub-section 8. In the City of London the local authority is the Common Council, and in the boroughs the council of the borough is the local authority. In Scotland the local authorities are defined by the Act to be, in the counties, the justices of the peace; in the burghs the town council; and in places where police commissioners or trustees exercise the functions of police commissioners, the local authority are the commissioners or trustees; and in Ireland,

in towns corporate, the town council; in towns having commissioners, the commissioners; and in places not included in the foregoing descriptions, the petty sessions for the district in which the place is situate. Section 2 of the Act provides that "It shall not be lawful for any person to retain or receive for hire or reward in that behalf more than one infant, and in case of twins more than two infants, under the age of one year, for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents for a longer period than twenty-four hours, except in a house which has been registered as herein provided." Section 3 provides that the local authority shall keep a register of all houses registered under the Act, and "shall from time to time make bye-laws for fixing the number of infants who may be received into each house so registered." So that on the registration of a house the local authority has to make in each case a bye-law fixing the number of infants that may be received lawfully into that house.

5. A special bye-law has to be made for each house?—For each registration. "The registration shall remain in force for one year; no fee shall be charged for registration;" that is to say, it remains in force for one year from the date of registration and not for any specified period, as, for instance, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.

6. Has the registration to be renewed at the end of that year?—The registration has to be renewed; it is only operative for one year, and it has to be renewed at the end of that year.

7. And is a separate application required by the person who owns the house for registration; the registration lapses of itself unless an application is made?—The registration, I apprehend, would lapse of itself if an application for its renewal were not made. Probably the local authority would take care that an application was made if the registered person so desired,

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that is to say, before the expiration of the registration, notice of the expiration would be given, and forms of application would be supplied, in order that the registered person might make application for renewal of registration. This course is pursued in London. Then the same section further provides that any person who receives or retains any infant in contravention of the Act shall be guilty of an offence against the Act. Section 4 enables the local authority to refuse to register a house "unless they are satisfied that such house is suitable for the purposes for which it is to be registered, and unless they are satisfied by the production of certificates that the person applying to be registered is of good character, and able to maintain such infants." The Council requires that the applicant shall produce a certificate which states that the applicant is a person "of good character, and able to maintain infants" received for hire or reward, "for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents;" and the certificate is to be signed by a justice of the peace, or by a duly qualified medical practitioner, or by a minister of the Established Church, or of a registered place of worship, and also by two rated householders not relatives of the applicant, and each applicant for registration, in addition to a form of application, is furnished with a form of certificate upon which she can obtain the necessary signatures.

8. Also by two householders, you say?—Also by two rated householders who are not relatives of the applicant. Section 5 provides that "The person registered as aforesaid shall immediately enter in a register to be kept by him the name, sex, and age of each infant under his care, and the date at which, and the names and addresses of the persons from whom, they were received, and shall also enter in the said register the time when, and the names and addresses of the person by whom, every such infant received and retained as aforesaid shall be removed, immediately after the removal of such infant, and shall produce the said register when required to do so by the local authority; and in the event of his refusing so to produce the said register, or neglecting to enter in the register the name, sex, and age of each of the said infants, and the date at which, and the names and addresses of the persons from whom, they were received, and by whom they were removed, respectively, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds. The person registered shall be entitled to receive gratuitously from the local authority a book of forms for the registration of infants; such register may be in the form contained in the Second Schedule to this Act." I produce a copy of the register that is supplied to every person that is registered, in which she has to make the entries of the infants received and taken away, as provided in the Second Schedule of the Act. The form prescribed in that Schedule may be departed from, but in the copy submitted it is adhered to, except as to one column. The schedule requires merely the age to be put in; but we found that that was not sufficiently exact, so that we substituted the date of the birth of the infant. Section 6 provides that "If any

person shall make false representations with a view to being registered under this Act, or shall forge any certificate for the purpose of this Act, or make use of any forged certificate, knowing it to be forged, or shall falsify any register kept in pursuance of this Act, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act." But I do not know of any offence against that section having taken place in London.

9. That of forgery of the certificate, you mean?—Yes, or any offence against the section.

Lord Belper.

10. When you say no offence, you mean there is no case where they have been prosecuted under that section?—Yes, that is what I mean. It may be convenient at this point to state that when a person is registered, in addition to the register, the inspector also provides the person registered with a short and simple abstract of the law relating to houses registered for the keeping of infants, and also with suggestions as to the care of infants at registered houses. These suggestions comprise suggestions as to clothing, air and ventilation, cleanliness and food, and then as to the preparation of food and the regularity of feeding, and the ages at which food of different kinds is suitable for the infant; and it also gives a caution against using soothing medicines and sleeping draughts, and that sort of thing. It really comprises those practical suggestions which our experience in the treatment of infants in registered houses makes us believe to be essential for the welfare of the infants. Section 7 of the Act enables the local authority to strike off the register any person registered, for one of three things. First of all, for "serious neglect;" secondly, for incapacity to provide the infants entrusted to his care with proper food and attention; or, thirdly, if "the house specified in the register has become unfit for the reception of infants." The number so struck off has been 24 in the period I refer to.

Lord Thring.

11. What is the period you refer to?—Eighteen years.

Chairman.

12. You have only in the 18 years struck off 24 for the causes mentioned?—We have struck off 24, not wholly for the causes mentioned. In some cases it has been desirable to strike off the register persons who voluntarily desired to give up the keeping of infants, and who did not desire their names to continue to appear on the register. While they were registered they were liable to inspection, and were anxious in such a case to remove that liability; and we think it is a desirable thing that some power should be inserted in the Bill for dealing with cases of that kind.

Viscount Llandaff.

13. How many have come under that head?—I should think, speaking from memory, perhaps 25 per cent. of them; the remaining number have been struck off for one or other of the causes specified in the section.

14. I think

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

14. I think I gathered from you the other day in private conversation with regard to that matter, that a certain amount of inconvenience has arisen on your not being able to strike people off the register except from default?—That is the case.

Viscount Llandaff.

15. Could you divide the 75 per cent. into the different classes, saying how many were struck off for serious neglect, how many for the unfitness of the house, and so on?—I think that could be done, but I am not prepared at this moment to do it. Then Section 8 provides for the giving notice to the coroner of all deaths that occur in a registered house; the deaths, that is to say, of the infants affected by the registration; and for that purpose we supply all registered persons with forms of notice, which they simply have to fill up, and directions are given what they are to do with them. I put in a copy of that form. Then Section 9 provides for the penalty: It provides that "Every person guilty of an offence under this Act shall be liable to imprisonment for not more than six months, with or without hard labour, or to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.*, as a court of summary jurisdiction may award, and shall, in addition, be liable to have his name and house struck off the register." Sections 10, 11 and 12 deal with matters of administration; and Section 13 deals with the exemptions under the Act. Section 13 provides that "the provisions of this Act shall not extend to the relatives or guardians of any infant retained or received as aforesaid, nor to institutions established for the protection or care of infants, nor to any person receiving any infant for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infant under the provisions of any Act for the relief of the poor." The Act does not include any definition of relatives or guardians or institutions; and some amount of difficulty has been experienced from the absence of those definitions. Those, I think, are all the provisions of the Act to which it may be necessary to direct the attention of the Committee.

Chairman.

16. You have stated that inconvenience has arisen on account of the want of definition of "relatives" and "guardians" in Section 13; you mean by that, I suppose, that cases have arisen where keepers of children have raised difficulties and claimed to be exempted under that clause, and that you have been unable to prove that they were really guardians or really relatives?—There has been some difficulty with regard to those two words on account of not knowing where to draw the line; but the chief difficulty has been experienced with reference to "institutions"—what did or did not constitute an institution; whether, in point of fact, a lady establishing a home for infants and receiving at the same time payment for those infants, but obviously doing it for philanthropic purposes, was or was not within the scope of the Act. The practical rule that has been acted upon in London is, that an "institution" has been regarded as an organised society established for some social or philanthropic object and managed

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Chairman—continued.

by a committee of at least six persons. That is the practical rule which we have endeavoured to apply in all these cases; and I may say that it has acted fairly well. Wherever there was no committee we have required registration; but where there was a committee we have assumed that it was an "institution" within the meaning of the Act, and therefore exempt.

17. But you have never brought anybody actually before a court of law and had it interpreted by a court?—That has not been necessary; no sufficiently acute case has arisen to make that absolutely necessary.

18. Will you briefly describe the circumstances which led up to the Act of 1872. I do not want you to traverse the whole of the ground, but if you could tell their Lordships briefly the principal points I should like you to do so?—Prior to 1871 a state of things arose which is somewhat paralleled by the existing state of things, that is to say, there occurred cases in London where infants were found dead in the streets by the police in considerable numbers; and in the end a large proportion of them were traced to a particular woman, Margaret Waters, who was tried for their murder and hanged. Considerable public attention was drawn to the matter and a strong feeling arose that led up to the appointment of the Commons Committee which sat in 1871, and which took a large amount of evidence. That Committee embodied the result of their deliberations in a very good Report, which was submitted to the House, and which I may have to refer to from time to time in the course of my evidence.

19. That led up to the Committee of 1871, which took the evidence?—The Committee of 1871.

20. When the Act came into force how many houses were registered in London?—In the year 1872 there were five only; in the following year that number increased to 10; in the year 1874 it decreased to two; in the year 1875 the number was five; in the year 1876 it was six; and in the year 1877 the number registered was five. For all practical purposes I think the Act during those years was hardly operative, or, at any rate, to so slight an extent as to be of no real value to the community.

21. And what steps were at first taken for enforcing the Act in London?—At first the only steps taken were that complaints on matters brought to the attention of the local authority were inquired into, and any applications for registration that were received were dealt with; but at that time no special inspector was appointed, because the Metropolitan Board of Works felt very strongly that the provisions of the Act were too limited to be effective in dealing with the evils aimed at.

22. They appointed no inspector because they did not think the Act was strong enough; they thought it was no use; do you mean that?—They thought it was useless. Their reasons, I think, will come out in a later answer.

23. Did the Metropolitan Board of Works make any representation to the Government upon the subject?—Yes; in the year 1873 they addressed a letter to the Secretary of State, which I will read to the Committee. The letter is dated the 28th of May 1873. "Sir,—

A 3

The

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

The Board is desirous of calling your attention to the operation of the Act passed in 1872, to provide for the better protection of infant life. The circumstances which led to the passing of the Act are probably within your knowledge. It came into operation on the 1st of November 1872, and its purport shortly stated is, to require every person receiving for hire, for the purpose of nursing apart from its parents, more than one child, or in the case of twins more than two children, under the age of one year, to be registered by the local authority. The Board being constituted the local authority to carry out the provisions of the Act within the metropolis (except the City of London) at once took the measures which seemed best calculated to make the requirements of the law known to the persons affected by it. Advertisements were inserted in the newspapers, and printed notices sent to be put up at all the police stations and all the workhouses in the metropolis. It was evident, however, from the very small number of applications made to be registered, either that the provisions of the law remained unknown to the great bulk of the persons to whom it related, or that there was a general indisposition to comply with its requirements. The Board then addressed letters to all the vestries and district boards, and to the boards of guardians, in the metropolis asking them to instruct their various officers, who, in the course of their duties of sanitary or medical inspection or poor relief, might be brought into contact with persons who received children to nurse, to report to the Board any case in which they might find children so kept without the sanction given by the Board's registration, in order that proceedings might be taken to enforce the law. A similar request was made to the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. These measures, however, have produced very inadequate results. The total number of cases brought before the Board since the 1st of November last, the date when the Act came into operation, has been 25. Of these, nine were registered according to the statute, in four cases registration was refused, in seven the parties were found to be exempt from the operation of the Act, in that only one child was being kept apart from its parents; two were institutions, and as such exempted; and the remaining three cases are still under consideration. Looking to the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on this subject in 1871, the Board cannot avoid the conclusion that the number above mentioned bear but a very small proportion to the total number of persons in the metropolis who receive children for hire apart from their parents. At the same time the Board is of opinion that it has done all that it can do in the matter. Feeling, therefore, the responsibility under which it has been placed by the Legislature in being constituted the local authority under the Act, the Board desires to call your attention to the subject, and to express the opinion, based upon the experience above detailed, that some amendment of the law is required to enable this object to be effectually accomplished." That is signed by the Clerk of the Board.

Chairman—continued.

24. What was the result of that letter?—A letter from the Secretary of State, dated the 30th of May 1873, in which the writer says: "Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Bruce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th instant, calling attention to the operation of the Act passed in 1872 to provide for the better protection of infant life, and stating that in the opinion of the Board some amendment of the law is required to enable its object to be effectually accomplished, and I am to say that Mr. Bruce will be happy to receive any suggestions for the improvement of the Act which the experience of the Board may enable them to offer." The Board thereupon sent a series of practical suggestions for the amendment of the Act, in a letter dated the 25th of June 1873. The suggestions are: "(1.) That the term 'infant,' for the purposes of the Infant Life Protection Act, shall mean and include persons up to seven years of age. (2.) That any child kept for hire or reward beyond the period of 24 hours, as provided in the Act, shall be so kept only in a registered house, as provided in the same Act;" that is to say, that it applies the Act to one child. "(3.) That any police constable finding that any infant kept in a registered house is not provided with proper food and attention shall forthwith apply to any justice of the peace, or police magistrate, for a summons against any person keeping a child and neglecting it, and the justices on hearing the case may make an order that proper food and attention shall be given to any child kept pursuant to the Act. (4.) That the police authorities shall, on all occasions when they can procure any information relative to the keeping of any child for hire in any house not registered, give that information to the local authority. (5.) It is suggested that as persons who act as nurses without registration might claim exemption as relatives or guardians under Section 13, the clause should be considered, and probably the existing exemption repealed, leaving the distinction as to nurses to depend simply on 'hire or reward.' (6.) That clearer authority and facility should be given for obtaining admission by the police or anyone authorised by a local authority to any premises where children are supposed to be kept." The Secretary of State replied to that letter on the 10th of October 1873. I may first add that a further letter was sent on the 8th of October to the Secretary of State, calling attention to a special case, and directing attention to the letter that I have just read. To that this reply was received: "Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Lowe to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, and to acquaint you, in reply, for the information of the Board, that their suggestions which accompanied their letter of the 25th of June last, for the amendment of the Act passed in 1872 for the better protection of infant life, were carefully considered by the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the subject, of which Committee the Under Secretary for the Home Department was a Member. The measure itself is tentative. There is a great risk lest, in order to

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

to prevent occasional crime, regulations should be introduced interfering intolerably with the non-criminal habits of a large class of the community, and especially subjecting the houses of the poor to no small intrusion; any such result would be fatal to the permanence of any legislation on the subject. Accordingly, taking the six suggestions of the Board, Mr. Lowe is not prepared (1) to raise the standard of infancy from one year to seven years; (2) to apply the Act to the nursing of one child; or (3) to transfer the oversight of the registered houses from the local authority to the police; though, doubtless, (4) the police should inform the local authority if they have reason to suspect violations in the law by non-registration. (5) The exemption of relatives was approved by the Select Committee, and Mr. Lowe concurs in their conclusion. (6) The Select Committee thought the present police powers ample, and that any extension of them would provoke opposition. Under these circumstances Mr. Lowe does not propose any alterations in the law on the subject, which has not been yet a year in force."

25. And then, what was the next step taken?—The Board addressed a further communication to the Secretary of State on the 7th February 1877. A great part of that goes over the ground already traversed, and I will not trouble the Committee with it, but the letter concludes, "I am now directed to state that the experience which the Board has since obtained as to the inadequate operation of the Act, which may be instanced by the fact that during the past year the total number of houses registered by the Board has been only six, leads the Board to adhere to the opinion which it formerly expressed, as to the advisability of the amendment of the Act, and in support of that opinion I am directed to point out, with regard to the case of the institution to which reference has already been made, that this is one of the places exempted from the operation of the Act, and over which the Board has consequently no control. Under all the circumstances it appears to the Board that the subject is one which is worthy of serious consideration, and it has therefore felt it to be its duty again to draw attention to the matter." And to that letter the Secretary of State replied in the following November, under date 2nd November 1877: "Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 7th February last, urging for an amendment of the Act for the better protection of infant life, passed in the year 1872, with a view to enabling the object to be more effectually accomplished, I am now directed by Mr. Secretary Cross to inform you that he has fully considered this question, and he is of opinion that ample powers exist for inspection under this Act, and that, before any fresh legislation is thought of, further steps ought to be taken for making the present law known; and Mr. Cross would suggest that such steps be taken by the Metropolitan Board of Works."

26. What was the result of that?—The result of that was, that the Board transferred the administration of the Act to my Department, and under my advice an inspector was appointed solely for carrying out the Act, and instructions were issued to the inspector for his guidance.

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Chairman—continued.

If the Committee will permit me I will read the instructions which were then given, which will show the course that, in the main, has been followed since in carrying out the Act in London.

27. It was in the year 1878, I think?—It was in the year 1878. These instructions are dated the 12th February 1878. "The inspector will, in the first instance, in addition to fully ascertaining the powers of the Board under the Act, make himself acquainted with the state of things the Act is partially intended to remedy, by a careful study of the Report of, and the evidence given before, the Select Committee on the Protection of Infant Life, and the Appendix thereto. That gives, better than anything else, an insight into the causes of the excessive mortality of infants; and it contains information as to the proper treatment of infants, which ought to be of great value to the inspector. It will be desirable that the inspector should note, in a convenient form for reference, any facts, either as to the detection of crime, or as to the treatment of infants, that it is necessary he should be cognisant of. He will also at first carefully examine the advertising columns of certain newspapers, a list of which will be supplied to him, in order to ascertain (1) any private lying-in establishments in the metropolis; and (2) any places where children are taken care of for hire. With the same object he will also obtain lists of all relieving officers, officers of charitable societies, sanitary officers, registrars of births, &c., and all workhouses and police stations in the metropolis. He will then arrange these in groups geographically in such a way that he can call at the places named in each group on the same day, and as frequently as possible. He must use his utmost endeavours to interest the officers in the working of the Act, so that they may give him any information bearing upon the subject coming to their knowledge. To facilitate this, he will leave them addressed envelopes, as well as his official card. On hearing of any lying-in place, he will make quiet inquiries as to what is known in the neighbourhood as to the number of the births, and as to the disposal of the infants. He will ascertain what births have been registered and endeavour to trace the children, if alive, and if dead, to satisfy himself as to the cause of death, either by reference to the registrar of the sub-district, or to the doctor who attended the child. In cases where he succeeds in tracing infants to the keeping by persons for hire, he will ascertain full particulars as to the terms on which they have been received, their present condition and treatment, and of the houses and persons who keep them. The inspector will fully report each day in writing to the Clerk to the Board what he has been engaged in during the day, and report separately as to each case, when such case is ripe enough to be reported on, or when he requires instructions or assistance from the office. As regards the inspection of the premises of persons applying for registration, the inspector will examine and report as to the (1) situation and surroundings of the premises; (2) if the applicant occupies the whole or part of such premises; (3) the number of rooms occupied and the cubical size

A 4

of

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

of each; (4.) the number of persons occupying each room; (5.) as to the fitness of the person applying; (6.) as to the methods of maintenance proposed, and the means of carrying them out. The inspector will frequently visit the premises already registered and satisfy himself that the number of infants is within the number allowed, and also that their condition and the condition of the premises is satisfactory."

28. And what was the result of the active enforcement of the Act?—This result is embodied in a further letter to the Secretary of State, who must have been moved from some other quarter in the direction of an amendment of the Act, as he applied, in a letter dated the 10th of March 1880, for the Board's suggestions "as to the proposed amendment of the Act." I may perhaps be allowed to read the letter of the Metropolitan Board of Works in reply, because it does embody the experience of the Board after the appointment of an inspector up to the year 1880, an experience covering a period of about two years. After recapitulating what had gone before the letter goes on: "Acting on that suggestion" (that is the suggestion of Mr. Secretary Cross to more actively enforce the Act) "the Board has since taken all available means not only for making the law known, but for enforcing it. Notices have been published in most of the daily, weekly, and local metropolitan journals, pointing out the necessity of registration, and information has been sought from the police, the Poor Law relief officers, registrars of deaths, &c., and from other sources. In addition to this, a special inspector has been appointed, and all the advertisements inserted in the public prints by persons taking infants for hire have been answered and the cases investigated, 669 investigations having been made in the two years ended 31st January last. The number of cases in which information was obtained from other sources during the same period was 427, making together 1,096, the total number of investigations made during the two years. As a result of the additional experience gained, the Board is strengthened in the opinion that in its present form the Act does not touch the great majority of cases in which infants are kept for hire in the Metropolis, all of which should, in the Board's opinion, be provided for; that some of the exceptions now made by the Act are undesirable; and that in some minor particulars also the Act requires amendment. Of the 1,096 cases investigated in two years, only 67 cases came within the operation of the Act, that is to say, only in that number of cases were two or more infants under the age of one year kept for hire or reward."

Lord Thring.

29. Will you explain that term "investigations"?—The advertisements which appeared in the public papers asking for children for adoption, or for hire or reward, were replied to by the inspector, and 669 investigations followed; that is to say 669 different inquiries were made.

30. On the advertisements?—On the advertisements. Then, in addition to that, the Board received from other sources information of 427 cases; and all these were investigated. Out

Lord Thring—continued.

of the 1,096 cases dealt with only 67 cases came within the operation of the Act; that is to say, only in that number of cases were two or more infants under the age of one year kept for hire or reward. The letter continues: "Of the persons concerned in these cases, 38 were registered under the Act and the remainder were either prosecuted or compelled to give up nursing some of the infants in their charge. In the remaining cases inquired into (in some of which infants were not kept, but only sought for), 622 infants under five years of age were found to be kept for hire."

31. Those were outside the Act?—They were outside the Act; 622 infants outside the Act were found to be kept for hire, "and there is every reason to believe that the number was much larger."

32. They were not within the Act?—No; the Board was seeking to bring them within the Act. There were 622 infants under five years of age.

33. But under five years of age would include the infants within the Act; you understand that I want the line drawn between the one-year infants and those outside the Act?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

34. Were they outside the Act for various reasons or for any particular reason?—They were outside the Act because, although in some cases under one year of age, only one infant under that age was kept with others over that age, and in other cases because none of the infants were under one year of age, although they were all under five years of age. "These infants were often kept under conditions which, if the cases had been within the operation of the Act, could not have been sanctioned. Either the persons in charge of the infants were old and unfit, the accommodation bad, or the food insufficient and unsuitable. In 89 cases it was found that, in order probably to escape the operation of the Act, only one infant under one year was kept, but that there were others above that age." That, I think, gives the information his Lordship wants as to the proportion not under the Act that were under one year. "From the experience thus gained the Board is satisfied that, if it is desirable to extend the special protection of the law to infants placed out at hire, as provided in the Act, there is little reason why that protection should not be extended to all such infants under five years of age, and whether the number received for hire be one or more. Numerous instances have occurred in which infants entrusted to persons who only receive one at a time have died in quick succession, and there are strong reasons why the taking of one infant for hire should only be permitted under the same supervision as two or more are taken. The Board also consider that some provision should be included making it unlawful to transfer infants for lump sums. At present it frequently occurs that a parent gets rid of all responsibility for an infant by the payment of a few pounds to a person whose interest certainly is antagonistic to the child's welfare. In one of these cases a woman, who had previously been imprisoned for six months at the instance

instance

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

instance of the Board, for improperly keeping infants, 'adopted' an infant 14 days old for the sum of 6*l.*, the parents of the child being entire strangers to her. In such cases it would appear desirable to make the parties to the transaction liable to punishment. The Board also remains of opinion that institutions should not be exempt from the operation of the Act. In three cases during the past year, including the notorious Deptford case, much good would probably have resulted from supervision. The managers of properly regulated public institutions can have little or no objection to registration, and there are other establishments claiming exemption from the Act where official supervision would probably have a wholesome effect. In some minor matters also the Act needs amendment." Then follow the suggestions for the amendment of the Act which, being set out formally, I perhaps need not trouble the Committee with unless they desire it.

Chairman.

35. Then was the Bill of 1890 introduced?—There was further correspondence, which is more or less of the nature of recapitulation. The Board addressed a further letter on the 14th of November 1888, eight years after the other, again urging the amendment of the Act; and on the 8th of December 1888 a letter was received from the Secretary of State which I will read to the Committee; it is dated "Whitehall, 8th December 1888. Sir,—The attention of the Secretary of State having from time to time been drawn to instances of evasions of the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, and various amendments of the law having been proposed by coroners and others interested in the subject, Mr. Matthews is desirous of obtaining any further observations or suggestions with a view to the amendment of the law which the experience of your board among those of other large towns might be able to afford. As an instance of evasion of the law a case has come to his notice where a woman, by means of advertisements under several names, was in the habit of obtaining possession of children under pretext of adopting them herself. On receipt of the premiums she would as soon as possible put the child out to nurse with some person who was willing to take the charge of a single child under the age of 12 months, or she would place it with some person whose house was registered under the Infant Life Protection Act for a weekly payment, or she would answer the advertisement of people who wished to adopt a child, and place it with them at a reduced premium (leaving a margin for profit for herself). Fictitious names and imaginary particulars as to parentage would be given to the various parties receiving the children. The Act would thus be evaded as follows:—1. The main provisions of the Act in Sections 2 and 3 are entirely evaded by the process of distributing the children who are received 'for hire or reward.' 2. The provisions of Section 5 as to the entries to be made in the register when the child is received are evaded by giving false particulars, and in the same way the provisions as to entering (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

the name and address of the person removing the child are evaded either by giving a false name and address, or by giving no name or no address. Section 6 does not apply in these cases, because the particulars are entered by the person receiving the child, and are therefore not false to the knowledge of the person making the entries. To meet these defects in the law the following suggestions for legislation have been made to the Secretary of State, and will be considered by him when he is in possession of further information:—1. The operation of the Act should be extended to infants up to five years of age, and to the keeping for hire of any number of infants. 2. Where two or more adults live together and take infants for hire they should be severally liable. 3. Registered persons should be required to give notice of removal, and upon the discontinuance of their registration to surrender the register kept in compliance with Section 5. 4. I am to request that in laying this letter before the Town Council of . . . you will be so good as to move the council to favour Mr. Matthews with their observations thereon, and with any information as to the working of the Act at . . . that may be likely to be of assistance in the consideration of this question." The letter is signed by "C. Stuart Wortley." In reply to that letter the board did on the following 18th of January make suggestions for the amendment of the Act, which in point of fact are very similar to those I have already put before you.

36. Then with reference to the Bill of 1890, was a Bill introduced into the House of Commons by the Home Secretary?—Probably, as the result of the information that Mr. Secretary Matthews obtained in response to that circular letter, which was sent to the various local authorities in the kingdom, a Bill was prepared by the Home Office, and introduced by Mr. Matthews and Mr. Stuart Wortley in 1890; and the Bill that is now before your Lordships is practically a reprint of Mr. Matthews' Bill of 1890. I may say that there is one addition which deals with the transference of infants, but in the main it is the Bill that was introduced by Mr. Matthews.

Lord Belper.

37. The printed Bill, as introduced?—Yes, as introduced; we shall come to the amendments afterwards.

Chairman.

38. What were the main provisions of the Bill?—The answer to that question is, that the main provisions of the Bill were similar to those of the Bill now before your Lordships.

39. And what became of that Bill?—The Bill was referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons, of which Mr. Stuart Wortley was the Chairman. Evidence was taken, and the Bill as amended was reported to the House, but for some reason it was not further proceeded with; possibly because it was late in the Session. The Report was presented on the 2nd of August 1890, and it may have been too late in the Session to go on with the Bill; but, as a matter of

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fact,

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

fact, it was not re-introduced at a subsequent date.

40. However, you do not know the reason of that of your own knowledge, of course?—I only know as a matter of fact the date of the presentation of the Report, and that the Bill was not re-introduced. I am unable to give the reasons for it.

41. Will you give the Committee some information as to the defects of the present law?—I hand in a return giving particulars of the number of infants in registered houses in London from 1883 to the present time, and their death rate. The return also indicates the number of infants up to the age of seven years that the inspector found being kept for hire at unregistered premises visited in the course of his investigations; and also the number of deaths, so far as they could be ascertained by inquiry from the persons keeping the infants. The return is divided into two parts, which are quite distinct; one relates to registered houses, and therefore within the scope of the present Act; the other relates to unregistered houses not under the Act.

42. Are you quoting from the return published in your report?—I am quoting from a return which I have specially prepared for this Committee.

43. It is not the same thing?—It is not precisely the same. The return first of all gives the number, in each of the years from 1883 to 31st March of the present year, of registered houses that were actually under registration in each year, and the number which were on the register at the end of each year. I do not know whether the Committee would desire me to go through the numbers, but they vary from about 20 up to about 50 in the various years.

Viscount Llandaff.

44. In what year were the 50?—Perhaps the Committee would like me to take the recent years; shall I take the last five years?

Lord Thring.

45. This is the number of registered houses?—I am now dealing with the number of registered houses. In the year 1891–92 (the official year is from the 1st April to the 31st March) the number registered during the year was only 15, and the number on the register at the end of the year was only 11. In the year 1892–93 the number registered during that year was 21, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 16. In the year 1893–94 the number registered during the year was 22, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 21. In the year 1894–95 the number registered during the year was 50, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 38. And in the year 1895–96, which has just expired, the number registered during the year was 54, and on the register at the end of the year, 41.

Viscount Llandaff.

46. This was under a system under which you could not get off the register. Under the Act as it stands you cannot get off the register?—Not

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

until the expiration of the registration year, unless you are struck off under Section 7. I should explain it in this way. The official year is from a fixed date to a fixed date; but the registration year is not from a fixed date to a fixed date, and in order to give full information to the Committee, I am obliged to give the fact that during a year so many houses were actually registered, although at the end of that year that precise number was not on the register. A few cases are accounted for by being struck off the register for one or other of the reasons provided for in the section, but only a few.

47. Do you mean that a certain number, not quite 13, but a certain number of registered houses had their registration expire before the end of the official year 1895–96?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

48. When you say "registered" you do not mean newly registered; you mean newly registered and renewed?—Some of them would be renewals. At the end of twelve months the registration ceases, and in a legal sense they are new registrations; but in point of fact, they are what your Lordship would understand as renewals; that is to say, houses that had been registered before were re-registered.

49. Like public-houses?—Like public-houses.

Lord Belper.

50. Then, when you give us the figures of 50 or 54, it does not mean all new houses?—No.

Lord Thring.

51. You mean the actual number on the register whether renewed or new?—That is the meaning. Of course, changes are always going on; new houses come on the register and old ones not being renewed, go off; they are continually changing. The registration is only for one year.

Lord Kinnaird.

52. And all go off?—And all go off; and only those are replaced on the register for the ensuing year as to which applications are received. Then, dealing with the number of infants under one year that were found in the registered houses during the 13 years which the return deals with, we found that the number of 1,502 infants had been received during that period; that the number of deaths that took place in the registered houses during the period was 253.

Viscount Llandaff.

53. Under one year of age?—Yes, under one year; and the number of inquests held was 23.

Chairman.

54. Twenty-three inquests, you say?—Yes.

55. And how many deaths?—Two hundred and fifty-three; that is to say, in 230 cases out of the 253 cases the coroners on the information received did not think it necessary to hold inquests.

Lord Thring.

56. But the deaths were of infants under one year?—The deaths were of infants under one year.

57. Not

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

57. Not of infants received under one year, but infants who, at the time of their death, were under one year old?—They were the deaths of infants under one year old. Then, passing to unregistered houses, that is, houses not in any way affected by the Act, the number of infants being kept for hire that the inspector found in the course of his inquiries at these unregistered houses during the period named was 4,501, almost precisely 3,000 more than those which came under the Act; and of that number 1,970 were found to be under one year; 852 were found to be between one year and two years; and the remaining number, 1,579, were found to be between two years and seven years. At that time we took cognisance of children up to seven years old.

Chairman.

58. The 4,501 means the children under seven years of age?—The total number of children kept for hire at unregistered houses under seven years of age.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

59. That is not merely the total of the different children for each separate year, it might include the same child twice over?—That has occurred to me; and any deductions that may be made from the death rate must be made with that allowance. It is impossible to tell, either with the infants at registered houses or the infants at unregistered houses, to what extent the numbers are duplicated. Of course, the inspector is able to know and visit a comparatively small number of the unregistered houses; he only comes across them in the course of his ordinary duties of inquiry; and there may be and probably are, a great number of other houses at which infants are kept for hire, of which he has no cognisance; but these are the number of infants he found at unregistered houses; and the number of deaths given are compiled from information that the persons receiving the infants supplied to him. In the case of the deaths at registered houses, the figures are exact, that is to say, we are cognisant of those deaths; but in the case of the deaths at unregistered houses, we can only know of them from the information given by the persons who received the infants; and the deaths of which we received information amounted during the period to 561; those were the deaths of infants of under one year.

60. Then the percentage would really be higher?—Probably very much higher.

61. If you duplicate the particular cases, of course that makes the death percentage higher?—It does. In the case of the registered houses dealing with the children under one year, it would probably not have been much higher; there would be very little duplication there, because, of course, the children soon reach the age of one year.

Lord Thring.

62. Does not the Bishop's question lead to this: that the comparison between the deaths in unregistered houses and registered houses is necessarily fallacious?—To a certain extent that is so; and I pointed out that any deductions (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

made from the death-rate must be made with some allowance for duplication.

Lord Kinnaird.

63. If the 4,500 included duplicated children, the percentage would be lower, would it not?—No, the actual number of children would be less, so that the death-rate would be higher. Then the deaths of infants under one year found at unregistered houses during the same period was 273.

Chairman.

64. You have some figures, I understand, with reference to the proportion of deaths of infants under one year at registered and unregistered houses?—Going on with the figures shown in the return, and subject to the allowance I have indicated to your Lordship, the death-rate was only 16.8 per cent. at the registered houses, of infants under one year, which is only slightly above the general death-rate in London of infants under one year, which averaged 15.4 over a period of 10 years (see the Registrar General's Annual Summary for 1894, page 6). All the deaths in registered houses are known to us, and although only a proportion of those at unregistered houses, the ascertained deaths at unregistered houses give a rate of mortality of 28.5 per cent. In other words, for every 1,000 births 168 infants under one year that died in registered houses, at least 285 died in unregistered houses. I think I may put it in this way: that so far as the figures apply to the children under one year there is very little duplication, and the figures are to a certain extent a guide.

65. Can you give the Committee any further information as to the mortality of infants?—I have gone through the evidence attached to the Report of the House of Commons Committee of 1871, which gives the following rates of mortality of infants. The ordinary mortality of infants under one year in England and Wales is between 15 and 16 per cent.; the ordinary mortality of infants nursed by their mothers in workhouses is also between 15 and 16 per cent.; that of infants put out by the Foundling Hospital to wet nurse is also between 15 and 16 per cent.; while the average mortality of hand-nursed infants is stated to be about 40 per cent.

Viscount Llandaff.

66. Even in well-conducted homes?—I am coming to that. In inferior houses and in rural districts it reaches from 40 to 60 per cent.; in large towns where the sanitary conditions are unfavourable it reaches to 70, 80, and even 90 per cent. The children of wet nurses taken from their mothers' breasts to make room for other infants are stated in the report to scarcely ever live; and even the infants of wet nurses left in well-conducted establishments like the Magdalen Home, are subject to a death-rate stated to be 54 per cent.

Chairman.

67. Those figures that you have quoted just now with reference to the infants of the wet nurses taken away, came out in the evidence

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

given about the Foundling Hospital, I think?—That is so.

68. That the Foundling Hospital put out children to nurse in the villages with wet nurses, and then the children of these wet nurses are put out to be hand-nursed and they generally die?—That was the evidence.

69. Can you tell us what are the proportions of legitimate and illegitimate children born in London?—From information supplied by the Registrar General's office and published by the council in London statistics, I find that in 1893 there were 128,149 legitimate infants and 4,913 illegitimate infants born in London. Then going to the death-rate I find that the deaths of children under one year in the County of London in the year 1893 were 21,802, or at the rate of 163 per 1,000.

Lord Thring.

70. One year children?—One year; I am dealing with the deaths of children under one year.

Viscount Llandaff.

71. What percentage does it give?—16·3 per cent. There were only 1,576 inquests in respect of those 21,802 deaths. Turning to the illegitimate children, I find that out of 4,913 illegitimate children born in London in 1893 only 80 came into registered houses; we found 125 in unregistered houses, and some probably were taken by institutions, but how many it is impossible to say. The average death-rate would account for about 840, and probably a small proportion were brought up by their mothers; but I think I may put it that many are not accounted for.

Lord Thring.

72. Do you mean that they are not known?—What becomes of them is not known.

Chairman.

73. Did you state that 80 illegitimate children you found in registered houses?—In that year.

74. Out of a total of how many children in the registered houses; I want to know what proportion of the legitimate to the illegitimate children you found in the registered houses; have you got that?—I find that in 1893-94 there was a total of 80 infants under one year in registered houses. These were nearly all illegitimate children.

Lord Thring.

75-8. As against how many legitimate?—I would rather that the inspector under the Act answered that question; but I think it will be found that few, if any, of the infants at registered houses are legitimate children.

79. Do I correctly understand you to say that all the children in the registered houses are illegitimate; when I say all, I mean nearly all?—Yes, I believe that to be so.

80. And that you know?—Well, the inspector would answer that question more positively.

81. I want to know this very much: as far as you know, when you talk of these registered houses, the children in them are, as a rule, illegitimate?—I have been myself pressing the

Lord Thring—continued.

inspector on the point several times, and he estimates that from 1 to 2 per cent. of the infants at registered houses are legitimate, the remainder being illegitimate.

82-3. And, as far as you know, you agree with that?—I have no knowledge apart.

Chairman.

84. You said just now, that out of a total of 4,826 illegitimate infants a certain number are at institutions and with their mothers; you cannot give anything more precise as to what became of them later?—We have no means of ascertaining how those infants were disposed of; and of course I am putting these figures forward as an argument indicating the desirability of some further powers being given in order that there may be some means of dealing with a larger proportion.

Lord Thring.

85. I understand you to say that the mortality of the children under one year old is 15 or 16 per cent.; but then that is only a very little higher than the mortality of adults, is it not?—I refer to the annual summary of the Registrar General, of the births, deaths, and causes of deaths in London and other large towns for the year 1894, and I find under the head of London, at page 6 of the Summary, and under the heading of Infantile Mortality—

86. Under one year old, or what?—The deaths of persons at all ages include those of 18,732 infants who had not completed their first year of life. These deaths are equal to a rate of 143 per 1,000 children born, as compared with 154, the average rate in the preceding 10 years. Infantile mortality was highest, 158 per 1,000 in the east group of sanitary areas, and lowest, 131 per 1,000 in the north.

Viscount Llandaff.

87-9. It does not say what "infantile" means; infants of what age?—Infants who have not completed their first year of life.

Chairman.

90. Can you give the Committee any information as to the number of inquests on legitimate and illegitimate infants in London. I may take it that when you speak of infants it is always infants under one year old, unless specified to the contrary?—I submit a return showing the number of inquests held in London on legitimate and illegitimate children in the years 1893, 1894, and 1895. Dealing first with legitimate children, the return shows that for the year 1893 there were inquests held on 894 male infants, and 796 female infants under one year; that there were 452 inquests on male infants of over one year and under seven years, and 381 inquests on female children between those ages; which gives a total of both sexes of 1,690 legitimate infants of under one year, and 833 legitimate infants of between one year and seven years during the year 1893. Dealing now with illegitimate or unknown infants, there were inquests on 162 male infants under one year, and 137 female infants under one year; and on illegitimate infants between the ages of one year and seven years

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

years there were 15 inquests on male infants, and 11 on female infants. In the year 1894 the number of inquests on legitimate infants, both male and female, under one year was 1,576, and 778 on legitimate infants between one year and seven years. On illegitimate infants under one year there were 287 inquests held, and 27 on illegitimate infants between one year and seven years. And for the past year, the year 1895, the numbers were slightly increased. There were 1,797 inquests on legitimate children under one year, and 877 upon legitimate infants between one year and seven years. There were 322 inquests on illegitimate infants under one year, and 38 inquests on illegitimate infants between one year and seven years.

Viscount Llandaff.

91. How many of those inquests resulted in any criminal verdict, do you know?—The information supplied to me by the coroners, from which this return is made up, does not include that; but I think you will be able to get it from the coroners themselves, some of whom it is proposed to call.

Chairman.

92. Then dealing with the Bill, and with Clause 2, why do you think that the Act should be extended to children under five years of age?—The view that our experience leads us to take is, that registration and the consequential supervision would benefit infants over one year kept for hire almost as much as it would benefit those under one year. The experience of the inspectors is to the effect that the conditions under which infants are found to be kept at unregistered houses are not nearly so good as those at registered houses, and we feel very strongly that supervision of some kind would be very beneficial to nurse infants up to, at any rate, the age when they would come within the operation of the Elementary Education Acts; and for that reason we suggest that the age should be raised from one year to five years, when the Elementary Education Acts apply; so that to a certain extent law and authority will be in touch with nurse infants, not merely for the first year and after the fifth year, but continuously from their birth forwards.

93. And then by the same clause, persons keeping only one infant for hire will come under the Act?—Some of the worst cases that we have come across are cases where only one infant under the age of a year is kept. The inspector will give you more detailed information than I can give as to trafficking in infants where only one is dealt with at one time. It may be within the knowledge of the Committee that in a case that is now under investigation, the Reading case, only one infant was taken and kept at a time, and yet clearly that is a case where some amount of supervision was desirable.

94. And how will this clause affect the boarding out of infants by societies and institutions?—Of course the keeping by societies and institutions is covered by the exemption, but the boarding out by societies and institutions is not covered by the exemption. The method that the Select Committee of 1890 proposed to apply (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

to that was the insertion in the exemption clause of sub-clause (b.) There they proposed that "in the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants," but I believe that exemption would only apply to one institution, the Foundling Hospital. The Committee may consider it a desirable thing to somewhat extend that exemption.

Lord Thring.

95. It is a matter of difficulty?—It is a matter of extreme difficulty; but where no other infants are kept, except infants that are boarded out by a properly organised society, the registration and supervision by a public authority may not be so necessary, because a properly organised society would take some private means of supervision, which might be equally effectual, or more effectual than public supervision.

Chairman.

96. The difficulty, I suppose, was where to draw the line between what you describe as a properly organised society, and these so-called philanthropic institutions which perhaps are not so well managed?—They are not so well managed. We have experience of a considerable number of societies where the management has been anything but good.

Lord Thring.

97. Could you name them?—Any evidence of that nature that the Committee desires will be forthcoming. I prefer that the inspector who was in touch with the cases should give you that evidence.

Chairman.

98. On that point you suggest the question of a possible extension of the exemptions. It might be possible, perhaps, to meet it in the way that was indicated by Miss Hill in her evidence before the Committee of 1890, in which she suggested the registration of committees in different places; I mean to say that possibly institutions might be exempted which are duly authorised by the local authorities in places where infants are boarded out, that have the leave, as it were, of the local authorities to board out infants in that locality, so that the local authority might know of the infants being boarded out there?—Some provision of that sort would probably meet the case. I may say that I have no experience of that sort, because I think boarding out in that way would be largely carried on outside London rather than inside London. I ought to have said "little" experience; we have some experience of infants being put out at registered houses by institutions, but, of course, no difficulty has arisen with them because they have been placed in registered houses under supervision.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

99. Are these institutions you refer to as not so well managed, managed by a committee or by single persons?—By single persons as a rule.
100. You

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

100. You know, of course, that the objections raised by several of these institutions mainly consist in the contention that the respectable people with whom they board out these children in the villages would be rather loth to come forward and offer to take the children if they had to register them; that is the objection urged by the Foundling Hospital and various other institutions?—That is the case.

101. How would this clause affect the case of a working man or woman who desires to put an infant with a friend?—If in such a case objection to registration is felt by the friend, it would doubtless be a difficulty. It is a difficulty that the 1890 Committee attempted to meet by suggesting the limitation of the proposed Amending Act to illegitimate children. That doubtless might meet the case, but at the same time I point out to the Committee that any limitation of that kind would be extremely difficult to deal with in actual administration. I apprehend that it would not be a difficult thing for almost any woman to produce to a person receiving infants for hire sufficient evidence to justify that person in receiving the infants. She might, for instance, borrow a certificate as evidence that she was a married woman. I do not think there would be very much difficulty in that being done. So that I apprehend that if so wide an exemption as that were inserted in the Bill there would be considerable scope for evasion. I ought to mention also that one of the proposed exemptions that the Committee of 1890 inserted in the Bill was under exemption "E," which reads: "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause." But I feel even more strongly that that exemption might be so wide as to cover nearly every case that might arise; and for that reason it requires to be considered with very great care. At the same time I also point out that the whole of this Clause 6, dealing with exceptions, is intended to apply only to cases where lump sums are paid for the infants. The proviso is: "Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of five years, in consideration of an immediate payment, shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section." It is a little difficult to see how that would work.

102. It would be rather difficult to prove that they had received some lump sum, would it not?—It would be exceedingly difficult to prove it; and I think possibly it would be a very easy thing to evade, because when the transaction took place it would be necessarily a private transaction; the person receiving the infant might protect herself by preparing what purported to be an agreement that the payment should be periodical, and it would be very difficult indeed to obtain evidence to show that an offence against the Act had been committed.

Chairman—continued.

103. She might have a series of receipts for several weeks ahead and yet a lump sum might be paid down?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

104. I suppose the most desirable thing of all is that the lump sum cases should be prevented?—Yes; I think that those cases in which a parent practically parts entirely with an infant to another person on payment of a simple sum of money lead to more crime than any other class of cases.

Viscount Llandaff.

105. In the case of a lump sum payment, it is to the interest of the receiver that the child should die; in the case of a weekly payment it is her interest that the child should live?—That is the case.

Chairman.

106. But all the evidence given in the past by people interested in these boarding-house institution shows one of their cardinal rules is that payment should always be weekly or monthly on behalf of the children; both in the case of Poor Law rules and voluntary institutions?—That is the case.

107. How would this clause affect the case of parents in India and elsewhere who may have to send children to England?—It would undoubtedly affect those cases; and I have no doubt that cases of that sort should be exempted, and probably the Committee will be able to see some means of providing an exemption for them. I think it might not be difficult to prepare an exemption which would cover cases of that kind. They do not appear to be altogether covered by the amendments inserted in the Bill of 1890, unless the proviso as to limiting the operation of the Bill to illegitimate children is adopted. That would, of course, entirely cover them.

108. It would be covered, of course, if the children were sent to relatives or guardians?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

109. But, practically, the introduction of the word "illegitimate" would solve the difficulty in all these cases?—Practically it would.

Chairman.

110. But at the same time, with regard to the question of the Bishop, you are of opinion strongly that if the Act was confined to illegitimate children it would open the door to a very large amount of practical evasion of the Act?—I fear that that might be so.

111. That in the case of these people who are the worst class, and necessarily very unscrupulous, it would not be in any way difficult for them, and would not require any very great ingenuity on their part, if the inspector came round and made inquiries as to the infants in the house, to prove that they were legitimate?—I think that it would not; that the receiver of the infants would probably be able to satisfy the inspector that she had taken the necessary means for ascertaining that the children were legitimate before she received them.

112. The

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

112. The inspector would be entirely at the mercy of the person's statement?—Very largely so.

113. In fact, he would have no means of checking it?—I see very little means at his disposal; he could only do so by subsequent inquiry, which would be a matter of great difficulty.

114. Then, with reference to Clause 3 of the Bill, will you tell the Committee the object of requiring written statements as to the parentage of infants placed out to nurse?—The object of making the statement a written one is that we believe that a person would frequently hesitate to make a false statement in writing while possibly ready to do so orally. The present law, as you are aware, prohibits a false statement, but provides no penalty for making the false statement. This clause is practically as it left the Select Committee of 1890, except the period of residence; that Committee altered it to three months, both in Sub-Clauses 1 and 2.

Viscount Llandaff.

115. But the Bill of 1890 does not require writing. Clause 2 only says, "Shall state truly the name, sex and age of the infant"?—"Shall state truly"; that is the case; and I have given the reasons for desiring that the statement should be in writing, because we believe there would be less probability of evasion being attempted.

Chairman.

116. Do you say that there is no penalty for a false statement now under Section 5 of the present Act; it does not state so in the section, but it says in the section, that the person "shall immediately enter the name, sex, and age"; is it not the assumption that if they state it wrongly there is a penalty?—The penalty in the Act is directed solely against the registered person, and not against a person who may give false information.

117. We have dealt with Clause 3 with regard to the question of statements in writing respecting infants received, but not with Sub-section 2, about the preventing of the handing on of children; I do not think we have had any remarks from you on that subject?—That, I think, does not arise under this clause, but under another clause; Clause 5, I think it is.

118. Yes, it comes under this: "Where an infant is removed from the care of a person registered under the principal Act the person removing the infant shall state truly in writing"?—That is in order to enable the registered person to make the entry in the register which is required under the existing Act.

119. That is for the purpose of enabling the inspector to trace the people if he finds that they have gone?—That I apprehend is the purpose, that there may be some means of tracing what becomes of the infants.

120. They are not able to do it under the present Act, then?—Yes, the present Act makes a provision for the registration by the registered person, of the infants, both as to their reception (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

and disposal, but it makes no provision as to misleading statements made to the registered person; and I apprehend that sub-clause (2) of Clause 3 of the Bill is intended for the protection of the registered person with a view to ensuring that correct information is given for the entries on the register.

121. Then Clause 4, which requires the delivery up of the register, what is the object of that?—That is a small point; but it has been found in practice that persons remove and do not give up the register, so that we lose trace not only of the persons but of the infants; and the object of the clause is to enable us to follow the person, and in order to regain possession of the register. All the person is now required to do is to produce the register while under registration, and the object of the proposed clause is to require him, on leaving the house or giving up registration, to give up the register.

122. Clause 5, have you anything to say about that?—Clause 5 is an attempt to deal with the transfer of infants, and is, I apprehend, one of the most important clauses in the Bill. At present any person can receive an infant and then get rid of it to another person without committing an offence; that is, supposing they take care to avoid keeping two or more infants for more than 24 hours; and this appears to be conducive to the practice of taking in infants for lump sums and disposing of them. The Bill proposes that a person may not receive infants without being registered, and may not dispose of them to another person without consent.

Viscount Llandaff.

123. The consent of the local authority?—The consent of the local authority; that is to say, that a registered person having received for hire an infant, that person should not be allowed to traffic in it (that is, to dispose of it for a profit) without the transaction being in some way registered.

124. The Bill goes much beyond that: you must not transfer it in any way; not merely for hire?—I think the intention is that it shall apply to transfer for hire.

125. Transferring to the Poor Law authorities would be within the clause?—It is obvious that that is not meant; it is, I think I may say, entirely directed against such a transference as is very common, and which you will probably hear of over and over again in the evidence, where persons do take infants for lump sums, and place them out with other persons at a profit.

Chairman.

126. That is to be guarded against by putting in the words "For hire or reward," again after the word "person" in the third line, "It shall not be lawful for any person who receives any infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person for hire or reward"?—It would require a little consideration, but that might probably meet the case.

127. That would make it absolutely clear: You say that is what you mean?—I think it requires consideration before any modification is made.

B 4

128. "Transfer

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

128. "Transfer or give for consideration"?—Yes; I think possibly after the word "relative" in the proviso, in Clause 5, the words "or guardian" might properly be added. It would be a re-disposal, practically, on the part of the person from whom the infant was received. I may say that it is a matter which comes frequently within our experience that a person has been paid a lump sum to take charge of an infant, that that person has transferred the infant on a promise to pay a periodical sum, say, 5s. a week, for its maintenance, that the payment has been made for two or three weeks, and that the payment has then ceased, and no trace at all of the intermediary has been obtained; and that child has been then taken to the workhouse and its maintenance fallen upon the rates.

129. Under this clause it could not be taken to the workhouse without the consent of the local authority?—That is not what is intended.

Lord Thring.

130. How can the local authority know anything about it; how can they know even of its existence?—Assuming that the law has been complied with as to registration, the local authority would, of course, know of its existence; but at present this transference of infants can be done perfectly legally, and the object of the Bill is to make it an offence to put obstructions in the way of doing it, and to make it somebody's duty to see that it is not done.

Viscount Llandaff.

131. Supposing that a woman has got a child to take care of for a neighbour, and the woman gets scarlet fever, and in a hurry wants to transfer the child to some safe house, she must, under this clause, get the consent of the local authority before she can do it?—Of course, every Act must be carried out with discretion.

132. But the words are, that she is not to transfer the child to anybody without the consent of the local authority?—It is rather difficult I apprehend to draw an Act to cover every possible case, and my experience is that a large discretion is necessary in the administration of all Acts.

133. A dispensing power, in fact, in the local authority to administer the Act or not as they think fit?—A dispensing power not to enforce penalties where the local authority considered it undesirable.

Chairman.

134. But before we leave this very important question are you going to bring evidence afterwards, or can you bring now any evidence, to show the extent to which children are passed on in this way which you desire to put a stop to?—The inspector will be able to produce evidence on that point.

135. We want to know to what extent it exists now?—Yes; evidence will be given.

Viscount Llandaff.

136. The transfer in itself would not be a bad thing; it is maltreatment of the transferee that you want to guard against?—I think the system of traffic which leads to possible maltreatment is what we want to guard against.

Lord Thring.

137. The most dangerous thing of all is to give a lump sum to a woman, and two hours afterwards she gets rid of the child to another person?—I apprehend that Clause 5 of the Bill would affect that. There is no limitation to 24 hours in that clause. It provides, "It shall not be lawful for any person who receives any infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person without the consent in writing of the local authority"; that is to say, what now goes entirely untouched by the law and is believed to be a common practice, would be created an offence, and this would enable the local authorities to some extent to touch it.

Lord Belper.

138. Do you intend that this clause should necessarily hang by the clause which compels all people having children under five years of age for hire or reward to be registered, because if it does it is better to say in the clause that any person registered under the Act, under these circumstances, shall not be allowed to transfer the child without the consent of the local authority; but if you mean it to be effective, whether you get the other power passed or not, then it is another thing?—I think the clause should stand on its own merits quite apart from any question of registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

139. That a non-registered person having received a child ought to get the consent of the local authority to its transfer?—Having received it for "hire or reward."

140. That person being already liable to the penalty you mention for not having registered?—Yes.

141. You think that such a person would try to get the consent of the local authority?—It would enable the local authority to keep in touch with the case.

142. The non-registered person being already liable to the penalty of imprisonment for having taken a child without registration, you suggest that that person should go to the local authority for consent to transfer it. They would not do it?—They very likely would not do it; but the clause makes something illegal which is legal now, and which in the common interest of the community ought to be stopped. We may or may not be able to enforce the clause, but it will give us some power to stop the practice.

Lord Thring.

143. Take the case of a child at a school sent from India to a friend in this country; cannot they transfer the child to another school without the consent of the local authority?—I have already said that in my opinion the Committee will have to devise some means of exempting cases of that sort.

Chairman.

144. What you want is to hit the person that comes to the house and takes the child away?—I want to hit the intermediary.

145. You

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

145. You want to find out where the child has gone to. The inspector asks, Where is such a child that I saw last week; he finds it is gone, and wants to know where it is gone to?—I do not think the case is one such as you have in your mind, but it can be illustrated in this way: a woman who does not really keep infants herself at all, or only for quite a short period, advertises for infants or answers advertisements in which infants are proposed to be given out for adoption; the ordinary practice is that that person enters into negotiation with the parent or guardian of the child; finally, a sum of money, varying possibly from a few pounds, say 10l., up to a very considerable sum of money, is paid to this person to take the child off the parent or guardian's hands. The person who receives the child and the sum of money then gets rid of the child by placing it out in the care of somebody else who receives it for hire or reward, sometimes in a registered house. Our experience is that the money may be paid for a week or two, but that then the payment is dropped, and the person who receives the infant very likely puts it on the parish; it is the intermediary, the person who makes the profit out of the transaction, that we want to hit.

146. But you have already hit that person by two clauses; you hit him by the clause that requires him to be registered?—I am afraid not, because in a large number of cases they do not keep the child for a period of 24 hours, so I do not think they are hit by that clause, but they would be hit by the clause you now have before you.

Chairman.

147. They might take the child and receive the payment, go straight away to the other place and put it out?—That is the ordinary practice: they receive the child at a railway station, and put it out at once.

Lord Thring.

148. It is involved in the registration clause: you mean to say you want to make it a statutable offence for a woman to take a child, getting a large sum of money with it, and then get rid of the child immediately?—Yes.

149. But she does not maintain the child at all?—No. An ordinary case would be where she would receive 10l., and put that child out at 5s. a week, and pay for two or three weeks, and then drop the payments.

Earl of Buckingham.

150. Then the child would go to the workhouse?—Yes, it ordinarily does, so that the profit made would be upwards of 9l.

Chairman.

151. I should like to know whether this clause would hit the lying-in-house keeper in the sense of handing over children; would it make it illegal for the lying-in-house keeper to take a child and pass it on?—I think it would where the lying-in-house keeper undertakes the charge of the child for the mother. When she simply acts as an agent of the mother in placing the child out, I doubt whether it would touch her.
(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

152. What proof could there be of that?—Everything arising out of this Act is difficult of proof, I admit. I think that the very fact of the thing being made illegal would go a great way towards stopping it.

Lord Kinnaird.

153. Do you know whether many of those struck off the register or who wish to get off the register, afterwards take in infants for hire or reward; do you follow them up?—They sometimes come back for re-registration. The inspector does more or less keep in touch in them. I think that the effect of having once registered is to render it improbable that the registered person would seek to avoid registration afterwards.

Chairman.

154. Now we will go on to Clause 6; do you think that the power of entry that is given there is necessary?—Some difficulty has been experienced by the inspectors, and it is suggested that their powers should be enlarged. I observe that the Committee of 1890 proposed to limit the power of compulsory inspection to those cases where the warrant of a Justice is granted; and as that is the ordinary practice and custom of this country, I apprehend that this Committee will desire to embody a proviso of that sort in the clause. I do not suggest that any departure should be made from the safeguards that are ordinarily attached to the right of entry. I am not now speaking of registered houses, I am speaking of the right of inspection in a case of suspicion; and the section as drawn gives the right of entry in such a case as that, but the Committee of 1890 modified that right by requiring a warrant of a Justice in the ordinary way; and I suggest that that may be a desirable safeguard.

Viscount Llandaff.

155. There is no power of entry in the existing Act?—There is none.

Chairman.

156. And the consequence was that, when the officer went to make inquiries, where he had reason to suspect that children were kept, they sometimes refused to admit him, and he had no power of entry?—That is so.

157. Will you tell us what you think of Clause 7?—That enlarges the power of the local authority to strike the house off the register, not only for serious neglect or incapacity to properly provide food and attention, or because the house has become unfit, as provided by the present Act, but also for other reasons; for instance, when the registered persons themselves desire to be struck off the register. No such power of cancelling the registration appears to exist except for the reasons specified in the section, and it would be desirable in the interest of the registered persons that some enlargement of the section should be provided for.

Lord Belper.

158. Would it not be proper to put in that Clause 7 in the principal Act should be repealed; they

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

they appear to follow exactly the same lines with the addition you have mentioned?—Yes, or simply to provide an amendment of the clause.

159. You embody the whole of Clause 7 of the principal Act with an addition, and in that case it ought to be repealed?—Yes, in that case it ought to be repealed.

Viscount Llandaff.

160. What is to be done with the children? Here is a house with several children which suddenly gets struck off the register, and therefore keeping these children would be an offence?—It would be so under the existing law. It would not arise under any cases that the enlarged section is proposed to meet; but, as a matter of fact, the practice is that the inspector always takes care as to the disposal of those infants before the house is struck off the register, or immediately afterwards. We take the greatest care that no unnecessary inconvenience is put upon the registered person, and that the infants are properly cared for. May I put the case of a woman who commits a breach of the law and is committed to prison; the inspector invariably in those cases has to look after the infants by taking them to the workhouse, or providing proper care for them; otherwise they would be quite without care.

Chairman.

161. Have you got any other suggestions to give to the Committee?—I have no further suggestion to make in my examination-in-chief; possibly certain points will arise in the further examination as to any exemptions that the Committee may question me upon; and I may be in a position to make some suggestions then.

162. I should like to ask you before we conclude the examination-in-chief about Clause 8, the interpretation of the expression "institutions established for the protection or care of infants"?—There an attempt has been made to define the meaning of the word "institutions" as meaning "societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons."

Lord Belper.

163. It is rather broad?—It is very broad, necessarily broad I think.

Lord Thring.

164. Does it add anything to the former clause?—It does this: it endorses a practice that has been practically acted upon for many years past. There is no definition as you are aware in the present Act; we have acted upon that definition and find it answers in practice.

Viscount Llandaff.

165. I do not quite see what you get by the words "societies organised for some public or social object." The point is a committee of six?—Yes, that is the principal point.

166. I suppose taking the words in the original Act "for the care and protection of infants," those words indicate a public and social object?—I think they do. Then the words "relatives" and "guardians" are not defined, and I think it may be found very possible to

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

give a definition of those words. I venture to suggest to the Committee this definition: that the word "relatives" shall mean persons related to the infant either by blood or marriage within the degree of first cousinship; the word "guardian" shall mean, the person or persons, who is or are by law, liable to maintain the infants.

Lord Thring.

167. The persons liable to maintain the infant would be the parents?—But the parents might be dead or absent.

168. I should have thought it desirable to leave them both alone?—It is quite possible that it might be desirable to leave them alone, but it may tend to make the thing a little more workable if you define what relationship is, and therefore I suggest within the degree of first cousinship by either blood or marriage.

Chairman.

169. Do you see any objection to qualify this definition of a society "controlled by a committee of not less than six persons," and putting in a proviso that it shall be approved by the local authority of the district in which they shall board out children, because it seems to me that one of these women might be able to get six other persons worse than herself to form such a committee, and then you would have no control over them?—I see that difficulty.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

170. What would you believe to be the reason why there are so few registered houses in London for the taking in of children, when any registered house can be legitimately a source of profit; there are only some 20 or 30 houses in the whole of London; why are there not more?—I am afraid I can give no explanation. The Council has endeavoured by every means in its power and by vigilance to increase the number. They have appointed in recent years two additional inspectors, and there are now three inspectors for London, one male inspector for the north of the Thames, one for the south of the Thames, and a lady inspector who visits the registered houses; and we have taken every means in our power to make the necessity for registration known, and have endeavoured to find out all about the disposal of infants put out for hire; and the practical fruit of our endeavour is that those houses are on the register, and under supervision. Why there are not more it is very difficult to say, except that we find in practice that, I should think, 90 per cent. of the infants that are now put out for hire do not come within the purview of the Act; that is to say, either only one infant under one year is kept, or if there are more infants than that one infant, the remainder are over one year old, so that the Act is not transgressed, as registration is not necessary in the present state of the law in such cases.

171. But if it be, as one would think it may be, a most profitable thing to have a house properly conducted for three or four infants, is it not possible that the very inquiries you refer to have been discouraging respectable people who might desire to have a registered house rather than encouraging them. I mean this: That

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

That at present the *prima facie* view that anyone would take of a place where infants are received is, that it is a disreputable place, and that though it may just escape condemnation, or may even succeed in being registered and fairly well conducted, it is not such a thing as respectable people would desire to engage in. Why not? It puzzles me; I am asking simply for information?—I think the objection to registration must be mainly a sentimental objection. Our experience shows us that many people have a prejudice against their houses being considered as baby farms, and that directly you register them, their neighbours, and anyone cognisant of the fact, begin to regard them suspiciously, and although the reverse of that is really the fact, that is to say, they remove by registration any real reproach against the practice of taking infants for hire, that is not the way it is regarded by the general public.

172. You are not of opinion that anything could be done by the authorities just now rather to encourage the registration of a larger number of houses than merely to inquire whether existing houses are registered or not?—Everything that can be done in London is already done in the direction of encouragement of registration of houses.

173. The registration of houses which at present takes place?—Yes.

174. But I mean multiplying registered houses?—As far as it is possible for us to increase the number, we do so; we offer every facility by information and advice, and in every way we desire that persons who do take infants for hire should come on the register, and we point out to them that it brings with it no disabilities except the sentimental disability of being regarded as keeping a baby farm.

175. And you find it difficult to understand why, considering how many hard-up people are in pursuit of a fair source of profit, there should not be more of these registered houses?—I am inclined to think that at the prices usually paid for infants taken for hire there would not be much profit.

176. That is what I wanted to get at; there are two reasons that might prevent it; one that there might be no demand for such places, and the other that they would not be profitable, and you rather think that they are not profitable?—I do not think there are many inducements to enter into it. It is not a lucrative business.

Viscount Llandaff.

177. Why do so many people take one child; you have given us a large number of cases of people who take one child only where they might register and take two or three?—I think it is very difficult to say why.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

178. You mentioned in connection with that, that in existing houses that are registered changes are continually going on, that people are going off the register and on to it; what does that mean; what induces this constant change; do the majority of the places that are registered remain on the register for a term of years, 10 years say; would you find people registered to—
(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

day who were registered 10 years ago?—I would rather that you would take that from the inspector, who would be able to give you more precise information. I can only say in general terms that as a rule registration is not of any considerable permanence.

179. Then taking your evidence as a whole, I gather that you regard the operation of this Bill as practically intended for the case of illegitimate children almost exclusively; it may be going too far to say that, but in overwhelming preponderance?—In great preponderance as far as our experience goes, that is to say as far as the cases of which we have any record, the proportion of legitimate children which have been found kept for hire would probably not reach 5 per cent. of the whole.

180. The children who would come under the purview of this Bill may practically be said to be 95 per cent. of them illegitimate?—I think that may be said to be the case.

Lord Belper.

181. Then practically it would not affect your object much if this second clause was confined to illegitimate children?—Except as to the practical difficulty, which I have already pointed out, on the question of the evidence of legitimacy. I fear that that would be exceedingly easy to obtain, and that although the children might be illegitimate, evidence of legitimacy might be brought forward to induce persons to take them for hire, and in that way the law might be evaded. I point out, for the information of the Committee, that the House of Commons Select Committee of 1890, while proposing to limit the operation of the Bill to illegitimate children, did not propose to repeal Section 2 of the Act of 1872; so that it was intended that two or more infants under one year, either legitimate or illegitimate, should require registration under the existing Act, but that the extension of the law should be limited to illegitimate infants.

182. Of course, in that case this would go in a different form; not to repeal the former clause?—That would be so.

183. I did not intend in my former question to suggest that you should alter the clause in the original Act, but that this clause as far as it is new should be confined to illegitimate children?—Yes, that I understood.

Viscount Llandaff.

184. I did not quite appreciate your objection to the exemption clause, Clause 6, Sub-section (e) of the Bill of 1890, which exempts from the provisions of that Bill the case of working people leaving home in search of work, and leaving their children with a friend; is not that a constant case in the North of England especially, where men leave home for a week or a fortnight, or more, in search of work?—I think that that may be the case, and to a certain extent, to a less extent, in London also.

185. Wherever it occurs, whether in London or in the North, surely that is not a case in which you would insist upon registration?—I think if any means can be devised to avoid the necessity of registration in such a case it ought

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

to be devised; but the difficulty I see is this: the Bill, as I have just pointed out, was proposed to be applied only to illegitimate children.

186. The Bill of 1890?—Yes, the Bill of 1890. Of course we are now dealing with a clause suggested by the Committee of 1890, and incorporated in the Bill of 1890, just as they incorporated the provision as to illegitimate children. They, first of all, only applied the Bill to illegitimate children, which appears to me to cover all such cases as these; and they then in addition, put in a proviso which, as far as I am able to judge, would have left little for the Bill to deal with. It would be a matter of the most extreme difficulty to deal with a question of legitimacy or illegitimacy, but when to that is added the exceptions contained in (e), it seems to me that the Bill became almost inoperative.

187. But, forgive me, Clause 6 has nothing whatever to do with legitimacy or illegitimacy, except where it is expressly mentioned. Clause 6, Sub-section (e) applies to the principal Act, the Act of 1872, as well as the Bill of 1890, and it exempts those cases of working men leaving home and putting their children in the care of a friend?—Yes.

188. And you admit that that is a proper exemption if you could ear-mark it?—Yes, I do think that; but the provision is to this effect: "In the case of any infant left by the desire, or with the knowledge, of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person, not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian, from home, on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause," I apprehend that it would not be difficult in the case of any infants we might find in charge of persons for hire, for one or other of these exemptions to be brought forward. They are so exceedingly wide; that is my difficulty.

189. It is wide; it covers the case put by Lord Thring, the case of a parent in India, with reasonable and necessary cause for putting his child in somebody else's care?—I fear it is too wide to make the Act beneficial.

190. But if it is a true cause for the transfer of a child to the care of another person, you admit that it is a legitimate cause?—I admit that that might be so, though at the same time I do not admit that there are any reasonable objections to registration, and I am disposed to think that there would be an advantage all round if registration were effected, because the parent or guardian who had been called away in search of work would have some guarantee that his child was being properly looked after meanwhile, and I see no reason at all except a sentimental one against registration in such a case.

191. What is the cost of your system of registration and inspection in London?—The cost to the registered person or to the ratepayers, do you mean?

192. To the ratepayers?—I should think that at the present moment it is about 600*l.* or 700*l.* a year, with three inspectors, and practically no other expenses beyond the inspectors.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

193. Printing and stationery?—That is small, certainly not more than about 25*l.* a year. I find the present cost of enforcing the 1872 Act in London is just over 500*l.* a-year.

Lord Belper.

194. The registration of these particular houses, do you mean?—The whole administration of the Act in London.

195. But you have only about 40 registered houses in London?—Yes, but we are dealing with the whole subject; we are dealing, or attempting to deal with the whole question of the putting out of infants to hire in London. Every case that we can possibly find out is thoroughly inquired into, so that I do not anticipate that any very great addition to the staff would be necessary in case there was an extension of the Act. Of course that would be a matter of experience.

196. Do you mean that the 500*l.* is spent in the administration of the Act, or that it is spent with reference to the registration of these particular houses?—In the administration of the Act I should say that the registration and supervision of the registered houses would be covered by a cost of 100*l.*

Lord Thring.

197. I should like to ask you one or two more questions. Whether we like it or no, must we not admit that, as the Bishop has suggested, registration is detested under this Act; as a matter of fact, sentiment has immense power in these matters, and there is the strongest sentimental objection, if you like to call it so, to registration?—I do say, as a fact, that the feeling does exist, and exists very strongly.

198. And is it an unnatural feeling; registration means, in the apprehension of the people in general, baby-farming, does it not?—It does, but I think that the view is a false one to this extent, that it is much more serious to take infants without registration than with registration.

199. Yes, I only want you to admit this, that registration under the Act is detested on the ground that it is supposed to imply baby-farming, and that baby-farming means a system of taking illegitimate children for the purpose of carrying out the views of those who wish to get rid of them?—I think that the objection to registration is in connection with that sentiment.

200. A true sentiment; the majority of these children are really farmed out, committed to the care of these people with a view of getting rid of them, so that the parents may never hear anything more of them, but may go their way without having anything to do with them again?—I do not think that that is so with legitimate cases.

201. Are there any legitimate cases?—I am not speaking of legitimacy in the ordinary sense. I do not think that that is so in ordinary cases where the mothers put out their infants to be taken care of, and pay periodically for their maintenance; I do not think that in all those cases it can be said that the object is to get rid of those infants.

202. Then really and truly the whole object of

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

of this Bill so far as you can make out, practically the direct object, is to extend it to places where one child is kept and to the five years' old children?—That is the main object.

203. I want to point out to you that all these clauses with respect to written statements are really of very little value, because you have no possible means of checking them?—I venture to think that if you make a thing unlawful there is less probability of its being done than if it can be done quite lawfully.

204. Then we have got to balance the advantages that may accrue in certain cases by extending the Act, for all the reasons which have been suggested by you, against the disadvantage that it would include people who legitimately take children and yet would detest to have their houses registered?—No doubt that is the case.

Viscount Llandaff.

205. Registration itself does no good, but notice to a local authority that some person has got a child, not her own, to take care of, would not that answer the purpose; if the law were this, that if you take in somebody else's child you must give notice to some local authority?—The whole object of registration is with a view to that.

206. Would there be the same objection to giving notice, do you think, that there is now to being registered?—I think very likely there might not be the same objection to giving notice as to registration.

207. Then supposing notice were coupled with a provision for the medical officer of the district yearly to visit the child, would not that answer every purpose you want?—I think not.

208. Why not?—It is only for the health of the child that you are concerned. If the child is improperly fed or the ventilation not sufficient, or from want of cleanliness the house is not healthy, the medical man is the best person to see it, is he not?—I think in London some special officers are absolutely essential; it would never be carried out by medical officers with their multifarious duties, I feel very strongly upon that point. For instance, we have a Public Health Department as well as a Public Control Department, and with us it is found

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. CLIFFORD LUXMOORE DREW is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

217. You are, I think, Her Majesty's Coroner for the Western Division of London?—I am.

218. Would you mind telling the Committee some of your experience of the Infant Life Protection Act?—Well, as a preliminary, I might say that I have had a large experience in the western district during the last four or five years, and that during that time several cases of note have come under my investigation. Although during that time the number of cases of baby farming and allied cases to that

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Viscount Llandaff—continued.

more convenient that this Act should be administered in my department by special officers, because there would be a serious practical difficulty in carrying out the Act in connection with ordinary public health matters; there is nothing in common between it and the ordinary duties of the medical officers of health.

209. I should have thought that the whole point was whether the children were in a satisfactory state of health?—But the ordinary duties of the medical officers of health are connected with the sanitary condition of the premises rather than the condition of the individuals; and here it is the condition of the individuals, and an ordinary medical man would be a better parallel.

210. I suppose there would not be so much objection to the visit of the medical officer, as to that of an inspector; it would not excite the same feeling as if the public control inspector calls?—The public control inspector who visits these houses is a lady. I do not think there can be any real objection to her visits.

Chairman.

211. We shall have her evidence, I presume?—You will have her evidence.

Lord Kinnaird.

212. Should you say that many children are taken out of London and boarded out in the country?—I believe that is largely done.

213. Then if many of them went into the country and they died in the country they would be out of your statistics?—Yes.

214. Then that would make your statistics unreliable with regard to percentages?—To a certain extent; of course, although that is a considerable number it is relatively small to the large number born; but it would be relatively large possibly to the number of illegitimate children born.

215. In the case of most of the societies that have boarding out, it would be almost entirely in the country, would it not?—I think almost entirely.

216. You have not any figures to show how far that is the case?—I am afraid I have not. I do not know whether they exist.

Chairman—continued.

have decreased in the district, I do not suppose that it is an actual decrease, because I should think it very likely that the cases have gone to other places where investigation is less strict.

219. Is your jurisdiction wholly within the administrative County of London then?—It is, entirely.

220. Have you got any figures to give as regards the number of cases which have come under your notice?—No, I cannot give the figures.

c 3

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

figures. I might have given them if there had been time; but I do not know whether the inspector of the County Council would give that.

221. We have the figures that come before the County Council?—Whether he could differentiate between the different districts I cannot say; but I cannot off-hand tell you the number. I could give you, if you like, the outlines of a few of the more important cases.

222. Could you give the Committee one or two samples of the class of cases that come under your notice?—Yes, certainly. I have noted one or two cases. The first case was that of a child named Weston, that was received from a woman living in the south of London, by a man and woman residing near Kensal-road. This man was a street artist—a man who drew pictures on the pavement—and they were in very poor circumstances. It appeared from the evidence before my court that at the time that this child was received there was another child. The other child was taken for a weekly sum; but the child in question, Weston, was received, I think, for a sum of 2*l.* to be taken right out and adopted, in fact. Now, I may say that the child that was taken for a weekly sum was handed over to the parents in a very healthy condition; the other child died. The investigation showed that these persons were extremely poor, and that the milk obtained for the two children could not have been sufficient to support two children; the natural inference being that the child that had the weekly allowance made for it, and was returned in a healthy condition, had more sustenance than the other. Of course, that is only an inference, but the fact of one child dying from starvation, and the other being returned in a healthy condition, justifies that inference, I think.

223. What was the verdict?—"Death from starvation;" and the woman was sent for trial for manslaughter, and convicted for neglecting the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

224. As to the children; were the two children together in the house?—Yes, the two were there together. Another case of rather a different nature was this: There were two people, married people; the man was a man who was shifting about from occupation to occupation; and during the evidence in my court the wife said that at the time they took the child he was out of work; but he himself denied that, and said that he was not. Whether that was so or not I cannot say; but I do know this, that shortly after taking this child he started a business, presumably with the 25*l.* received for this child, as a greengrocer, and the child died, and eventually the business collapsed. I was told by the officer that within three months the business had gone altogether. The inference is that he bought the business with the 25*l.*; but had the child lived and the business failed, we do not know what would have become of the child. That seems to be a class of case where the people obtain a living distinctly out of the child.

Chairman.

225. Was it a child under 12 months old?—Yes, I think it was two months old. The child died, and I held an inquiry on it.

Lord Belper.

226. What was the verdict?—"Natural causes." This verdict, on reference, was found to be from "Improper feeding."

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

227. Can you tell us whether these children were illegitimate or legitimate?—In the case of Weston it was illegitimate; but whether the other child, returned in a healthy condition, was illegitimate, I cannot say. The second instance was the child of a servant living in the North of England. A third example is the case of a woman named Boucher. It is rather a celebrated case; the real name is Butcher, but she assumed the French for it, and called herself Boucher. This woman keeps a lying-in house, and in the particular case in point a servant-girl went to this house and was there confined. The mother of the child made arrangements previously for the child to be taken away and taken care of; and it appears that this child was removed at the age of about two hours and afterwards died, and a *post-mortem* was held, and it showed that the cause of death was congestion of the lungs, owing to exposure from removal at that early age. At the inquiry certain statistics were given by the inspector under the Act, and a few of these I will give you now. The first evidence he gave was as to four children whom he traced. The first had been removed from this woman at the age of 10 hours; this child was dead. The second child had been removed at the age of half an hour; this child was also dead. The third child had been removed at the age of one hour; that one also was dead. The fourth, which had been removed at the age of 14 days, was also dead. There were five other cases traced to this person, four of which were found to be dead.

Lord Thring.

228. You said that the child was removed; where?—Removed from the house where this person lived to the care of an outside person.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

229. Is the point in these instances that the death was due to exposure?—In the case where I held the inquiry the child was taken out at the age of two hours, death resulting from congestion of the lungs.

Lord Thring.

230. Supposing a child is removed, and nothing done to it, would not that kill it?—From the want of feeding, you mean? The evidence that I get in my court is that midwives, and many doctors also, do not recommend any feeding for 24 hours, or so, afterwards.

231. These children did not die of starvation, you think?—I cannot tell you, except as to the case in my own court, what the children died from; but these four children certainly have died, and four out of the other five have died; eight out of nine cases traced to her.

Another

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Another case is that of a woman named Blackburn. In the case of the child on whom I held an inquest, this woman was proved to be in pecuniary difficulties, and in that case evidence was given that she had received 19 children; how many of those died I cannot say, but the deaths of five children were traced to this woman's house.

Chairman.

232. Nineteen children in what length of time?—That I cannot tell you. That was the evidence given in my court by one of the daughters, who said that she remembered 19 children being under the care of her mother. I have no doubt that the inspector under the Act, who investigated all these cases can give particulars; they were not in my own district.

233. I am afraid we cannot take from you as evidence any cases except cases within your own knowledge?—The evidence in this case about the 19 children was given before me on oath by the daughter of the woman herself; but I think you will find that the inspector under the Act will be very likely able to give you details of the five children that were traced. Now the other case, and the last which I propose mentioning, was one that came under my own investigation. This is a case where a friend takes a child from a person for profit. This was a case where a single woman had two children, both of whom a friend took with her other children. The subject of the inquiry was 10 weeks of age. This woman was apparently in the habit of frequenting public-houses and getting intoxicated, and on the day of the child's death she appears to have left home about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and returned at 10 o'clock the worse for drink, and the child was then dead. It appears that these children, the woman's own children together with the two little children belonging to the single woman, were left in the care of a little child of seven years of age. When the inquiry was held evidence was given by the doctor and others that the room was in a very dirty condition, and also the child. On a chair was one child with three kittens, a child was on the floor, and another child was climbing over the sofa where the dead one lay. The doctor said in his evidence that the room was in a filthy condition, and that the smell was simply abominable. There was found a dirty milk-bottle and a tin of sour condensed milk. In that case a verdict of manslaughter was returned against the woman, and she was eventually sent for trial. Those are typical examples of the different classes of cases; first, where a person takes a strange child for profit; secondly, where it is possible they may take it with the intention of starting a business, and where a lump sum is paid down; and, thirdly, a case where a person takes the child of a friend for profit.

Chairman.

234. But none of those cases would be touched by the present Act, I take it?—No, except the first.

235. Because in none of those cases was there more than one child of less than 12 months of age?—In the first case there was; in the last case certainly not.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

236. What were the ages of the two children in the last case?—The inspector will tell you that, but the one which came under our consideration was 10 weeks old.

237. What was the age of the other one?—I cannot tell you; that was over the age of one year, as far as I remember; so that she would not require to be registered. The last case was the case of a woman with an invalid husband, and she told us that she had a great struggle to keep a roof over her head. She admitted that she had that child, the subject of the inquiry, for which she received 5*s.* a week, and had taken it at the age of 14 days. During the inquiry she told us that she had had three children, and in this case a verdict of death from improper feeding was returned. It was clearly proved at the police court that she had three children at the time, and she was convicted under the present Act for keeping more than one child under the age of 12 months.

Chairman.

238. Have you got any particular views or recommendations as regards the present law and alterations of it?—I think that the present Act, being an Infant Life Protection Act, should extend much further than baby-farming. It should commence at a much earlier age than that. For instance, under the present law, in order to constitute murder, the child must be wholly born; that is, it must be completely born.

239. That is rather beyond the question that we are inquiring into; but what I want to know is, have you any recommendations to make, for instance, with regard to extending the age of children to be registered; have any of your juries made a strong recommendation with reference to that; some coroner's juries have?—They have frequently, and I have forwarded some recommendations as regards extending the Act to the registration of one child.

240. Registration in all cases, you say?—Yes.

241. And extending the age?—Yes.

242. To any particular time?—No. As far as I can remember, we have had no riders to that effect.

243. Can you tell us anything of your own knowledge which points to the way in which these children are disposed of by the mothers to other people and then passed on from them to others again?—The way would be first by the midwife herself arranging it, and in that case in particular, which I referred to just now, the midwife admitted that she sometimes made the arrangement, and that she had got women to take the children, and she charged them a fee of about 10*s.* for it. A second way is for a friend to take a child from another person, and the other means most common is to get it done by advertisement.

244. Have you got any particular remedies to suggest with reference to that, beyond the extensions of the Act which you mentioned just now?—The remedy would be extending the Act to all children taken for profit or reward, and also having very strict registration and inspection.

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Those

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Those are the remedies that, as far as I see, are the ones likely to deal with the case in point.

245. Have you got any particular remarks so make with reference to the system of baby-farming as it comes under your notice as a coroner, I do not mean with reference to the general question of baby-farming; that we shall be able to get from the inspector who looks after the Act?—Well, the system is this: that a person in some cases receives a large amount for taking the child, sometimes 100*l.* or 200*l.*, and then she passes the child on to some one else for a lower sum, and it is very likely to reach another person for, perhaps, 3*l.* or 4*l.*, so that there is extensive profit made in that way.

246. You mentioned the case of lying-in houses just now; do you know of your own knowledge of many cases where children are habitually passed on from these lying-in houses to professional baby farmers?—Yes. In the case of this woman Boucher, she keeps a lying-in house, and has a certificate as a midwife, and she passes them on, and that woman gets a fee of 10*s.* from the woman who takes the child.

Lord Belper.

247. From what class do those people generally come?—It is very hard to trace the people, but as regards my own cases they have principally been from the servant class.

Lord Thring.

248. And the children illegitimate?—Yes. In one or two cases they received children from somebody at the railway station, and these people gave a fictitious name, and they never saw them again; we could get no information.

Lord Belper.

249. But I was speaking with reference to the lying-in houses; did it come out at all what class of women used them?—No. I know from my own experience in another case where a child had been overlaid at this very house, the woman was the wife of an artisan.

Viscount Llandaff.

250. That was a legitimate child?—That was a legitimate child.

Chairman.

251. What means may be used to destroy children?—Well, of course, there are some rapid, and some less rapid but still quite as effectual. For instance, the first classification would be that of actual violence, such as cases that have recently occurred in the Reading baby-farming case, where there has been actual violence. Not very long ago, about three weeks, I held an inquest on a child that was found in a parcel, and the medical evidence showed that the child had died from suffocation. There were marks about the face and mouth, and it was also proved that the child had been put into the parcel, and the parcel had been tied up before death, because *rigor mortis* had set in; the child was found with *rigor mortis*. That was a very clear case of actual violence, and it was a case of murder. There are other cases of slow starvation which are very difficult to bring home to

Chairman—continued.

any person; and under this heading may be classified, perhaps, improper feeding, which is starvation only of a slower nature. One knows this: that it is not necessary for starvation that the person starved should be deprived wholly of food. If you give a child improper food, or if you give any person food that person cannot assimilate, the effect is the same, though slowly brought about; so that if a child is given improper food, and food that is not nourishing, and that cannot be assimilated, death sooner or later must occur, but it is longer delayed than if it had been wholly deprived of food.

252. You find as a rule, do you not, amongst people of the poorer class great ignorance as to the proper method of feeding infants?—Yes, great ignorance, and also amongst the midwives themselves.

253. Amongst certificated midwives?—No; but a very large number of the people who are attending cases are not certificated.

254. Is it the case that the people who keep these lying-in houses are not generally certificated?—Some may not be. I think it is necessary that all lying-in houses should be under some supervision.

255. Do you know whether medical men are generally called in, or do these midwives, as a rule, practise without them?—A great many do, and I get a great number of children dying without any medical man seeing them at all, and a great number of so-called still births.

256. Do you get many cases of deaths of the mothers in lying-in houses from improper treatment?—No. There was one case where a child was suffocated, in which it was proved that this Mrs. Boucher had left the mother a few hours after the confinement, and had returned to her the next morning, and that she had been left all night alone. It was a peculiar bed, which sank down in the centre, and the child had rolled from the side on which it was placed, and the mother had overlaid it. In that case there was no attention at all.

257. With reference to the question of medical men and medical certificates, is it your experience, as has been stated before the former Committee by coroners, that sometimes a considerable amount of difficulty is experienced on the part of these people who take in children in obtaining proper medical certificates from doctors as to the cause of death?—I am afraid I do not quite understand the question.

258. I will put it in this way: Is it your opinion that it is very difficult, from some of the certificates of death that are given by medical men, to trace the exact cause of death, in order to find out whether a death was due to improper feeding or resulted from negligence, or whether the death was caused by criminal intent?—That may be so. I have myself refused certificates that have simply had the cause of death assigned that was merely a symptom of something else. For instance, I have had certificates of marasmus and of syncope and of convulsions. Now, a child may die from convulsions, from natural or from unnatural causes, and, therefore, "convulsions" itself is not a cause of death; there must be a cause behind that.

259. In

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

259. In fact, it is very difficult, in the majority of the cases of these children, to tell whether it is a case of natural death or of criminality?—It is absolutely impossible in many cases, because it may arise from what I may describe as a small amount of ignorance. For instance, in many cases where children are fed on condensed milk, which does not satisfy them, and where they are slowly starving, they become ravenous; then the people knowing this, and thinking that the food itself is not sufficient, instead of going to the proper treatment, namely, cow's milk, give the child pieces of bacon, or, as they say, anything they are eating themselves; and when they give a child of two months old a piece of bacon this may cause its death. That is a case in which it arises from ignorance, but not gross neglect amounting to any criminal charge.

260. So that in that respect the instructions which are given out by inspectors in registered houses as to the feeding of infants are very valuable?—Quite so. In many towns cards of instructions are issued; for instance, in the town of Bristol; I remember that the General Hospital there used to issue cards to all their patients with reference to the feeding of children. I think it very essential that it should be made known to people how to feed these children; many people have not an idea.

Viscount Llandaff.

261. Of your five cases three are within the present Act, are they not?—Three; that is to say, in the first case of Weston there was no prosecution by the inspector; probably if there had been supervision there would have been, if the other child had come under the age of 12 months. In the second case, that is the case of the 25*l.*, it was certainly not within the Act.

262. But that is a case in which the verdict was "Death from natural causes," and you have no suggestion to make to the contrary?—No, but it is very hard, as was said just now, in cases of mal-nutrition and improper feeding, to return anything else but a verdict of "Death from natural causes."

263. Was there any evidence of mal-nutrition?—I forget now what was the cause of death in that case, but I know it was the case of a child who had been received for the sum of 25*l.*

264. Then the third case, the case of this woman Boucher, would not be touched by the present Bill. The Bill does not oblige you to get registered if you do not keep a child for more than 24 hours, so that Madame Boucher, who despatches the new born infant, at the age of half-an-hour or 10 hours, and so on, would not be touched by the present Bill?—In one case the child was 14 days old when it was removed.

265. In all the cases but that one the child was less than 24 hours in the house?—Yes.

266. In the two remaining cases the child was taken by a friend who got drunk and left the child; that would come under the Act?—But the other child was over the age of 12 months; there is no inspection there.

267. Then the woman with the invalid husband was within the Act?—That was a case in which she was prosecuted and convicted under the Act for keeping more than one child.

(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

268. You spoke of sour milk; you are aware that sour milk is slow poison?—It would very likely cause irritation and intestinal inflammation in a young child.

269. I do not follow you as to what you want to do; supposing we extend the Act to everybody who keeps one child, how would you do with regard to parents living in India who sent home a child to be kept in England instead of in India?—But is that a case simply of profit; would they be making a profit out of that?

270. The child might be sent to a school?—You would not send a child to school at that tender age. Probably, if the Act were limited to five years of age, very few under five years would go to school.

271. I really want to know how you would do it. Children are constantly sent home from India under five years of age to be kept by friends who are paid for their maintenance, and in such a case a man technically may make a profit out of it?—I do not think there should be any limitation myself, but that where any child is taken for profit or reward there should be registration. I have never myself had any difficulty about it, never had a question raised, never heard people say that they objected to it. As regards the inspection, that perhaps might be left to the discretion of the people carrying out the Act; but the fact of registration, I think, should occur in all cases.

272. Do you say that in the case of a school of the highest possible class you would recommend that that school should be required to be registered, because they took young children who came back from India?—But would they take children of that tender age, under the age of five.

273. Children are constantly left in England of the most tender age. If an officer goes out to India and cannot take out a child, he gives it to a friend and he pays for maintenance; how would you avoid including a case of that kind?—But is that taking a case for profit? Are they actually giving a person a sum so that they might make profit out of it?

274. You cannot in law examine whether a person makes a profit; it is "hire or reward," that is the condition. I want to know what you would suggest in such a case; would you require registration and inspection?—I am afraid that in case there were any exceptions made to registration that might be fatal to the efficiency of the Act altogether. Who is going to decide in which cases registration shall occur and in which it shall not? Cases of ill-treatment of children are not restricted to the poorer classes, and "hire or reward" should guide registration.

275. You cannot suggest any remedy. You must be aware that you could not expect people in such cases to submit to registration?—I do not see myself that the people would object to registration. If a person takes a lunatic into a private house that is under the Lunacy Commissioners it is liable to inspection; there is never any question raised or any objection as to that.

276. You do not think that there would be any objection to this?—I do not think so. Of course the inspection in this, as in other matters, would be a confidential matter between the persons

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administering

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued]

Lord Thring—continued.

administering the Act and the persons employed to take charge of the children, and it would be carried out with great discretion.

277. You surely would not give a discretion to the persons employed, with reference to people who kept houses which came under the Act?—I should, perhaps, use the expression "tact." They come down, but they do not come down in a public way; they come at odd times.

278. However, you think it would not be objected to?—I should think not; I have never heard anything to make me think that it would.

Viscount Llandaff.

279. Registration is no use without inspection, is it?—Not a bit, I think.

Lord Belper.

280. You have not read the evidence before the House of Commons Select Committee in 1890 on Infant Life Protection?—No.

281. There are cases there mentioned where strong objection would be taken to inspection?—Of course, I was only speaking to my personal knowledge. I have never heard of any person objecting to it.

Lord Thring.

282. I asked what you thought would be the effect if the law were extended in the way you suggested, and whether it would not involve inspection in all cases?—I do not see myself personally any objection. Knowing the law, I should not myself object to it. You see that inspection and registration are so essential, in order to know the class of people who are taking children, to know that they are fitted mentally, physically, and morally, and in other ways, to undertake the care of children. I have had cases of children sent out during the day to people who have had some impediment in their speech, or something of that sort, and were not able to make other people understand; and such persons are totally unfit for the care of children.

283. You are aware, I suppose, that in all the great factory towns the infants are sent out from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening?—Yes.

284. Do you wish them to be brought within the law, because they are not within the law now?—They would not be under the proposed new law, I take it.

285. I say do you wish that they should be within the proposed new law?—I think the inspection of these houses would be beneficial to the children; I have had many cases of children who have been taken in at these places, and only the other day my jury censured a woman for her want of care. I think she had two children, and this child died the last day she had it; the child had inflammation of the lungs. One of the witnesses living in the house said: "The day before the death I noticed that the child was extremely ill, and had it been mine I should have called in medical advice." The woman who kept the *crèche* said that she had noticed nothing the matter with the child.

286. If you make the law include these cases, you would do away with the 24-hours limit?—Where a person had perhaps 20 or 30 children

Lord Thring—continued.

under her care, I think she should be competent to undertake the care of children.

Viscount Llandaff.

287. Had that woman any children of her own?—She had been a nurse, she told me.

288. If it had been a child of her own, do you think she would have called in medical advice?—I cannot say.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

289. Speaking generally, would you say that you have been able to draw a marked difference in your experience between the treatment of legitimate and illegitimate children; that is to say that a very large proportion of the cases of this kind in which you hold inquests would be illegitimate?—I could not say that, because I hold inquests on a very large number of legitimate children who die from improper feeding.

290. Let me put it in another way: not those in whose cases inquests are held, but those cases in which the results of the inquest seem to betoken wilful, deliberate neglect?—Well, of course wilful or deliberate neglect come under the criminal law at once, and it would constitute either murder or manslaughter. I have had only five or six cases in which people have been sent for trial for neglecting children. It is very hard to say whether that improper feeding to which reference has been made is wilful or not. It is a very easy thing to feed a child so as to cause its death wilfully, but at the same time it is very hard to prove it.

Chairman.

291. Do you get many cases of death from improper feeding from registered houses under the Act?—No, I do not.

Viscount Llandaff.

292. Do you get many cases of mothers with their own children at home who feed them improperly?—A great many cases, especially among very young mothers. The sanitary condition of many houses is so imperfect that it is absolutely necessary that some inspection should occur.

Lord Thring.

293. What houses?—The houses where one child is taken in under the age of 12 months, and where there are several children over that age.

Viscount Llandaff.

294. Is there not sanitary inspection by the sanitary authority in every district?—There is no house-to-house inspection; no compulsory inspection, I mean. Unless the attention of the sanitary authorities, I take it, were drawn to a particular house, there could be no inspection.

295. How would it be under this Bill?—In all cases where the child was taken for profit or reward there would be registration, and the licence would not be issued unless there was proof that the house was in a good sanitary condition, and also that the people applying for the licence were fit. In the case I mentioned just now, where a little child was found dead

on

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

on a sofa, the overcrowding and the filthy and abominable condition of the house, and the sour milk there, rendered the chance of a young child living very remote.

Lord Belper.

296. But would not that overcrowding apply in many cases to children living with their own parents; but the Act here is to apply to children taken for hire or reward?—That is so.

Viscount Llandaff.

297. Is there any reason for dealing differently with those children?—In many cases there may be a motive for neglecting them which does not exist in the case of children living in their own homes.

Chairman.

298. These children are given out often for a lump sum?—Yes.

299. And, naturally, there is a motive then for neglecting them?—Yes; and whether there may be such a motive in cases where a child is sent out for a weekly sum is a matter for consideration; one only hears one side of it; that is the mother's; it is very often to the mother's interest to keep a child alive that she may have a hold on the man; but, on the other hand, there may be other people who are interested in the death of the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

300. Not the keeper of the child, you mean?—No; but other people might be interested in the death of the child and might use influence on the person keeping that child.

Chairman.

301. I should like to ask you one question with regard to the lying-in houses; do you regard them as being the main source from which the profession of baby farmer is fed?—Very often I think they are; and in regard to the large number of cases of children found dead, I, myself, have no doubt, though, of course, one has no proof, that many of those children do come from lying-in houses.

302. Are you a medical man?—I am, and a barrister too, so I speak from both sides.

303. And do you strongly recommend the registration of all lying-in houses?—Certainly I do, and inspection.

304. That would include the private hospitals kept by many in the profession; a good many doctors have private hospitals of their own?—I would not go so far as that, because I do not see very well how you can class them together.

305. There is a distinction between a private hospital and a hospital that is a public one?—I do not see why a difference should be drawn for the purposes of the Act.

Lord Belper.

306. Where would you draw your line?—In the case put, the doctor in charge of a house of that sort would be conversant with sanitary (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

and other matters, and for his own sake he would not have his house in an unsatisfactory condition.

307. Where would you draw the line in a law compelling the registration of lying-in houses?—I should have inspection, certainly, of all houses kept by midwives who systematically receive persons about to be confined, and who are to be attended by the midwife herself.

Lord Thring.

308. Is it not a fact that in almost innumerable cases men in the country bring up their wives to London for their first confinement?—Some may, but they are under the care of a doctor.

309. They are in a lying-in house?—But what one understands by a lying-in house is not a house where a person comes and takes rooms under the supervision of a doctor, who previously sees that matters are correct.

Chairman.

310. But where would you draw the line so as to distinguish between the bad class of lying-in houses, which cause the evils which now exist, and the perfectly legitimate and well-conducted lying-in houses managed by some well-known doctors?—I should say that all houses kept by midwives for the delivery of women should be under inspection.

Lord Thring.

311. An ordinary lodging-house keeper might have them. You must know what goes on in London. A man's wife is going to be confined; he takes a lodging in the best part of London for the purpose of his wife being confined in London; do you mean to tell me that you are going to have that house registered?—That is not a lying-in house as I understand it. I mean a house that lays itself out, and advertises to receive women during their confinement.

312. Do you mean that where people do do that, and do not advertise, then the houses are not lying-in houses?—No, but I should not classify a lodging taken by a doctor as in the same class.

313. It is not taken by a doctor; the commonest thing in the world is, as everybody knows, that a man living in the country with a delicate wife, or for some other reason, wishes her to be confined in London, and comes up and takes an ordinary lodging in a house where they take in people who are going to be under the care of a doctor; are they all to be registered?—But those are only rooms engaged for one occasion. If these landladies kept houses and advertised to take in women, and attended them themselves, I should say that that is a lying-in house; that is what I mean. I mean the doctor himself is perfectly competent, or should be, to say what the surroundings are, and to see that the person undertaking it is a fit person.

314-16. Are you to register every house which is accustomed to receive ladies who are going

D 2

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

going to be confined. I ask you how are you going to distinguish between those cases and the other cases, or are you going to register them all?—I can only say what I just now said, that in all cases where women lay themselves out for it and have a lying-in house, and

Lord Thring—continued.

where they advertise to receive women during their confinement, and where they attend the patient themselves, as midwives, in all those cases there should be inspection. It is only a suggestion that I make.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Lunæ, 27^o Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. ALFRED SPENCER, having been called in, is further Examined, as follows:

Lord Thring.

317. I THINK we got a little puzzled about the comparative mortality of adults and infants; I understand with regard to the County of London you can give the comparative mortality of infants and adults in the County of London?—I can.

318. Infants under one year of age I mean?—I can.

319. Will you give it?—I find that the corrected general death-rate for London was, in the year 1894, 18·93 per 1,000, which is equal to 1·893 per cent.; that the average death-rate of infants under one year for the 10 years 1883 to 1892 in London was at the rate of 154 per 1,000, or 15·4 per cent., which, I think, is nearly eight times as great as the average death-rate for all ages.

320. And then I understand there are a certain number of other large towns, I forget how many you told me?—The corrected death-rate in 33 great towns is given in the Registrar General's Annual Summary for 1894 as 19·59 per 1,000, or 1·959 per cent.

321. Of all?—The general death-rate. Then the average death-rate of infants under one year in 33 great towns.

322. In the same 33 great towns?—In the same 33 great towns. For the 10 years, 1883 to 1892, it was 166 per 1,000, or 16·6 per cent.

323. Then can you give the differences, I mean the percentage of deaths of infants as compared with the percentage of adults in London; what is the difference?—In the one case it is 18·93 per 1,000, and, in the case of infants, 154 per 1,000, or a difference of 135·07 per 1,000.

324. Then I understand that in respect of the whole of the country there are no materials for comparing them?—I am unable to find in the (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

Registrar General's Summary any materials as to the general death-rate of infants under one year, but I can give the corrected general death-rate for England and Wales, and that is 16·59 per 1,000. I understand that the Registrar General is to be called, and he will probably be able to carry these figures further than I can.

Chairman.

325-6. A Member of the Committee has asked me to inquire what particular effect the registration of houses has upon children; can you speak to that of your own knowledge, or shall we be able to get at it from your inspector?—I can only speak in general terms. The inspector would probably be able to describe to the Committee the difference that his experience has shown him to exist between the treatment of infants at unregistered houses and the treatment of infants at registered houses.

327. But I may take it from you that the general effect of the reports which you have received since you have been administering this Act shows that in registered houses the mortality is less, and the children are better looked after, and better fed, and more kindly treated, in registered houses?—That is exactly the case.

Lord Thring.

328. With your great experience, I should like to know why you think that strengthening the law in the way that is suggested by the Bill would enable you to get more houses registered; because I apprehend that wherever anybody wants to treat children badly they would evade registration?—Where there is a deliberate intention of treating infants badly I apprehend that that might be the case; but there is a very large proportion of cases where there may be

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27 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

no deliberate intention to neglect or ill-treat infants, but where a certain amount of neglect undoubtedly takes place, which would, in my opinion, be to a large extent met by bringing the houses in which these infants are kept under registration and supervision.

329. But what clause in this Bill, or what law, do you think, would enable you to get at the houses, because the people will not come in voluntarily?—Clause 2 of the Bill, which extends the operation of the Act to all infants under five years of age, would bring in an enormously greater number than are brought in by the present Act.

330. A greater number of children, I admit: but what do you say as to a greater number of houses where the children are under one year of age?—Already we are brought into contact, in the course of our inquiries, with a large number of houses at which infants under five years of age are kept for hire. That alone would, in my opinion, increase the operation of the Act by 90 per cent.; but I also think that if you widen the law we shall be able, by the means we shall be able to take, to find out and to get into touch with a very much greater number of cases than we are able to do now.

Lord Belper.

331. I understand that at present you say there are only 20 houses registered under the present law?—Forty-one under the present law.

332. Certainly in some form we have had the number 20 given us?—At the end of last year there were 41 on the register.

333. Do you know how many children there are in those 41 houses, or were at that time?—That the lady inspector who has the houses under inspection will be able to give you.

Chairman.

334. I think the lady inspector would be able to answer a great many of the questions of Lord Thring as to the willingness or unwillingness to come on the register?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

335. Can you form any opinion what proportion of the houses which ought to be registered under the present Act, or what proportion of the children who should be registered under the present Act, are registered?—That, of course, is a question partly of opinion and partly of experience. I believe that at the present time there are few, if any, of the houses in London not under registration which should be under registration.

336. Therefore, practically, you mean that as far as the law permits you, it is your opinion that you get hold of nearly the whole of the houses that ought to be registered, and, therefore, nearly all the children that under the present law ought to be registered?—That is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

337. You mean that in the whole of London at this moment you do not think there are more

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

than 41 houses in which there are two infants under one year of age kept for hire?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

338. Then the effect of any increased stringency of the Act in London would be to bring in an additional class of children, not more houses?—A very much greater number of houses and a still greater number of children.

339. True; but at the present moment, with regard to the one year infants, I understand you to say that you are of opinion that the one year infants are all, or nearly all, brought in that ought to be?—As far as the present law goes.

340. Therefore, the effect of the increased stringency of the proposed Bill will be to bring in not more of the one year infants, but to bring in a very large number of cases between one and five years old?—It would bring in the infants over 12 months old; but in addition to that, it would bring in a very large number of cases where only one infant under one year is now kept either alone or with other infants of over one year.

Lord Belper.

341. I understand that you say that you practically get hold of the cases of the whole of the children that come under the present law, or nearly all?—I believe that to be the case as regards London.

342. Then if that be the case, as far as that class of cases go, that is, those which come under the present law, there are really no malpractices going on, or ill-treatment of children, because they are all under registration and under inspection?—That is my belief.

343. Then do you believe that the fact that the present law only goes a certain way and does not include those children to whom it is now proposed to extend it, the fact of its being so limited, drives the people who wish to indulge in these malpractices and in the ill-treatment of children, into keeping them in houses with children over the age that is now the limit. If there are any malpractices, they must have gone on somewhere; with regard to the children of one year, if they do not go on in the houses which are now registered, which, you say, include nearly the whole of the cases, they must go on in some others?—That is probably the case.

344. You say that the fact that the law only goes a certain way drives them into keeping one of these younger children in a house with several other older children?—That in our experience has been found to be the case.

Chairman.

345. Is not your contention rather that, instead of keeping the children all together, the children become more widely distributed, whereas people who would, if there had been no existing law, have kept perhaps more than one child under one year, now only keep one child under one year?—And frequently others over one year with that child; yes, that is so.

346. So that although the present law may not be, and you think it is not evaded at all as regards

27 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

regards the existing administration, still it is practically evaded as regards the children by means of the limitation of age?—That is the case.

Lord Belper.

347. I suppose the law, if you extend it to a certain number of houses where there is only one child kept, will be much more difficult to carry out than the present law is?—There would be a very much larger amount of work to be done, but I do not apprehend that there would be any greater initial difficulties in carrying it out than in carrying out the present law.

348. But surely there must be much more difficulty in finding out where the houses are where such children are kept; if there are a number of children kept together your attention is easily called to it: if there is only one, clearly it is more difficult to find it out?—But we have already had our attention called to a large number of cases where only one infant has been kept.

349. But that does not show that your attention has been directed to the whole of the cases where only one infant has been kept?—But adopting, as we do, the system of answering, practically, every advertisement that appears in the public press for nurse children, that does bring us very closely into touch with the practice of putting out children to nurse, and we think that by that means, and by communication with the registrars of births and deaths, and by using the other machinery that we employ in carrying out the present Act, we should be brought into contact with the greater part of the extended work that would be given by the enlarged Act.

350. I understand your answer, but I think it is not actually an answer to my question. I thought that you at once admitted that where you have got a large number of houses to deal with of a similar character it would be very difficult to deal with the same proportion as you can of a smaller number of houses of a larger character?—I do not apprehend greater initial difficulty.

Chairman.

351. It is a mere question of administration?—It is a mere question of the enlargement of the area of our work.

Mr. SAMUEL BABEY, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

358. You are an Inspector under the Infant Life Protection Act for the London County Council?—I am.

359. When were you first appointed to carry out these duties?—In February 1878.

360. That, I think, was the time when Mr. Spencer told us the Act first began to be really efficiently administered, really taken in hand?—Just so.

361. Will you describe your duties to us?—

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

352. In other words, an increased staff of inspectors?—That is my opinion.

353. It is the fact, is it not, that these people whom we desire to catch in the net of the law, who ill-treat and neglect children, do so habitually; I mean to say, a person who takes in a child casually, and for a short time, and does not take another one, as a rule is not necessarily found to be unkind to that child; the people we want to catch are those who take in children habitually, and, as soon as the first child is dead, take in another one, and, as soon as that child is dead, take in a third one?—That would be the case.

354. And therefore, when you have once located them you know them, you have got your finger on them, to a certain extent?—To a certain extent that is the case; and, as a matter of fact, we are in touch with a large number of persons who make a practice of taking in infants for hire.

355. It is a regular mode with them of getting a living, in other words?—It is.

Lord Belper.

356. I quite understand that there is a demand for such houses, and I understand that that creates a supply; the demand, I mean, of people who have got infants to dispose of whom they do not care about seeing again. If that is the case surely the supply will be found somehow, in future, to a certain extent?—Does your Lordship mean that we shall to a certain extent be able to get into touch with the supply in order to get cognizance of the disposal of the infants?

357. I mean, it becomes more difficult to get hold of every case, and therefore it will not be so easy to get hold of the cases to which you are now going to extend the Act as it has been with reference to the earlier cases?—May I answer the question in this way; that I do not anticipate that any enlargement of the Act would reach all cases where infants are put out at hire and ill-treated or disposed of, but that it would bring the law and the administration into closer touch with the whole system, and would give a greater initial probability of knowledge on the subject.

Chairman—continued.

My duties are to examine the advertising columns of certain newspapers for advertisements for the care or adoption of infants, and to investigate each one. Also to keep observation on private lying-in establishments with a view to ascertain the number of births of infants at these places, and endeavour to trace what becomes of the infants. Also to keep touch with the police, relieving officers, registrars of births and deaths, and other officials, with a view to obtain information

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27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

mation of places where infants are kept, and generally to avail myself of all sources of information of the keeping of infants for hire. I report in writing each day to the chief officer of the Public Control Department the result of my inquiries. Previous to April 1894 the registered houses were also inspected by me, but the Council from that date appointed a female inspector, to whom this duty was deputed.

362. Have you got anything more to say on that?—No.

363. Those are your official duties now?—Yes.

364. Practically your duties are confined now to following up advertisements, and enquiring about children in unregistered houses?—That is so.

365. And then when once the house is registered, you hand it over to the lady inspector?—Exactly.

366. Since your appointment in 1878, how many investigations have you made?—Apart from the visits which I have made to the houses registered for the keeping of infants, I had made, up to March 1895, 9,575 investigations at houses where I had reason to believe nurse-infants were being kept for hire. From April 1894 to March 1895 I was assisted in this work by another inspector whom the Council had appointed to assist in carrying out the Act. I have not included any figures as to my visits to the houses properly registered for the keeping of infants, but these houses were under constant inspection by me to see that the infants were properly cared for.

367. Do you mean to say that you called at 9,575 houses, or that you investigated the cases of 9,575 children?—That number of houses.

368. In these investigations how many cases did you find which came within the terms of the Act of 1872?—Two hundred and five cases only came within the Act, and these were cases where I found persons infringing the Act by keeping two or more nurse-infants under the age of one year without registration.

369. And what course did you take with regard to these 205 cases in which the Act had been disobeyed?—In 89 cases the persons keeping the infants were summoned; 85 convictions were obtained; one case was dismissed; three persons failed to answer the summons and could not afterwards be traced; in the remaining 116 cases the offenders were cautioned in writing, and all of them subsequently complied with the Act, either by having their houses registered, or by giving up the care of the infants kept in contravention of the law.

370. Why did you summon some and simply allow the others to register themselves?—Because the cases were of such a character that it was considered unnecessary to take them to the police court.

371. You did not then necessarily summon them because you found them keeping children unregistered that ought to have been registered, but you only summoned in the cases where you

Chairman—continued.

found children badly kept; is that so?—Chiefly so.

372. Where did you draw the line?—In some cases, where the accommodation was fairly good, and the children kept in a fair way, and where the persons subsequently complied with the law by having their houses registered; those cases were not prosecuted.

373. One question I should like to ask about those you cautioned; did you find, when you cautioned these people, that there was any disinclination to register themselves, or did they prefer to give up keeping more than one child, in order to still remain outside the provisions of the Act?—In many cases no doubt that was so.

Lord Thring.

374. Do you mean that they gave up the child?—They gave up keeping more than one child.

Chairman.

375. But then they went on keeping one child?—Yes, very often.

376. In how many of the investigations made by you did the Act of 1872 not apply?—In 9,370 cases.

377. And in how many of these 9,370 investigations did you find infants kept for hire?—In 3,991; and, taking account only of infants under seven years of age, I found altogether 5,955 infants kept for hire or reward.

Lord Belper.

378. I thought you said that the whole of the cases where children were kept for hire was 3,991?—That is so.

379. Then how can you make out the 5,955 infants under seven years of age?—

Chairman.

380. Were the 3,991 under one year old?—No, they were not.

Lord Belper.

381. As far as I understand it, the number of cases where any children were kept for hire was 3,991 only?—I will give them in detail.

Chairman.

382. I do not see how you make up your 5,955?—Because some are keeping probably three infants, or four, one being under the age of a year, and the others over that age.

383. Then does the 3,991 apply to houses?—Houses.

384. And the other number is children?—Yes.

385. When you say that they were kept for hire, did the people admit that they were being kept for hire?—Yes, or in many cases they were adopted for a lump sum.

386. I suppose there were a good many that were not kept for hire. Had you any reason to suppose

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

suppose that they deceived in that respect; that they gave you false answers?—Many times I got false answers, especially where I found the law being broken.

387. They told you that they had taken the children in for nothing, and then you found out afterwards that that was not the fact?—That is so. In one year alone, that of 1892 to March 1893, I found 215 unregistered houses with, in all, 345 infants under the age of seven years kept for hire.

Lord Thring.

388. When you say unregistered houses, do you mean houses that ought to be registered?—No, they needed no registration under the law, because they were not breaking the law. In the same year there were only 21 houses registered by the council with 72 infants kept in them. The infants in the registered houses were benefited by the protective provisions of the Act of 1872. The infants in the unregistered houses were not.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

389. Seventy-two infants under seven years of age, do you mean?—No, 72 under one year old.

Chairman.

390. In how many houses did you say?—In 21.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

391. In the first instance, the 345 in the unregistered houses were children under seven years of age?—Yes.

392. The two cases are not exactly parallel?—That is so.

Lord Belper.

393. Can you say whether you intentionally visited any houses where you knew there was only one child kept?—In answering an advertisement I would call at the house and find the child received and kept.

394. What I mean is this: that I conclude you were making these visits in trying to enforce the present law?—Just so.

395. Therefore you probably would not visit houses where there was only one child kept, or unless you had reason to suppose, or thought beforehand, that there was more than one child kept?—I might not, but I could only learn that by visiting the houses.

Chairman.

396. Can you give any information as to how the infants were distributed amongst the unregistered houses?—Yes. In 205 cases two or more infants under one year were kept unlawfully. In 1,598 cases only one infant under the age of a year was kept. In 683 cases one infant under the age of a year, with others over one year, was kept; and in 1,505 cases only infants over one year old were kept.

397. Can you give any figure as to the mortality of the infants at unregistered houses?—Yes; 807 deaths came to my notice; in 658 of these the infants were under the age of a year, and in 149 the infants were over one year but under seven years.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

398. Can you give any idea of the number of children that were kept in the houses in which the 807 deaths occurred: can you form any sort of idea of the per-centage?—In some cases one only would be kept; in others, two or three.

399. I asked you if you could form any idea as to the number of children that were kept in the houses in which these 807 died; I wanted to get at the per-centage of deaths in the unregistered houses?—I do not think I can give that. In many cases there was only one infant kept, and in others there were two or three, or, in some cases, four kept, one of them being under 12 months old.

400. Do you know how many inquests were held in respect of these 807 deaths?—Inquests were frequently held, but I cannot give the correct number previous to April 1889.

401. I forgot to ask you over what period do the 807 deaths extend?—From the commencement of my work in 1878.

402. From 1878 to now, or to the time you gave up inspecting the registered houses, do you mean?—These deaths were at the unregistered houses.

403. Up to the present date then?—Up to 1895.

404. Do you know how many inquests were held in respect of these deaths?—Inquests were frequently held, but I cannot give the number previous to April 1889. From the 1st of April in that year 1889 to the 31st of March 1895 there were 323 deaths.

Lord Kinnaird.

405. Of infants?—Of infants.

406. Under one year?—No, not all under one year; and 135 inquests were held in respect of these 323 deaths; 101 verdicts of deaths from natural causes being returned. There were 30 verdicts of deaths from improper feeding and surroundings, when the nurses were cautioned or censured; and four verdicts of manslaughter or wilful neglect. This shows that in 41 per cent. of the deaths of infants at unregistered houses coming under my notice the circumstances were such as to demand inquiry by the coroner.

Chairman.

407. What have you got to say as to the condition and the treatment of the infants you found kept for hire at unregistered houses during your investigations?—In many cases the infants were kept under very unsatisfactory conditions as regards cleanliness, food, clothing, want of proper accommodation, air space, and the unsuitability of the persons who had charge of them.

408. May I ask whether you came across many cases of actual cruelty?—Not actual cruelty.

409. I mean cases that would come under the present Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—No; in many cases the children were neglected, but not criminally neglected: they suffered from want of suitable food and clothing, and were kept under conditions not at all satisfactory, but the neglect was not criminal.

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410. As

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

410. As compared with this, what was the condition of the infants kept at registered houses?—While the supervision of the registered houses was entrusted to me, I found the infants clean and fairly well kept and clothed, suitable food provided, and medical attendance when needed, and the accommodation so far as regards air space and surroundings satisfactory. Before granting registration in these cases in London, the local authority always satisfied itself that the provision for the care of the infants was satisfactory. The houses were afterwards frequently inspected, so that the conditions under which the infants were kept should be satisfactorily maintained.

411. I should like just to ask you there, when you visited the registered houses did you find much annoyance on the part of the people?—No, none whatever.

412. They did not dislike your coming?—No.

413. Can you give the total number of persons and houses which have been registered since 1878?—From 1878 to the 31st of March 1894 there were 550 registrations granted.

Lord Belper.

414. That means 550 different houses, does it not?—Not different houses.

415. Is the same house when registered another year counted again?—Yes.

416. Then they are not different houses?—Sometimes they are.

417. But I ask you if the whole of the 550 are different houses?—No, they are not different houses; sometimes the registration is renewed, and, in that case, they are not different.

Chairman.

418. Do not you distinguish between fresh houses and houses which simply had the registration renewed?—I do not think I can distinguish them.

419. Perhaps you can tell us at a later period; you can find out, or perhaps Mr. Spencer can let us know?—Yes.

420. In counting the number of cases you have investigated you did not put down as a separate investigation each visit you made to an unregistered house, did you?—Yes, they are all separate investigations.

421. Each time you visited an unregistered house?—Yes.

Lord Kinaird.

422. If you went 10 times to one house would you count that as 10 visits?—I have never been 10 times to one house, but if I did I should so count the visits.

423. If you went five times to one house should you count that five investigations?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

424. You mean investigations; should you count the same child over again?—No, I should not count the same child over again, but cases where I could identify children kept at unregistered houses would be very few.

Lord Thring.

425. Then how do you possibly identify the children; you say you never count them over again?—I should not if I knew it. I may see the same child at another house, but if I did, and recognised it, I should not count it again. Children are frequently moved to other houses.

Chairman.

426. Can you give the total number of infants received into these houses during the period named?—I cannot give the correct number previous to 1883, but from the commencement of that year to 31st March 1894, 1,227 infants had been received.

427. How many deaths of infants have occurred at these houses during the period you have stated?—Two hundred and twenty deaths have occurred from 1883 to March 1894.

428. And what number of inquests were held in respect of these deaths?—Fourteen inquests were held, which resulted in satisfactory verdicts, except in two cases where the persons were admonished and cautioned.

429. Can you say where these people who take these children, generally, get the children from?—They get them in various ways; some from homes, some from lying-in houses, by advertising, and in various ways.

430. Can you tell the Committee anything about the number of births of infants at private lying-in establishments, and what becomes of the infants?—It is very difficult to trace the infants born at these places, the keepers of houses of this description seldom caring to give any information, either as to the infants born or what becomes of them. In 1893 I traced four infants, who, soon after their birth, were taken to Waterloo and Victoria railway stations by the keeper of one of these houses, and were handed over by her to persons to whom she paid 2*l.* each for their adoption. Three of these infants died soon afterwards, and inquests were held in two cases, and a verdict of manslaughter was returned in one case. The judge who tried this case, and the jury, expressed a strong opinion that houses of this description should be under strict supervision, and that the authorities whose duty it is to administer the Infant Life Protection Act should endeavour to obtain a speedy alteration in the law for the better protection of infants. Other abuses in connection with such houses have also come under my notice, and I am satisfied that the practice of disposing of infants for adoption is carried on to a considerable extent by persons who keep lying-in houses.

431. Can you tell the Committee who that judge was?—Mr. Justice Hawkins.

432. And what was the date of the case you refer to?—In 1893.

433. Then I gather from your explanation that you are of opinion that lying-in houses should be under some supervision?—I am strongly of that opinion. Infants are frequently put out to nurse, or for adoption, from these lying-in houses, and if we had any control over them we could get to learn where the infants go.

434. Clause 3 of this Bill requires statements to be made in writing respecting infants received

or

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

or removed from registered houses. Can you give us reasons in support of this clause?—False names of infants, and false names and addresses of persons who have placed infants at registered houses, have been given; and persons on removing the infants from these houses have refused to give their address, or to state where the infant will be taken to, so that in such cases it would be almost impossible to trace the person or the infant, or to take any steps to prevent the infant being improperly dealt with if any harm had been intended.

435. Have you often gone to registered houses and found children taken away which had been there before, and been unable to trace them?—I have very often.

436. And the people have refused to give you information?—Not the registered person. The person who placed the child there has refused to give any account of where it has been taken.

437. The person who places the child there you say?—Yes.

438. Then Clause 4 requires delivery up of the register after the lapse or expiration of the registration; can you state anything in support of this clause?—In several cases registered persons have removed, and neither they nor the infants in their charge could be traced, and there is reason to fear that in some such cases the persons have used the registers to falsely represent themselves as being still registered.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

439. They represent themselves to whom?—They may represent themselves to anyone as being still registered.

Chairman.

440. To anyone who comes with a child, you mean?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

441. Do you mean that persons coming with a child ask is this house registered or not?—No.

442. Then who are the people to whom a person would misuse an old register by saying, "I am registered"?—That may be done, and I know of two cases where persons have removed from outside districts into London, and have still taken infants to be nursed, and have represented themselves to be registered.

443. But whom did they make that representation to?—To the person who takes the child there. In fact, two told me so themselves.

444. In that case the person bringing the child did ask the question?—No, that representation was made to me personally, and it may be made to others.

445. It was made to you on the strength of the old register, you mean?—Yes.

446. They produced to you a register for somewhere else?—From an outside district, and outside London.

447. Then it was not made to the person who brought the child?—No, not to the person who brought the child.

Chairman.

448. You knew all the registered houses, because they were under your supervision?—This (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

was outside London; those have never come under my supervision. When they left a district outside London they came into London, and brought their register with them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

449. A person comes from Manchester, we will say, where he has been registered; he comes to London, bringing a Manchester register; what use is that in London?—No use at all.

450. But to whom is it offered or supposed to be of use?—It may operate upon the person who brings the child there.

Chairman.

451. Clause 5 of the Bill requires that it shall be unlawful for any person who receives an infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person without the consent in writing of the local authority, unless it be to a relative: can you explain the benefit that would result from that provision?—I may explain that a system of barter or trafficking in infants has come under my notice where infants have been received, under pretence of adopting them, for sums of money from 2*l.* to 50*l.* These infants were seldom kept by the trafficker, who, through advertising in the newspapers or answering advertisements, has succeeded in immediately transferring the infants to other persons for adoption, in some cases without any premium, and in others for less sums of money than originally received, or has placed them out to nurse for weekly payments which have not been kept up; the trafficker has given a false name and address and has not been traced. If the Committee will allow me I can give particulars of nine cases of this kind which have come under my notice since the year 1886, in which 144 infants were received. The sums paid with these infants could only be ascertained in 66 cases, for which in all a sum of 632*l.* was received by the traffickers. Some of these infants were afterwards abandoned in a most heartless manner and died, and others were sent to the workhouse and became a charge upon the rates.

Lord Belper.

452. Were these cases found out afterwards?—They were traced afterwards.

453. Was your information in time to have stopped any of these cases taking place, supposing the law had permitted you to do so?—I should say so.

454. I thought you said you only found it out afterwards?—The offence must take place before we can interfere.

455. But sufficiently soon after to enable you to trace the people and prosecute them?—In some cases.

Chairman.

456. Then Clause 6 of the Bill requires that additional powers shall be given to officers in carrying out their duties; will you explain any difficulties you have experienced in working the Act of 1872?—I have been refused admission to houses where I have had reason to believe

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that infants were being kept for hire. Information as regards infants kept for hire has been refused me; and false information has also been given me in respect of infants kept for hire for the purpose of evading the Act, and much difficulty has, in consequence, been experienced in proving offences against the Act.

457. And has there been any other difficulty in administering; it is mainly a question of people refusing to answer questions, and refusing to admit you to their house, I understand?—Yes.

458. Will you describe the manner in which you now carry out your investigations, and the way in which you gain admission to unregistered houses, and learn whether infants are kept there to nurse?—On seeing an advertisement in a newspaper for the care or adoption of an infant, I call at the address given.

459. Have you got any samples of those advertisements?—I have (*handing in a paper of samples of advertisements*). On seeing an advertisement in a newspaper for the care or adoption of an infant, I call at the address given and inquire for the person by name or initials as given by her, obtain an interview, and satisfy myself, before disclosing who I am, as to whether infants are being kept or the Act infringed. I then explain the object of my visit and the requirements of the Act, and hand a notice form, No. 47, which gives instructions as to where application should be made for registration if it should at any time be needed. Should the advertiser give her address at a newsagent's shop where letters are received, I write a letter asking an interview, and for terms for the adoption and care of the infant.

460. Do you write the letters yourself, or get them written?—Very often I get them written; I write sometimes myself. On getting a reply to my letter I interview the person and satisfy myself that the Act has not been infringed, and explain its requirements. Should I obtain information of any person suspected of keeping infants, I visit the house and act as the circumstances of the case may justify me in doing.

461. Have you had much difficulty, as a rule, in getting into these places?—Very often.

462. They suspect you?—I think they do.

463. You generally represent that you have a child to put out, I suppose?—I lead them to believe so; I have to do so.

464. Then, as regards Clause 7, as to the power of the local authority to strike the name off the register, do you find that necessary?—I think so. Under the present Act there is no power to strike off the register the name of a person who has discontinued the keeping of infants. Such person must remain on the register until the expiration of the registration, and some inconvenience has been caused thereby. The suggested alteration is to meet that difficulty.

465. Now I want to ask you a few questions arising out of some of these points. I want to know, first of all, would the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, if properly administered, cover the deficiencies in the present Act?—I think not.

Chairman—continued.

466. It simply deals with cases of criminal cruelty, you mean?—With cases of criminal cruelty.

467. And starvation, I presume, is included in cruelty. It also dealt with those cases?—Yes.

468. Then is it your experience that there is much dislike on the part of respectable working people to register their houses?—I have not found a great difficulty in that matter. It seems there are some who do not particularly wish to register, but, generally speaking, I have found no objection.

469. I mean, when you have gone round to these unregistered houses and explained the Act, possibly in cases of infringement as well as in cases where it is not infringed, are the more respectable of these people generally quite willing to come and register themselves?—Many of them would be if they required it.

470. But I mean to say, if the Act were extended to include all children?—I do not think there would be a very great deal of objection; there would in some cases, no doubt.

471. You know that objection has been raised on the part of a great many philanthropic societies that board children out, on the ground that if the present Act were extended it would be very difficult to find respectable people who would take these children in. From your experience amongst people do you find that that would be the case?—There may be an objection felt by some people, but I do not think that, generally speaking, it would be so.

472. You do not think that there is any general objection to registration?—No; and particularly I may say that when a person has been registered they have no objection whatever to the visit of the inspector.

473. And do you find that they have less objection to a lady inspector than to a man?—I really cannot answer that.

474. You do not know?—No.

475. But do you think there might be objection to the visits of a man in uniform; there was a great deal of evidence given before one of the previous Committees as to the objections that would be entertained to a man in uniform visiting the house; that is rather a different question?—Possibly there may be objection to a man in uniform; I should think there would be.

476. But I do not know that there is any proposal with reference to that. Would you tell us what do you think is the best way of defining "relatives" and "guardians"?—There is some difficulty about that, but I think it has been thought that first cousin by blood or marriage should be the extent.

477. Have you found cases where children have been taken away in what you think ought to be regarded as an improper manner, and in which you have been simply told that they have been taken away by a relative; I mean to say cases where you think that it would have been advantageous if the term "relative" had been defined?—Cases of that kind have come under my notice, where it would have been satisfactory if the child could have been traced.

478. I want

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper.

478. I want to ask you one or two questions with regard to the evidence that you have given. I understand you made 9,575 visits of enquiry; I think you said you could not state how many different houses those visits included?—I cannot say exactly the number of different houses.

479. But you have included in that 9,575 all the visits you have made, whether they were second or third visits to the same house or not?—Yes.

480. Of those there were 205 cases in which you found there was an infringement of the present Act?—That is so.

481. In that number of 205 cases, have you also included houses which might have infringed the Act twice?—I have only two cases of that kind where I found the same person breaking the law a second time.

482. Therefore, practically, except those two cases, they would be all different houses?—Yes, they were different houses; when I found the second offence the persons had removed to other houses.

483. Different houses, but the same people?—The same people.

484. Of those cases I see that 116 were not prosecuted, but were cautioned, and with regard to several of them (I think you said several) you consented not to prosecute on their giving up keeping more than one child; is that the case?—Yes, they complied with the Act by giving up one child.

485. How often have you visited those houses since?—Very frequently; I cannot tell you how often.

486. You have assured yourself that they have not gone back and taken another child afterwards?—Some I have not been able to trace; others I have, and have frequently seen them since.

487. Should you agree with the evidence that Mr. Spencer gave us, that nearly the whole of the cases that ought to be registered under the present law are registered?—Well, we know of none that are breaking the law.

488. Have you any assistance in your work, or are you the only official?—I have another inspector to assist me; I take the district north of the Thames and he takes the district south of the Thames.

489. Then are these visits that have been made by you two or by you alone?—By me alone up to March 1894.

490. I think out of these, in round numbers, 10,000 visits you find that only about 200 were infringements of the Act; I suppose if the Act applied to all cases of children up to five years old and to all the cases where only one child was kept it would be a most enormous increase of your duties?—There would be a great increase.

491. It is almost impossible to say what the limit of the houses you might have to visit would be?—I do not think that a very great increase would take place, simply because I have discovered these myself from time to time, and I should bring them under the law that would extend it to one child.

492. I understand that you have discovered (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

these where you had reason to think that there was a *prima facie* case, for supposing that the present law might be infringed?—Yes.

493. Therefore, you did not take the trouble to visit a great number of the cases where only one child was kept, or where there was no reason to suppose that the present law was being infringed?—But still in any case where I had suspicion, I would always take steps to visit again.

494. However, the number of visits that you have made is something like 48 times as many as the cases where there has actually been an infringement?—Yes, that is so.

Chairman.

495. On that point can you state from your experience what the capacity of an inspector in looking after registered houses is; how many houses do you think an inspector could properly look after; 100, 200, 300, or what?—I should think an inspector could look after 200 or 300 houses very well.

496. Two hundred or 300 registered houses I mean?—By arranging the visits to the houses it could be done.

497. How often do you generally go?—I went never less than once a month; and I went very frequently if I had suspicion of anyone, and thought it required it.

Lord Belper.

498. In the case of your visits for the limited purposes of this Act, you discovered 3,991 cases where children were kept for hire?—I did.

499. Do you think that the greater part of those houses would register if the Act were extended?—Well yes, they would have to, or give up keeping infants.

500. They would either have to give up keeping children, or have to register, or have to infringe the Act; there are those three courses open to them; but my question is whether you think that the greater part of them would register?—I cannot say that.

501. At all events, that 3,991 is only a very small proportion of the houses where children are kept for hire?—That is so; no doubt there are many more.

502. I think you did not divide your visits or your cases into different years at all, you cannot tell us what the effect of the working of this Act under the county council has been by showing what number of cases you have had to visit, or what number of cases of infringement of the Act have been in the different years?—No, I have given them all together, but I think it must be in the return that Mr. Spencer has handed in.

503. From your personal recollection should you say your work was very much diminished since you first undertook the administration of the Act?—There is a slight improvement in the way infants are treated; the work has not diminished because it has increased rather; a greater number of persons advertise for the care of infants.

504. Therefore the fact of the attention of the county council having been turned to it has not had the effect of greatly diminishing the practice of keeping children?—No, it has not.

E 3

505. In

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

505. In fact you do not think that if the Act were extended there would be any fewer children kept, but you think that the children would have a very much better chance of being properly kept?—I certainly do.

506. I want to clear up some of these points about these lying-in houses. There are a great many advertisements in the papers now with regard to these houses?—There are.

507. Have those advertisements increased of late more than they used to do?—No, recently they have rather decreased.

508. The advertisements of the lying-in houses; I do not mean the children?—Advertisements as to lying-in houses have decreased.

509. But I ask you if they have increased?—I do not think they have increased.

510. Because I believe it is a fact that the number of advertisements regarding children to adopt have decreased, have they not?—Yes, within a few months they have.

511. Do you know any particular reason for that?—No. I may state that some of the newspapers that had inserted these advertisements very freely discontinued it. Year after year they do that. Some three years ago the "Weekly Times and Echo" advertised very freely; they have entirely discontinued it.

512. You do your best to prevent the more respectable papers from putting in these advertisements, you and Mr. Spencer, I suppose?—I have spoken to some. I have occasionally called at a paper office about an advertisement, and sometime afterwards they have discontinued them. The papers are very good; they will do all they can to prevent anything going wrong.

513. But what I want to know is this: do you think that people who put out children are finding that advertisement renders them open to too much interference from the authorities, and that they are adopting other means of getting rid of the children?—Yes, I think it probable they apply to lying-in houses without making their wants known publicly, that is to say, without advertising in the paper. They adopt the course of writing to a lying-in housekeeper, and arrangements are made in that way, and children are distributed all over London and other places by that means, and we know nothing of it.

514. Have you ever called at any of these lying-in houses?—Yes.

515. How have you generally been met; with a rebuff?—No, I cannot say that, but I get no information as a rule as regards an infant; they very seldom tell what becomes of them, they pretend not to know; I am told the "mother made the arrangements; I know nothing about it."

516. But it is your belief that it is the lying-in houses that are the great means of supplying children to what I may call the professional baby farmer?—Yes, I believe that to be the case.

517. I mean like the people in this Reading case?—Yes; I have no doubt a great many are distributed through those houses.

518. Do you know of many of your own personal knowledge?—I cannot say that I know many cases, but I know some where the children

Chairman—continued.

have come to grief through being distributed from these houses.

519. But you do know as a fact that the children from these houses vanish in a mysterious way and cannot be traced?—They do.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

520. I am anxious to return to a point on which you have already answered Lord Belper; do we clearly understand from you that you think we are practically getting hold now under the existing law of all houses in which more than one infant under 12 months is being kept?—As far as we know, we are.

521. That is exactly my point, as far as you know; but you have told us that over London there are at this moment 41 houses registered; do you believe that there are not much more than 41 houses in London now in which two children under 12 months of age are being kept for hire?—It is possible there may be.

522. What is possible?—That there may be more than one kept.

523. But practically you have no reason to suppose that there are a very large number more who ought to be registered, and who are not?—No, I have not.

524. Then you would say that all the mischief that occurs now which the Act would touch, occurs in houses unregistered in which only one infant is now kept?—That is so.

525. That is to say that is the main amendment that the law wants, to cover houses in which only one infant is kept?—Yes.

526. Then have you, with your experience of the working classes, thought at all as to the mode of doing it, if the law were made to cover every house in which only one infant was kept for hire; have you considered the question of the difficulties that would arise in working men's houses as to the temporary lodgment of a child with a neighbour for payment?—I do not think there would be much difficulty in that.

527. I see, on looking at your evidence that you gave in 1890, that you were asked, "You do not wish to interfere with people who take a neighbour's child out of kindness, but may receive 1s. or 2s. a week for supporting it?" and your answer is, "There are very few cases of that kind that comes to my notice?"—There are very few.

528. Do you mean that you have not an opportunity of seeing it, or that you think it is a rare thing to happen?—I do not think it is a very frequent occurrence; but it may be that such cases have not come under my notice.

529. Do you think it is a rare thing for a mother who goes into a hospital, or for a widower who is working elsewhere, or for 100 other such cases, to get a neighbour to take a child for a month, say, for a few shillings a week?—There are such cases, no doubt.

530. But you think it is rare?—To me it is; it has not come under my notice.

531. But I mean, have you had such means of observing as to make your view that it is rare, a view based upon the real knowledge of the facts; your evidence would be very important if you can assure us that you have had the means of observing,

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

observing, and think that it would be a rare thing to happen?—It may be that such cases would not come within my experience.

532. Then you told us that it was part of your duty to keep watch over private lying-in establishments, and find out what becomes of the infants; under what authority at all do you profess to go to make such enquiries at a lying-in house?—Well, I do it in the ordinary course of my duties; of course the lying-in house-keeper could shut the door in my face if she liked, and not admit me.

533. She may reply "what business is it of yours," and you have nothing more to say?—That is so.

534. Are any of the cases of the advertisements that you follow up found by you to be really genuine cases of people who honestly wish to adopt the child in order to bring it up themselves?—There are some cases of that kind; the majority are the other way.

535. You think that in the case of advertisements the majority are the other way?—I do.

536. In the houses where children are taken in for hire, can you give us roughly any idea of what proportion are illegitimate children and what proportion are legitimate?—I should say that not 5 per cent. of the children who have come under my notice have been legitimate.

537. That is to say that 95 per cent. are illegitimate children?—Yes, as far as my experience goes.

538. That corresponds with what Mr. Spencer told us. Now why do you think it is that there are not more people in London who register themselves as ready to take children, if it is so profitable a thing to do as it seems to be?—Well, it is not very profitable. In some cases it is profitable because the people are well paid. The payment for the maintenance of children varies very much; some get 4s., some 5s., some 6s., others 10s.; I have known as much as 15s. and 17. a week paid for a child. Of course in those cases where it is well paid for it is profitable; but there cannot be much profit in taking a child at 5s. a week.

539. Do you know what is the sum paid by guardians to persons for taking an infant who is boarded out?—I have not much experience of that, but I have been told that they pay 5s. a week.

540. And do you know what the Foundling Hospital give in such cases?—I believe they pay 6s. a week.

541. If that is so, and if it is the case that there are a large number of people, who, as it would appear, are prepared to pay more than that, does it not seem to you that, if there were more registered houses known to be respectable, and in every way commendable places, not registered as baby farms, but registered as wholesome places, that would offer a legitimate mode of making money properly; and I want to know why you think that is not more adopted. You have answered that in many cases it is not profitable; but in many cases it will be profitable?—In many. It is quite clear that the law does not apply to so many; it applies to persons keeping more than one infant; and therefore very few (0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

are registered. They prefer keeping only one infant under a year old, and the others over that age, and so to avoid registration.

542. But now you told us a few minutes ago that you did not think there was much objection on people's part to being registered?—Not those I know.

543. But you still say that people would rather keep one infant than two even if they could make more profit out of the two, because of their objection to being registered?—Yes, I do think so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

544. Have you ever known a registered person advertise for a child?—Yes.

545. Would you expect a genuine advertisement for a child for adoption to appear in any of those papers you have referred to?—There may be some.

546. Would you expect it, or would they go to other papers?—I should not expect to find any of the advertisements genuine, although some might be genuine.

547. The majority of children, I think you said, now that are included in baby farms you think come from lying-in houses?—A great many do.

548. A majority?—I do not think the majority.

549. When you refer to lying-in houses do you include houses kept by a qualified practitioner?—By midwives.

550. But by a qualified male practitioner; a doctor?—I do not refer to them.

551. You do not refer to those kept by a doctor?—I have not referred to them.

Lord Kinnaird.

552. Do you register the house or the person?—The house is registered and the person as well; the registration is granted to a person for a certain house.

553. May that person move with that form of registration to another house, or must they inform you?—They must inform us, and have the new house registered.

554. So that if they change in the 12 months would that house count as two; I understood that the figures you have given us are merely the total number of registrations?—Yes, the total number.

555. So that if they change that would be two houses?—Yes, two houses.

556. You told us you had no power of getting into a lying-in house if they chose to keep you out?—None whatever.

557. If you think there is anything going on wrong, have you any power then?—I have not.

558. You cannot put the police on them?—The police may go by a warrant.

559. Do they work with you?—Frequently.

560. Do you put them on the scent of a great many?—They assist me.

561. I was surprised to hear what you said a short time ago; do you say deliberately that you do not think people object to registration, though we hear that in practice not one in 50 of the houses are registered; why do they not register if they do not object to registration?—Because the law does not require them to register unless they keep two infants.

E 4

562. And

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

562. And you do not think there are many who keep two infants under one year not registered?—I do not.

563. How often do you visit these registered houses?—I used to visit them when they were under my control about once in three weeks or a month, sometimes oftener.

564. Do they change their names much in order to avoid registration or being found out?—I do not think so.

565. Are many sent out of your area into suburbs beyond, do you think, in the case of those that you suspect?—There are a great many sent out into the suburbs outside our district.

566. Then when they leave you do you report to the authorities having the administration of the law there, if you can follow them?—I have done so when a case has come under my notice.

567. Do you do that regularly, I mean?—Only when I knew of such cases.

568. There is no general list kept in which you exchange names and so on with those who are working the law in other parts?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

569. Have you a copy of the form that a person fills up to apply for registration?—Yes, I have.

570. Would you put it in?—I think it has been already put in by Mr. Spencer. (Mr. Alfred Spencer.) I have one here. *That (pointing to a form) is the form of application. This is the certificate of character. This is the register of infants. This is a letter to the person instructing him about being registered. This is an abstract of the law for the guidance of the person. These are the suggestions as to the care of infants. This is the form of notice to the coroner. The only one that I have really put in hitherto is that one "Suggestions as to the Care of Infants." I will hand them all in. (The same are handed in, vide Appendix.)*

Lord Thring.

571. (To Mr. Babey.) On the subject of lying-in houses on which you have been pressed, take a case you are very familiar with; a great many ladies come up to be confined in London, and take lodgings for that purpose; would that be a lying-in house or not?—I should not like to include a solitary case like that.

572. It is not a solitary case, for houses are constantly let in London for that very purpose?—Lying-in housekeepers who advertise weekly in the papers, I look upon as professional lying-in housekeepers.

573. But supposing they do not advertise them, I want to ask what demarcation you intend to draw between lying-in houses and places where ladies are confined?—My impression of a lying-in house is where month after month several women are taken in to be confined and the people keeping the house make a profession of it.

574. How do you know? I will put the case of a lodging-house keeper in London; she receives during the year 10 ladies, is that a lying-in house or not?—I should call it so.

575. You would call it so?—I should.

576. Then the frequency of it makes it so?—Yes.

Lord Thring—continued.

577. Then you would define a lying-in-house to be a lodging-house where a person is sent to be confined, and pays for her lodging?—That would be a lying-in-house.

578. Then with respect to the children, you are aware that this is intended to include children up to five years old?—I am.

579. I want to draw your attention to a class of children quite different from those to which the Bill refers; you are well aware that Indian children are constantly, almost always left behind, and sometimes two or three of the same family are brought up in a family for hire or reward; would you bring them within the Act?—If the Bill became law it would bring them in, of course.

580. Then you think that a school that takes in young children should be brought within the Act?—There may be some exemptions in a case of that kind.

581. But you think that on the whole they ought to be brought within the Act, both those and the cases of friends taking Indian children (as a good many people who are not in good circumstances do), for hire or reward; you think they ought to be within the Act if they have more than two children under five years old?—Well, as regards school children they are not often taken at school under that age.

582. But there are cases. The other case is also most frequent; I only want to know whether you think the Act ought to apply to them or not?—There is a difficulty in that matter I quite admit.

583. And do you see any means of drawing any line between the two?—No, I really do not.

584. Then I want to draw your attention to this particular clause, Clause 6, the clause about entry, that "any officer so appointed may visit any house registered under the principal Act, or any house in which he has reason to believe that any infant under the age of five years is being kept for hire or reward." I want to draw your attention to the meaning of that clause, "any officer," that would include a common constable, or anybody not a constable "may enter any house in which he," the officer "has reason to believe that an infant under the age of five years is being kept for hire or reward." Now, do you really mean that you think that is a proper clause, to empower any constable to enter into my house if he chooses to think that I have a child there; he has only got to say that he "has reason to think," and he can enter my house because he has reason to think that I have a child there; any officer of the local authority it means, I suppose?—Any officer of the local authority, I suppose.

585. Do you really think that the County Council ought to be able to come into my house, because any officer thinks he has reason to believe that I have a child kept for hire or reward, under the age of five years?—If that power was invested in an officer, I should presume that he would not exercise it unless it were in a very serious case.

586. Did you ever hear of any Act of Parliament under the sun investing any officer with power to go into any house in London because he

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

he chooses to think that a child under five years old is kept there for hire or reward?—It is usually done by warrant; I quite admit that.

587. And also when there is a warrant there is usually a reason assigned in the warrant?—Yes.

588. I only want to know whether you seriously consider that that is a proper clause?—I have met with cases where I should have been very pleased to have had the power.

589. Then with reference to these visits you have told us of, you have, in fact, acted as a detective, very properly, no doubt?—Yes.

590. When you went to these places, if the people had known that you were coming, they would not have let you in?—No.

591. You have no right in law to ask these questions?—I have no right; they can refuse, of course.

592. And if they refuse, they do no wrong?—They do not offend against the law, I admit; then the law is evaded in consequence, very often.

593. Therefore all the information given you was entirely willingly given, and under no obligation whatever?—Yes, but the information is frequently false.

594. But why is it more wrong to give false information if you are asked a question that you are not bound to answer, than it is to ask the question; however, that is a question of morals?—Yes.

Chairman.

595. You stated that you corroborated what Mr. Spencer said, and that you thought there were no houses which ought to be brought under inspection which are not under inspection?—There may be a few.

596. And you give as your reason for that, the fact that you practically follow up all the advertisements that appear?—That is so.

597. And you think it is done mainly through advertisements?—It is, no doubt, except that as I have stated, it is done through the lying-in houses.

598. I can understand your following up the case of a person who wants to adopt a child, but there are cases here of people who advertise and want to put out children. There is one here for example: "Wanted, a good motherly home for two children, boy eight years, baby girl nine months." You cannot possibly trace the circumstances of the people putting out the children?—There is very great difficulty in doing so.

599. And no doubt also the children are given out secretly by the lying-in houses?—Yes.

600. You have two sources of secret supply of children, and I should have thought there must be many cases in which people who take children secretly like that are keeping them illegally, without any possibility of your finding them out?—Of course there may be some; it is impossible to say, but we have not found them out yet.

601. Then, can you tell me how many lying-in houses you yourself have traced in London through the advertisements?—Sixty seven, I think.

(U.95.)

Chairman—continued.

602. Altogether in London?—Altogether in London.

603. You mean, then, to say that there are only 67 that advertised?—That advertised, just so; 67 houses known through advertising.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

604. Are you speaking of London or of your district?—Of London.

Lord Kinnaird.

605. Do you think that is approximately the total number?—That is the total number that I see advertised; there may be more.

Chairman.

606. There are a lot of advertisements here of lying-in houses; are all these houses known to you that are advertised here?—I have not studied that; that is a list which has just come out; there are a good many there that are known to me, no doubt.

607. They advertise generally?—Generally week by week.

608. Well, then, it has been suggested that if the Act was extended to include all children under five years of age it would embrace the lying-in houses; would it do so, or do the lying-in houses invariably get rid of the children as soon as they possibly can?—They are very seldom kept there.

609. So that the lying-in houses are therefore sort of feeders to the baby farmers, but you could not by any means bring them under the Act as baby farmers themselves?—Just so.

610. And then, with regard to the question of institutions, have you any experience of what I might call shady institutions for the care of children, which are run ostensibly on philanthropic grounds, but really as matters of private gain, which it would be highly desirable to have under proper supervision?—At the present time I know none that are shady, but I have known them previously.

611. I do not want you to mention names, but do you know of any?—Not at present.

612. Have you come across any?—I have in the course of my inquiries.

613. What sort of places; I do not want you to specify names, but what class of cases; do you mean persons who keep a sort of boarding house or home for children, or what?—It would be in the shape of a home for little children, and the mothers pay, as a rule, something for their maintenance, and subscriptions are received, or were received, rather to supplement the keeping of the children.

614. Do people go round and ask for subscriptions for them?—I think it is done through advertising.

615. And were these institutions ever managed by a committee that you knew of?—None of those that I have been speaking of.

616. Did they publish accounts?—No, I think not.

617. I was rather trying to get at the point of the exemption of those that have a committee and are managed by a committee of six; I wanted to know whether the proposed exemption of an institution managed by a committee of six would be likely to exempt many places which it

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appears

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

appears desirable to include; but then you say these classes of places are not very frequent now?—No, I know none but what appear to be genuine at present; but in these places there is an enormous death-rate of children.

618. You do not mean what are known as crèches, places where they take in children by the day only?—No, I do not refer to them at all.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

619. The Act exempts institutions?—Yes.

620. How would you decide whether a place was an institution or not?—That has never been defined, but it has always been considered an institution where it is an organised society.

621. You say you knew some that advertised for subscriptions, so that they would be institutions?—Yes. Persons keeping a place of that kind seldom kept the infants apart from their mothers, the mothers used to lodge in the house as a general rule.

622. Why would you call that an institution?—It is a home more than an institution.

Lord Thring.

623. You said, and quite rightly I thought, that its being an organised society was to constitute it an institution. A person keeping a house like that which you have been talking of does not constitute an organised society?—I want to convey in that case that the infants were kept in a home, and their mothers as a rule with them.

624. My Lord asked you why they were institutions?—They used to claim to be institutions.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

625. And on their claim you allowed it?—Because there was no offence against the Act.

Chairman.

626. You know it was proposed in the amended Bill which went through the House of Commons in 1890 to limit the application of the proposed Act to illegitimate children only?—Yes, it was.

627. Is it your opinion that if the Act was extended, but was restricted to illegitimate children only, that would lead to great evasion through illegitimate children being laid out as legitimate?—I quite believe that; there would be great difficulty.

628. You think it would not be a very difficult thing for a person bringing a child to a baby-farm to produce what are known as "marriage lines" belonging to somebody else, which she had either borrowed or got hold of in some way?—I think it very probable that would happen.

629. And that then when you went round to make inquiries at the house, and you found this child put down as being legitimate and therefore as being outside your inspection, you would find yourself practically powerless in the matter, and it would be very difficult for you to check the statement as to whether the child was legitimate or not?—That would be so.

630. Can you suggest any means, supposing it were restricted to illegitimate children, of preventing that suggested evasion; for instance, in the Bill of 1890 it was put that "the burden

Chairman—continued.

of proving, for the purposes of this Act, the legitimacy of any infant under the age of five years, retained or received for hire or reward, shall rest with the person retaining or receiving the same, unless he proves that he took all reasonable means to satisfy himself of such legitimacy;" now that last sentence opens the door to unlimited evasion, does it not?—It does, no doubt.

631. I suppose they would all say that they have taken "all reasonable means"?—They would, no doubt.

632. It might be very difficult to prove that they had not taken reasonable means to satisfy themselves; can you suggest any other means of putting a stop to evasion; any better words, or any better way than simply throwing the onus of proof on to the person who takes the infant in?—If some written statement was given with it it would perhaps prevent that being done.

633. You would have to get a written statement from the person who gave it in?—Yes.

634. And you would probably want that statement endorsed by two responsible householders, persons who knew them, to show that it was, at all events, a married woman who brought the infant?—I should think it necessary to have it verified in some way.

635. But from your experience of the class of people who take in these sort of children, it is your firm conviction that it would be very easy to evade the Act if it was restricted to illegitimate children only?—I do think so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

636. Do you work with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or do you find that they like to work entirely independently of you?—I do not work with them.

637. Do you refer cases to them which come under your notice indirectly?—I should do so.

638. You are looking for a child under one year, and find a child under five years being cruelly treated; would you refer that to the society?—I should, or to the police.

639. But you do occasionally do it?—I have not found a case for some time that it was necessary to send on to them.

640. But you would do so; you would work with them in that way?—Yes, certainly.

641. I want to be quite clear on this point; you think there are only 67 lying-in houses in London now, or, roughly speaking, that number, and you judge of it by the advertisements?—Yes, there are only 67 who advertise.

642. I find that there are 13 in one newspaper that you have put in?—Yes.

643. That is to say, one-fifth of the whole body in London advertising in this particular paper?—They advertise in various papers.

Lord Kinnaird.

644. How do you define a lying-in house?—Where persons are taken in to be confined.

645. One or more?—I should not call it a lying-in house unless they took in several cases.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

27 April 1896.

Mr. ATHELSTAN BRAXTON HICKS, having been called in; is Examined as follows:

Chairman.

646. You are the coroner for the Kingston district of Surrey and the South Western district of the county of London?—Yes.

647. You have, I believe, taken considerable interest in this question of Infant Life Protection?—I have always, from the commencement of my holding office.

648. How long have you been coroner?—Coroner since 1885, and deputy-coroner before that, since 1883.

649. Are you a medical man?—I am a barrister-at-law.

650. We had a coroner last time we met, who was both a medical man and a barrister, and I know many coroners are medical men?—I have been at the hospitals and been bred in the medical profession all my life.

651. You have considerable knowledge of medical subjects therefore?—Yes, and I have been deputy-coroner in 11 London districts in and around the metropolis, so that my knowledge is not confined to one district but applies to many.

652. You gave evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1890?—I did.

653. You may take it that the Committee does not want to go over the whole ground which you covered to a certain extent as to the general necessity of an Act for the Prevention of the Destruction of Infant Life; and what we more or less want to confine ourselves to is the necessity, if any, for the extension of the Act; and the reasons which you have for desiring such extension, and I may say the extent to which you would extend it, and the effect that that extension would have?—Quite so.

654. Have you anything further to say on the general question of the necessity of extension than what you gave before the Committee of 1890, because I think the Members of this Committee have seen that evidence, and we do not want unnecessarily to go all through it again?—Then I think I may put it in this general way: that I have carefully read the evidence which I gave then, and that my experience of the last six years has made me more strongly convinced that the opinions I expressed then, with regard to some of which I was then doubtful, have been confirmed by that six years' experience, and that there is an absolute necessity for a strong amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872.

655. Will you read a letter, please, which you received lately from the Home Secretary?—Yes; it is dated 12th of March 1896. "Sir,—I am directed by the Secretary of State to forward herewith for your consideration a copy of a Bill to amend the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, which has been introduced into the House of Lords. A Bill for a similar purpose was introduced into the House of Commons in the year 1890, and a copy of the form in which it passed a Select Committee of that House is also enclosed herewith for comparison with the present Bill. Sir Matthew Ridley will be much obliged if you

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

will be so good as to furnish him with any observations that you can make on the provisions of the present Bill, and as it is probable that amendments may be proposed with the object of assimilating the Bill to the form passed in 1890 by the Select Committee, he will be glad if in your observations you can institute some comparison between the respective values in your opinion of the two Bills. The Bill has been read a second time, and it is intended to proceed with it with as little delay as possible. I am to beg, therefore, that your reply may be sent at your earliest convenience.—I am, Sir, your obedient Servant, Charles S. Murdock."

656. Then, I think, you had better read your reply, which expresses your opinions on the subject?—So far as I was able to deal with it in that mode, to that extent as a comparison. "17th March 1896.—To Her Majesty's Secretary of State, Home Department. Sir,—I am in receipt of yours of the 12th instant, and in answer thereto, I beg to say that the subject-matter of the Bills for the amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, has been under the consideration of the Coroners' Society since 1890; and previous to that the society had often discussed the inadequacy of the Act of 1872, and last year I was requested as the honorary secretary of that society to draft certain observations for its consideration. These observations have been approved by the council of the society, and are to be discussed at the annual general meeting to be held in June next, and I have no doubt that the meeting will endorse the recommendations of the council, which is composed of prominent coroners from all parts of England and Wales. However, without waiting for the annual meeting, I have the honour to forward you a copy of these observations. In accordance with the request contained in your letter, I beg to submit some further observations in my personal capacity as a coroner. I have carefully considered the two Bills forwarded to me, and where the clauses of the House of Lords' Bill, 1896, are similar to that of the Amended Bill of 1890, I offer no criticism as I entirely agree with them. Where they differ, I would state that I prefer the provisions of the Bill of 1896, for the following reasons:—It is to be noted in Section 2 of the 1896 Bill, that the provisions of the Bill of 1890 are extended to any infant, without regard to legitimacy or otherwise. This is a distinct improvement, as the 1st Section of the Bill of 1890, with regard to proving legitimacy, would, in practice, have been difficult and unnecessarily inquisitorial. The extension of the age to five years is another improvement, as it would be greatly to the benefit of the child itself. The old limit of 12 months was much too low, for it is about that time that the change from milk food to stronger diet commences, and so it is found in practice that at 12 months children often fall away and die in a manner which gives rise to suspicion. The change of food in a child is one of the most common sources of wasting, and my experience forces me to think

F 2

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

think that it is often done intentionally. Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, which is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, is one of the most useful, as tending to minimise the evil called baby sweating, where a child is handed over by some unknown person to be nursed, or for so-called adoption, and a lump sum is paid down. It would also check the practice of handing a baby from one person to another without any check, and where each such person gives it a different food. I have known a case in which a child was in the care of five different people in less than 12 months. To keep a register in the terms proposed would be very little trouble to the individual, and for the sake of coroners who would have to be informed of each death, it would materially assist them in their inquiries. The next section which calls for comment is Section 8 of the Bill of 1896, as to the interpretation of institutions established for the protection and care of infants. Personally, I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill, and though it does not appear to be so wide as the exceptions in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, yet it may open a means of evading the Act. The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of the Bill of 1890. It may be possible that the promoters of the Bill will find themselves compelled to accept some amendments on this point, but I think it would be a great advantage to the children themselves that a register should be kept of the facts required in Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, and that the local authority may have access to such register when required. Regarding exceptions A, E, and F of Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, I have carefully considered them, and I cannot conceive any exceptions which could be more useful for the purposes of evading the provisions of the Act. The Bill itself does not attempt to define what or who is a relative or guardian, or a reputed parent, nor in exception E is any check placed upon the excuses where given; and if this exception, or anything like it, was to hold good, every alleged evasion of this Act would be pleaded under this exception. It should be noted that most of the exceptions, if *bonâ fide*, are really covered by the words of Section 2, in the Bill of 1896, because there it says that the Act shall only apply to persons retaining or receiving an infant for hire or reward. The word reward brings me to the consideration of those cases which are called adoption; that is, where a person receives a sum down to adopt a child. The newspapers teem with advertisements offering this mode of the disposal of infants; and it is a notorious fact, as exemplified in many cases which were brought before the Select Committee of 1890, and others which have been inquired into since, that the majority of such advertisers are of the most wicked kind, and carry on their business as an absolute trade." (I may mention that this letter was written before the Reading scandal came out.) "Therefore, I think that the word reward should be interpreted in the new Bill in the terms of the proviso to Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, viz., 'Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of

five years in consideration of an immediate payment shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section.'" (That would be that they would have to register the original arrangement by which they entered into an arrangement to take care of the child, and that a certain amount of inspection might occur, not necessarily.) "It is the experience of most coroners that where children are taken in to nurse singly, and the house is therefore unregistered, some of the worst cases of neglect occur. I think the effect of the present Bill will be most salutary, and would cause a class of respectable and careful persons to undertake the care of a child or children. The fact that they are registered and inspected will, in my opinion, have an effect quite different to that which some of the opponents of the Bill allege it will have. That is, instead of such people being looked upon with suspicion, the registration will be equivalent to a certificate of good character. As a proof of this, I have always asked witnesses at inquests, who had from the evidence undoubtedly taken every care of the infants under their charge, if they had any objection to registration and inspection. The answer has always been in the negative, and some have gone further and stated that they would prefer this course. Where children have been more or less neglected, I have always found that the nurses are fully aware that registration and inspection is not required by law where one child is kept, and therefore advantage is taken of this, I cannot think that the effect of this Bill will be to arrest philanthropic efforts, or the adoption of children by the well-disposed, and I sincerely trust it will pass into law. Coroners, of all persons, are in a better position to judge of the weakness of the present Act, and though it may entail an extra amount of work, I do not think that any would be willing to oppose the present Bill. Should there be any other point on which you would wish me to make observations, I am quite at your service.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant. (signed) A. Braxton Hicks, Coroner." Might I be allowed to read the copy of a memorandum that is enclosed with that letter to the Home Office?

657. What is it?—Observations which I was requested to draw up for the consideration of the Coroners' Society at their meeting in June next. We have a large council who pass all the matters to be placed in the report, and this matter among others was approved by them; it was under the heading of "Suggested Amendments in the Law." "Infant Life Protection Act. This Act was passed to regulate the system which had sprung up and become known as 'baby farming,' as it was found that children were taken charge of by persons for a fixed sum or periodical payment, and were either ruthlessly murdered or allowed to die by general neglect; there was no check upon this system, and it became at last such a scandal that the Legislature passed a law called 'The Infant Life Protection Act,' to afford some protection to such children. It provided that no person shall receive into a house for hire or reward more than one infant under the age of 12 months for the purpose of nursing unless they are registered, and

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

and that the local authority shall cause a register to be kept of such houses, and generally have supervision over the same; that every death of an infant occurring in a registered house shall be notified to the coroner, in order that he may hold an inquest, if necessary; and further, that these provisions shall extend to Scotland, except that the procurator fiscal is to be informed instead of the coroner. There are also penalties attaching to infringements of this Act to be enforced by the local authority, in London by the county council, in counties by justices in petty sessions, in the City of London by the common council, and in boroughs the borough council. Although useful as it was at the time, it is now found that except in the Metropolis and other large towns, it is nearly a dead letter. Experience has shown that advantage is taken of the provisions of the Act by persons, to evade being registered, by only taking one child under 12 months of age at a time, and a great amount of neglect has been found to occur in these cases, especially when a cash premium has been paid in one sum. These children die from neglect, starvation, &c., and others are taken in their place, and probably as many die in 12 months as in six under the old jurisdiction, or no supervision. This subject was again brought before Parliament in 1890, and a Bill was introduced to extend the provisions of the Act to persons who received any illegitimate infant under the age of five years, and that they should be registered, and a proper record kept of age, sex, &c. A Committee was appointed to consider the Bill, but it was found that so many classes of persons would be exempted from its provisions on sentimental, philanthropic, and other grounds, that little or no improvement would be effected upon the Act of 1872, and that it would be, therefore, practically valueless. It was further pointed out to the Select Committee that persons taking upon themselves the custody of a child and assuming the duties and responsibilities of parents which did not otherwise belong to them, should be placed under some supervision, so that the authority could ascertain if they did their duty. Such supervision would be no hardship on the well-disposed, and it would be a great check upon evil-doers. Another point to be considered with regard to these children is, that they are the subject of what may be called 'baby-sweating.' A person advertises to adopt a child for a lump sum. She makes arrangements to meet the parents of the child at some public place, and the child—frequently without its real identity being known—is there and then handed over with the money; and the motives which actuated the parents are suppressed and all knowledge of them is lost. These facts have been brought to light over and over again, but with the law, as it is at present, nothing can be done to check the evil. The Coroners' Society would recommend to the Home Office an amendment of the Act of 1872, embodying the Bill of 1890 as originally drafted, with such addition as recent inquiries have shown to be advisable for the due protection of infant life. It is considered that in this way all requirements would be met."

658. Then there is another paper in which

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

you made some statements about lying-in houses; we will keep that till we come to the question presently. I think now we can best get what we want by going through this letter. The first thing is the inadequacy of the present Act; I should like to know what you have to say about that?—The great thing there in the opinion of the coroners and myself, is that the age limit is too low. We deal practically with these questions; we see the bodies of those children, we hear the medical evidence, and we hear, as far as we can ascertain it with regard to the class of people we deal with, what we hope is the truth, and we find that the age limit is too low having regard to the nursing out of children. One reason, as I have stated, is that the food is changed at about 12 months. The child at that time if it has been out to nurse and has fed on the bottle, is very often in somewhat of a delicate condition, because it is very awkward to rear a child in good health at times even with the best of care by the bottle, but with the class of people with whom we find as a fact these children are put out, it is almost impossible to have any check upon them by merely putting it at the 12 months. It certainly is to be said that a lot of these children put out to nurse die at an age under 12 months; but then those are the children who are put out to nurse singly where there is no registration or inspection. I do not think that in my experience since I gave my evidence in 1890 I have had one case in which I could seriously complain of want of due care or proper feeding by the people who were registered. The inference I draw from that is that registration is of advantage because inspection follows and the people know that they will be looked after and so they take more care than otherwise they would.

Viscount Llandaff.

659. But there is no inspection under the law as it stands?—Not with one child, as it stands.

660. But of a registered house I mean?—Yes, there is constant inspection of a registered house.

661. Not by law; there is no power to inspect in the Act. Where do you find that; if they chose to say "You cannot come in," the inspector has no power to enter?—It has always been the practice that an inspection does occur with these places.

662. If you do it without law why do you want the law altered?—I understood that the Act included that. I do not have power to carry out the Act.

663. There is no power of entry on inspection on giving directions as to food, in the Act?—I think it is included in Section 4; surely that would cover it; it says, "The local authority may refuse to register any house unless they are satisfied that such house was suitable."

664. That covers the power of entry and inspection, you think?—How can they satisfy themselves without that?

665. That is a mode of making the people consent to have the house examined before the registration is granted, but that in no way assists you in entering the house afterwards?—It seems

F 3

to

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

to me that if the local authority are satisfied that the house is not properly sufficient, they may not only refuse to register, but strike the name off the register under Section 7. I am not an authority in interpreting an Act of Parliament, but if I were the inspector I should say that if I have the power to strike a house off the register I have the power to see that I can do it.

666. The inspector has never found any objection, you think, made to that?—No; I think Mr. Babey has found no trouble where they were doing well; but he has found some where they had something to hide.

Chairman.

667. With regard to extending the Act, do you think it ought to include children over the age of one year?—Yes.

668. Because a child up to five years old requires almost as much care in looking after as a child of more tender age?—I would not fix the limit up to five years, personally, myself.

669. The first few years of its life, I will say?—Yes; I will tell you what would happen. As a child got older the inspector would know it was going on all right, and there would not be the same need for constant looking after it, so that when he found the foster parents were keeping it well and healthy, up to say two or three years old, he probably would not want to go there much more than once in six months; merely to see whether the same condition of things was going on.

670. In other words the people you practically want to get at are the two classes; first of all those who take the children either from places where women are confined, or from individuals who bring the children to them with the deliberate and set purpose of either killing the children or letting them die as soon as possible; and the other class who have no criminal intent, but still allow the children to die through ignorance and neglect?—That is so; those are the people.

671. And are there a great number of cases where children die through ignorance and neglect and through no criminal intent?—No doubt. I think that is the case with the majority who die; that is to say, the neglect is, at all events, so difficult to absolutely prove.

672. And the people who have no criminal intent would not necessarily object to some sort of supervision, I should think, would they?—No; in fact I found that where they were *bonâ fide* trying to do their best, and it only seemed a little stupidity, or something of that sort, they have told me, "We should be very pleased to show how we are treating the child." I had a very respectable woman before me from Sydenham the other day, and I said to her, "Would you have any objection to inspection and registration?" "No, certainly not, Mr. Coroner; I should only be too pleased to show how much care I do take of the children;" and she was not registered, as it happened, because she had only one child. At one time, I believe, she had been; I am not certain about that; but here was a woman of a superior class, who evidently had belonged to the well-to-do middle-class, who had probably come down a bit.

Chairman—continued.

673. Therefore, I may take it that as regards the general question of the inadequacy of the Act, you are of opinion that if the age was extended it would not result in driving these children away to other places where they would be hidden, but that it would result in their being better looked after?—I certainly think so; and there is another thing which is connected with that question: You ask me if I think it would drive them to other districts? I say, if the law was universally acted upon as well as it is in the county of London, of which I have knowledge, I think we should not have this drafting from one place to another; and in regard to that, I might state the case which I stated before the Committee of 1890, the case of Mrs. Arnold, into which I inquired, and which developed a lot of cases in which children had been entrusted to this woman; and after I had finished the inquiry, the jury then made a very strong recommendation. I spoke a month afterwards to Mr. Babey, the inspector under the Act, and I said, "Will you kindly give me a list of the people who are registered in my district?" He said, "Since that case there is not one left, sir." That shows that they knew where to go, where the Act was not strictly enforced. I am bound to call attention to this because I think the Act has been a dead letter in many cases.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

674. You speak of people who had been registered?—The people who had been on the register all cleared out of my district entirely, so that I had no one left who was registered. They thought that a strict inquiry would affect their interests in some way.

Chairman.

675. Did they clear out, or simply give up keeping children?—I think they moved into Mitcham, which is just out of my district and not in the metropolitan area; Mr. Babey told me so, but I had no cause of complaint with the particular woman who had the charge of the child at the time of its death. Whether she was frightened and thought there were more penalties behind in the Act than she was aware of, I do not know.

676. Now then I will take you to what I have marked as paragraph 4: "I have carefully considered the two Bills forwarded to me, and where the clauses of the House of Lords Bill (1896) are similar to that of the Amended Bill of 1890 I offer no criticism, as I entirely agree with them. Where they differ I would state that I prefer the provisions of the Bill of 1896 for the following reasons." Now I want to go through part of the Bill and just find out your views. You say here, "It is to be noted in Section 2 of the 1896 Bill that the provisions of the Bill of 1890 are extended to any infant without regard to legitimacy or otherwise." Now that is a very important point, on which I should like to have your opinion?—That is so.

677. The Bill of 1890 made it refer to illegitimate children only, and the present one makes it refer to both?—Yes, whether legitimate or not. The reason was this: The provision in the Bill of 1890 stated in Sub-section (2) of Section

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Section 1 that the burden of proving whether a child is legitimate or not "shall rest with the person retaining or receiving the same, unless he proves that he took all reasonable means to satisfy himself of such legitimacy."

678. Now is it your opinion that that last proviso opens the door to a very great deal of evasion?—In the Bill of 1890.

679. Yes, unless he shall have proved "that he took all reasonable means" of doing so; would it not be very difficult for the inspector when he came round and found a child mis-stated as legitimate, whereas it was illegitimate, to prove that the person had not taken every reasonable means of finding out, if they stated that they had done so?—He could not possibly do it with the class of people I am speaking of.

680. And therefore that if a person took in an illegitimate child, and the mother, or the person who brought it, produced borrowed or forged "marriage lines," as they are called—?—Yes, or a certificate of registration falsely given.

681. Or a certificate of registration, it would be very difficult for the inspector to in any way check those statements?—I do not see how he can do it with the present state of the Registration Law in force. I do not know whether your Committee are aware that the registration of births is about as slipshod a way of doing the work as one can conceive if you want to get at the truth.

682. That question of registration of births is rather outside our reference?—I am showing how impossible it would be for an inspector to know. A woman who was confined in the Lying-in Hospital in York-road; she was a married woman; she registered the child as the child of her husband, and his occupation. I had reason to consider otherwise, and I asked her to come up before me, and she made a statement to the registrar which put him on his guard when the death was registered, and she said her husband had been away 14 months. This child was not a legitimate child, and the husband could not be the father of the child; but to Mr. Babey she would say, "This is a legitimate child; here is the certificate of the birth."

683. Do you consider it would be more inquisitorial or less inquisitorial to confine it to illegitimate children only?—I say, make no question about the matter; simply if a child is put out to nurse for hire or reward, legitimate or illegitimate, let it be the same rule.

684. You think that to inquire into the question of whether it was legitimate or illegitimate, in other words, to confine the Act to illegitimate children only would be very inquisitorial?—Yes, it would be a great check on the carrying out of the Act first of all, and next it would be excessively inquisitorial.

685. And would lead to a good many false statements?—Yes, certainly.

686. You say in this letter that you consider that "this is a distinct improvement as the first section of the Bill of 1890, with regard to proving legitimacy, would in practice have been difficult and unnecessarily inquisitorial." Then you go on with the extension of the age to five years, about which I think we have heard your opinion?—I might first of all state with regard to that

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

last part that I do not find that legitimate children put out to nurse are any better or worse treated than illegitimate children. As coroner holding inquests on children apparently neglected, I do not find any more neglect with illegitimate than with legitimate children; and that is one reason why I think there is no reason to make a distinction.

687. Do you, when you hold an inquest on the body of a child, always try to find out whether it is legitimate or illegitimate?—Yes, by law I am bound to find out the requirements necessary for registration purposes.

688. And in distinguishing between the inquests held on the bodies of children that are put out for hire or reward and others, do you find that there are amongst them many legitimate children, children that are put out to hire or reward?—Yes, many legitimate children.

Viscount Llandaff.

689. Generally, is it not the case that there is a greater inducement to get rid of an illegitimate child than of a legitimate one?—May I be allowed to consider that question for a moment? Where children are *bonâ fide* put out with the hope that they will survive I do not think there is any difference really in the treatment; but there is this to be considered in a physical point of view: that illegitimate children are born very often under such circumstances that they are handicapped as to living, whereas the legitimate children very often are only put to nurse when the mother becomes ill, or she is dead, or the husband has to go away, or they generally have some chance of starting life fairly well with mother's milk; but illegitimate children are always bottle children. I have never had experience yet of an illegitimate child dying which was brought up by a wet nurse.

Lord Thring.

690. Do we understand you to say, that in your opinion a law for illegitimate children is no more needed than for legitimate?—No, I am speaking of the question of death generally; as to the necessity of general protection for infants now independently of crime or not.

691. I thought you said to Lord Llandaff that in your opinion there was no greater motive to put an illegitimate child out of the way than a legitimate one?—I was not dealing with the motive for the moment, only with the fact of death. The motive would necessarily be greater with an illegitimate child if there was any motive at all.

Viscount Llandaff.

692. Surely the obvious motive is to get rid of it somehow, so as to put it out of sight; is it not more likely, therefore, to get into bad treatment and bad surroundings?—If it is to be killed I agree.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

693. Both Mr. Spencer and Mr. Babey have stated to us, that at least 95 per cent. of the children whom we have to protect are in their opinion illegitimate?—The majority put out for hire or reward would no doubt be illegitimate; but in the cases that come before me I

F 4

cannot

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

cannot say that I have found lately any great distinction between those legitimate and those illegitimate.

Chairman.

694. Perhaps you misunderstood me. I meant this: Do you when you have inquests on bodies of children take special notice of those who have died under the care of baby farmers, whether registered or unregistered?—Yes, certainly.

695. Do you keep private memoranda of your own in connection with this subject?—Yes, I used to, because since 1890 I have had much fewer cases where I could have any suspicion. Before 1890 I certainly did find that there was a large majority of illegitimate children allowed to die, and I could not get an adequate cause.

696. But the legitimate children that die and upon which you have inquests and which may to a certain extent be said to have been put out for hire or reward are mostly, are they not, children of working people who put them out for the day or for a time while they go to work?—No, not many; my experience of late has been so different from what it was before 1890. Taking the class of cases which I was dealing with before 1890, at any rate so far as I can find out they are not now nearly so bad as they were then. I have not had a case in which I have had to make any severe comments about children put out to nurse since that; I have not found very much except stupidity since then; but in those cases before that Bill of 1890 when I gave my evidence I had grave causes to think that the cases that came before me were more the result of a bad motive.

697. But I thought you said you were more strongly of opinion than in 1890 of the necessity for the Act?—Yes, my experience has been varied since then; since then I have been Deputy Coroner in Middlesex for Dr. Diplock.

Lord Thring.

698. I understand you to say that since 1890 you have not met with many cases of children either legitimate or illegitimate?—In my district.

699. I am asking you what you know in your own district?—In my district; but I have held other appointments.

700. Is it the case that since 1890 you have not found children either legitimate or illegitimate ill-treated?—I have found them neglected, but ill-treated is a different term.

701. Neglected through ignorance?—Yes, and dirt and filth, that is if they live out with people who are utterly incapable or ought to be considered incapable of keeping them.

702. Did they treat the children worse than poor mothers would have treated their own children?—Yes; we see the difference in the people who have to take care of them. The poor respectable person is generally a great deal cleaner, but the ones put out to nurse are put out with people who ought to be the last to have charge of young children. There are two classes of cases that I am dealing with; the cases which are now registered, the class of people and houses, are the ones who take in for hire or

Lord Thring—continued.

reward more than one child over 12 months. Those I say I have very little to say about, because they are registered and inspected. The classes I want your Lordships to suggest in your recommendation are the single children who are put out one at a time, over whom there is no inspection, no supervision, and who are put out as I tell you with people that I have seen myself to be utterly incompetent, from all sorts of causes, physical cleanliness, and other causes, to have the care of one child; old women who are drunken, and those I have come across, and I always come across them, but I do not come across them very much in that class of cases that I did before; but I want to get the Act extended to the case of the single child who is put out for hire or reward. I think your Lordship did not quite understand why I was drawing the distinction.

Viscount Llandaff.

703. I have understood that since 1890 in your district there are not so many bad cases of any children at all?—I do not know. It was in the registered houses I was being asked about for the moment.

Chairman.

704. No. Were you referring to registered houses alone?—Yes, the registered houses; but then I am wanting to point out that it is the unregistered houses which take one child in that I am addressing myself to.

Viscount Llandaff.

705. But even taking those into the account, I understand there are not so many bad cases?—Not so many gross cases which have been found actually to be criminal.

706. You said that since 1890 you had not noticed so many bad cases?—I have not, not so many bad cases, but I have noticed bad cases.

707. Then things have got better?—So far as my knowledge goes.

Lord Thring.

708. Were any of the bad cases criminal?—No, they were not found criminal.

709. You mean to say that these poor women treated them as they would their own children, and that that treatment was not wise treatment; does it amount to more than that?—Yes, it does.

710. Did they treat their foster children worse than they would have treated their own?—Yes, certainly I think.

711. Why do you think so?—From the evidence before me.

712. Then why did not the jury find accordingly in their verdict?—Because there was not evidence to show it.

Chairman.

713. Have you sample cases to quote?—If you were coroner you would see the difficulty. I mean to say first of all the jury had to find the verdict. We are not committing magistrates; we are not in that position. At least the jury acquit, and it is not for me to say if the cases are criminal.

714. You

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

714. You mean to say that in some cases you thought it was criminal but the jury did not?—Yes, the jury did not find the verdict of manslaughter.

715. We are asking you whether or not, in the cases of children, you have met with any cases that were criminal?—I am not entitled to say that, but I have had my suspicions that the case ought to have been sent for trial.

Viscount Llandaff.

716. Did you point out your suspicions to the jury?—Yes; I pointed out to them that it was a question for them.

717. The jury disagreed with you?—They said that they thought it was an error of judgment; if you sent the case to the Old Bailey you find that the juries there come to the same opinion. I cannot answer more than what the juries find.

Lord Kinnaird.

718. What is the cause why you think they are not quite so bad; is it that the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act has helped to frighten bad parents?—I think it has had a great influence.

Chairman.

719. Do you find that there is much difference between districts?—Yes, an enormous amount.

720. When you say not in your district, were you in a different district before 1890?—No; but I was holding inquests in Dr. Diplock's district in 1892, for instance, and before that I was in a different district. I have been in 11 different districts.

721. Therefore you are not comparing the same district since 1890 with the same district before 1890?—No; I was speaking about my own district. With regard to Dr. Diplock's district in 1892 I found an enormous amount of baby farming absolutely and neglect too, in Willesden, Kilburn, Notting Hill, and those parts just there.

Viscount Llandaff.

722. How did you find that out?—By holding inquests.

723. As a deputy coroner?—Dr. Diplock was seriously ill, and I held the whole of his inquests.

724. I understand now. You meant to say that the improvement was in your district, and not in the other district?—Yes.

725. Then may we take it that in your district there has been an improvement since 1890?—Yes, there has been; but when I was in Dr. Diplock's district Mr. Babey had to come constantly to my court to investigate the matter there.

Lord Thring.

726. You cleared out the bad ones from your district and drove them into another?—You go to another district and find the same people there.

Chairman.

727. When you told us at the beginning of your evidence that you saw even greater necessity for the extension of the law than (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

existed then, you were speaking of your general experience?—General experience.

728. And not necessarily confined to your own district?—It was a general statement; and not only that, but as Secretary of the Coroners' Society such facts are constantly communicated to me, and I am more of that opinion for that reason. We have 207 members of the Coroners' Society, and they are constantly communicating the facts to me.

729. Now, about this section which you have dealt with in what I have marked as paragraph 7; "Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, which is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, is one of the most useful, as tending to minimise the evil called 'baby sweating,' where a child is handed over by some unknown person to be nursed, or for so-called adoption, and a lump sum is paid down. It would also check the practice of handing a baby from one person to another without any check; and where each such person gives it a different food?"—Section 3 of the Bill of 1896 is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, "where an infant is received by a person registered under the principal Act the person from whom the infant is received shall state truly, in writing signed by him, the name, sex, and age of the infant, and the place and time of its birth, and his own name and the place or places at which he has resided during the period of six months immediately preceding the statement." Sub-section (2) goes on to say that if an infant is removed from the care of a person registered the person removing the infant shall state truly in writing his own name, and so on.

Viscount Llandaff.

730. How do you propose to enforce that. A woman comes and gives her name as Mary Smith; how are you going to find out whether that is truly stated?—I had that objection raised. If a person is registered they would take some means for doing it.

731. What steps can they take?—Who is the person to whom you are alluding; the person who receives the infant or the person who brings it?

732. You say that the person who brings the child "shall state truly, in writing signed by him, the name, sex, and age of the infant, and the place and time of its birth, and his own name"?—You would be no worse off then than you are now.

733. What is the power to enforce it?—The person registered; they would take some means to ascertain.

734. The question is whether the person who delivered the infant has told a lie; how can you enforce it in suspicious cases, where a person hands over a 10l. note and disappears?—I did not draft this Bill. I would make a suggestion that the person who receives the child for hire or reward should make the best effort he can to ascertain where the child comes from.

735. What are the best methods?—Certainly it would not be receiving it at a railway platform; that is where most of these children are handed over with 10l., 20l., 30l. paid down, and the child is found in the River Thames.

736. The Bill does not forbid receiving it on a railway

G

27 April 1866.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

railway platform?—Is not that a matter for your Lordships to assist the public in?

737. How do you suggest that the registered person receiving the child is to ascertain that the person from whom he receives that child is telling the truth?—How are you to say whether the person giving information as to the registration of birth is telling the truth; if you can find out who the person is you can punish him.

Chairman.] We are acting rather on a misunderstanding. Clause 3 that we were talking about says, "Where an infant is removed from the care of a person registered;" that has nothing to do with the person who brings the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

738. "The person from whom the infant is received shall state truly in writing"?—That is in Sub-section (1).

739. Suppose they cannot write?—The same thing applies to any Registration Act that is passed, unless you have got some means for punishing the person for making a false statement. You must have some sanction to the section, I grant you. There is a sanction in the Bill, but it is no more operative than the sanction in the Registration Act.

Chairman.

740. It comes to this, therefore, that it is desirable to check false statements; and if this clause is passed into law, and the person is found making a false statement, you would be able to punish him for so doing, whereas you now cannot?—That is so; there would be sanction for the making of that false statement.

741. What I want now to find out from you is with reference to this question of paying lump sums down for children. We are familiar, I think, with the evidence we have heard as to the practice of doing so, so you need not go into that now; but what I want to know is, have you any proposals for preventing lump sums being paid down? I think you make some remark about it in this letter; I want very much to know whether there is any feasible mode of preventing that?—I think at the end of the letter I mentioned that; that the proviso in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890 should be re-enacted so far as where any child is taken for hire or reward, that is, the reward to be a lump sum down, they must still be registered under the Act and with such particulars as they themselves know of.

742. Perhaps I had better leave that till we come on to that clause; I will ask you a question about that presently. Then the next paragraph of your letter is this: "The next section which calls for comment is Section 8 of the Bill of 1896, as to the interpretation of institutions established for the protection or care of infants. Personally, I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill, and though it does not appear to be so wide as the exceptions in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, yet it may open a means of evading the Act. The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs *b*, *c*, and *d* of the Bill of 1890." Would you mind

Chairman—continued.

telling us now what are your views as to the interpretation of "institutions"?—That is so difficult, I really do not know what to do; I can only state that my knowledge is the knowledge of most people.

743. You do not want to have any exceptions?—I would say broadly that if it were possible to have no exceptions, where people who form themselves into institutions or anything in the nature of a public body have the care of infants, even only whilst the mother is lying-in, they should come under inspection.

744. You are talking of lying-in hospitals as distinct from lying-in houses?—First of all, a *bonâ fide* institution; we are talking for the moment of what is *bonâ fide*, that they should keep a register, and that that should be open to inspection if wanted. I believe that most of the institutions do have such a register, so that it would be nothing more to ask them to keep it than they do voluntarily, but there are a great many institutions which we may call lying-in houses.

745. We will talk about lying-in houses presently?—The only definition that has been suggested was this, that the institution should be that which is composed of a certain number of registered persons.

746. May I ask whether you have come across what might be called boarding homes kept by people who obtained subscriptions, and then ran the concern as a means of profit?—I know as a matter of common knowledge that they have done so. One sees in the papers that they have been prosecuted for trying to do so.

747. You think there are some of these cases which call themselves institutions which would be very much better to be looked after, and under registration and supervision?—Certainly.

748. Have you come across any cases of that sort, when evidence has been given before you?—I have had my suspicions of one or two places.

749. You think there are such places?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

750. What is it you suspect?—That they are not *bonâ fide* carried on as institutions, but carried on for hire or profit; that they are not *bonâ fide* charitable institutions; that there is virtually no committee of management; that there is no one of the outside public knowing what goes on.

Lord Thring.

751. Are you saying that institutions which profess to be public are in fact private speculations?—Yes, and that there are other institutions which are professedly public or philanthropic, of which I have my suspicions, from circumstances that happen, that they are simply houses for the cloaking of crime and immorality.

752. What I mean is this, and it is quite a different thing. In the first place, a private institution for profit claims to be a public institution; that is of course wrong, that is false pretence; then what do you say then, that there are other private institutions that are immoral places?—I will not say they are private; they profess to be public by giving some grand name to them, but they are carried on merely for the profit of one or

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

or two people, and that they are first of all immoral institutions, or for the sake of getting people relieved of their immorality, and if necessary under the cloak or by means of crime.

Viscount Llandaff.

753. I hope that these institutions for immorality and crime, murder, in fact, are not numerous: could you put your finger on them?—I think I could. I am in communication with the inspector when I find any evidence of this sort of thing.

Chairman.

754. In the Bill of 1890, the only institution practically exempted was the Foundling Hospital, because it says here, "In the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants." I think that was the case of the Foundling Hospital only?—It would include the Royal Lying-in Hospital in York-road, and others.

755. "In the case of any infant received in an institution, established or maintained for the protection or care of infants, or for the care and treatment of persons suffering from disease or injury." Now do you consider that that exemption is too wide; do you think that any institution established or maintained for the protection or care of infants would include some of these undesirable places which ought to be looked after?—I think it is so, because it is only on their statement that it rests. There is no means of testing their *bona fides* that I can see.

756. Do you think it would meet the case if we defined an "institution" as being a public institution under the charge of a committee of six persons, six householders?—I should think all institutions might, at all events if public institutions are started, give notice to the local authority and establish their *bona fides*; if the local authority are satisfied of their *bona fides* there need be no other trouble at all unless complaints are made; there might then be given in the names of the requisite persons who might themselves vouch that it was an institution to be carried on for a legitimate purpose.

757. We know that there are many perfectly legitimate philanthropic societies and institutions which look after children and either board them out or take care of them in various ways which are well managed and which the promoters of this Bill do not wish you to interfere with?—I think that by that means you would prevent anything like an interference by simply saying, "Give notice to the local authority that this is going to be established for the care of infants"; and the local authority being satisfied that it is *bonâ fide* there would be nothing more than that probably. They might keep a register of the infants they took under their charge.

758. In other words, the people who start an institution ought to get a license from the local authority?—Not to be paid for, but as an authority showing that they were in a *bonâ fide*

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

condition to carry out the object. For instance, there are several medical men in a high class position who carry on lying-in houses and who take charge of the children; there would be no hardship in their having to say, "I am going to open a house for some of my patients who come up and wish me to attend them." The local authority would make a note of it, and be satisfied with the *bona fides* of the person.

759. Then with regard to the exceptions in (*b*) (*c*) and (*d*). "In the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants; nor (*b*) in the case of any infant received in an institution, established or maintained for the protection or care of infants, or for the care and treatment of persons suffering from disease or injury. (*c*) In the case of any infant received by any person under the provisions of any Act for the relief of the poor, or of any order of the Local Government Board made under such Act; nor (*d*) In the case of any infant received by any persons who have obtained the requisite authority of the Local Government Board to act as a boarding-out committee?"—That is what they say; they are already inspected, and under thorough supervision.

760. You do not want the Act to interfere with them?—No, I think I may say about that that it is only a question of interpretation of the meaning of the word "institutions" as regards these houses. I can see no objection to this.

761. You say here, "Personally I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill;" and then go on, "The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs (*b*) (*c*) and (*d*)"?—It would.

762. Therefore you do not want to exclude those children?—This is not written for your Committee. It is my opinion, so far as the Home Office asked me for it, of the two Bills; but anticipating opposition, and knowing what the feeling of a good many people would be, I merely would say that I personally should like to have no exception; but I can see no reason why these places where there is systematic inspection need be included. Now the children boarded out by the Poor Law are wonderfully well looked after, and the children do very well; one cannot ask for registration and inspection where it virtually exists under the Poor Law registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

763. Would you except that?—I would except that from the provisions of this Act if it were passed. I am trying to get some better Act passed, and I should not like by my suggestions unnecessarily to harass people.

764. You mean you would suggest by a perfect Bill to include children boarded out by a Poor Law committee?—As to those bodies of that description, I only say that there should be notice given, and a register kept of the children; no inspection after it; that is virtually done.

G 2

765. Then

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

765. Then (a), (c), and (f); (a) deals with a child "received by its relatives or guardians, or in the case of an illegitimate infant by the persons who would be its relatives or guardians if the infant were legitimate"; you class those three together, and you say that you have carefully considered them, and you say "I cannot conceive any exceptions which could be more useful for the purpose of evading the provisions of the Act"?—That is my opinion, because it all depends upon what the people call themselves. What does a "guardian" mean there? It does not state what a "guardian" is.

766. Will you give the Committee some idea as to how you would define a guardian?—No; I do not know what a guardian means.

Lord Thring.

767. Guardian is as clear a term as father?—In my experience it is not among these people, and they would simply say, "I was a guardian of this child."

768. That is a question of evidence?—Then when you come to prosecute them the magistrates would have to say whether they acted reasonably.

Chairman.

769. Then with regard to the question of relatives, would you define the word relative?—I think it ought to be defined; I do not know what it means. I am dealing as a coroner with these terms.

770. I suppose, before a coroner, blood relationship is recognised?—But supposing it is by marriage?

Lord Kinnaird.

771. You are talking of the poorer classes?—I am talking of the class which come before me. If it is a dictionary term I can define it as an educated man; but when it comes before a magistrate, the magistrate may say, "this person did not intend to evade the Act." I think it is no use putting these terms in, therefore.

Chairman.

772. Have you then known, of your personal knowledge, cases of children taken away like that by people who called themselves simply relatives?—They will come and say, "Oh, yes, I am a relative; I am a friend of the mother."

Viscount Llandaff.

773. When you know they are not?—They do not tell me that till I come to make an inquiry, but the person they take the children to gets that answer.

Chairman.

774. You have come to the conclusion, in your experience as a coroner, that the word relative among these people is a very elastic term?—Yes, and if there is to be any punishment for this it is utterly useless not to define relative in some way or other.

Viscount Llandaff.

775. Have you ever known a case within the existing Act which talks about relatives, of a

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

person having two children, calling herself their relative and not being their relative?—Yes, a child put out to nurse about four months old.

776. That would not be a case within the Act; I am asking whether you have ever known a case of any person escaping from the existing Act by having two children, not from a relative, but from a person who called herself a relative?—There is a reported case in the Courts, and it occurred, I believe, under Mr. Drew's jurisdiction; Mr. Babey can tell you; but I may mention, by the bye, in Kilburn before he took that district, I have had such a case in which a woman had charge of a couple of children; one child was under the Act and the other was not, and she stated that that child was an adopted child. First she said she was the mother, and then I said, "Are you the real 'mother' or is it an adopted child," she said "it is an adopted child; I had a lump sum down."

777. I want to know whether anybody has been prosecuted under the existing Act for falsely calling herself a relative of children?—I cannot tell you. There is a case where one woman was prosecuted under the existing Act; I cannot tell you where it was.

778. The whole difficulty arises with the word relative in the existing Act; it is put in without definition, and I want to know whether that has created a difficulty?—Yes, that has created a difficulty. I read these cases in the different law reports, and that is how I become cognisant of them, by common repute. Mr. Babey, I believe, has the whole facts of that case.

Chairman.

779. With regard to (c) "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause." Now it is held by those who are responsible for this Bill that that Clause would open the door to such an immense amount of evasion as to render the Bill practically nugatory?—Certainly, I cannot conceive, if they were called upon to say why they have done this or that, any other result than that is a method by which they could evade the Act in every possible way.

780. Do you find that these people who take in children when they are tackled are pretty ingenious in making excuses?—They know probably more about the Act than I do myself, as to the way to evade it at any rate. If you look at the wording of that subsection, I cannot see how it does not leave the door open to all excuses as a legitimate answer to any charge brought under this Act.

781. Then (f) With regard to "an infant placed by a parent, reputed parent, or guardian," I think you have practically anticipated that already?—I do not know what a reputed parent means; I have never been able to understand what a reputed parent was.

782. It

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

782. It is in the Poor Law Acts?—But unfortunately the people who have to read this Act do not know the Poor Law Acts; a person would say "I was the reputed parent," the magistrate would say, "I cannot convict."

Chairman.

783. Then I come to this question of adoption on payment of a lump sum; you say here after stating your objection to these people who receive a lump sum down with a child, "Therefore I think that the word 'reward' should be interpreted in the new Bill in the terms of the proviso 2, Section 6 of the Bill of 1890 (viz.): 'Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of five years in consideration of an immediate payment shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section,' " what do you mean by "immediate payment;" do you mean that supposing I take a child to one of these people and I arrange with them to pay them either weekly or fortnightly or monthly, and supposing I want to evade the Act there is nothing to prevent my paying them 10*l.* there and then, and saying "I will make you a weekly payment of 5*s.* or 1*s.* hereafter," would that come under your head of an immediate payment?—Yes, I should call that an immediate payment, and then they would come under the exemption I presume either of reputed parent or they would stand in *loco parentis*.

784. If I went to the same person and said "I want you to take this child at a payment of 5*s.*" and I paid the first 5*s.* down, then would that be an immediate payment?—No, I mean where there is no further demand upon the person who pays the sum.

785. But it seems to me that your proposal would lead to as much evasion?—They would be bound to register then; they were able to evade it before.

786. I am perfectly well aware of the evils of this lump system; I want to get hold of some practical method of stopping it and insisting on weekly payments; it seems to me to be very difficult?—"Immediate payment" is not my wording, again, but it means, as I understand, that if a person wants to make an excuse to adopt that child, or have a lump sum paid for it, they are bound to be registered; I think that is what that proviso meant, that they shall not be allowed to plead any of the exemptions in the Act if they have received any payment for the child, whether one payment or a dozen.

787. Is there any means of proving what a person has received for a child?—They take a child, an inquiry is probably made; you have some means of finding out probably by whom that child is taken charge of.

Lord Thring.

788. How is it to be proved?—Is it a matter of questioning.

789. It is a matter of answering, it seems to me?—That applies to every other fact to be proved by evidence.

790. The question is whether there is any use in passing clauses about things for which you (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

cannot produce the evidence?—I think in most of the clauses that I am suggesting I could find out most of the evidence; I will not say in every case. I think if you were to pass these sections I should have a very good deal more power to be able to find out how some of these misdemeanours and crimes are carried out. It is because we have no power as coroners that we feel ourselves helpless, that we ask the legislature as a body to help the coroners who are trying to check what they know is in existence; and since the Committee met, a very awful object lesson has occurred, which I cannot help alluding to, at Reading; whoever is guilty of that: it is an object lesson. This is not only my feeling of course; it is the feeling of a good many juries that some endeavour should be made to meet it. I quite agree with your Lordship that there is a difficulty in the case in having a clause of a Bill or an Act that will have the desired effect.

791. I ask you as a man who has sat in a judicial position, you have got to find out whether a witness has been paid 50*l.*; if he has he has committed an offence; if he has not been paid 50*l.* he has committed no offence; do you believe that a witness would tell the truth and say he had received 50*l.*?—No, I do not; if I relied upon him alone I should not hold an inquest at all; I have sometimes 30 witnesses.

Viscount Llandaff.

792. But can any of the 30 know?—It is not a question even of one witness, you will find a lot of evidence in another way.

Chairman.

793. You make this statement here: "Where children have been more or less neglected I have always found that the nurses are fully aware that registration and inspection is not required by law where one child is kept, and therefore advantage is taken of this;" cases of that have come under your personal knowledge?—Constantly. Wherever the nurse child is a single child I say, "You were not registered," and they say, "Oh, no, I was not obliged to be."

794. And they keep only one child?—Only one child at the time, and it is mostly those that seem neglected; the single cases.

795. Those are the worst class of cases?—Yes, those are the worst class of cases.

796. Do you think, if they were forbidden to keep single children, they would move to some district where the Act was not administered or give up keeping children, or would they register?—They might do either of the three; but I think if they are fairly careful they would register. If they did not care one way or the other they would either give it up or move; but I think the advantage would be if it were known that persons were registered, it would be a sort of character to them; that they were decent people and known as such to the local authorities, and it would be an inducement to respectable people to take children. Now it is not an inducement to respectable people because they are afraid of being called baby farmers.

G 3

797. An

27 April 1896.]

Mr. Hicks.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

797. An immense number of those with whom children are boarded out never came for any certificate of respectability, and they do not want it?—It is not what they want; it is what the public want. I do not think myself that registration would have any bad effect upon the boarding out of these children.

Chairman.

798. With regard to the question of lying-in houses you write a letter here for the Coroners' Society, in which you go rather into a more extensive question, the question of registration of births?—Yes, that includes a very wide subject.

799. I do not think we can quite take it up in the Bill; and also the question of still-births; and you make certain recommendations, but what we want to know is this (I do not think there is any doubt about it); is it the fact that these lying-in houses furnish a considerable number of children for the professional baby farmer, and that these children are not accounted for afterwards; and may I take it that it is your carefully formed opinion that there exists a considerable number of the worst class of lying-in houses which do this?—Yes.

800. And which you strongly recommend should be placed under supervision?—Yes, certainly.

801. How would you distinguish that class of lying-in houses from the private hospitals which are kept by some of the leading doctors of London, and from what I may call lodging houses where people come up from the country, and which are kept in a perfectly legitimate way?—I say then on the same principle as I said before, give notice to the authority and a proof of *bona fides*, and that would be the end of it.

802. How would you define it though, as a legal man?—I should distinguish between *bona fide* houses, first of all—

803. Would you distinguish between a house which was guaranteed by a qualified medical practitioner; do you think that would be sufficient?—It ought to be sufficient.

804. I suppose doctors are sometimes called into these, what I may call "shady" houses?—I should not say it was sufficient, if you ask me. It depends upon the class of medical practitioner.

805. Therefore the guarantee by a qualified medical practitioner would be practically no guarantee at all?—Not at all.

806. Can you suggest any other?—That they should submit the names of the people who are going to keep the house, and that a proper register should be kept.

807. Ought these houses to be inspected?—I think so.

808. And a register kept of every child born in them?—Yes.

809. Apart from the general registration outside by the registrar of births and deaths?—Yes; they do keep them themselves in the *bona fide* establishments, but I still think that there should be a registration all round for people who undertake the care of sick children and children of tender years.

Chairman—continued.

810. Do you think there would be great objection on the part of the medical profession?—Very likely; and you would find it among the class just now referred to.

811. I am not talking of them; I mean the better ones?—No; I think a doctor would sooner have a patient up to a house that was looked after properly than he would have a person to a house he had no means of knowing to be fit.

812. A doctor having any respect for himself would hardly recommend a person to a house not respectable and fit?—That is so; but in cases of emergency he would have nowhere to send a person to. A person goes to a house advertised, and says, "Would you see me there," and he finds that the sanitary arrangements are wrong.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

813. Do you agree, speaking generally, that 95 per cent. of the children whom we have got to protect are illegitimate; I do not mean that those are the exact figures?—I should say the large majority are. I should not say as much as 95 per cent.; from my experience I should say it was about 60 per cent.

814. Then do I understand that you suggest that there might be some mode of registration rather less irritating, less detailed I will say, than the present mode. You spoke just now of intimating it to the local authority; you suggested that there might be something less onerous than the present rather elaborate system of registration?—I think at first that the same preliminaries ought to start; that there should be an inspection to see that the matter is so far *bona fide*, but then, after that, if the local authority was satisfied, they need not insist on inspection so often; I think there should be some preliminary inquiry as to whether the place was fit to be carried on at all under those conditions.

815. Why do you think it is that there are so few registered houses in London now for the care of children; why are there so few, if, as we have been told, it is so profitable a trade?—I think now that they do not get registered; they still have more children out than before, but they take only one child at a time, and so they do not have to register; they have found that out. Now you can take a single child; that is the reason that they only take one at the time.

816. But your opinion is that, in the event of such a Bill being passed as we have here, making it necessary to register for one child only, a very large number of persons would immediately apply to be registered?—I think the majority of them would if they had to do it, but if they have not got to do it they would not come and tell you they want to be registered.

817. Have you any means of forming a general opinion, not in detail, as to how numerous these lying-in houses are in London; we were told this morning, that in the opinion of some of those before us, there are only 67 in London who advertise?—I cannot give an answer to that.

818. But you would think that 67 was not all?—I should think there are a lot more; I think you alluded to only those who advertise; I believe every midwife, who calls herself a mid-

wife.

27 April 1896.]

Mr. Hicks.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

wife, has two or three rooms for lying-in women, independently of any advertisement at all; in fact I know a great many of them have.

Lord Kinnaird.

819. Are midwives registered?—No, they are not registered yet.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

820. Do you consider that it is an unusual thing for a respectable parent to desire temporarily to put a child out for a week or two for payment?—No, not at all unusual.

821. Then do you consider that there would be an additional difficulty caused to such parents if they could not send out their child except to a registered house?—There might be some difficulty at first.

822. The kind of thing that suggests itself is this: a mother has to go into hospital for a few weeks; a neighbour takes the child for half-a-crown a week; would you say that that neighbour having to be registered would not cause serious difficulties to the working classes?—I do not think so, if they knew that all they would have to do is to let the police know of it.

823. Do you not think that that process of going to the police station would be a great difficulty in their minds?—No, I do not think so. Whenever a baby is ill, and they cannot find a doctor, they always go to the police, and do not hesitate to go there.

824. Then your opinion is that it would not be felt a hardship by the working class that a baby put out for a week or two would have to be

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

registered?—They would have to give notice, but the registration need not be so elaborate if it was sufficient that the person temporarily taking charge of the child was to give notice to the police, who might inform the local authority that such a child was there. They could easily find out that it was only a temporary arrangement.

825. Then would you consider that notice was necessary if a woman was going away for two nights; the Bill says 24 hours; the woman is going away to see her mother or sister, we will say, only for two nights, and a neighbour takes the child; or would you say that is an offence under the Act?—I should not like to say that; but I think something should be put in the Act which should make the definitions different; that is the difficulty I mean. There are cases in which things should be defined better.

Viscount Llandaff.

826. You have objections to the exemption that covers the very case his Lordship has put to you?—It is so wide.

827. "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home"?—But "necessary absence" would be so wide, you might put something to show what a "necessary absence" would be; it is all a matter of definition.

828. Do you think it is necessary to define "necessary"?—That is for the magistrate; I certainly think that that exemption is a bad one.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Thursday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 30° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. ATHELSTAN BRAXTON HICKS, having been called in; is further Examined,
as follows:

Chairman.

829. I THINK we ascertained your opinions pretty fully the other day; is there anything further that you wish to add that has occurred to you since, that you can put shortly?—Yes, there is. I was not prepared to discuss so much the detail of the Bill on the last occasion, not having had to do with the drafting of it; but with regard to some questions asked me which showed that there was some difficulty in the minds of the Committee as to how the notice made to the local authority of the receipt of a child could be quickly and easily given, I may say that it struck me that the local authority in the country might be a long way off, and there would be some difficulty in giving the proper notice, or in knowing to whom to give it. I have therefore suggested certain amendments to the Bill, a copy of which I have given to your Lordship. They are as follows: "(1.) Any person who shall receive any child under the age of five years for hire or reward shall be registered in accordance with the provisions of this Act; that is to say: (a.) On receipt of such child by any person, notice of such receipt shall immediately be sent to the police, who shall at once send notice thereof to the local authority under this Act. (b.) That on receipt of such notice the local authority shall order the inspector to make inspection of the premises, and ascertain the particulars necessary for registration. (c.) The local authority shall then decide if the circumstances are sufficient to justify the house being registered. (2.) No person shall be held to contravene the provisions of this Act if he or she shall have given notice to the police of the district within 12 hours after receiving any child, that he or she has taken charge of such child for the purpose of nursing for hire or reward. (3.) Any person not a parent who shall have taken charge of any child or children under the age of five years for hire or reward shall not allow any such child to be removed from his or her care to be taken charge of by another person not a parent for hire or reward unless he or she has given notice to the local authority of such (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

intended removal, of the name and address of such child, and the person and place where it is purposed to be removed; and such local authority shall enter such particulars in the register. And where a child is removed from the jurisdiction of one local authority to that of another, notice of such removal shall be sent by the authority from whose district the child was removed, to the local authority into whose district the said child has been removed, and that such latter authority shall then make the necessary inquiries and inspection, which are required under this Act for the purposes of registration of the premises."

830. Those are suggestions?—Those are merely suggestions. I am not a draughtsman myself. There is a great difficulty, when children are removed, in knowing where they are removed to, and the local authority would have no knowledge that the child had been removed into their district unless the person chose voluntarily to give notice to them. The local authority who had registered the child would, if this suggestion were adopted, have to give notice to the other local authority, and so put them on their guard, so to say, and it seems to me that the giving of notice to the police would save all the trouble and a good deal of the inconvenience that might be felt in having to register where one child is taken care of.

831. You do not mean that necessarily the police of the district should have the administration of the Act?—Not necessarily, unless the local authority give it to them. If the police had to act they would be able to give the local authorities the particulars necessary; but if a local authority had certain inspectors as in the county of London, and I believe in some other districts, then on receiving notice from the police that the child has been brought into their district for nursing, they would be able to send their inspector and ascertain all that was necessary for registration purposes, and the advantage of that, of course, would be that the people would be able easily to get at the police;

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whereas

30 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

whereas there would be a great deal of difficulty, perhaps, in getting at the county authority.

832. I want to ask you one question on another subject: many people contend that these cases of what are known as baby-farming are police cases, and that if the police did their duty properly there ought to be no need for any extension of the Act. Do you agree with that?—I do not agree with that; I agree with the view that the Act absolutely wants extending to the case of one child only.

833. Other people again say that they are not really police cases, and that the Act is necessary, because it is very difficult to prove actual murder and actual crime, in a large number of these cases, after the child is dead; is that your experience as a coroner?—To what age do you wish to limit it, may I ask?

834. I am not speaking necessarily to the question of age; but is it your experience as a coroner that in the inquiries that take place into the death of some of these children, which may have taken place under suspicious circumstances, it is extremely hard to prove actual crime?—Yes.

835. Intent to kill?—Almost impossible.

836. Therefore, you think the best way of preventing that is to go to the root of the matter and try and obtain a proper supervision of the children while they are alive?—That is what I do think; that seems to me the only chance of detecting them. You cannot discover crime, though you may suspect it, and people somewhat reckon upon that.

837. Then another thing: inasmuch as it is generally the worst class of baby-farmers that treat children in the way you wish to put a stop to, some people raise the argument that if registration were extended these people would simply not register?—The bad ones, do you mean; then you can punish them, because, as a rule, you can find them.

838. You think you can find them out?—I think, with the proper carrying out of the present Bill thoroughly, you would very soon find out who were the bad ones and who were the good, and if they were registered or if they were not. I may mention with regard to the removal of children, which is an important point also, that on referring to my letter-book I find that in October 1888 I held an inquest on a child, and Mrs. Arnold turned up in connection with that case, and I wrote then to the Home Secretary, for the time being, a long letter on the subject explaining the whole facts of the case. Of course, the Bill of 1890 was introduced afterwards. Whether the case I allude to, and others besides, had any bearing upon that Bill of 1890 I cannot say, but it showed that it was hardly possible to find a trace of these children without an inquiry such as the coroners hold.

Viscount Llandaff.

839. You say that if the Act was extended, as proposed by the Bill, you could find out the bad baby-farmers who did not register?—Yes.

840. How?—I should not be able to; but the police would from neighbours; they would very soon find out.

841. Then what prevents them now from

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

finding out cases?—Because the one child now is not looked after by anybody. They know they need not look after the single child who is taken for hire or reward, and therefore it is only where there is an aggregation of children in one place that they need register, and they may more easily be found out than the one single child.

Lord Thring.

842. I do not quite follow you there; why should it be more easy for the police, if the Act is extended, to find out that a child is kept in an unregistered house, than to find out at the present moment that a child is murdered or likely to be murdered?—At present there is no law to put in motion, therefore the police do not trouble themselves probably to carry out duties that are not forced upon them by statute.

843. Surely it is the duty of the police to find out every case in which they think a child is likely to be murdered?—If they think it is likely to be, but how can they tell that; they cannot go and inquire at every house and ask if they have a child. But you can very soon ascertain from surrounding neighbours that a child has been taken in, and make inquiry. The police would have the power under the present Bill to make that inquiry and report to the authorities.

844. Here is one general question: can you give us any idea, taking London, what number of children would come under the Act, first if you did not increase the age, but simply took the case of single children?—I could not tell you anything as to the number.

845. You could not state it approximately even?—No, I should not like to profess to do so.

846. Nor could you say what would be the effect of extending the age with regard to the number?—That would mean increased work, of course.

847. But you do not know the magnitude of it at all?—No, I think not.

848. You cannot tell us, nor can anybody tell us the number of children that would probably be affected, or as to what is the percentage of children that would come within the Act, as compared with the whole number of children that are born?—I should think that Mr. Babey would be able to give you an approximation to that better than I could.

849. I suppose it is admitted that hand-fed children run a much greater risk of dying than children fed in the natural way at the breast?—That is so; and wherever I find that a single child has been fed by the bottle, as it, of course, has to be (they call them bottle babies), I always, if it is under twelvemonths, begin from the birth of that child, and from all the witnesses who had care of that child from the birth ascertain how that child has been fed. The result of that has been to show that in one case five people had charge of a child under twelvemonths, and they had each fed it differently. It would be impossible for me to say if there was any intent in that case.

850. But I may take it from you that the bottle-fed babies are much more liable, however carefully tended, to die than those fed naturally?—Tha

30 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

—That is so; and, therefore, the bottle-fed baby requires more supervision from some one in authority.

851. And these foster children are almost all bottle-fed?—Yes; I have never known a wet-nurse to nurse the child.

852. The people who take them never nurse them themselves?—No, never.

Chairman.

853. In your practice, as a coroner, I presume in the course of your inquiries how infants have died, you have come across cases of these single

Chairman—continued.

children that are being kept for hire or reward?—Constantly.

854. Where the people who have kept them have openly flouted the inspector and defied him to a certain extent?—Yes, they have laughed at me when I have said, "Are you registered under the Act?" (That is what I generally have asked.) "Oh no, sir, we are not obliged to be," they have answered, and have laughed at me as much as to say, "I have got the better of the Act anyway."

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. E. DE M. RUDOLF, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

855. You are the Secretary of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, I believe?—I am.

856. How long have you occupied that position?—From the formation of the society; in fact I am described as the founder in the articles of association.

857. How many years ago is that?—Fifteen years.

858. What is the object of that society?—To provide homes in several ways for destitute children of all ages and both sexes, from infancy upwards.

Lord Thring.

859. Under one year included?—Yes, from six weeks old we have taken children.

Chairman.

860. How many children are under its care now?—At present about 2,300.

861. What are the society's methods for providing homes for the children?—In the case of the very young children we board them out with foster parents.

862. What do you call "very young"?—Up to the age of about seven; from seven years of age till 13 we put them into small homes; and over that age into larger homes where they can learn industrial occupations. Then we emigrate a certain proportion of the children whom it is desired to remove from their old surroundings, send them to Canada to our homes there.

863. And what are your methods in providing the foster parents; the homes for the younger children; that is what we are more concerned with?—In the first place we have a form of recommendation which has to be signed by the clergyman of the parish, and examined or reported upon by a lady referee. I hand in a copy of the form which contains a series of questions, for instance: The name of the foster parent and address? How far distant from the residence of the proposed supervisor? Is the foster mother a member of the Church of England? What is the occupation of the foster parent's family? What is the income of the family, and from what sources? Of whom does the family consist? Number of children in (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

charge of, or belonging to and living in the family? How many rooms in the house? Are there any lodgers? What provisions will be made for sleeping of child, as to bed and room? Name and distance of proposed day and Sunday schools? What payment per week will be required. (*The form is handed in.*) That is the initial stage. Anybody wishing a child to be placed out with a foster parent has to fill up a form of recommendation on the part of the foster parent in the first instance. If that is favourably considered, and it is decided to send a child to a foster parent, she is supplied with a copy of the regulations to be observed (which I hand in), and a child is sent down, when she is required to fill in a "Form of undertaking by the foster parent" (which I also hand in); that is to say, to bring up the child as one of her own children, to provide it with proper food, lodging, and washing, and provide for the proper repair and renewal of clothing, and so on; and, in fact, to comply with this paper of regulations which I have handed in. Then another form is signed by the foster parent acknowledging that she has received such and such a child. The child having been placed with the foster parent, is reported upon periodically by the supervisor, who is resident in the district, either a lady or a clergyman; and besides that we have a lady inspectress who works from headquarters and visits the children without giving previous notice of her visits. She is a lady doctor, and she reports to headquarters direct; so that we have two inspections; one a continual inspection on the spot by the supervisor, and an occasional inspection by an expert. We have something like 700 children boarded out under those conditions at the present time; and we never have found a single instance of wilful neglect on the part of any foster parent who has complied with our conditions.

Lord Belper.

864. Are the children all placed out singly or two or three together?—Not more than two are allowed to be placed in any one home, excepting in the case of brothers and sisters. Then the number, if there is accommodation, can be increased to four.

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865. What

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

865. What number did you say you have?—About 700 altogether boarded-out.

866. Are you acquainted with the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Bill of 1896?—I have read them through.

867. What is your opinion of the Bill?—Without going into details of the working of the measure, I think it is very desirable, in order to place further restrictions on the practice of baby-farming by irresponsible persons; of course, assuming that such a society as the Waifs and Strays Society does not come within the operation of the Bill.

868. I think I may say on behalf of the Committee that there is no desire on their part to interfere with the good work carried on by a society such as yours?—I understood that.

869. Have you got any special reason for further approving of the proposed extension of the Act? The two principal points are extending the Act to one child and raising the age to five years?—I think both provisions are most desirable. One argument which appeals to me very much in favour of the Bill is the indirect result it will have in checking immorality. For instance, in the course of my work we have frequent applications from persons who have undertaken the charge of an illegitimate child of, we will say, a servant girl. The servant girl having succeeded in disposing of her child in that way has disappeared; having promised to keep up a payment she pays for a few weeks, and then leaves the neighbourhood altogether. If the Bill would result in making it more difficult to dispose of such illegitimate children, I think the indirect result will be good upon the community generally.

Lord Thring.

870. What do you mean by "dispose of"; I do not follow?—A servant girl has an illegitimate child; she persuades some woman to take charge of this child under a promise of paying so much out of her wages; it is very easy for her, after paying it for a month or two, to leave her situation and seek a situation in some other part of the country, thus leaving the child in the hands of the foster parent.

871. I want to know how this Act, whether extended or not, prevents that. I suppose the child goes to the workhouse, as a matter of fact, in such a case as that?—The child might or might not; in some cases boards of guardians have refused to receive children from foster-parents who have accepted them under a promise of payment.

872. They must receive them, must they not?—It is a question for the guardians; they differ in their practice.

873. I want to know how the existing Act, or any extension of the Act, would prevent or assist in preventing cases of that sort; I do not follow?—If it were known, as I suppose it would be known, that it is necessary for a person to be registered and inspected even if she were to take one child, it would deter a great many women from taking these children in who take them in at present. The child would be placed by the servant at once in the workhouse; she would go there at once.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

874. And take the child with her?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

875. And be ruined for life, perhaps?—Hardly ruined for life. It would be a lesson for the girl.

Lord Thring.

876. You know that a good many servants have children of which the masters and mistresses know nothing, and it is not discovered till years afterwards; the servant had one child, she put that child out; that child was kept alive, and nothing wrong was done with it. Would it not be a very strong inducement to put away a child if a servant, in such a case, could not get rid of it quietly?—My own society provides for taking illegitimate children from servants where there is a reasonable prospect of amendment. In a first case they would always take an illegitimate child on the promise of the payment of part of the girl's salary, under the guarantee of some responsible person.

877. Without disclosing the name?—Without making it public. We should know it ourselves, of course.

Chairman.

878. That is the general practice of your society in providing homes for illegitimate children?—Yes, to require a promise of amendment on the part of the mother, and a promise of payment out of her earnings so that she may recognise her responsibility.

879. Do you act on the principle of the Foundling Hospital and only take what I may call first cases?—We only take first cases.

880. And what class are the parents mostly?—Illegitimate children are chiefly children of servant girls who have either been betrayed under promise of marriage or something of that sort.

881. You have told us how the society selects the foster parents; did you tell us the conditions under which it boarded-out children?—I have handed in a paper of conditions.

Lord Thring.

882. Did I rightly understand in your conditions that when a child is sent somebody recommends it; you do not send it out till somebody recommends the child?—Our cases generally come through the clergy of the National Church throughout the country. They act as rescue officers really.

883. Is it then confined to the Church of England?—In so far as this, that we only appeal to members of the church, and bring up all the children in the doctrines of the Church of England; but we take all children, except Jews and Roman Catholics.

884. But does the clergyman who recommends them pay anything?—If he can; but we take many free cases. I suppose half the number of the children we have in our charge are absolutely free; children for whom we have no payment whatever.

Chairman.

885. Are you satisfied from your experience that the society's methods in boarding out secure

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

secure proper care of the children?—Quite; we have had no instance of any case of wilful neglect. Sometimes there has been an overlooking of our regulations as regards sleeping two children in one bed, and so on, but nothing wilfully wrong.

886. Are you of opinion that registration as such would put a stop to some of the evils which we wish to attack under this Bill?—I see one difficulty, and that is how to discover the existence of the single children who are boarded out. If, as I suppose, the Bill is to apply to children up to five years of age, the census would probably help in the matter; you could get information through the census, I suppose, that a child is merely being boarded with a certain person and does not belong to that person. The difficulty in carrying out the working of this would be to discover the houses where the children are placed.

887. But if a person had a single child belonging to somebody else, and was deliberately keeping it secret for the purpose of not registering it, they would hardly be likely to put it down in the census, would they; they would be more likely to put it down as their own?—Then they would make a misstatement, and be under a penalty; there is a penalty for making a wrong statement in the census paper. Then the School Board, for instance, would be able to help. Supposing a child is attending a school under another name than that of the person with whom she is residing, I think it should be reported at once.

888. Is it not the case when these children are given out that one of the points that the parents make is that all identity should be lost, and all the names absolutely sunk?—That is not so in our case; not in the case of my society; I presume that it would be so in some cases.

889. You have no experience of the machinations of the ordinary baby farmer?—No, none whatever.

890. You have not come across them in your inquiries in finding homes?—We have always had the name of the mother given to us; the name of the child is represented to us as the name of its mother always.

891. Then, as a rule, you have found great advantage accruing to the children from the fact of the careful supervision?—Yes.

892. Are you, therefore, of opinion that these children, who are now put out singly, and who are not looked after because they do not come under the Act, would benefit by the supervision which would be provided by registration?—No doubt; I feel sure they would.

Lord Belper.

893. Is the operation of your society confined to London, or to any particular district?—It extends to the whole of England and Wales.

894. Are there a large number of those 700 children, you spoke of, in London?—No, out of London; we board them out entirely in the country.

895. And you are very careful, of course, as to getting information as to the respectability of the houses into which you put them?—We are.

(0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

896. That is much easier to do in the country than it would in London?—Yes.

897. Do you suppose that there would be any objection raised by the people with whom you board out these children to having their houses registered as places for taking in children?—I think there would be a strong objection, both on the part of the foster parents and the supervisors.

898. The foster parents, you mean, with whom you place them?—Yes; and also the supervisors.

899. I understand you think there would be a strong objection?—A strong objection on the part of the foster parent and the supervisor.

900. Whom do you call the supervisor?—The supervisor would either be the clergyman of the parish or some responsible lady in the district near enough to the house to pay frequent visits.

901. And speaking generally, from your knowledge, you think that persons in respectable houses of that character where you place them would object to their being registered as houses where children were taken in?—I have reason to think so.

902. Do you imagine that under this Bill these houses would not be obliged to register?—Yes; I have read the Bill to consider its application to the operations of a society such as the Waifs and Strays Society, and I should imagine that, under Clause 8, the Waifs and Strays Society would be exempt entirely.

903. Clause 8 is the interpretation clause, where the expression "Institutions" is interpreted?—Yes.

904. And then, with regard to that, you would have to refer to the principal Act?—Yes; but reading the clause with the principal Act, I think the Waifs and Strays Society would be exempt.

905. I do not express an opinion about that myself, but I point out to you that the question is whether an institution being excepted from the effect of the Act would mean any child put out in a house by that institution. I should have thought that it would mean children kept within the institution itself, and that it would not mean the houses to which these 700 children were put out by the institution; what is your opinion on that?—But the interpretation reads: "shall mean societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons." I claim that "the Waifs and Strays Society is organised for some public or social object," and that we have "a committee of not less than six persons."

906. But you must read it with the 13th section of the principal Act: "The provisions of this Act shall not extend to the relatives or guardians of any infant retained or received as aforesaid, nor to institutions established for the protection or care of infants." Now, is not an institution established "for the protection or care of infants," an institution where the infants are protected and cared for within the walls of the institution itself?—But the interpretation says that it means "societies organised for some

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public

[30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

public or social object," and I say that we are a society within the definition.

Lord Thring.

907. The foster parent is not?—The foster parent receives the child, and we are ourselves responsible for the child.

Lord Belper.

908. At all events, in giving the evidence you have given, you believe that you are excepted from the Bill?—I do.

909. And if you were not excepted from the Bill you would not like it to remain in its present form?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

910. You approve of the Bill, speaking generally, I understand, provided that sufficient care were taken to exempt such societies as yours?—I do; speaking generally, I approve of the Bill entirely.

911. Have you considered the question of whether the provisions of the Bill, if it became law, would press hardly upon respectable people who desire to take in a child for a neighbour; has that come under your notice?—It might in some cases. I am thinking now of women who go out to work, we will say by the week; they want somebody to mind their children. It would be rather hard upon respectable widows, perhaps; but those cases would be comparatively few compared with the large number of children who are placed out with irresponsible persons, by servant girls and others.

912. Do you think that the provisions of the Bill make that possible hardship unimportant as compared with the general good?—Yes, I think so.

913. You mention those cases, but what about the very numerous cases, one would have thought, of a mother who goes away three or four days and asks a neighbour to take a child for a shilling or two in the interval. Such cases are occurring almost every day of the week in London?—I should have thought it would be easy for a woman who goes away to make an arrangement with a relative. Of course it is difficult to arrive at the number of such cases.

914. Of course it is; but what we want is, as I understand, that those gentlemen who have a large experience in dealing with the arrangements for keeping children away from their parents, should tell us whether or not they would think the hardship sufficient to prevent us from passing such an Act?—Well, in my opinion, the hardship would not be sufficient to prevent passing this Bill.

915. Have you ever boarded children in houses that were registered?—Never.

916. That is to say, you have never sent two children under one year of age to one house?—No.

917. Not even a brother and sister; they would be twins, of course?—No.

918. In short, you have no experience of registered houses at all?—Well, we had a registered home at one time. It was established

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

by the present Lady Derby, and was handed over to the society when her husband became Governor General of Canada. It had been registered before it was transferred to the society; but we came to the conclusion that it was not the best way in which to care for infants, massing them together in one institution; so we dispersed the home and boarded the children out singly. We soon altered the way of dealing with the children. The rate of mortality was rather high, and we thought we would lower it by dispersing the children and boarding them out; and I think we did.

919. There is no question that the rate of mortality is higher when many children of tender age are together?—Yes, very young children.

920. How much do you pay to foster parents for care of children?—We pay 5s. per week.

921. Do you find that adequate in all cases?—Yes, in all ordinary cases. Feeble-minded children, those requiring special care, we have to pay more for.

922. Do you know what the payment made by the Foundling Hospital is?—I do not.

923. It used to be 6s. a week; I do not know what it is now, but you find 5s. adequate?—Five shillings; and I think that is the rate sanctioned practically by the Local Government Board for boards of guardians.

924. Then do you consider that the foster parent makes some profit by taking them for 5s. a week?—Yes, the foster parents would make in the country districts nearly 1s. a week, in town districts or suburbs of town they would make something less, perhaps 6d. a week.

925. There is a large demand, I suppose, for your children; I mean you would have no difficulty in boarding out twice as many?—No difficulty whatever. We have a large number of properly-recommended foster parents on our books, waiting for children.

926. Do you consider that the mother of an illegitimate child ought to find any difficulty in discovering, supposing she wishes to do all that is right, a place where she can respectably board her child under present circumstances?—I do not think that she ought to have any difficulty if she were to come to a society such as ours. The Waifs and Strays Society would always listen to an application from the mother of an illegitimate child.

927. And would endeavour to find for her a proper home?—A proper home for her child under the conditions I have mentioned. They are contained in a printed letter, which I will hand in. The conditions are that it must be the first child, and that 4s. a week should be paid, guaranteed by some proper person, mistress or somebody else; and that there is good promise of amendment on the part of the mother. The society would then pay the extra shilling.

928. Then in the case of any mother who desires, under proper circumstance, to have a child taken care of, and is prepared to guarantee the 4s. a week, you are prepared to find the home for the child?—Yes, find the home for the child, and pay 5s.

Lord Thring.

929. I want to draw your attention to this: You

[30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

You tell us, and no doubt rightly, that your foster parents are almost invariably kind?—They are.

930. And you also tell us that they would almost invariably object to be registered?—I assume that they would from the fact that they would object to two inspections.

931. But you tell us that the foster parents who are of the best class, would object to be registered, and also that the ladies who superintend it would also object to the registration as supervisors?—That is so.

932. You admit, and I fancy it is generally admitted, that the accumulation of these poor little things in any one house, whether they are well-kept or less properly kept, increases the mortality?—I believe so.

933. Has not registration a double aspect; if there were great difficulty in distributing the children in separate houses owing to the requirement of registration, the effect would be to accumulate in the registered houses a greater number of children?—I do not know that this Bill contemplates the aggregation of children; that is to say, more than we will say just a reasonable number, say two or three at the outside in any one cottage.

934. I do not see that either in the Act or in the Bill there is any limit on the number of children that may be aggregated in a particular establishment if the establishment is found to be large enough for them?—There is no limit in the Act.

935. Is not that rather an unfortunate feature, because it seems to stand to reason that it would be very unadvisable to pass any legislation which would tend to the accumulation of children in one establishment, however well kept?—I think it would. The difficulty in having a large number of infants in one establishment is this: that the children would not get that individual care and attention that they would get if they were placed out singly with respectable women. For instance, in the small house that I was alluding to recently, there was a staff I think of four matrons to deal with 20 children; therefore supposing that four of those children were in trouble with fits or something during the night, those four matrons would be fully employed, and the 16 other children would have to get on as best they could.

936. I want to get your opinion; as you know, on other occasions we have had evidence that accumulating children together in large masses at any age was a very unfortunate way of bringing them up?—I quite agree with that.

937. It seems to me that in proportion as you discourage the distribution of children in separate houses, in the same degree you tend to accumulate them in houses where considerable numbers would be maintained; that seems to me a misfortune?—It is a misfortune. It would rather have this effect, to send the applicants to a responsible society such as the Waifs and Strays Society, where the children would be placed out under proper supervision and conditions. It would have that effect as well as the aggregation of children in large homes.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

938. You say that both the foster parents and the supervisors would object to registration; would they still more strongly object to any interference by the police?—They would.

939. And if notice to the police were required of them it would be highly objectionable to them?—Yes.

940. Any respectable foster parent would resent it?—Yes.

941. You said that you had one registered home handed over to you by Lady Derby?—Yes.

942. Where was that Home?—In the north of London.

943. How many children were there in it?—I think 16 to 20.

944. Was it registered under the Act?—It was registered.

945. And inspected, I suppose, by Mr. Babey?—I do not know; it is some years ago. It was before Lord Stanley of Preston was Governor of Canada.

946. Lord Stanley of Preston went to Canada in 1887?—Yes; it must be nine or ten years ago.

947. Do you remember about how many children there were then?—I think some 16 or 20 infants.

948. And you found that the mortality was high?—The mortality was very high.

949. And when that happened you broke the Home up?—Yes.

950. Do you remember whether the inspector visited it?—Not to my knowledge; he may have done; I should not know, perhaps.

951. I gather from you that you never have registered any of your foster parents, even though they had more than one child?—No; we have never placed out more than one under the age of 12 months with any single foster parent; that is to say, we have taken care not to bring ourselves under the Act.

952. What particular reason have you for avoiding the Act?—Simply because we find that a young child under the age of 12 months is as much as any one person can properly care for.

953. I thought you said you had taken care not to bring yourselves within the Act?—We have not troubled ourselves with the Act, but we have done that out of regard to the children, that is to say, we are so careful to see that our children are properly cared for, that we have never placed out more than one child under 12 months with one foster parent; and so we have never brought ourselves under the Act.

954. You want to encourage single boarding-out of children?—Yes, of very young children.

955. And if you hampered the boarding-out by registration you would rather move in the direction of more than one child being taken; you would make anybody who takes the trouble to register at all take the trouble to do more than that?—I am not sure that the society would do that.

956. I do not say your society?—As a matter of convenience it would be best, of course, for more than one child to be taken in.

957. For the convenience of the foster parent, you mean?—And the convenience of inspection and registration.

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958. Not

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

958. Not for the convenience of the child?—
Not for the convenience of the child.

Lord Belper.

959. I understand that you think it very desirable that there should be only one child in these houses at a very young age, and you also think that the respectable people would object to being registered?—Yes.

960. The natural effect of those two opinions is, that single children would have to go and be kept by people who are not respectable?—I am referring not to respectable people; I am referring to the society's foster parents. The original question, I think, was whether the foster parents under the society would object to be registered.

961. I am merely taking the opinions stated in your evidence. There were two opinions. One is: That it is very desirable that children at a very young age should only be boarded out singly; the other is, that respectable people taking in these children would strongly object to being registered themselves; is not the result that between the two you have to send the children to people who are not respectable, or to accumulate them?—The term "respectable," perhaps, ought not to have been used. A person, may be so much in want of a little addition to her income, although perfectly respectable, that she would be willing to undergo the formality of registration. I should like to withdraw that word if I used it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

962. You told us, to begin with, that you did, speaking generally, approve of this Bill?—I quite approve.

963. Do you realise that the effect, if this Bill became law to-morrow, would be that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people in England to-day would immediately be registered or cease to keep the children they have got?—Yes, I think so.

964. You have also told us that as regards the foster parents you have to do with, they would object to registration, and you would protect them by the covering shield of the society?—Yes, quite so.

965. But there are many thousands of foster parents outside your society who all take in one child, and you think that you would not object to a law which compelled them to be registered?—No, I should not object.

966. Can you give us the ground?—On the ground that there should be some adequate supervision. There is no supervision in the case of these thousands of irresponsible foster parents at present.

967. And the advantage of having that general supervision would, in your opinion, outweigh the disadvantage to the foster parent or the deterrent effect upon respectable people, which would make them, perhaps, decline to take them?—I think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

968. But would you be prepared to sanction considerable exemptions from this rule of registration?—I should be prepared. I think that societies should be exempted.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

969. And those whom the societies employed?—Yes. I think that societies should be exempt. The societies might, perhaps, be required to have their system or method registered; that is to say, that the various papers which I have handed in should be submitted to the responsible officer for carrying out the provisions of the Act, and should be approved by him.

970. As I understand, you have no infants under your own immediate care at headquarters?—Oh, no.

971. You board them all out?—Board them all out.

972. You would exempt at any rate the foster parents whom you employ from registration under the Act?—I would exempt the foster parents; but, as I say, I do not think there would be any objection to registering the society.

973. Take the cases of the labouring man or woman obliged to leave their children for some weeks in order to get work, and putting those children with neighbours; do you think that they should be obliged to be registered; possibly for a week or a fortnight?—It has struck me that the 24 hours specified in the Bill might be with advantage extended. That is merely my own view.

974. To what extent would you extend it?—I should say limit it to a week; I think that might be considered; 24 hours is rather a short time.

975. You are aware that the Act as it stands, and the Bill as it stands, requires immediate registration of any child that has been received for more than 24 hours, from whatever cause?—Yes.

976. Now take the case of a child put with its mother's sister or some near relation; is there any need to register it?—Not when placed with relations, certainly.

977. Take the numerous cases of people who send their children to the seaside under the care of a servant; do you think that any public advantage would be gained by registering them. I send my children, we will suppose, to the seaside for three weeks under the care of a nurse?—I should say not; I should say that the parents would see that they sent their children to a fit and proper place.

978. This is one of the exceptions strongly objected to by some. In the case of an "infant placed by a parent, reputed parent, or guardian in charge of a person in the domestic service of that parent, reputed parent, or guardian;" do you see any objection to that exemption?—I see no objection to it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

979. The main object that you would have in view in advocating this Bill would be to secure supervision of the individual child?—Yes, it is.

980. Have you ever thought whether that could be arrived at by the multiplication of some supervising authorities?—I think the existence of the supervising authority would not be sufficient; in order to exercise that power of supervision registration would be needed in the first instance; otherwise the supervising authority would not know of the existence of the boarded-out child; it involves registration, not only supervision.

981. I mean

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

981. I mean that there should be a larger number of people than now exists other than Poor Law authorities to whom a mother might go to ask for advice as to where to put her child; and that the home to which the child is sent should be, not itself individually registered, but under the supervision of somebody who was registered like your own society?—I think so. I think that would to some extent meet the necessity.

982. You have nothing of that kind to suggest?—The only thing that I can suggest is, the extension of my society, the boarding-out part of the work.

983. And you are prepared to extend it to any degree?—We are prepared to extend it to any degree.

Lord Belper.

984. Might I ask, with reference to these exemptions, have you considered whether the Bill would answer your purpose, at all events, as an interpretation of the "institutions" to be exempted. We have got it in the Bill as it stands (I do not think it is generally agreed to). "The expression 'institution established for the protection or care of infants' shall mean societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons?"—I think after the words "shall mean societies organised for some public or social object," there might be inserted such words as "having the supervision of homes in which children are boarded out," or, "exercising proper supervision"; and then to show that such proper supervision is exercised, the system should come under the notice or the approval of the officer who is to put the Act in force.

985. That means that the society must be registered?—The society as a society, but not its homes, not its houses. I think that that would be one way of meeting the difficulty.

986. You suggest that the society should be registered, not exempted from registration, but that they should be registered, and that that registration should include all the homes to which they put out their children?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

987. Except the homes from supervision?—Yes, except the homes from supervision; but the system of the society would have to be approved.

Lord Thring.

988. Do I understand that you would not object to requiring the approval of the local authority to the institution before it registered it. In other words, to give a discretion to the local authority to register the society or not?—Approval by the local authority was not in my mind; it was rather approval by the central authority. I mean it would be impossible to apply to every local authority throughout the country, because we have our children singly boarded-out in a large number of parishes.

989. By a central authority you mean a Government department?—The Local Government Board or whatever authority had the control.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

990. If there was a waifs and strays society at Leeds you would not object to that having to get the approval of the local authority?—If it were independent of ours; but we have our own branch there.

991. Do you mean that your branch in Leeds should apply to the London County Council for leave to continue their operations?—But is there no higher authority, no public department, to which we could apply? I mean such as the Home Office, or the Local Government Board.

Lord Belper.

992. That, of course, would be a new proposal; but your suggestion lies in the direction of its being made the duty of some public department to inquire into the management and status of these societies, and to give them their approval; and that, as a society, it should be exempt from the operation of the Act; that is what you say?—That is what I suggest.

993. And that, getting that certificate of exemption from this public authority, they would be free from any inspection themselves, and that all the houses they sent the children to would be exempt from inspection?—Yes.

Viscount Landaff.

994. What sort of supervision would you have of the children?—The supervision which I would recommend would be a local supervision, in the first instance, and then an occasional supervision by someone not interested in the foster parent or the child.

995. Some private responsible person?—Yes.

996. The London County Council employ inspectors?—I should not advocate that, but a voluntary inspector.

Chairman.

997. With regard to that proposal of yours that societies like yours should be sanctioned by a central authority, I suppose the practical way you would work that would be that they should give you a certificate, and then when your local committee has approved a certain house of a foster parent, you would give her a card or certificate from your society, and then when the inspector came round and inquired if she had got children there, this card or certificate could be produced showing that she need not be registered under the Act?—I think that could be easily given; something could be given to the foster parents by which they could show their authority to take in children as conveyed to them by the society.

998. And you would have no objection when you boarded out a child in a certain place to write to the local authority and say, under the certificate of exemption which we have from the Poor Law Board, or whatever it was, we have placed a child in such and such a house within your district. You would have no objection to that?—I do not know. I do not think we could undertake to do that.

999. Why not?—Simply because of the detail. Our object is not to increase detail in our work when it is not absolutely necessary for our own convenience. A charitable society is not like

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30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Government Department; we must do our work at the lowest possible cost.

1000. It would be only one communication?—It might be done; but we should have a large number of forms and papers to send in to the Government Department, and they are very laborious. We should not mind furnishing a list, or allowing our forms and registers to be inspected by any Government official; but to be bound to give a notice to a public official every time we board out a child or change its residence would involve a considerable amount of work.

1001. I understood you to say just now that the objection to registration on the part of your foster parents is more or less an objection to the double supervision to which they would be subjected?—Yes, the double supervision.

1002. So that if there were only one supervision there would not be necessarily an objection to registration as such?—That is another question. Registration would involve, I suppose, a certain amount of publicity; that is to say, that the visits of the inspectors would become known in the district, and in many cases of respectable people, foster parents who are really above the artizan class, they do not like it known that they are in the habit of receiving payment for these children.

1003. Do they object to having it known that they receive payment from your society?—Publicly known amongst their neighbours.

1004. You have your lady visitor, who knows?—The lady visitor knows and the lady doctor knows.

1005. You think it would get known in the district that they were keeping children, because of somebody coming to inspect?—If there were a regularly appointed public inspector.

1006. You have local committees, and the members of those pay visits?—We have one supervisor, a lady who is in the habit of visiting at all the houses along the street.

1007. She is known as such?—As a district visitor. She visits all houses, irrespective of the boarding out of children.

1008. Now, Lord Thring, some time ago, rather pressed you on the question as to whether what I might call a more extended system of registration, would not tend to accumulate children in certain registered houses, instead of leaving them to be boarded out singly as they are now; are you conversant with the rules whereby the local authorities, who administer this Act, register houses; I mean, have you any knowledge of the rules that they go on?—Some little knowledge; not very much.

1009. Do you think they would allow a house to be registered if it was proposed to keep a large number of children in it; do they not before they register a house for a certain number of children examine the amount of cubic space?—Yes.

1010. Therefore they would not allow undue accumulation of children?—Overcrowding, you are now referring to, I understand; but that is not the point.

Lord Thring.

1011. I asked you whether it is not known to be the fact that a great accumulation of children,

Lord Thring—continued.

especially young children, however much cubic space is allowed them, is detrimental to the children; is not that the case?—It is the case.

1012. My question is this: whether, supposing you make distribution, as I call it, of children in separate boarding-out houses difficult, you do not incidentally make it probable that they will be accumulated in particular establishments; to which you replied, yes. Then my inference is this, that if you discourage by any means whatever the distribution of children you encourage their accumulation in houses; a good object, I admit, but still would not it be injurious on the whole; and I illustrate it (because I wish to show what I mean) by saying that nothing is more detrimental than the enormous schools in the neighbourhood of London which have plenty of cubic space, but it is known that the aggregation of such numbers injures the health of the children. Do you follow me?—I quite follow you.

Chairman.

1013. I should like to ask you something about that Derby Home; can you tell me where it was; "the north of London" is a large term?—I cannot remember.

1014. You cannot locate it now?—I cannot locate it now.

1015. You can find out for us, perhaps?—Yes.

1016. I should like to know whether that house was registered under the Act?—I believe it was; I am only speaking from memory.

Lord Belper.

1017. Was it within the Metropolitan Board of Works area?—I believe so, but I will obtain that information.

Chairman.

1018. With regard to these foster parents of very small children, are they generally wet nurses with whom you put them out?—No; we cannot get them.

1019. You do not go on the lines of the Foundling Hospital?—No.

Lord Thring.

1020. It is too expensive?—And the difficulty is to get them.

Chairman.

1021. The evidence that was given before the former Committee showed that the Foundling Hospital had rather a peculiar system of sending the children to single women who had children of their own, and these women's children were put out to be hand-nursed and generally died?—The mortality of our young children is not high, I think.

1022. I wanted to know whether your system was the same as that of the Foundling Hospital?—Not the same.

Viscount Llandaff.

1023. Have you, in the course of your experience, come across any institutions nominally for the protection and care of infants that are really speculative undertakings for illicit profit?—I have come across none.

1024. We

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1024. We were labouring on a definition the other day in order to exclude certain improper institutions, nominally for the protection of infants?—My experience is bound up with this one society of my own; I am not in a position to

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

speak as to that. The Charity Organisation Society might, perhaps, give information on that point.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss ISABEL G. SMITH is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1025. You have been, I think, for the last two years, an inspector for the London County Council under the Infant Life Protection Act?—I have.

1026. What is your special branch of the work?—The inspection of the houses registered under the Act, and of those of applicants for registration.

1027. Will you tell the Committee how you proceed on receiving an application for registration under the Act?—On receiving notice of application I visit the house of the applicant, and I examine into its fitness as regards situation, cleanliness, sanitary condition, amount of air-space, and the number of occupants. I ascertain the age of the applicant, and whether or not she is entirely dependent on the fees to be received for the maintenance of the infants whom she purposes keeping. I see and note the condition of any children she may already have in her charge, and endeavour to learn her ideas and practice as regards feeding and general treatment of infants; and, as a result of my interview with her, I form an opinion as to her fitness to have the care of nurse infants.

1028. Do you make any inquiries outside as to the character of the applicant?—Yes. On my first visit to her house I supply her with the form for certificate of character which is provided by the Council, and of which I think a copy has been handed in. This she is required to get signed by either a justice of the peace or a doctor, or a clergyman, and also by two rated householders who are not her own relatives. On receipt of this certificate, duly signed, I call upon those who have signed it and ascertain the extent of their knowledge of the applicant's character. I may add that if I am not satisfied with the information that I receive I endeavour to obtain it in other ways.

1029. When you have completed those inquiries, how do you then proceed?—I submit the application to the chief officer of the Public Control Department with a full report on the result of my inquiries, and generally state what opinion I myself have formed as to the suitability of the applicant for registration.

1030. What is the amount of air-space required in registered houses by the Council?—The minimum amount in the sleeping apartments is 400 cubic feet for each adult, and 250 cubic feet for each infant or child of under 10 years of age.

1031. And after houses have been registered, do they come periodically under your inspection?—They do.

1032. And do the persons registered know when to expect you?—No, I never give any notice of my intention to visit.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

1033. How frequently do you visit each house?—On an average, about once in three weeks; but more frequently in cases of serious illness, or where I am not quite satisfied with the result of my last visit, or under any other special conditions.

1034. Do you, as a rule, find the people unwilling to be under registration?—No, not when they understand what it involves. An applicant will sometimes inquire whether, if registered, she will be under police supervision, but she is generally, I may say always, satisfied when I assure her that that is not so.

1035. Do women sometimes voluntarily apply for registration, that is to say, without any intention of keeping more than one infant of statutory age?—Yes; I have had cases in which women who did not intend to keep two infants of statutory age sought and obtained registration.

1036. Though they intended only to keep one?—Although they intended only to keep one. In a few of these cases they have registered in order that they might take a second infant if asked to do so temporarily.

1037. What is their motive for doing so?—They find registration a protection for various reasons. It is to some extent a safeguard against the malicious insinuations of neighbours. Some look upon it as a certificate of their fitness to have the care of infants; and they know that in cases of inquiry into their treatment of their charges I shall be prepared to testify as to what I have found it to be.

1038. Is it a habit of registered persons to seek your advice on matters connected with the care of infants?—Yes; I constantly get letters from them asking me to call soon, as they wish to consult me on some matter.

1039. Do you mean that they consult you instead of a doctor?—No, certainly not. I particularly urge upon them all the necessity of obtaining medical aid for a sick nurse infant, even more readily than they would for their own children; and, although there is frequently a difficulty as to who shall pay the doctor, the parent or the nurse mother, I find the latter generally very ready to call him in in order to relieve herself of responsibility.

1040. Then you find that when women fully understand what is involved by registration they have, as a rule, no objection to it?—I do.

1041. Is any record kept of your visits?—Yes. Every evening I send in to the chief officer a separate report on each visit made that day, stating the number, names, and ages of all the children kept in the houses visited, their condition as to health and cleanliness; if in bad health, whether or not they are under medical treatment; and whether or not I found the

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premises

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

premises clean. I name any changes that have occurred since my last visit, stating whether these have been correctly entered in the register kept by the registered person, and mention any special circumstances which have come under my notice. I also, for my own use, keep a register of all children kept in each registered house, with notes on my visits.

1042. How many registered houses are there at present in the county of London?—There are 41.

Lord Thring.

1043. Are they all under you?—All.

Chairman.

1044. What is the number of infants and older children who are kept there?—At present there are 46 infants of under one year of age; 27 children of between one and two years; and 31 children of over two years.

Lord Belper.

1045. Is that the whole of the children in these 41 houses?—That is the whole of the children.

1046. Are there allowed to be other children in the houses along with them?—Yes, a few of these women have children of their own, but as a rule they are women whose families are grown up and out in service.

Chairman.

1047. What is the average death-rate of infants in registered houses?—Speaking from my own experience merely, that is for the last two years, the average rate is 12 per cent.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1048. Under one year?—Under one year. The deaths of children above one year are very few. In 1894-5 I had five deaths above one year; and in 1895-6 only one death.

Chairman.

1049. And can you tell us the general death-rate for London as regards infants under the age of one year for the same period?—The return for 1895 I believe is not yet issued; that for 1894 was 14.3 per cent. as compared with the death-rate in registered houses, which is 12 per cent.

1050. And what is the death-rate of nurse-infants in unregistered houses?—Of the infants found in unregistered houses during the same period, 23.6 per cent. have been known to die; but the actual number of deaths amongst them may be much greater.

1051. The unregistered houses do not come under you?—No. As to them, I am speaking from figures supplied me.

Lord Belper.

1052. What do you call unregistered houses?—Those in which one nurse-child of statutory age is received, and where they have children over the age.

1053. If they are not registered, how can you possibly tell what age the children are?—I am only speaking now of those cases in which nurse-

Lord Belper—continued.

infants are kept which have come under the inspection of the male inspector.

1054. You mean the houses that in the course of his investigation in regard to these registered houses he happens to have found out?—That is so.

1055. Of course it cannot cover the whole number?—No.

1056. Having discovered those houses, how is the percentage arrived at?—I must refer you for that to Mr. Babey; I have merely used the figures obtained from his information.

Chairman.

1057. I think Mr. Babey has already given the figures?—Yes, I think he has.

1058. But they do not really come under your department?—They do not come under my department. I merely put them in as a comparison with the death-rate in registered houses.

1059. Do you find that the Act of 1872 reaches the class of people whom it is most desirable to keep under supervision?—No, because at present the woman who knows that her house and methods will not bear investigation evades registration by keeping not more than one infant of statutory age, knowing that she may keep any number of children over the age of one year.

1060. Perhaps you can give us some illustrations from your own experience on this point?—I can. A case which has recently come under my notice is that of a woman of notoriously drunken habits who keeps one infant of under one year, and at least one older child. She has at the present moment, at least she had on Tuesday last, an infant of six months, and a child of about five years. Another case is that of a child of about two years of age, who was recently admitted into a registered house, having been previously, through an advertisement, placed with an unregistered person, who was afterwards found by the mother to be training it as an acrobat, unknown to the mother, and without her consent. This person admitted that she had taken charge of the child with that intention. Infants suffering from effects of improper or insufficient food, or uncleanness and other neglect, are frequently brought to registered houses after having been in the charge, for hire, of unregistered persons.

1061. These are cases which you have come across yourself?—Yes.

1062. Have you any special reason for thinking that the age-limit ought to be raised?—Yes. I think it inadequate for even healthy children; but as very few indeed of those who are commonly placed out to nurse are of normal health and development, there appears to me to be particular reason why the age-limit of the infants who come under this Act should be raised.

1063. Then, Section 3 of this Bill provides that the required particulars as to name, sex, age, &c., of the infant shall be given in writing. Have you found any difficulties from the want of this regulation?—I have. One is the frequent desire of parents from whom infants are received to avoid publicity or identification, and the consequent inducement to give false names or addresses, the latter being sometimes those merely of shops to which letters may be addressed.

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

dressed. Another is that the particulars are very frequently given verbally to the person registered, and she, being in many cases an illiterate woman, without any intention to deceive, enters them falsely in her register from having misunderstood them.

1064. You are referring to the statements made by the person who hands in the child?—The clause in question requires that the person from whom a child is received shall give these particulars in writing.

1065. Is the registered person at present required to deliver up her register on the expiry of her registration?—No, she is not legally required to do so.

1066. Have you in consequence ever experienced difficulty in obtaining it?—Yes, difficulty is often incurred through persons who have been registered not informing the local authority of their removal and subsequent address. I am now, in order to obtain her register, in search of a woman who conceals her present address on account of her being in debt to several persons in the neighbourhood in which she lived when registered.

1067. What particular necessity do you see for the insertion of Clause 4 into the Bill; the clause which compels a person to deliver up the register within seven days after the registration has ceased to be in force?—That arising from these persons being liable to show the register, in order to make it appear that they are still under registration. I find that they make use of the fact that they are registered as a sort of certificate of respectability.

Viscount Llandaff.

1068. How can an old register serve in a new house?—It would not serve; but these persons sometimes remove without our being able to trace them, and by carrying the old register with them they may falsely make use of that to give the impression they are still under registration.

1069. A woman is registered for a house in London; how could she avail herself of a London register when she goes elsewhere?—I am alluding more to removal to another part of London. There is at present nothing on the face of the register to show that it is for that house. A woman is not supplied with a new register for every house to which she removes.

Lord Belper.

1070. Is not the date there?—The date of the reception of the infant is there.

1071. Are we to understand that registration only lasts one year, and that the person each time is re-registered at the beginning of the year?—No, it has not been the practice to supply a new register every year; she receives a letter of registration which is dated.

Chairman.

1072. Then Section 5 suggests that it shall be made illegal for any person who receives an infant to transfer it to another person who is not a relative without the consent of the local authority. At what practice is this provision meant to aim?—This provision strikes at the practice (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

of trafficking in infants by receiving them with a lump sum, and disposing of them again, either with a smaller sum, or by promising weekly payments, which very often are not continued.

1073. Have you come across many cases of that sort, of children being handed on like that?—Not in my actual experience in the registered houses. The law at present allows persons who desire to carry on such transactions to evade registration, and thus accomplish their object.

1074. To evade the registration, I suppose, by not keeping the child for 24 hours?—No; by not taking more than one of statutory age.

1075. But there are some of these people who receive infants who do not take them to their houses?—Yes, many such cases have been found in which they have been handed over to some one else immediately.

1076. You anticipate a particular necessity for it, if registration is made compulsory, for all who take charge of any one nurse-infant?—Yes, because we may then expect to have many less scrupulous persons on the register; persons who will rather apply for registration than be debarred from taking nurse-infants at home.

1077. The law at present gives the inspector no power to enter registered houses; do you find any difficulty in obtaining admission?—No, not at present. I always explain, on my first visit to an applicant, that if she is registered I have to visit her house whenever I think fit to do so; and if she objected to this arrangement she could elude registration by taking only one infant of under 12 months of age.

Viscount Llandaff.

1078. You tell her that, do you?—I tell her that it is my practice to visit all registered houses.

1079. Do you also tell her that if she only takes one child she need not be registered?—She knows that.

1080. Do you tell her so?—I hand her an abstract of the Act.

Chairman.

1081. When, however, a person has no alternative but to register if she wishes to keep a nurse-child, there may, you think sometimes, be an objection made to your entering her house?—I do; though undoubtedly the provision will be even more useful to those inspectors who are concerned in the detection of infringements.

1082. But what sort of cases do you refer to there?—I refer to those people who would certainly rather not be registered, because their houses are not always in the most satisfactory condition; but who will rather apply for registration than be debarred from keeping nurse-infants. I am not referring to cases of houses which are so unsatisfactory and so unfit that the local authority would never think of registering them; but there are very many women who are not absolutely dirty, but who, at the same time, do not keep their houses as clean as I should like to see them.

1083. It is proposed to extend Section 7 of the Act of 1872 by the insertion of the Clause: "If it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the local

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

authority that any person whose house has been so registered . . . has from any cause become unfit to be entrusted with the protection and care of infants, it shall be lawful for the local authority to strike his name and house off the register." Do you see any particular necessity for such a provision?—Yes; a person may lapse into, or, after registration has been granted her, turn out to be of intemperate or otherwise irregular habits, without it being possible to prove actual "serious neglect or incapacity to provide proper food and attention," the contingencies provided against by the old Act.

1084. Has the local authority at present power to strike the name and house of a registered person off the register at the request of the latter?—No, registration cannot expire before the end of the year for which it has been granted, except by removal from the registered house, or it has been proved that the registered person has been guilty of serious neglect, or is incapable of providing proper food and attention, or that the house itself has become unfit for the reception of infants.

1085. Do you consider that some such provision will be beneficial?—I do, because it frequently occurs that, before the year is expired for which registration has been granted, the registered person determines to give up the care of nurse infants and generally takes to some other occupation, such as going out to work by the day. I have not found that any purpose is served by the inspection of the houses of trustworthy persons after they have given up the keeping of nurse infants.

1086. With regard to a question that arose earlier in your evidence as to the number of registered houses in London, can you give any reason why there are so few registered houses; is the keeping of the children a lucrative business?—I do not consider it so as a general rule. The common fee obtained is 5s. per week, sometimes it is less. I have, in fact, made a list of the prices received. I have knowledge of the fees received for 236 of the 318 children who have come under my care, and I find that out of these, 151 were received at 5s. a week, 11 were received for smaller sums; the remainder for sums ranging from 5s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. I find only one child for whom 10s., and one more for whom 10s. 6d. was received. I have here, too, a statement made to me by one of the registered persons who really conducts her house as a means of livelihood, and who goes very systematically to work. She stated to me that an infant of one month costs her 3s. 8½d. per week, and that an infant of 10 months costs 5s. 5½d. I have the items here if they are desired.

1087. Will you please mention them?—An ordinary infant of one month requires half-a-pint of milk per day; the cost of milk for a week would therefore be 7d.; the barley also as food 3½d. This woman includes a sixth share of her rent as a part of the cost of the infant as she keeps the house for the purpose, that is 1s. 8d. per week; firing, 5d.; soap, starch, sugar, and the sundries, 9d. She has made no charge for furniture or incidental expenses. In the case

Chairman—continued.

of an infant of 10 months, the milk would cost 2s. 4d., the other items being about the same; so that that child is actually costing her 5½d. more than she receives for it; and she considers that she makes whatever little profit she can get out of the older children whose food will be less expensive, because they feed as the family do.

Viscount Llandaff.

1088. Do you know how many she is allowed?—She is allowed three infants under the age of one year, and five older children; but in point of fact she has seldom more than six.

Chairman.

1089. Where is this house?—At Tooting.

1090. What sized house is it?—It is a six-roomed house, for which she pays 10s. rent per week.

1091. How long has she been under your charge?—Since I began the work, and she was under Mr. Babey's supervision a year previously.

1092. There are generally half-a-dozen children you say there?—Yes.

1093. Has there been any death amongst them?—Yes, last summer, when there was an epidemic of infantile diarrhoea, she lost two infants.

1094. As a rule the children there are pretty healthy, are they?—She is very unfortunate in getting unhealthy children, for this reason; she is known to be a good nurse, and the matron of the rescue home from which she is generally supplied sends her all the delicate babies. She is a woman who is most particular to keep them under good medical supervision, and I find that she does her very utmost for the welfare of the children.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1095. She looks after the whole six or eight alone, does she?—She is assisted by her daughter, and has other assistance for housework when necessary.

Chairman.

1096. Have you any other houses where as many children as that are kept?—That is the largest.

1097. What is your average; it works out about two and a-half, I think?—I have several houses where six are allowed, no other where eight are allowed. In several of my houses there is only one child kept.

Viscount Llandaff.

1098. And yet it is registered?—And yet it is registered. The woman is registered for the keeping of two and is at liberty to take another. Many of them do not care to have a second, and others, again, do not push the matter, but they will take the child if it is brought to them.

Chairman.

1099. What do you find is the proportion of illegitimate and legitimate children amongst these that are given out to nurse?—Of the 318 children who have come under my supervision during the two years, 233 were either acknow-

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30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

ledged to be illegitimate or, judging from the circumstances which attend their being placed there, were undoubtedly so. Of 47 others, I have no knowledge in this respect; the presumption is that the 47 others were also illegitimate. With regard to the remaining 38 (or nearly 12 per cent.) it was claimed that the parents were married, and with regard to 12 of these 38, there is reasonable cause to believe that the claim is true.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1100. That means that out of 318 children there are only 12 whom you have substantial reason to believe to be legitimate?—That is so. I must state that at present I have very great difficulty in ascertaining. The registered persons know that they are not obliged to find that out, and they find it a matter of policy not to inquire.

Chairman.

1101. Have you considered the question whether in the event of this Bill being confined to illegitimate children only, it would be possible to evade it very largely by representing illegitimate children as being legitimate?—I decidedly think so; at present it is a very common custom to represent a child to be legitimate when it is not.

1102. And it is very difficult to prove it, I suppose?—I think it would be very difficult; it would entail a visit, certainly, to many registrars in London, and the writing to country registrars, and even then I do not see that we could actually prove the matter. The certificate might be borrowed or forged in some way. In the case of borrowed certificates, there would be the additional difficulty that the child would be entered under a false name.

1103. I suppose, in the event of a woman coming with a child and producing a marriage certificate, inquiries could be made at the address which was stated on the certificate as to whether there was any person there; but then the woman might vanish, and it would be very difficult to find her again. That would be a difficulty, I suppose. I mean, although you could take the address on the marriage certificate, and send somebody to go and make inquiries, you would absolutely have no hold over the person who originally brought the certificate and child, and she might vanish?—In point of fact, the addresses are constantly changing of the parents of these children.

1104. You think that what I suggested just now, limiting it to illegitimate children only, would open the door to much evasion?—I do.

1105. You are now looking after 41 houses; does that occupy your time very fully?—I work for the county council under another Act, the Shop Hours Act; so that my time is not fully devoted to the inspection of the registered houses under this Act. The work entailed is very much more than one would suppose from the mere visiting of 41 houses; we have very frequently applications for registration which are not granted for some reason or other.

1106. And can you form any opinion now, from your experience, how many houses and

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

how many children you could look after, or what would you say is the capacity of one inspector like yourself?—A great deal would depend upon what the distribution of the houses is. If the law were extended there would be likely to be a great many more houses in a given area than at present, and not so much time spent in travelling.

1107. And probably if there were three or four inspectors you would have London mapped out into districts?—Undoubtedly so; and I should think that then one inspector might look after 150 to 250, possibly 300 houses; it is a matter of experience.

1108. Three hundred houses, or 300 children?—Houses; 250 or 300, perhaps; everything would depend upon the distribution of them.

1109. How many visits do you generally make; you say about once in three weeks?—About once in three weeks.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1110. Who are these people generally who apply for registration; are they widows or women with husbands and families, or in any case single women; what, speaking generally, are they?—Perhaps the majority are widows. I have a few single women at the present moment; I think three; and several others are the wives of working men.

1111. Out of the 41 houses you do now speak of, are the larger proportion in suburbs like Tooting, or are there some in the central parts of London?—Not actually in the central parts. I have houses in Brixton, in Camberwell, and in St. John's Wood; nothing nearer the centre at present. They are more distributed throughout the suburbs, from Woolwich on to Wandsworth at present, and to Shepherd's Bush on the other side.

1112. You said that eight was the largest number for which any existing house was registered; have you no institutions registered?—None at present; there have been none during the two years I have had my present work. May I please state that that house is not registered for the keeping of eight infants; the person is registered for the keeping of three infants under the age of 12 months, and I have never had any house registered for the keeping of more than three infants; but when the accommodation and assistance are sufficient the registered person is allowed a few children over the statutory age.

1113. Is there any payment at all connected with this?—On the part of the applicant do you mean?

1114. Yes?—None whatever.

1115. You have 41 houses in all through the whole of London; of course that is a very small proportion of the houses in which children are being kept for hire; we can only conjecture what the number is, but it must be very much larger than that. Have you reason to think that there are many of those houses which ought to come under the Act, and do not?—No, I do not think that there can be many houses kept by persons who are infringing the law at present.

1116. Why do you think there cannot be?—

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30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

Because I know that there are two inspectors working on all information that comes within their knowledge, and whose business is to prevent it.

1117. Do you think that they can get sufficient information to keep them abreast of the fact, whether in the whole of London there are not many houses with two infants under 12 months?—That I cannot form an opinion upon; I have no experience in the matter.

1118. It would not be in your department to find that out?—Not at all. If information comes in my way, of course I hand it on.

1119. May I ask you to state once more, for I did not quite follow it before, what, in general terms, you would say is the reason why there are not a great many more registered houses, considering how possibly profitable it may be to keep such a house?—Well, in the first place, I cannot admit that it is profitable unless the fee received is absolutely certain, which it is not, I may say in the majority of cases, the payments so often fall short. The infants are, generally speaking, not of normal health and development; they entail a very great amount of supervision; and many women find that they can take charge of one infant when they could not possibly with their other duties look after two; and they know that with one they are not bound to be registered. And one objection which I have experienced pretty frequently against registration is that there is a very general misunderstanding as to what registration involves. People so often believe that they will be subjected to police supervision, I am repeatedly asked by an applicant for registration whether the police will come to the house at all; whether any one in uniform will come. That I take to be a very great objection to it.

1120. And if this Bill became law, and everyone keeping one child was registered, do you believe that there would be, on the part of people generally, any great objection to registration?—Speaking from my own experience I should say no, if inspection is carried out as it is at present in London, say, by a woman going to these registered houses, a woman who probably is quite unknown to the neighbours, at least whose business is unknown to the neighbourhood. But I find that the more respectable the person really is the less objection is there to registration. The objections I have met with have been from very ignorant people, from people whom I did not consider altogether desirable nurses.

1121. Then, in your opinion, if the Bill passed to-morrow a large number of respectable people would immediately apply for registration?—I daresay they would find it a hardship at first until they understood what the whole system involved; but I have not found objection after it was understood.

1122. You attach importance to the inspector being a lady and not a man?—Well, I think for that particular branch of the work a woman is best adapted. Undoubtedly, only women would be chosen who had some knowledge of nursing and the care of infants. A woman can be consulted more readily than a man on these matters.

Chairman.

1123. Had you had any previous experience of this class of work before you were appointed to your present post?—No, not exactly of this class of work. I was trained by the National Health Society as a lecturer on nursing and hygiene. It was on the strength of that training that I received this appointment.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1124. Do you get from neighbours a large amount of information as to what goes on in houses where infants are?—Not a large amount; I have occasionally been told by neighbours of a very undesirable person, or a person who is presumably an undesirable nurse, having charge of a nurse infant. I have noticed a case in Woolwich where a woman, who is intoxicated three or four times a week as a rule, has charge of a nurse infant, and she, I consider, is an unsuitable person.

1125. It would be through neighbours you would expect the information to be given which obviously would be required in so much larger quantity, if this Bill became law?—To a certain extent. Undoubtedly, the police would give information: such cases may be known to the police, who have now no power to interfere. I know, in the case I refer to, a neighbour went to the police one night, and he told him he could not enter that house. If that person were obliged to register that house she would be more under supervision.

1126. It would be the duty of the police, then, to keep their eye on every house in London on which one child was being nursed for payment?—I do not say that; I take it that if the law laid it down that persons who kept one nurse infant were obliged to register, the respectable ones—those who intended to do well by the child—would apply for registration; the others would I hope become known to the police.

Viscount Llandaff.

1127. The others would not register?—They would, undoubtedly, seek to evade it, but if the law gave the authority power either to enforce registration, or to require the giving up of the nurse infant, the difficulty would be met I think.

1128. But I understand you take very great precautions before you do register a house?—Yes.

1129. You have two rated householders and a clergyman to certify to the character of the person?—Yes, a clergyman, or a doctor, or a magistrate.

1130. And further inspection of the house on inquiry into the antecedents of the person?—Yes.

1131. You register highly respectable persons only, I take it?—Persons who satisfy the Council on these points.

1132. What percentage of persons do you reject; are there many people who apply whose applications you reject?—The applications received during the years 1894-95 were 53; of these, 31 were granted, five were refused by the Council, and the remaining 17 were withdrawn by

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

by the persons applying before registration was granted.

1133. Now among your registered houses, is there any child for whom a lump sum has been paid?—I have two cases of adoption, each for 20l.

Chairman.

1134. Are they well looked after?—They are very well looked after. I find no difference whatever between them and the children for whom weekly sums are paid; but of course they come equally under my supervision.

1135. Then why do you think if the proposed Bill were passed you would get a less respectable class of people registering?—Simply because I think that many, rather than entirely give up keeping one nurse infant, will apply for registration. In the case of applications for registration I have frequently to tell myself that I must consider not what I think exactly right under the circumstances, but what may be reasonably expected.

1136. Why should you become more lax if this Bill is passed for single nursing infants to be registered?—I did not mean to admit that we should become more lax.

1137. I understood you to say that you might expect to get less respectable people on the register if the Bill passed and single infant houses were registered?—Well, I think that there are degrees of respectability; perhaps the word itself is not very fortunate.

Lord Belper.

1138. You would lower your standard?—No, I cannot say that.

1139. With regard to the figures you gave us, I think you said there were in 41 houses only 104 children?—Yes, that is so.

1140. Is that in the course of a year?—No; on the 31st of March 1896.

1141. On a particular date of the year there were 104 children; have you got a return showing how many there were in those houses during the year?—During any portion of the year?

1142. No, during the year; I see we had a return put in before in reference to these houses showing the number of infants there were in a registered house during the year; have you got that same return?—The total number of infants and children kept during the year (that is not necessarily during the whole of the year, because some of them might be removed) is, under the age of one year, 154; between one and two years, 34; over two years of age, 39.

1143. Can you account for the fact that the figures are so very much larger; is it that they are only at these houses for a certain time; two or three months?—Very frequently children are removed.

1144. Supposing they were removed from one registered house to another, they would appear in the total just the same, and therefore they must be removed from a registered house to somewhere that is not a registered house?—This 154, I must explain, contains a few duplicates. I do occasionally get a child removed from one registered house to another, and in this (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

return that child would be counted as two. That would account for very few.

1145. But taking children under one year on a particular date of the year, there were 46; in the whole year there were 154, which is very nearly four times the first figure; that practically is giving only an average of about three months for each child to be under the care of a person in charge of one of these registered houses; can you account for that short period?—Some would be accounted for in this way: that of these 154, 38 were infants on the 1st of April 1895, and they were no longer infants on the 31st of March; they were children and put into the other class.

1146. They grow into the next classification of between one and two years of age?—Yes. Then we have 21 deaths of infants under the age of 12 months to take into account, and the others would be removals.

1147. It is really in the infants under one year that the very great variations take place, and that is accounted for in the way you have explained?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1148. Have you formed any opinion (it can only be an opinion or conjecture, perhaps) as to the number of houses which would at once, if this Bill became law, have either to apply for registration or to break the law; I mean would you think it to be thousands in London, or hundreds?—I have no experience that would lead me to form such a conjecture. I have not come into contact at all with more than a very few of these houses where nurse infants are kept which are not under registration.

1149. From your general knowledge of the circumstances and life of the working classes of London, which your work at present brings you in contact with, would you roughly think it was a case of thousands of houses having to be registered at once?—I could only form any opinion from the figures already supplied by Mr. Babey.

Lord Belper.

1150. May I ask whether, in many of these registered houses, any of the children taken in are the children of people like sailors, where the child's mother is dead and the father is going on a voyage, and they have to dispose of their children in some way when they leave the country?—I have not had a single case of that sort.

1151. Therefore the whole of those cases must be in single houses, in houses where there is only a single child kept?—That is probably so; and I have had the children of widowers.

1152. In these registered houses, from your experience, there are hardly any cases of children of working men, or of people who have had to leave their own homes, and therefore to put their children out?—Very few indeed. I have come across three or four children of widowers.

Lord Thring.

1153. Suppose you carry it up to five years, can you give us any idea whatever what increase it would make. The Bill proposes two things:

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30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

first of all, to include the children where only one is kept; and secondly, to include them up to the age of five years?—I only know that it would bring in a very large number of nurse children under the age of five years, but as for giving any actual figures, I am afraid I could not do that.

1154. Do you think it would be very large?—I believe that it would be.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1155. All I want to get at is a general idea, which perhaps other people could form as well as you; but we value your experience. It seems to some of us that the change proposed, however beneficial, would be on a gigantic scale; that every street in London would be concerned in it largely; and that one must not think of it as being something trifling; and I am anxious to know whether we could get from

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

you any opinion of the scale on which we should be legislating?—If it was a question of machinery, I do not think that the central part of London would be very much affected; but nurse children are more frequently placed in the suburbs; and if every street is affected the inspection which one inspector will be able to carry on will be very much larger. My time is chiefly taken up really in travelling at present. Sometimes pressing business takes me from one extreme to the other in one day; I have gone from Putney to Poplar in one day, and I went the other day from Fulham to Woolwich.

1156. But you can say nothing to diminish our apprehensions of the gigantic scale on which we should be moving?—I do not think I can add anything to what I have already said.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Tuesday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 5^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1157. I BELIEVE you are the head of the Statistical Department of the General Register Office at Somerset House?—Yes.

1158. How long have you held your present appointment?—Something under three years.

1159. And you were medical officer of health for Manchester and Salford, I believe, for some years?—That is so.

1160. And in that latter capacity have you devoted much attention to the question of infant mortality?—I have.

1161. And have you read the evidence given to the Select Committee on the Protection of Infant Life in 1871 by your predecessor, Dr. Farr?—I have.

1162. Dr. Farr then handed in a table showing the legitimate and illegitimate births in England and Wales in each of the years from 1845 to 1869?—That is so.

1163. And also the proportion in each year born out of wedlock to 100 births?—That is so.

1164. Can you give us any figures to bring the table up to date?—Yes. That is the table brought down to the year 1894 (*handing in the same*).

1165. This is a Return of the Births in England and Wales from 1845 to 1894, which shows the total births, the legitimate and the illegitimate births, and the children born out of wedlock to every 100 births?—Yes. Might I explain the table?

1166. Certainly?—The important column is the last, which deals with the proportion of children born out of wedlock, that is to say, the illegitimate births to the total births. The table shows, with respect to the year 1894 (the whole table relates to 50 years), that there were 890,289 births in that year—

Lord Belper.

1167. Is this dealing with the whole country?—The whole of England and Wales. Of these 851,946 were legitimate, and 38,343 were illegitimate (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

imate, or 4.33 per cent. of the total births. The teaching of the table is that whereas in the year 1845 the proportion of illegitimate births to total births was 7.0 per cent., in the year 1894 it was 4.3 per cent.; and the reduction has been steady through the whole of that 50 years, or almost steady.

Chairman.

1168. That shows a steady decrease in the proportion of illegitimate children?—In the proportion of illegitimate children.

1169. Born since the year 1845?—That is so.

1170. Can you give us any figures on the comparative mortality between illegitimate and legitimate children?—Not for England and Wales as a whole, because, so far as I know, no statistics on the point exist; but I have found statistics which were submitted to the Committee, I think, in 1871 by Dr. Farr, and which had been received from the medical officer of health of Glasgow, and these I beg to submit to your Lordships. May I read them?

1171. If you please?—The figures relate to the years 1873 to 1875. In those three years, there were 56,698 births of legitimate infants in Glasgow and 8,613 deaths of legitimate infants under one year. In those three years there were also 5,288 births of illegitimate children and 1,509 deaths of illegitimate infants under one year. Coming now to the proportion, the deaths of legitimate infants to 1,000 legitimate births were equal to 152; the proportion of deaths of illegitimate infants to 1,000 illegitimate births was 286.

Lord Thring.

1172. Have you any means of telling us the number of births that do not appear in the Registrar's books at all; in other words, that are concealed?—It is impossible to give that information.

1173. Of course it is impossible to give it accurately; but can you give us any idea; any opinion

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

opinion whatever?—I can say this, that in the course of the last 20 years the proportion of children whose deaths escape registration has unquestionably been decreasing, and very fast; I think there is no doubt about that.

1174. Can you give us any idea what it is; are there a third or are there a half?—Nothing like that.

1175. What would you think?—It would be quite impossible to form a judgment.

1176. It would be very small, would it?—Very small now.

1177. Would you say it was under 5 per cent.?—Yes, I should think so certainly. I am speaking of the present time. I think I can explain my reasons for holding that opinion.

Chairman.

1178. Have you got any other figures to give us?—With respect to Manchester, of which city I was medical officer of health for between four and five years, I have some similar particulars. I could not bring down the figures relating to Glasgow from the year 1875 to the present time, because, as your Lordship knows, I only received intimation on Friday last that I should be wanted here to-day, and the time would not allow of my writing to Glasgow and getting the particulars; but I have particulars which I myself procured from Manchester for the years 1891 to 1894, a much more recent date. In those years there were 65,446 legitimate births registered, and 11,371 deaths of legitimate infants under one year of age. In the same time there were 2,807 illegitimate births, and of these 1,099 died under the age of one year. As regards the proportion, of the legitimate infants 174 per 1,000 died before they became one year of age, and of the illegitimate children no fewer than 392 per 1,000 died under the age of one year. With your Lordship's permission, I should like to explain, and I think I can, the reason for this excessive, or for part of this excessive mortality amongst illegitimate infants. It is a matter of fact that frequently the mothers of illegitimate children desire to register their children as legitimate, for obvious reasons, but our experience in the General Register Office in London is that constantly we are receiving from registrars all over the country information that mothers have desired to correct their statement before the Registrar, and to own that their children were illegitimate. The consequence is that if that is true (and I can answer for it that it is true), then the rate of illegitimate deaths appears by these tables to be higher than it ought to be, and I have no doubt whatever that that fact accounts for the very excessive mortality, or of some of it, amongst illegitimate infants.

1179. In other words, you mean that whereas illegitimate deaths are generally registered as such, illegitimate births are often registered as being legitimate?—That is so, and this greatly increases the apparent mortality.

Lord Belper.

1180. If a child has been registered as a legitimate child, why is its death registered as that of an illegitimate child?—The conditions

Lord Belper—continued.

of registration are somewhat different in the two cases. Frequently, in the case of a birth being registered, it is the mother who registers it; the mother is frequently one of several mothers in a registrar's office, and your Lordship can easily see that a girl would probably shrink from exposing her shame before other women. I think that explains it.

1181. I quite understand that; but having once been registered as a legitimate child, why when the death is registered is not that so far accepted as a proof that the child was legitimate?—We have evidence to show that the deaths of illegitimate children are more correctly registered than are the births of illegitimate children; that is a matter of experience.

1182. Then do you mean to say that, if a mother produces a certificate that the child is registered as a legitimate child, you go behind that and say that the child is illegitimate, and go into further evidence?—We have nothing to do with the birth when the death comes to be registered; they are entirely separate registrations.

1183. I should have thought that in the case of a child's death, from considerations of respectability, the parents would at all events wish it to be registered as the death of a legitimate child rather than as the death of an illegitimate child; if it had been registered as a legitimate child at its birth, I should have thought that *prima facie* evidence that it was legitimate?—As a matter of fact, I may tell you that we find legitimate births are much less accurately registered than illegitimate deaths.

1184. Does not the mother or the father who comes to register the death take the trouble to refer to the fact that the child has already been registered as a legitimate child?—I cannot answer that question. I submit to the Committee this table that I have just read (*handing in the same*).

Viscount Llandaff.

1185. Could you tell us the proportion of the illegitimate births which you think are registered as legitimate births?—I cannot tell that.

Chairman.

1186. Have you anything further?—I have nothing further to put in. I have some figures here that I thought your Lordships might want to question me about.

1187. I do not know quite what it is that you have got?—It is with regard to the question of uncertified deaths in London.

Lord Thring.

1188. Will you tell us how in effect they register a death?—

Chairman.

1189. The death has to be registered within five days, I think, has it not?—Under the Act of 1874 it has to be registered within five days.

Lord Thring.

1190. What happens when a child dies?—Under

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Under the Act of 1874, it is compulsory on the parent, or on what are called the qualified informants, to give notice to the registrar within five days of the death of the child, and if he fails to do so he is subject to a penalty.

1191. In what form does he give it, simply that a particular child has died or that it is a legitimate child?—He must be present at the registrar's office, and there furnish him with particulars.

1192. True; but what does he say; what particulars must he furnish him with?—I am sorry I have not a copy of the register here. There are forms prescribed by the Registrar General to be filled up.

1193. He has to state the name of the child of course?—Yes, and the age.

1194. And would the register state the legitimacy or the illegitimacy of the child?—That is a matter of inference. In the case of an illegitimate child the name of the father does not appear in the certificate, only the name of the mother, and from that we infer that the child is illegitimate.

1195. And you ask no questions beyond the form?—The registrar is instructed in all cases to be as accurate as he can in getting at the truth.

1196. The doctor's certificate is as regards the cause of death?—Yes, as regards the cause of death; it is not evidence of the age.

1197. Nor of the legitimacy?—No, it has nothing to do with that.

1198. Simply the cause of death?—Yes.

Chairman.

1199. You will send a copy of the form that is used to the Committee?—Yes.

1200. Can you give us any more information bearing on this subject; any other tables that you may have compiled?—I can put in a table with respect to the uncertified deaths in London in the years 1882, 1883, and 1884.

1201. Will you read them out, and call attention to any particular point?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1202. "Uncertified" means without a certificate of death from a medical man?—Yes. There were in those three years 3,020 uncertified deaths; of these the medical attendant refused to grant a certificate altogether in 66 cases, and made an informal statement, that is to say, not one acceptable to the Registrar, in 215 cases; in 258 cases the patient was attended by an unregistered assistant; in 400 cases by an unregistered practitioner, and in 415 cases by a midwife; in 1,666 other cases there was no medical attendance at all.

1203. But can you distinguish those deaths in any way as being deaths in child-birth, because you spoke of midwives?—No, the table does not deal with causes of death.

Lord Belper.

1204. These are infants, are they?—I have got them at the ages of under one year, one to five years, and over five years.

1205. I understand from the first return you handed in, that the percentage of illegitimate (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

births has varied from 7.0 per cent. in 1845 to 4.3 per cent. in 1894?—That is so.

1206. Can you form any opinion as to what that steady decrease is owing to. I mean, in the first place, of course it is possible that there might have been some alteration in the way of getting the information; in the second place, of course, it might be owing to an increase of morality; or to different habits of life. I should like to have your opinion as to what cause you would ascribe it to?—I have no doubt whatever that it is owing to a very large extent to the increase of morality generally throughout the country. As regards all the causes for it, it is difficult on the spur of the moment to deal with them. I should be very glad to consider that subject if the Committee wish it.

1207. I should like your opinion as to whether there has been any change in the manner of getting the information that might account for the percentage being smaller now than it used to be?—I will consider the question. I am not prepared at the moment to answer it.

1208. In considering your answer you will bear in mind the evidence you have given. You say the births of illegitimate children are more strictly looked after now than they used to be, therefore the tendency would be to show an increase in that return of the percentage rather than a decrease, given equal conditions. We have probably got hold in the return of more illegitimate children than we used to formerly, you say; that would show a tendency to increase the percentage rate of illegitimate children rather than to decrease it; and, therefore, you have not only got to account for the decrease in that Table, but also for some tendency to alter in the opposite direction owing to the circumstance you have mentioned?—I will consider that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1209. What is the death rate of infants under one year throughout the country?—The deaths of children under one year to 1,000 births in England and Wales in the 10 years 1884 to 1893 were 147 per thousand births.

Lord Thring.

1210. One question on the evidence you have given: I suppose the evidence on which registration is formed is necessarily exposed to great danger of mistake because you rely simply upon the evidence of interested persons, do you not?—That must have some effect, unquestionably.

1211. That must have its effect. Though, no doubt, it is done with extreme care and with extreme skill, still we must take it as being subject to the infirmities of human interest?—Yes, that is unavoidable.

Viscount Llandaff.

1212. Could you not now give the general death-rate of legitimate and of illegitimate infants under one year?—I have already explained to the Committee that I cannot do that for the whole of England and Wales; the figures do not exist.

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1213. Can

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

1213. Can you give us the figures for London?—No, only for Manchester. The reason why I can do it for Manchester is this. With respect to every death of a child under five years of age, I made inquiries by the help of sanitary inspectors and female visitors amongst the poor; I made inquiries with reference to all the conditions, as far as they could be ascertained, of the life, all the circumstances attending the death of those children; and in that way, amongst other things, I got to know about the question of legitimacy and illegitimacy, and the question of whether the children had received proper attention during life; and that is the reason why I am able to give you these figures for Manchester, though they cannot be given for the country generally.

Viscount Llandaff.

1214. According to your figures, Manchester was much worse than Glasgow?—Yes. I have tried to explain that. The Scotch law is different from the English law in regard to illegitimacy, as your Lordship knows.

Lord Thring.

1215. You mean that in Scotland subsequent marriage makes the children legitimate?—Yes.

Chairman.

1216. That would rather tend, would it not, to make people look upon illegitimate children in a lighter way in Scotland?—It is my personal opinion that this is so.

Lord Belper.

1217. You said that the figures are worse in Manchester?—In Manchester the deaths of illegitimate infants to 1,000 illegitimate births are 392 per 1,000; in Glasgow 286 per 1,000?—Yes.

Chairman.

1218. You mean that in Glasgow they are registered as illegitimate births, and then through the marriage of the parents they are subsequently registered as legitimate deaths?—Yes, I think so.

1219. What this really shows is this: that in Manchester the illegitimate children are worse cared for than in Glasgow?—

Viscount Llandaff.

1220. I want an explanation of that; why does Manchester kill so many more illegitimate children than Glasgow?—My belief is that the figures as regards illegitimate death-rates are incorrect, and for the reason that the number of illegitimate births upon which those rates are calculated is inaccurate; that is to say, they are fewer than they ought to be, and therefore the death-rate is greater. If the number of illegitimate births is increased in the way which I have described, then, of course, the rate will be lower. As a matter of fact, they cannot be corrected in Manchester; or can only be corrected in a very roundabout way.

1221. Both Glasgow and Manchester are above the average of deaths, legitimate and illegitimate?—You see you have not got the number or proportion of deaths from legitimate

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

children. You cannot get the proportion for illegitimate children, because the figures do not exist.

1222. But they are above the average of the whole; you have told us that the normal death-rate, legitimate and illegitimate, throughout England and Wales, is 147 per 1,000?—That is so.

1223. In Manchester and in Glasgow both the legitimate, and still more the illegitimate, deaths are far above that?—That is strictly true; but then it must be remembered that that 147 includes the whole of the healthy districts of England.

Lord Kinnaird.

1224. Do you check by name the legitimate deaths to see that they agree with the births; when a child is reported to be dead, do you see that it agrees with the child that was born, or not?—In certain districts, where the registrar knows the people very well, of course that can be easily done, but in very large cities the registrar does not know the bulk of the people.

1225. Is it his duty to do it?—The registrar has the general instruction to get to know the truth, as far as it is possible, from the people who come to him.

Viscount Llandaff.

1226. But is part of the truth which he has to ascertain whether John Smith, whose death is registered, is the same as Charles Jones whose birth was registered a few months ago?—Yes, as far as possible he ascertains that; but migration is very common.

Lord Kinnaird.

1227. Can you give us any experience with regard to the poor people changing their names?—I have no knowledge.

1228. You could not give any tables to show how many of those children who are certified as dying, differ from the names certified as born?—I could not give that information.

1229. Do you think the registrar would be particular in putting the question whether it was legitimate. You have told us that the mother would wish that it should be regarded as a legitimate child, and if he was a kind man would he put it down so on her statement?—He would do so at his peril. The Registrar General would not retain in his service a man capable of doing that.

Lord Thring.

1230. Has the registrar the power to go behind the form that is filled up?—He must secure that the facts entered in the form are correct, as far as in him lies.

1231. If the forms are rightly filled up apparently, has he any right to cross-examine on those forms; I thought you told me he had not?—He himself enters the particulars in the register.

1232. According to the forms?—He has to ascertain the facts *vivâ voce* from the person who comes to register a birth or a death.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1233. Does he go outside the office and find out whether the answers are true?—It is his business

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

business to ascertain, as far as he can, the truthfulness of the statements made to him.

1234. Does he go outside the office to do that?—In many cases I know it to be done. I speak from my own knowledge of Manchester and Salford.

Viscount Llandaff.

1235. A girl comes and says, "This is a legitimate child"; does the registrar inquire of a neighbour, or how does he find out whether the statement is true?—He is expected to ascertain by any means in his power that the person is telling the truth.

Lord Belper.

1236. In a case of doubt (because there must be a large number of cases in which the registrar cannot find out with absolute certainty), which column is the child registered in, "legitimate," or "illegitimate"?—I do not understand what you mean by a case of doubt.

1237. With the limited means of inquiry that the registrar has, he cannot prove in every case that the statement is absolutely accurate; and if he is left uncertain are there any instructions which would make him enter that child in the one column or the other, or is there a column "doubtful"?—May I put in a form of the register book with respect to births. That contains two columns, columns 4 and 5, and, *mutatis mutandis*, the like information may be got from the death registration book; column 4 gives the name and surname of father, column 5 the name and maiden surname of the mother. In the case of an illegitimate child the column containing the name of the father would be blank, and from that one might infer that the birth was illegitimate.

Chairman.

1238. If she is married she puts down her married name and her maiden name as well?—Yes, "name and maiden surname of mother," is the heading of the column.

1239. What is the practice, to put down the two surnames?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

1240. Are there no cases where the registrar leaves it open in the return that he makes; where he cannot find out whether the child was legitimate or illegitimate?—Only by omitting the column in respect of the father.

1241. That makes it illegitimate?—Yes.

1242. Therefore all those cases would go into the illegitimate?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1243. What is the penalty on the mother for wilfully giving false information?—£10.

Viscount Llandaff.

1244. Have you ever known the penalty exacted?—Personally, I should not know whether the penalty had been exacted or no; that comes under another department, and I cannot give evidence on the point.

Lord Thring.

1245. Supposing the woman refuses to answer in cross-examination, is there any penalty?—May I read this, it is from Section 39 of the (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

Act 37 and 38 Vict., c. 88, with respect to the registration of births and deaths: "Every person required by the Births and Deaths Registration Acts, 1836 to 1874, to give information concerning any birth or death, or any living newborn child, or any dead body, who wilfully refuses to answer any question put to him by the registrar relating to the particulars required to be registered concerning such birth or death, or fails to comply with any requisition of the registrar made in pursuance of those Acts, and every person who refuses or fails without reasonable excuse to give or send any certificate in accordance with the provisions of the said Acts, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 40s. for each offence."

1246. Not 10l.?—That was in the case of a wilfully false statement. The prosecutions do not come under my immediate supervision; therefore I have to depend upon my own reading of the Act, which, as Lord Thring knows, is not likely to be very trustworthy; medical men are seldom good lawyers.

Viscount Llandaff.

1247. Beyond what you have already told us, viz., the inaccuracy in the number of illegitimate births, can you account for the enormous disproportion between the illegitimate deaths under one year in Manchester and the general death-rate?—I have no hesitation, as the result of long experience in Manchester and Salford, in saying that illegitimate children are subject to a course of treatment very much worse than that which legitimate children receive, and that that has a very baneful effect upon their health and life.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1248. And would you say in the same way, from your experience as a medical man, that an illegitimate child is more likely to be an unhealthy child when born?—Yes, I think so, certainly.

Viscount Llandaff.

1249. Do they receive that want of attention and that indifferent treatment from their mothers or from others, as a rule?—From all those who have charge of them.

1250. The mother as well?—I am afraid that is so; in fact I feel certain of it.

1251. Is there much baby-farming (I use the word to describe the thing in general) in Manchester, or was there in those years?—There is no doubt that it does exist to a certain extent.

1252. But only to a certain extent?—Only to a certain extent; I believe, and am sure, it is less now than it used to be; but what the amount is I cannot say.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1253. Manchester has appointed no inspector for the purposes of this Act?—I am not certain about that.

1254. Did you, when you were there, give any particular attention to the subject of the administration, and the necessity of the Act of 1872, the existing Act now, with respect to the protection of infant life?—I thought it was my proper

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

proper business to look after the children because I was sure that they wanted more protection than adults did; and, therefore, under whatever Acts, I took very great care to inquire into the circumstances attending the death of all young children, and especially of those who were illegitimate.

Chairman.

1255. You know the provisions of the existing Act of 1872, what is known as the Infant Life Protection Act?—Yes, I do, generally.

1256. You know that it compels the registration of houses in which more than one infant of under 12 months is kept?—I am aware of that.

1257. Have you, in the course of your experience at Manchester, been able to form any opinion as to the advisability of extending the operations of that Act?—Yes, I should like to extend the provisions of that Act to children above one year of age.

1258. And have you formed any opinion as to whether registration, *per se*, is, as a rule, beneficial to children; I mean to say the registration of the houses?—Yes, I am sure that it must be.

1259. You mean to say that the fact of a house being registered ensures a certain amount of better treatment and supervision of the children?—Yes, a little more publicity, too. The inspector, for instance, I take it, would, if the house were registered, be allowed to enter the house at reasonable times, and ascertain that the children were properly looked after. You drag the whole proceeding into the light of day, and my opinion, as a medical man, is that that is altogether salutary; I mean in regard to the whole system of taking care of children for gain.

1260. So long as mankind remains as it is there will always be a large number of illegitimate children, I am afraid, and, consequently, there will always be a considerable number of children whom it is desirable to hide or put away in some sort of way; have you any opinion to express yourself as to the advantage, a further advantage, which an extended system of registration would have in, what I might call, bringing these children to light in the way you suggest?—I feel confident, from my own experience, that if the circumstances under which such children were attended to were looked into carefully, that would tend to the improvement of the health conditions of the children, and the prolongation of their lives.

1261. Yes; but my point is this: it has been urged that further registration would simply have the effect of driving baby farming more below the surface; that the registration itself would not necessarily enable us to get at the people that we want to get at; that we should only get at the respectable people who are willing to be registered. Have you formed any opinion as to the willingness or unwillingness of people to register; did you come across that in your capacity as officer of health?—Speaking of the question of registration generally, I never found that the effect has been such as you describe. It does not tend to drive information of that kind, as it were, below the surface; I have never found anything but good from the inspection of places of that kind. I may take the

Chairman—continued.

case of the Notification and Registration of Infectious Diseases, which, as your Lordship knows, was at one time looked upon with very great disfavour by many people. It was then said, If you insist upon it, the effect will be to conceal disease to a very large extent. Facts prove that that fear was utterly groundless; and probably there has not been passed in recent years an Act which has done more good than the Act for the Notification of Infectious Diseases has done.

Viscount Llandaff.

1262. Did you ever inquire how many houses there were in Manchester that came within the Infant Life Protection Act?—I cannot give you any figures as to that.

1263. Did you ever inquire?—I do not remember having done so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1264. Was any registration in force at all?—I cannot at this distance of time tell you.

1265. Our general impression from what we have heard is that it was not in operation there; you cannot tell us to the contrary?—I cannot.

1266. Then your view that it would be a good thing to extend it is, so to speak, an academic view rather than one based upon experience, because practically you do not know whether the difficulties existed or not?—Not as regards that particular Act. I am speaking from my experience of other and similar provisions.

Viscount Llandaff.

1267. Have you at all studied the way in which the London County Council have administered the existing Act?—I have not.

1268. Are you aware that their inspectors require certificates of character and respectability and of the perfect sanitary condition of the house before they register at all?—I am not aware of that.

1269. Does it not strike you that under that system none but the good houses register?—That would be the effect of registration.

1270. Registration does not make the house good, but the house must be good before it is registered?—Yes.

1271. And the result is that none of the bad houses are registered?—Yes; I should refuse the registration unless the house were fit to be registered.

Lord Thring.

1272. Is the registration of diseases an analogy?—I think I am entitled to take it so.

1273. Is it not the duty of the doctor to notify the disease?—It is the duty of the doctor to notify the disease; but I am speaking of the publicity given to the fact.

1274. That is the very point I want to point out to you. In the case of the registration of houses it is the interest of the keeper of a bad house not to register; but the doctor is bound, legally and professionally, to register a case of infectious disease; I do not see the analogy. Now, I want very much indeed to ask you this question: with your very great experience, you are aware that this often happens (I do not know whether it is so in Manchester, but I presume it is), that the mother goes out at six o'clock in the morning and stays in the factory till six in the evening,

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

evening, or whatever the time may be; you are aware that the child is handed out at six in the morning and brought back at whatever the hour may be when the mother returns?—Yes.

1275. Are you not aware that the infantile mortality caused by this taking of the child out from home and bringing it home in the cold, and the ill-feeding, is very large indeed?—I am aware of that.

1276. And is it not the fact that really and truly the mortality induced by that system of *crèches*, carrying the children out to places, is much more startling and much greater than that induced in any other way?—Well, I have not been able to satisfy myself on that point.

1277. Do you know anything about Burnley?—No.

1278. Would you agree with what I was told, that in the places where large wages are given to the mother, 20s., 25s., and 30s. a week they earn, do they not?—Yes.

1279. That the child mortality is greater amongst that well-to-do artisan class than it is in the class of the poorer artisan who does not go into the factory, for the reason I have stated?—I should be quite prepared to believe that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1280. What is, roughly, the population of Manchester, the district you worked in?—About half-a-million.

1281. In London, which we may call, say, 5,000,000, the greater London, there are now 41 houses registered; according to that, at the same ratio, Manchester would have four houses registered; would you feel that the registration of four houses in Manchester at all met the needs of the present case?—I am sure it would not.

1282. We have been assured by witnesses that they are of opinion that every house is registered in London which under the existing law ought to be registered; but you would feel that if that were so you would certainly require to register more houses than four in Manchester?—I think so.

1283. In which more than one child under 12 months was kept for hire, I mean?—Yes.

Chairman.

1284. But that opinion, again, is what I may call purely academic; it is conjecture on your part?—Yes; I can only give you my opinion. May I say this: any questions that you would allow me to have from you I will consider to the best of my ability; but it is very difficult with regard to great and most important questions, such as these, to settle them off-hand. I should be pleased if I could be of service in the way I have indicated.

Viscount Llandaff.

1285. Could you state why Manchester left this Act as a dead letter; the proportion of deaths of illegitimate children per thousand there is far beyond the figures in Glasgow; why did you never put the Act in force in Manchester?—If I said the Act was never applied in Manchester I made a slip; I did not mean to say that; I do not know whether it was or not.

(0,95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1286. Would it not have come under your knowledge?—It is a considerable time ago, and, if it was applied, all I can say is, I did not proceed under it; I had other and very much more convenient ways of getting information. I may say, without desiring to take too much credit to myself, that there are very few cities in England where the poor are better looked after than they are to-day in Manchester.

1287. It is a dead letter, because the town council felt that they could do better without it, by other means?—We could do much better; I do not think we wanted the Act in Manchester.

Lord Kinnaird.

1288. There are illegitimate children in Manchester, and they have to be put out somewhere to nurse, as in London?—Yes, not only illegitimate, but legitimate children too.

1289. What means have you for inspecting the places where they are put out to nurse?—May I explain that we have in Manchester, not only a large staff of sanitary inspectors, but also a large staff of female health visitors, as we call them; it was the business of those visitors to go amongst the people, and to get to know all about them, their families, their troubles, and their sickness, and to do all that they could to make life in the poorer districts more endurable. In that way we got an amount of information which I do not think is gathered in any other town in England; and that accounts for my saying that really I know very little about the Act of 1872, because we had an excellent means of getting to know all about the people without it.

1290. And do you think many children were not put out of the way there?—I am afraid I must ask you to excuse my answering that, if my answer is to go down.

Viscount Llandaff.

1291. Have you ever found any difficulty in working that system that you have described?—No; the people were only too thankful for it.

Lord Thring.

1292. These female visitors were philanthropic; not paid, I suppose?—They acted under a society called the Ladies' Health Society in Manchester, and, on the other hand, they were in touch with the medical officer of health, who directed their work.

1293. Were they paid?—They were paid partly by the corporation and partly by the Ladies' Health Society.

Viscount Llandaff.

1294. And they attended as well to children in their own homes as to children boarded out?—Yes; to anyone who wanted their attention.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1295. That was a more successful method than this Act?—I cannot say anything about the Act; I think the methods which are adopted in Manchester were better than could be carried out under any Act alone.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1296. Is there any formal paper or document which

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

which gives an account of the work of these female health visitors?—Yes.

1297. What is it?—The reports of the medical officer of health in Manchester at the time give very full details on that point, and so likewise do the reports of the society itself. I should be very glad indeed to submit them to the Committee.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1298. If you had the houses registered it would rather take them out of the view of your health visitors, and put them under those looking after the registered houses?—Personally I have ceased to have anything to do with Manchester for three years, and I should not like to speak for my successor there.

Lord Thring.

1299. You would not like to take the people there out of the supervision of those ladies whom you have mentioned with so much approbation?—No; I would not for any Act that could be passed.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1300. If you come again, perhaps you will bring statistics of that society?—I will see whether I have them among my papers, and if not, I will write to Manchester for them.

Lord Belper.

1301. This society at Manchester was a regular society formed for the purpose?—The Ladies' Health Society is really a branch of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, which is the oldest voluntary sanitary association in England. The Ladies' Health Society consists of a large number of ladies who associate themselves for the purpose of superintending the operations of the so-called female health visitors, and they devote a very large proportion of their time and money to the task. I know perfectly well that the work which they are doing is beyond all praise.

Viscount Llandaff.

1302. Is it not part of the conditions of their success that they come as voluntary friends of the poor instead of as official inspectors?—That is the secret of their success.

Lord Belper.

1303. There is a return here of 1890, giving the names of institutions dealing with children under five years of age; is this society you speak of the Manchester and Salford Refuges and Children's Aid Society?—No, that is a charity.

1304. I understand that the society you speak of is so far an institution, that they have funds?—I should like to explain that they receive part of the wages of the health visitors, the paid health visitors, from the corporation, and the rest they collect by way subscription from their friends; and a great deal of money they get together in that way; but I may say that the work of the ladies is entirely voluntary, and not only so, but it is a very expensive affair for them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1305. The society has a large staff of female health visitors who are partially paid out of the rates?—Partially paid out of the rates.

1306. Can you give me roughly an idea of the number of these people who are thus in part paid out of the rates?—The number of them at present paid out of the rates would appear, I think, in the paper that I propose to submit to your Lordships.

1307. Is it a question, I mean, of tens or hundreds?—It is a question of tens, rather.

Lord Kinnaird.

1308. Have you had before you any complaints by coroners; we have had two London coroners here who said that the present Act was utterly insufficient to stop a great deal of ill-treatment, and possibly worse than that, of infants; have your coroners in Manchester complained of the same thing?—I have no knowledge of the fact.

1309. They did not complain to you when you were health officer there?—No, I received no complaints from the coroners that I remember.

1310. Did you act under a private Act, a local Act, in Manchester?—The Corporation of the City of Manchester acted under the Public Health Act, 1875.

1311. Are the provisions of that Act not valid in London?—In London they have a special Act.

1312. Did yours go further than the London Act?—I am not acquainted with the present London Act. I know that up to the passing of the last Act for London the Public Health Act, which applied to the country generally and not to London, was very much more useful than the London Act was up to the passing of the last Act; it was very weak.

1313. Do you consider that this new Act is required?—Do you mean for the country generally? I think it would be beneficial.

Viscount Llandaff.

1314. What do you say as to Manchester?—I cannot speak for Manchester now. I am sure that I never proceeded under that Act of 1872 in Manchester, and for the reason I have given.

Lord Kinnaird.

1315. Then they would probably treat the amended Act, if were passed, as they did the old Act?—I cannot tell.

Chairman.

1316. You will think the matter over and let me know if you can throw any further light on it?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1317. You said that you thought it possible that the improvement of the percentage of illegitimate births from seven in 1845 to four in 1894 was owing to a general improvement in morality?—Yes, I think I am entitled to say that.

1318. Have you any figures to show that?—No, it is my opinion, that is all. I think the regularity of the fall supports it.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

5 May 1896.

Mr. WILLIAM CROOKS is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1319. You are a member of the London County Council for Poplar, I believe?—And also a guardian of the poor.

1320. A guardian of the poor for Poplar Union?—Yes.

1321. You have lived there most of your life, have you not?—I have lived there, with the exception of about 18 months, the whole of my life.

1322. I mean you can speak with considerable experience of the feelings of the working classes with regard to this question?—I believe I can.

1323. You have read the Bill which is now before the Committee?—Yes.

1324. Are you in favour of it generally?—Yes.

1325. You are in favour of extending the age of the children to five years?—At the very least.

1326. And you are also in favour of making it apply to houses where only one child is kept?—I am.

1327. Have you had any experience yourself with regard to what are known as baby-farmers, that is to say, have you come across them at all?—No, except in my experience on the Public Control Committee of the London County Council.

1328. It is a fact, I believe, that baby-farmers (you know what I mean) do not exist so much in a district like Poplar as in the more western districts, the suburban and the better neighbourhoods?—That I cannot say. I do not know whether baby farms do exist to any very large extent in the better-to-do neighbourhoods; I have no practical experience of that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1329. Do you mean that you cannot compare the two?—Exactly so.

Chairman.

1330. But do you think that they exist much in Poplar?—Not to a very large extent. I shall have in a minute or two to give you one or two cases of what has happened with people who have taken children.

1331. You say that you are in favour of extending the Act; is it your opinion that registration would be advantageous?—I am positively sure of it.

1332. Do you think that the feelings of the working classes, as a general rule, those whom you have come in contact with, are generally in favour of the proposals of this Bill?—Most decidedly.

1333. Instances have been brought before the Committee of cases of possible hardship if an extended system of registration were in force; can you give us any instances of the general practice of working men with reference to their children when they have not got a mother to look after them, and when the men themselves have to go away from home in search of work?—Yes. I can give you many.

1334. What do they generally do?—A man who is left with a family of children; or a man

Chairman—continued.

whose wife has deserted him, finds always considerable difficulty in placing those children in good homes, and invariably (speaking now for this last four years) men who find themselves in that dilemma in my immediate neighbourhood come to me. They say, "Cannot you get the guardians to take my children?" and I say, "I really cannot; the law is against it unless you personally go into the house with the children;" and they say, "Well, what do you advise that I shall do?" I say, "Have you no sister-in-law, no mother-in-law, no relation whatever that you can place the children with?" "No." "Do you think that you could afford to keep a woman to look after your children?" "Well, I think I could if I could find a proper woman to do it." I then make a suggestion of this sort: "Now what I want to say to you is, that you had better go and look round and find some decent people who have a couple of rooms to let in their house, take the rooms, state the whole of the circumstances of the case to the landlady, say to her that you have a daughter or a son 9, 10, or 12 years of age, as the case might be, and generally they can look after the little ones, and that if the landlady will give an eye to them you will make it worth her while."

The particular case that I have in my mind must have been very successful indeed; for last week, in going through a thoroughfare, a man rushed up to me, shook me by the hand, and said, "I am so glad to see you; I took your advice." I did not quite understand what the man meant, and he said, "Don't you remember that I came to your house and asked you about my children?" I said, "No, there are so many men who come to me that I do not remember this particular instance." He said, "Well, I have taken two rooms in such-and-such a street, and the children are going on well, and I assure you that I shall never pass you again as long as I live," meaning that he would give me some kind of acknowledgment for the advice given to him. The other instance I have in my mind is the case of a man who came to the guardians with two babies; roughly speaking one must have been about two years old, a diminutive little thing, and the other about six months; and in a most imploring manner he asked the guardians to take the children. The guardians said, "We cannot take the children without you. Where is your wife?" "My wife has gone to a hospital very bad. I cannot go to work; I have these two babies to look after, and I can get no one to take them, or, at least, no person respectable enough, and sober enough, to look after my children in the way that I should like." The man was in a terrible way. I was so struck with him that I followed him out across the road and got into conversation with him, and I said, "Now what do you propose to do?" "What can I do? I shall starve if I go on like this; I cannot leave the children and I cannot get anyone whom I can trust the children with." "Very well," I said, "now look here; you go back to the relieving officer; you see the children are gradually getting

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

getting worse; they certainly could not have been left like that when their mother went away; you go and ask the relieving officer to give you an order and then go in with the children, and to-morrow I will come and see you, and perhaps I shall think of some better plan by which I can get your children placed out than I can think of to-day, or I may find some institution that would look after the children."

1335. But what we want really to know is this: you put the children out, you found a lodging for these children?—No, we did not. The man went away and did not go into the house with the child. The point I want to make there is that if houses were registered, or if this man knew perfectly well that any person that took his children would be under inspection and registered, there would be a safeguard at once, and it would encourage him to find a decent person to take his children to; he would have said to himself, "You must register; the inspector will be sufficient guarantee for me that these children are being properly looked after." Now, without that registration and without that power of inspection the man had no certificate that his youngsters would be properly looked after at all.

1336. Is there anything to prevent his doing that now?—Certainly; the man has no guarantee that his children are going to be looked after properly.

Viscount Llandaff.

1337. Two babies require registration now?—But one of them is beyond the 12 months; and you do not get very many working men with two babies under 12 months, I venture to say.

Chairman.

1338. Can you give us any experience of the working of what is called the adoption system; that is, giving out the children on the payment of a lump sum down?—I can only give this experience: that we get into the workhouse several children who have either been adopted for a lump sum down or taken on a promise of a weekly payment which has ceased, and in regard to whom we get absolutely no guarantee that the children are illegitimate, have been boarded out and have been adopted. The foster mother or father comes up and says, "I have a little girl or a boy that has been left with me under promise of payment, and I have not seen the mother or the father for a year, or for three months, as the case may be, and I cannot afford to keep it; and the guardians must take it." And the guardians are obliged to take it.

1339. You regard it as generally a very bad thing for the child, I suppose, that a lump sum should be paid down with it?—I do, indeed.

1340. Can you suggest any method of preventing children being given out on the payment of a lump sum?—I think that the amended Act should be framed to make it a penal offence to accept a lump sum, with a child of that description. I admit there is some difficulty in it, and after all you cannot frame an Act of Parliament that some one would not find a way of getting round; but, nevertheless, it would be better than the present condition of things; you

Chairman—continued.

would certainly get hold of more people than you now do; and if you only got 10 per cent. more it would certainly be worth framing an Act of Parliament to enable you to do 10 per cent. more good than you are doing at the present time.

1341. It is very difficult, is it not, to define and attach a definite meaning to the term "lump sum;" in this connection it has been called "immediate payment"?—Yes, which lands you in this difficulty, that you have no positive proof that a person adopted the child for 30*l.*, 50*l.*, or 100*l.* When the person had got tired of it, and had exhausted the money, they would at once, if they did not take worse measures for getting rid of the child, apply to the guardians to take it.

1342. That is not quite my point. I am talking of the difficulty of drawing a clause so as to make the payment of what is called an "immediate payment" on taking the child, that is, the payment of a lump sum down, illegal?—I think you could under the Act. A person takes a child, and you could register all those particulars. You might say that you have no means of knowing whether the person has adopted a child for a lump sum or not; but I think it makes a great difference if you have got power of entry and notification, which is sure to come about in a crowded neighbourhood; the people are sure to know when Mrs. Brown or Mrs. Black has got a new child; they will begin to ask one another where it comes from; and it is notified; the inspector goes in and makes the necessary inquiry, and satisfies himself, or herself, that all is fair and square and above board; a record is kept of it; and supposing later on the person applies for the parish to take the child over, then immediately you confront them with the record that you have got of the previous inspection; and by that means you would reduce that system certainly to a minimum.

1343. Do you find that there is generally a considerable secrecy connected with the taking of nurse children now; that, as a rule, it is something the people are ashamed of, and like to keep quiet?—Yes.

1344. Do you think that there would be much dislike on the part of respectable people to register themselves as taking in children?—Indeed, I do not. I think the more respectable the person, and the more desirable that they should have the children, the more anxious they would be to register. I can give you several instances of that. I am chairman of a boarding-out committee; that is to say, a committee that supervises the boarding-out of the children from our union; the boarding-out committee of the union. It is our duty to go through the certified committee's reports from the various places where children are boarded out. Sometimes when we get an independent report from a particular committee the guardians suggest that we might ask the Local Government Board for permission to visit. This is usually granted, and I have been on several tours of inspection to children boarded out; and of course in the best homes the door is thrown wide open, and you are called in and are asked

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

asked to inspect the whole of the children's clothes, together with their bedroom, and there is a free and open offer to strip the child to satisfy you that it is perfectly clean. You get to an indifferent home and there you are met with all sorts of excuses as to why a certain thing is not quite clean, or little Tommy or Jenny are not quite up to the mark. At once I object; I say that such persons have no right to be registered under any circumstances, and have no right to have children in their charge. If we frame an Act of Parliament, or a Bill at all, it is that it shall be no injury to honest and good persons, but shall be a terror to evil-doers. I cannot for the life of me understand any objection to registration; and I have never heard a single person who was worth listening to at all object to registration.

1345. You have had considerable experience of the boarding-out system, I believe, have you not?—Yes, I have.

1346. Whereabouts do you generally board your children out from Poplar?—We have some children at Eyke in Suffolk; we have some at Apsley Guise, together with Woburn Sands in Bedfordshire; we have some at Corsham and round that immediate neighbourhood in Wiltshire; and we have also some children under a Balsam certified committee; I have not been there.

1347. Have you local committees in these places to look after them?—They are certified from the Local Government Board.

1348. They are committees?—Yes, or rather shall I qualify that by saying it ought to be done invariably through committees; but in one or two instances that is not literally true.

1349. Have you got any other further reasons to give for supporting the Bill than you have mentioned?—Yes.

1350. Have you any experience of what is called the traffic in children, handing them on from one to another?—To evade the law, do you mean?

1351. Partly to evade the law and partly to ensure all traces being lost of the children. I am talking now of the provisions in the Bill with reference to getting statements in writing from the people who bring the children and pass them on?—I should think that could be done with very little difficulty, but I have had no personal experience as to that.

1352. I did not know whether you might have come across such a thing?—No.

1353. Were you going to give me some other reasons for supporting the Bill?—Yes. My other reasons were these. I am acquainted with a lady who does, and has done, a tremendous lot of rescue work, and she has passed through her hands (in the 18 or 20 years she has been engaged in the occupation of rescue work), no fewer than 3,000 young women. At the present moment she has lying in her house five young women recently confined. She says that, speaking for herself, she should be delighted if even her house could be registered, and that the inspector might go from time to time to children she places out. She boards them out, one only in a house; she pays 5*s.* a week for the children until the mother can afford to pay; she secures a situation for the mother; and she is induced to do this by

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Chairman—continued.

the fact that where the child can be kept alive and looked after, the mother is encouraged to become a respectable young woman and is encouraged to work and toil for the child, who keeps her from going into bad ways. In answer to what she said, I said, "Well, now, what do you say, Mrs. —, to the person with whom you place this one child being registered?"—"Well," she said, "I believe that people with whom I place the children would be very glad indeed to be registered; and what is more, if they were not glad to be registered I should object to their having the children at all, for I should say at once it was not a desirable home; for in every instance the greatest amount of publicity should be given to these cases; that is to say, those who have the care and study of these children."

1354. She only talks of registering her home as a lying-in house?—Yes.

1355. The Act only applies to children kept apart from their mothers?—Yes; but I wanted to quote the authority of this lady who has had so much to do with these children and has placed so many out, one in a house, as to her opinion of the desirability of registration.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1356. With regard to what you said as to the absence of difficulty, you have not referred to temporary cases; do you think it desirable that where a child is only for a day or two allowed to go to a neighbour, a thing that must be common in your experience, for a trifling payment, that house should be registered?—No, neither do I think it comes within the four corners of the Bill, so far as I have read it, inasmuch as you have got the 24 hours limit, and the trifling payment is very trifling indeed, and you would not call a friendly act of that description receiving a child for fee or reward; hence I do not consider that such cases come within the four corners of the Bill as we now see it.

1357. I do not quite follow you?—Supposing you ask a woman in the next house to mind your baby, because you were going to the seaside for two or three days, or supposing a man going away to work, said: "Here is the money and food for the child, and I will give you 2*s.* for the trouble," that 2*s.* will not pay for the trouble; it is a neighbourly act.

1358. Still it is hire or reward, is it not?—I cannot see it; I do not think you could stretch the clauses of that Act to call it hire or reward; but my experience teaches me this: the working classes, as a rule, are only anxious to do one another a turn of that description without accepting a single penny at all. If you were to ask me to fix a sum, I should tell you at once I could not; but if you were to ask me if I could name anyone who had so minded somebody else's children I could name a dozen at once.

Chairman.

1359. Your desire is that the Act should not interfere in any way with the neighbourly and friendly action you refer to?—Certainly.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1360. My experience exactly corresponds with yours, that in the majority of these cases there is no payment; but I should have thought there

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5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

was a large number in which there was payment, and what I desire to do is to produce such a law as shall allow of that arrangement without the need of registration?—I am of opinion that the Bill does that, because what I find is that the workman who has no wife has rooms and apartments of his own in a particular house, where the landlady keeps her eye upon the children; that is to say, when there is a family of four or five whose ages run from ten down to one year or less.

1361. Why do you think there are not more registered houses now?—I do not think that the law is sufficiently known, and but for the publicity recently given in the public press, it would not spread as much as it has; that is to say, that it has been, if one may use the phrase, boomed rather, and it is one of those things that we are rather glad to see boomed, to call public attention to the condition of things; and no man or woman that I know of, no woman certainly who desires to look after children, would offer the slightest objection. Supposing she did, and it was pointed out that certain scandals were happening, and that by registering the children she has it would prevent a scandal arising again, like a true woman she would say, Oh, certainly, if it will prevent anything wrong, I am only too glad to permit the inspector to say that my house is all right. It is a kind of certificate of fitness to receive children which they would be glad to have.

1362. Do you think that there are a large number of people in London now who are taking in children, but who are not under the existing law?—I should say yes; and also there are very many people who are taking children who ought to be registered; who ought not to be allowed to take them.

1363. The existing Act allows them to take one, but do you think that there are many people who, as a matter of fact, are taking more than one; who ought to be under the Act, and who are not registered?—I should hardly think so; but what I feel about it is that you get very many children under 12 months not properly taken care of. I know it is so in the case of a man applying from time to time for out-relief; he has care of a little boy; I have watched him for months; the little chap is just beginning to toddle about. Now the man and wife cannot be far off 70, and are quite past work. I do not think any of us would register a house of that kind; certainly not myself. I should think more of the interest of the child than of benefiting the old man and woman.

1364. At present there are, we are told, only 41 houses registered in the whole of London; you would be of opinion that there must be a larger number of houses than that which come properly under the Act now?—I go as far as to say that there must be hundreds, and if the law was made a little more stringent than it is now the registration would go up by leaps and bounds.

Chairman.

1365. I am not sure that you quite understand the Bishop. You say there must be hundreds of houses where children are now

Chairman—continued.

kept which are outside the present law, but which would be within the provisions of the Act if the Act was extended?—Exactly. I also say there are very many houses where there are two children under 12 months that we have not been able to get at; also by the very fact of amending this Bill and getting them within the publicity, you would be able to draw them in also.

1366. You mean to say that, in your opinion, there are a good many houses which have these babies which it has not been possible to get at?—Yes.

1367. That is only conjecture on your part?—It appeals to our common sense.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1368. Have you formed any estimate at all of the number of houses that would require to be registered if this proposed Bill became law?—We could only hazard a guess.

1369. It would be a question of thousands, would it?—I should think so.

1370. If in every case where a child under five years of age is being boarded and a payment made, registration had to take place, you would have instead of 41 houses 4,000, or, at all events, a very large number?—I think you would; I do not know that it would be quite up to 4,000; we have no figures before us to prove that.

1371. But, summing up what you have just said, you would be of opinion that the amount of hardship that would press upon individuals on account of being compelled to be registered would be trifling compared with the benefit the Act would confer?—Certainly, I do think that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1372. Have you got any registered houses in Poplar?—I do not know; I do not think so. Of course, that is a question that Mr. Spencer, the chief of the Public Control Department, could answer. By the way, that reminds me; a lady called at my house the other day, and asked my wife whether I was a member of the London County Council, and she said, "Yes; what do you want?" "Well," she said, "I have got four children; they are very nicely looked after, and it is a very nice house, and I want him to come round and see the house, and to see if he would give me a certificate"; and the message, I left behind was to tell the lady to go to 21, Whitehall; but beyond that I know of no case.

Lord Belper.

1373. This was a case that was not registered, but where she did take more than one child?—Evidently.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1374. You think the working classes are in favour of this?—I should say, yes, decidedly.

1375. Would they be willing to put their children in a registered house for two or three days, supposing they wanted to go away to work, or to go to the seaside?—I do not think that is quite a fair question, because under the Bill the house

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

house must be registered before they get the children.

1376. But there might be children already in the house, and it might be registered?—I think they would in that case.

1377. Do you think you would find people who were registered willing to take in the children of a neighbour in that way?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1378. Do you think that people like being called baby-farmers?—A certified house would not be called a baby farm for any long time to come, but because of the wickedness and cruelty going on there is need to set a better fashion than now exists.

1379. But at the present time they call them baby farmers?—You do not call a person in the country who accepts children to board out a baby farmer.

1380. I ask you is not that the common term used; if a person is registered, we call him or her a baby farmer?—No, the working classes are not so rude as is generally suggested. If you mean that in a drunken brawl, something would come out of that description, that may be so, but that is a matter of no importance to us.

1381. You have told us broadly that the working people are in favour of registration; I want to know what possible evidence you have that the working men in Poplar are in favour of registration?—I think I have the best of all reasons for saying that. I am in daily contact with the men to begin with. I address in my own neighbourhood on an average three public meetings a week. I have taken the subject of this Bill three or four times since we began to talk about the framing of the Bill, and on every occasion the Bill has been squarely debated by the men assembled at the meeting, and a resolution has been carried in favour of supporting the Bill. I cannot go any further than that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1382. Then will you explain this: The parents are in favour of registration: the owners of the houses are in favour of registration, as I understand you?—I say that the parents of the children are strongly in favour, and that all respectable persons who desire to take the children are also in favour of it.

1383. How is it, then, that there so little registration; that there are so few registered houses, and that the existing law is so constantly broken?—I think I have said that I did not think the law has been sufficiently well known until within this last month or two.

1384. Do you mean that for 25 years everybody interested in this question has been asleep?—The best answer I can make to that is the fact that you have just had a witness in the chair who said that the Bill was a dead letter in Manchester; and if an authority like Manchester will not put the Bill into operation, the local authority, surely there is some other person to compel the local authority to do its work.

1385. In London the local authority have been trying?—Yes, and are doing it exceedingly well.

1386. But, nevertheless, with everybody in

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

favour of it, there are practically no registered houses; how does that come about?—Yes; you have some registered houses.

1387. In Poplar you told me you did not know of one?—I know of 40 odd that are registered.

1388. But in Poplar?—In Poplar, no; that is perfectly true.

1389. I am told that there are two in Poplar?—I did not know that.

Chairman.

1390. It would not necessarily come within your knowledge?—No; what I say is that the men who are most likely to be obliged to put children out are in favour of a system of registration.

1391. Do you mean that they are not able to find a respectable person to take them?—That is so; the complaints I generally get from men who want us to take the children are that the person with whom the children now are drinks too much, or has some other failing, not necessarily drink; perhaps there is no ability for looking after children. You may get a sober foster-mother sometimes who knows very little about washing or bathing a youngster or keeping him clean. That may be the fault of our system of not training them properly, but the fact remains

Lord Belper.

1392. I think you were not in the room when Mr. Spencer gave evidence?—No.

1393. He said that he believed that in the whole, or very nearly the whole, of the cases of the children that would come under the present law the houses are registered. The question I asked him at No. 341 was this: "I understand that you say that under the present law you practically get hold of the cases of the whole of the children that would naturally come under the present law, or nearly all;" and the answer was, "I believe that to be the case," and I went on to ask, "Then, if that be the case, as far as that class of cases go, that would come under the present law, there are really no malpractices going on or ill-treatment of children, because they are all under registration and under inspection," and the answer to that is, "That is my belief." I only put that to you because you have expressed the opinion that there are a good many cases not registered?—Notwithstanding Mr. Spencer's very wide experience, I am still of that opinion.

1394. And you still think that there are a good many cases that ought to register that are not registered?—I think so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1395. You told us mainly of the view, and I think your evidence most important, of respectable working men who want a place to which to send their children. The children we have to protect are, in the main, illegitimate children; I mean that the children who are baby-farmed in England, to use the common phrase, are probably 90 per cent. of them illegitimate; we have had evidence to that effect; do you think that the mothers of such children find a difficulty at present in a district like

L 4

Poplar

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

Poplar in disposing respectably of their children?—No, not when they are under the wing of some body of good voluntary lady workers. I should say that then they could do so; but if the girls are left to their own resources to find a home, then I think the children are likely to be very badly placed.

1396. That rather goes round my point. Take an average girl, not linked in with any philanthropic or religious association of any kind, who has gone wrong and has a child; I ask, does she at this moment find a difficulty in knowing what to do with it?—She does.

1397. Would that difficulty be lessened or decreased if this Bill be passed?—Lessened, because a person taking the child would say, "The house is registered," and it is a guarantee to the young woman that everything is fair and square; therefore I do think it will benefit that kind of girl.

1398. You do not think she would find desirable people who are at present ready to take the child quietly without saying anything about it, but who would be unwilling to take the child if they had to get leave from the county council?—I do not think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

1399. Do you know the system under which the registration takes place in London?—I think I do.

1400. We have heard that there is a certificate from the clergyman, a testimonial from rated householders, an inspection of the house to see that it is sanitary and in good order before registration is granted at all; therefore it is not the registration that makes the house good, but the house must be good before it gets registration?—Admitted.

1401. Then there are the houses not registered at present, but as good as they will be after registration; why does the young girl get any additional facilities from the fact that the house is registered; it was good before?—My contention is that the person who might have a good house would feel herself incompetent to take the child; she would say: "All sorts of suspicions would be caused in this girl's mind; I should like to have the child, but what will be worrying her is the thought of what is happening to the child; I know I could look after it properly; I will be registered and take the child, and then she has a guarantee that I am looking after it properly."

Chairman.

1402. Do you express any opinion as to the advisability or inadvisability of limiting the operation of this Act to illegitimate children only?—I express this opinion, and it is very clear in my mind, that it ought to include all children.

1403. Do you think that if it was limited to illegitimate children it would lead to great evasions?—I think it would. I have thought it over very carefully and I have come to this conclusion, that if you were only going to register the legitimate children, there is nothing in the world to prevent a young woman finding a certificate of marriage for the purpose of placing the

Chairman—continued.

child out; her sister, cousin, or some one of the kind, might lend her one; but supposing, for instance, she got married in Devonshire and she wanted to place the child in London, the person receiving the child, or the person responsible, cannot go all the way to Devonshire and take a number of children with them and get the parson or the verger to prove that this was the identical young woman who was married there. And if the number of legitimate children put out is so exceedingly small, where is the trouble; you say the percentage is so very low; why not include them? I am of opinion that if you leave out the legitimate children, the only result will be rather to encourage fraud, and to encourage a girl to find a marriage certificate from somewhere or other for the purpose of evading the law.

Lord Kinnaird.

1404. I understand your evidence to be that you think there would be no objections to limiting the Act to illegitimate children, and you do not think that the classes that would make use of it most would object to registration, or that they would see no need of it?—That is my feeling.

1405. Then would you exclude institutions from the Act, or have you any strong opinion upon that point?—Yes, I would not exclude institutions. I only give you this as my own opinion; and the reason why I would not exclude institutions is that I think it would mean a better attention to the administrative detail of an institution if it were registered by the members forming the committee or the responsible persons. And the reason why I should encourage that, even from a managerial standpoint, is this: if I were manager or chairman of the managers of some such institution, I should welcome the inspection. I should say, "Now here is an institution being run by voluntary contributions; we have an inspection by the Government or the county council, as the case may be, who certify that this home, this institution, is a really good one, that everything that can be done is done for the benefit of the children; and will you not give us some money with which to carry on this good work?" I think it would be such an advantage to the institution that it would overcome any little difficulty that might arise in the managers' minds as to the undesirability of registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

1406. The chief object of this amended Bill would be for the benefit of the houses, as far as I can make out; a certificate of goodness?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1407. You distinctly think that there are many children who are not treated as well as they ought to be, whose treatment would be improved; there is sufficient cause made out for extending the Act, you think?—I do think so; I think it would encourage even the indifferent ones, which we should not be inclined now to register, as good homes to improve. When those people were desirous of taking in children, they would put their house in order; and though you might have to strike them off the register for one year,

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

year, you might put them on the next if they showed the necessary improvement.

Lord Thring.

1408. I should like to ask you one question: do you think the keeping of these children profitable?—Yes, in a good many instances, speaking from my knowledge of the boarded-out children, I should say decidedly so.

Chairman.

1409. What do the Poplar guardians pay?—Four shillings a week; 2l. a year for clothing, and 10s. a year for medical attendance in the case of each child.

1410. You say 10s. a year for the medical attendance; do you pay it to the person or straight to the doctor and tell him to attend the child?—In some cases straight to the doctor, which I think is decidedly advantageous; in other instances the money is paid to the certified committee; they might have a very heavy bill on one child, and in the others they may be perfectly clear; but the same thing applies to the doctor, for that matter.

Lord Kinnaird.

1411. You do not give the 10s. to the person who takes them?—Not to the foster-mother or father.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1412. Why do you go so far afield as Wiltshire?—The wisdom of the Local Government Board says that no metropolitan union shall board children out within the metropolis.

Mr. WYNNE EDWIN BAXTER, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1417. You are the Coroner for the Eastern Division of the County of London, and also for the Tower and its Liberties, I believe?—I am.

1418. And you have been Coroner for East Sussex, I believe, from 1879 to 1887?—Yes.

1419. And you were Deputy Coroner for the City and for Southwark, and the Duchy of Lancaster, in Surrey, and Middlesex, for several years?—I was.

1420. Also Coroner for East Middlesex; and now you are Coroner for East London?—Yes.

1421. Therefore I may say you have had considerable experience as coroner?—That is so.

1422. What particular class has your work mostly brought you amongst?—Amongst the poorest.

1423. And is it your experience that the evils against which this Bill is directed really more affect those of the better class?—It is. There are a smaller number of registered houses in my district, and there is a great absence of baby farming altogether.

1424. In your particular district?—Yes, in my present district.

1425. In what way do you mean that it affects the better classes more than the poorer ones?—(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

1413. Is not that what their wisdom says, because they wish to remove as far as possible the taint of pauperism from the children?—There are a good many sides to that question, which I have very strong convictions upon.

1414. Is there not that one side to it?—I found some villages to which children were sent to a certified committee where the children were actually known by the name of the union they come from. Therefore in that case it was not so.

1415. Is not the object, right or wrong, silly or wise, to remove the taint of pauperism as far as possible from the children?—Yes, but how does that apply to the provinces? You can board out within the union in the country, but you cannot board out within the union in London. That only applies to London, and does not apply to the kingdom generally. The Gloucester Union, for instance, of which I have some knowledge, board out almost within the city of Gloucester.

Viscount Llandaff.

1416. There is nothing to oblige you to go as far as Devonshire or Wiltshire; you might go to Surrey or Kent, might you not?—Yes, except that we find that other unions are anxious to get good homes, and most of the good certified committees have their hands full, and we have not as many homes in the country for that class of children as we might desire; hence we are obliged occasionally to go further than we should like.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Chairman—continued.

When a daughter of a working man gets into trouble, as a rule, she marries at the eleventh hour, whereas, amongst those in a more affluent position there is an endeavour to screen the shame and get rid of the child; and so baby farming starts.

1426. So that the customers of the baby farmer are, as a rule, in your experience, people of a fairly good position; of a comparatively good position?—Yes, a comparatively good position.

1427. What is your opinion with regard to the registration of houses in which nurse-children are taken for hire?—My opinion is that if a house is registered there is far less chance of the child being neglected, and I base my opinion on the fact that I have had no cause to suspect neglect in the cases of deaths that have occurred in registered houses in my district.

1428. Have you got any particular illustration to give us?—The only case of serious baby-farming occurred about a fortnight ago in my district; that is the only case in 10 years; and there two ladies appeared at the East-end at an hotel with a child; they inquired for the Stepney Causeway and were directed; they went into a general shop and inquired of the shopkeeper if

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5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

she knew of anyone who would take a child; there happened to be a poor woman in the shop at the time, and they asked whether she would like to take it; she promised to consult her husband; they eventually took it. The whole of the parties went to a solicitor's office, a formal agreement was drawn up, 25*l.* was paid in Irish notes, the woman took charge of the child, it was registered in the name of the foster-father, christened in the name of the foster-father as the foster-father's child, and the outcome was that the first night the foster-mother was drunk, the police locked her up, the child was taken to the workhouse, afterwards handed over to the foster mother, and the 25*l.* was soon spent. The child was then endeavoured to be got into institutions, and eventually was taken to the workhouse again, and died there. I submit that if this Bill was an Act nothing of that sort could have happened; a solicitor would never have drawn up the agreement without providing for registration; in all probability the police and the workhouse authorities also would have taken action.

1429. The facts which you are relating came out, I suppose, in the course of evidence at the inquest?—They did.

1430. And therefore, in this particular case, if the present Bill had been law, the child would have had some supervision?—In my opinion it would.

1431. Unless, of course, there had been a breach of the law and the child had been put in an unregistered house?—My impression is that the law would not have been evaded, considering the number of legal authorities through which the child passed; the hands of a solicitor, the police, and the workhouse authorities.

Lord Belper.

1432. But the workhouse was after the child had been taken away from the foster-mother, was it not?—The same night. It went twice to the workhouse; it was first taken by the police to the workhouse on the night on which it was received.

Chairman.

1433. As soon as the foster-mother received this 25*l.* she immediately got drunk?—She did, the same night.

Viscount Llandaff.

1434. How would registration have prevented her getting drunk?—It would not have prevented her getting drunk; but having received the child the home in which she was living would have been registered, and the child would have been looked after in the meantime.

1435. How would it prevent a woman suddenly flush of money getting drunk?—It would not have prevented that, but it would have guarded the child afterwards.

Lord Belper.

1436. Why; how would it have prevented the woman who was bribed by 25*l.* taking the child?—I think it would have prevented her taking the child because the necessity for registra-

Lord Belper—continued.

tion would have been brought home to her. She was a perfect stranger to baby farming?—It was the first case in which she had done it.

1437. You think a law about registration would have frightened her from taking the child?—Yes; but beyond all that the child was in her custody for about six months, and there was nothing to show that it was properly taken care of then.

Chairman.

1438. You are in favour of extending the provisions of the existing Act?—I am for the reason that I mentioned.

1439. Have you read the Bill which is before the Committee?—I have.

1440. You see it is proposed to raise the age to five years, and to compel registration in the case of only one child being kept for hire or reward?—Yes; I see no reason why it might not happen that one child would be neglected quite as much as two; and those cases of neglect that have occurred in my district had been cases where there has been only one child.

1441. What is your opinion with reference to the number of illegitimate children in the east end, in your district, as compared with other parts?—I believe that there are fewer illegitimate children. I can tell you exactly the number of illegitimate children last year.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1442. Fewer than what?—Fewer than in other parts of the Metropolis. I held last year 694 inquests on children, and of those there were only 18 illegitimate children. Of those 18 illegitimate children nine were with their mothers, six were with relatives, and three only were out at nurse.

Chairman.

1443. How many inquests did you hold last year?—One thousand six hundred and twelve.

1444. Of which, how many were on children under seven years of age?—Six hundred and ninety-four.

1445. And how many of these 694 were illegitimate?—Eighteen.

1446. Only 18 were illegitimate?—Only 18.

1447. What does that point to in your opinion?—It points to the fact that there is less illegitimacy amongst the working classes than in those parts of London where there is greater affluence; and it points to the fact that the Bill would not press hard upon the working classes if it was law.

Lord Belper.

1448. You mean a Bill which only affected illegitimate children?—But that is only part of my statement; because there are only three cases out of the 694 where they were legitimate, and out at nurse. There were three cases of nurse-children where the children were legitimate.

1449. But I was asking you about your statement that the poor people would be affected less by this Bill than the better class; then I say you understand by this Bill, a Bill which is limited to illegitimate children?—I understand that

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

that the Bill as drafted comprehends both legitimate and illegitimate.

1450. Then, how can you found an argument on it that poor people who have fewer illegitimate children would be less affected by the Bill than better to do people?—That is only half the argument; the argument is that only 21 children out of the number I have mentioned were affected at all; out of the 21, three were out at nurse being legitimate, and out of the 18 that were illegitimate, only three were out at nurse; so that there were only six altogether out of the 694.

Lord Thring.

1451. In other words the Act would have no operation at all?—Not in the east end; I take it that no law is intended to have an operation against the well doer.

1452. If they are not evil doers the Act is not wanted?—I think anyone reading the papers can see that there are plenty of evil doers; they do not happen to be in the east end of London.

Chairman.

1453. What class of children are the nurse children on which you have held inquests generally?—Domestic servants and work girls.

1454. You are talking of the three?—There were 18 altogether illegitimate children, and three were out at nurse.

1455. But in the case of the nurse children has there been fairly good remuneration given for looking after the children?—They have usually paid an adequate remuneration, and every effort seems to have been made to provide an adequate remuneration except in this one case I have already mentioned, which occurred a fortnight ago, which was a case quite strange to the east end, nothing whatever to do with the neighbourhood.

1456. Therefore you do not think that registration and supervision would be any real hardship?—I do not think it would be any hardship on the working classes.

1457. Have you in your other districts, as coroner, ever been brought into contact with any necessity for the present Bill?—I have had several cases, I could not mention instances; several cases where inquests have been held on children that had been out at nurse, and there has been grave suspicion that proper care has not been taken of them.

Lord Thring.

1458. You mean to say in the course of your whole experience?—In the course of my whole experience, yes.

1459. That would be some 20 years?—Yes.

1460. You have had several cases in 20 years in which children have been ill-treated, or there has been suspicion of ill-treatment?—Yes, there have been cases in which a verdict of manslaughter has been returned.

1461. Very seldom?—Seldom.

Chairman.

1462. Have you formed any opinion as to the practice of baby farming, based on your own (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

experience?—I take it that this Bill is more for single cases than for baby farming in the general acceptance of the term.

1463. Have you come across cases where children have been taken in only one at the time, more or less for the purpose of evading the necessity for registration?—I have had several cases, some last year, where children have been taken as nurse-children, and there has been great want of care taken with them. They have been handed about from one person to another. In one case I remember the father could not find out where the child was for a considerable time; it passed through four people's hands.

Viscount Llandaff.

1464. Was it an illegitimate child?—It was a legitimate child.

1465. Why was it put out in that way; was the mother dead?—Yes, it was because the mother was dead.

1466. The father in that case would have been rather glad of some supervision, I suppose?—He tried to find the child, and it took him nine days to do so.

1467. Did he put that child out with a lump sum?—No.

1468. He made weekly payments, I suppose?—He was to have made weekly payments.

1469. Did he make weekly payments?—Eventually, but during the time that it was being handed from place to place he had no opportunity of doing so.

1470. I suppose he did not make the payment without satisfying himself that the child was alive?—No; he had to wait till he found the child before he could pay.

Chairman.

1471. What was the object of handing the child round?—I think they were afraid the child would die and they did not wish the child to die in their custody.

Lord Belper.

1472. Do you mean that they bribed somebody else to take it?—No, they did not bribe; they simply handed the child over so as to avoid having it in their possession when the child died.

1473. They would not take a child without having a payment with it, if the child was likely to die?—Yes, they did; they did not see that it was so near death as the person who last had it.

1474. If no payment was given what was their motive?—They expected payment.

1475. Whom did they expect to get the payment from?—The father.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1476. Had they communicated with the father?—No.

Lord Belper.

1477. Then why did they expect that he would make them a payment?—Because they were told that he would; he had promised it in the first case.

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1478. Did

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

1478. Did the father make payment to the transferee?—Eventually.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1479. To all of them?—All the transfers went on in about nine days.

Lord Belper.

1480. And eventually it was traced?—Eventually it was traced.

Chairman.

1481. Are you generally in favour of the provisions of this Bill?—I am. I consider that if the child is away from its parents it is important that there should be some supervision by a public authority.

1482. And you think that if the registration was extended as proposed there would be a better chance of the children being well treated?—I feel confident they would, for two reasons: the persons with the registered houses would know that they were being supervised, and they would have the dread that the inspector would be in at any moment to see what was going on.

Viscount Llandaff.

1483. I should like to ask you about these inquests; you gave us the number of 694 inquests held in your present district?—Yes.

1484. In what time is that?—Last year.

1485. In one year?—Yes.

1486. How many of them resulted in the verdict of manslaughter?—I cannot say that; I have not the statistics; I did not anticipate such a question.

1487. I presume each of the 694 were sudden deaths, deaths that called for inquiry?—Sudden death or cases of violence.

1488. If it were violence it would be surely murder or manslaughter, to say the least?—No, a child may be run over.

Chairman.

1489. In "violence" you include accidents?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

1490. The 694 were all deaths that seemed to call for inquiry?—Yes.

1491. And you cannot tell me how many of them resulted in a verdict of manslaughter?—I cannot.

1492. You said about one?—Of the 21 cases I originally referred to, one was a verdict of manslaughter; there were 18 illegitimate and three legitimate.

1493. Of the 21 there was one case with a verdict of manslaughter?—The case in which the verdict of manslaughter was returned was the case of a child who had been left in a parcel in the snow.

1494. Was that one a nurse-child, or a child with its parents or relatives?—I cannot say; it was left in the snow in a parcel. I put it down amongst the illegitimate.

1495. Do you know its name?—No.

1496. If you find a child in the snow you put it down as an illegitimate child?—That is according to the Home Office rule in the Return.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1497. And in that case there was a verdict of manslaughter?—Yes, against some person or persons unknown. The child died within a few hours of its being taken to the workhouse.

1498. No registration of houses would prevent a child being dropped in the snow?—No; but still, in giving the full particulars of my cases, I was obliged to mention it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1499. I did not quite follow your argument about the legitimate and illegitimate children; we have been told by other witnesses that, in their opinion, the children whom, roughly speaking, we desire to protect are, in the main, illegitimate; that practically the children that die, that need not die, are, roughly speaking, mainly illegitimate; you seemed a little to traverse that. I was not quite sure what the point was; is it that you think that the proportion of illegitimate children who need our protection has been exaggerated, or is it that East London compares well with other places; what was your argument?—My argument was, that as far as East London was concerned there was not so large a proportion of illegitimate children as elsewhere; at the same time my experience is that it is mainly illegitimate children that require protection.

1500. You would quite corroborate that?—Yes, I had only three cases of legitimate children out at nurse during the year.

Viscount Llandaff.

1501. And only three of illegitimate children also, you have told us?—And only three of illegitimate; that is supplemental to the first proposition that there are fewer illegitimate children in the East-end than elsewhere; and as far as legitimate children are concerned there are very few out at nurse.

1502. I suppose you sometimes have a widower in Poplar?—Often; they are not widowers often for long; they marry again.

1503. You are a marrying district, but what would a widower do?—He either leaves the child with an elder sister of the child, or he marries again, or he puts it out to a relative.

1504. Would you interfere with the elder sister or the relative?—No, I should not.

1505. You would be in favour of that exemption?—Yes, certainly.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1506. Do you think that it is desirable that all the houses in which children under five years of age are taken should be registered, even if there be only one child?—I do.

1507. Have you formed any rough idea of the extent of registration that that would involve?—As far as the East-end of London is concerned very trifling.

1508. Why very trifling?—Because there are so few children that are out at nurse other than with relatives. Since I have been asked to give evidence, I have put it to I should think 20 jurors, who are mostly of the working classes, and they knew of no case in which a child was out to nurse except to a relative.

1509. You

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

1509. You are speaking here of a child under five years, of age and not of a child under one year?—Yes. I think that the necessity for supervision of course is weaker after a year; it is a vanishing quantity of course.

1510. That is very important evidence that you think it a very rare thing in the classes with which you have to do in the East-end to have a child put out for payment at all?—Other than to relatives. It is usual to pay even a relative.

1511. In asking that question of jurymen and others, did your question cover going out temporarily?—Of course I admit that there is a very large number of children that are left from morning to evening.

1512. I am not speaking of that but a few days; a mother goes into hospital or goes away to see another child that is ill, or something of that sort?—It would be as a rule with the mother's sister then.

1513. Or without payment?—Without payment.

1514. But at all events you think that the cases are few in which there is such boarding out for payment?—I feel confident it is so in the East-end.

1515. Then the cases for registration would be very rare in that part of London?—That would be so.

1516. But your experience has been varied; you have not only been in East London but in many other places; would you consider that in those places the need is much greater?—I do; I think there are far more cases in other parts than in East London.

1517. We are legislating, if we legislate at all, not for East London, but for England?—Quite so.

1518. Do you consider that, leaving East London out of account, the number that would have to be registered in London would be very great indeed?—I do not think very great. If you mean that in London it would be by thousands, I should not think so.

1519. At present you know there are only 41 registered houses in London?—I am aware of that.

1520. But you would multiply that by a good many, I suppose?—Perhaps 10 times.

1521. And you think that if you multiplied it, roughly speaking, by 10, you would practically cover all the cases in which any one child under five years of age is boarded with a person other than a relative?—I do.

Lord Belper.

1522. What is the practice amongst the class you are speaking about, the lower class where they have got no relations; supposing the husband to go away, or to go to work somewhere else, or that his employment takes him from home, what would be the usual practice?—I think the most usual practice would be to marry again, or for some woman to live with him as his wife.

1523. Then you think there are very few cases of working men who have no relatives, and who are obliged to make some provision for their (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

children?—Yes. I think, as a rule, that the working man remains a very short time without a woman in his house either as wife or otherwise.

1524. And are there no sailors or people of that sort in your neighbourhood whose business takes them away from home?—There are a very large number.

1525. What do they do supposing the wife is dead and they have got children?—Well, I should very much doubt whether most of them are wives; but they would go with relatives.

1526. I am taking the case where they have not any relatives; I suppose there are some?—All I can say is that there is the clear fact that they are not out to nurse from my experience.

1527. You mean there are none?—None.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1528. Can you account for the exceptional condition of East London in that respect?—I think the code of morals and the ordinary system of life there is quite different from what it is in a more mixed community. Of course they have got curious ideas of life, but I do not think that they would believe in a child being handed over to a stranger to be ill-treated.

1529. You have spoken of South London as well, which I know better than East London; would you apply that remark to Southwark?—I should not like to speak with much emphasis about Southwark; it is some years ago, 10 years ago, since I was there; but Southwark is a more mixed community than East London. Of course, it has quite as bad parts, I admit, as East London, but it is not of such even poverty as you get in East London.

1530. Greater poverty, of course, in some parts than anything in East London?—Yes, there are some of the worst parts in Southwark, but it is more mixed with others, tradespeople in a good position, and so forth.

1531. And therefore their morals suffer?—I think they have got a different code of morals.

1532. A lower code?—A lower code, so far as the poor are concerned.

Chairman.

1533. Therefore, when you said just now that there are fewer illegitimate children in the East End of London, you do not mean that the morality is greater, but that they get married just in time?—Yes. I think that when a young woman gets into trouble amongst the East End poor as a rule (of course, there are exceptions), the seducer does the honourable and marries at the last moment.

Viscount Llandaff.

1534. But I thought you told us it was an extremely common thing for a widower to live with a woman whom he did not marry?—Yes.

1535. Is not that a little inconsistent with what you have just said?—No; they would not live with a young girl, but with a middle-aged woman, probably; a widow, or something of that sort.

M 3

1536. I do

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

1536. I do not quite see why you think a Bill or an Act necessary at all as regards the East-end, because they seem to have an unusual degree of morality there?—The case that I have mentioned as having occurred a fortnight ago shows that these people may even attack the East-end in their practices.

1537. But one swallow does not make a summer; one crime does not make a criminal population?—No; but, like in the case of murder, how many murders do you get compared to the population unless you have a law against it.

1538. Do you think there is an analogy there?—I think a good deal; I think these cases of children, where they do happen, are practically slow murders.

Lord Belper.

1539. Mr. Babey said, in the course of his visits for the limited purposes of the Act now in force, he discovered 3,991 cases where children were kept for hire; whatever that referred to, he admitted there must be a very much larger number of houses than those 3,991. I asked him this question, at No. 501: "At all events, that 3,991 is only a very small proportion of the houses where children are kept for hire?" His answer was: "That is so; no doubt there are many more"; however, that would not be your experience in your district?—No; I can only make a guess when I say it would be magnified 10 times on the present registered houses.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1540. Do you think that there would, if this Bill became law, at once be an immense application of persons desirous to be registered?—I doubt very much whether the law would get known in a wide-spread manner at once; it would be necessary to have inspectors investigating them, compelling them to register. Every man is supposed to know the law, but there are very few who do.

1541. We have had two other gentlemen here who occupied positions as coroners, and they say that the witnesses who came before them were exceedingly familiar with the law about registration?—I think that they must have been from a more aristocratic quarter than the East-end.

1542. But as a matter of fact, you do not think there would be a great number of applications until time had been given for the law to be known?—I do not.

1543. But when it had, say, in six months or a year, do you think that a huge number of people would apply?—I think that they would apply largely, to the extent that the practice is going on; I do not think they would object to being registered.

1544. You do not think there would be any objection on their part?—No, I think that those who did take children would not object to be

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

registered. The others would refrain from taking children. My impression is that in the first instance these solitary cases are not taken with the intention of doing a wrong; but the idea dawns upon them, and they gradually neglect the child, or they find it convenient to take part of the 5s. for their own sustenance instead of devoting it to the sustenance of the child. The inspection would stop that, because there would be the visits from time to time, and the inspector would see what was going on.

Viscount Llandaff.

1545. What position in life was the woman of your one bad case, the one case that you say makes the Act necessary, that of a child boarded-out for hire?—She professed to be a married woman living at Tipperary, and the wife of a coachman; but no one with whom she came in contact believes anything of the sort.

1546. What was the woman who took the child, I mean?—She was a deck labourer's wife, out of work.

1547. Had she any children of her own?—No, never had any.

1548. A woman of respectable character?—Not very. I should say not at all a desirable person as a foster mother.

1549. Was her's a house that would have been registered or that would not have been registered, in your judgment?—She was only in lodgings; had only got one room.

1550. I suppose lodgings can be registered?—Yes; but I do not know what the rules would be about registration; and even if she were registered—

1551. She got drunk the first day?—She did; that would cancel her registration, I should think.

1552. But the inspector would not come in the interval between the morning when she took the child and the evening when she was drunk?—No, but she had the child for six months.

1553. She did not get drunk every day?—No, but I suspect that the child did not drink as much as it ought to have done.

1554. That was not a matter of evidence?—No; that is what one can imagine. The father was not in work; there was no means of keeping the house going except some casual washing that the woman did, and there was the child there without any means for its sustenance.

1555. What was the verdict in that case?—The child had been in the workhouse for three or four days, and the verdict was natural death. In the medical certificate the cause of death was given as embolism supervening on tuberculosis.

Lord Belper.

1556. No reflection on improper feeding or treatment?—No.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered,—That this Committee be adjourned to Thursday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 7^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.

Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.

Lord KINNAIRD.

Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

THE REV. BENJAMIN WAUGH, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1557. You are the Director of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—Yes.

1558. And you are well known as having interested yourself for many years in the question of the protection of young children; will you tell us what is the extent of the Society's acquaintance with the trade of nursing children?—Our acquaintance with it is extensive; geographically it includes England, Wales and Ireland. The extent may, perhaps, be indicated by the number of cases: we have dealt with a little over 250 cases of nursing children for profit in the course of last year.

1559. You have come across 250 cases?—We have had to interfere with that number, and there are many other cases which we do not interfere with which are satisfactory, but we have interfered with 250, rather more, in that area last year. Our method of dealing with them is by warning where we see wrong tendencies, by information where we see ignorance, as the cause of the cruelty. We warned something between 220 and 230 last year, and we prosecuted about 30 for neglecting our warnings and neglecting our instructions.

1560. That makes up the 250?—That is about the 250. Our work is much wider than perhaps the mere criminal aspect or semi-criminal aspect of it. We diffuse and distribute, wherever we find persons taking children to nurse, this pamphlet, and we have sent out some 20,000 copies of it. (*Handing in a pamphlet, entitled, "How to Preserve Infant Life."*) That has been drafted by the doctor at the Great Ormond Street hospital, supervised by our own medical man; and wherever we find people nursing children for profit or from love, we furnish them with that piece of information, which is in many cases useful. Ignorance causes a great deal of the child suffering.

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1561. You say wherever you find people nursing children for profit or from love you send them that pamphlet?—Yes, if we find that they are not doing their duty by the children, if there appears to be any neglect through ignorance or criminal intent. Then we also furnish those who seem to be indifferent with a formal notice, of which I produce a copy (*handing in the same*), and in order to give a little point to that we furnish them with a list of a quarter's returns for the whole kingdom of the prosecutions for the neglect of children (*handing in a copy of one*). This particular one happens to be a return for nine months. We have, in the last seven years, imprisoned and fined over 9,000 persons, fathers and mothers chiefly, but some of them nurses. That is in the last seven years since the passing of what is called the Children's Charter.

Chairman.

1562. You have got no data, or numbers, or means, of identifying any of these cases on this list?—No, they are intended for general use; the verification is not for the public.

Lord Kinnaird.

1563. For what period is this paper you have handed in?—I am not sure; it will be, I think, for a period of nine months. During seven years the judges and magistrates have given 1,600 years of imprisonment for neglect of children and ill-treatment under the Statute.

Chairman.

1564. We are not quite clear as regards this list; is it a six or nine months' return?—I will get to know that, and send you the result.

Lord Belper.

1565. And does it include the 250 cases you mentioned of nurse children?—No, because we only prosecuted about 30 cases.

M 4

1565. Does

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

1566. Does it include the 30 cases?—I am very sorry the document has not got a date on it.

1567. At all events it would include all that class of cases that would come within the period for which this return is issued?—Quite so.

Chairman.

1568. Can you tell us anything about your experience as to the character of nurses, and their motives for nursing?—On the whole, I should say the large proportion are good, well-meaning people; the smaller proportion of them are either very doubtful or very bad in their motives. I will give an illustration of what I mean by "doubtful motives." It is a case that happened a week or two ago in Mr. Horace Smith's Court, where he gave six months' imprisonment. The woman who took the child was a labourer's wife, and he spent too much of his money on drink, and she took in a child to eke out her living. Her own child was well nourished, and the child she took in at 5s. a week was dying because she took it to maintain herself and a little child of her own. Mr. Horace Smith gave the woman six months' imprisonment with hard labour. That was one of the not-criminal intent cases, that is to say, it was not taken to injure the child, but intending to benefit her own child, which was in danger of suffering through the drunkenness of her husband. Many cases we have had where women have taken children in because their husbands were out of work in order to help to maintain the family; not in the interests of the child taken. And these are what I put down as doubtful motives, though not criminal. Many, too, take in children for a little pocket-money. There was a case at Yarmouth where that was assigned as the reason why the woman took the trouble to take these children in. But there are professional women who get a living entirely by advertising for children, and who have a succession of them so rapid as to make their income considerable; and their motive in getting the children is clearly income without regard to the child's life; and the children are fast got rid of. I have two or three cases that I made a note of of that type. There is a case at Southport in Lancashire. The mother was an independent lady of means; 7s. 6d. a week was given with each child; two children were left with her. She and her husband did nothing. Her boy was well nourished and well dressed. We induced the Coroner to exhume the two children, and they were found to have died from opium poisoning. They were both insured, and before their burial the insurance money had been paid; and both the husband and the wife in that case got five years' penal servitude. That is an illustration of a kind of case that I should call criminal. The intention was to destroy the children, and they were destroyed by methods which would prevent detection, simply drugged, made to sleep, and they slept to death and were buried. It was only on account of a quarrel between the husband and the wife about the insurance money that the case came to light.

Chairman—continued.

1569. What class of people were these?—The man had been, I think, a painter, and had given up all work in consequence of his wife's occupation, which enabled him to live.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1570. You say, "his wife's occupation"; what was her occupation?—The taking in of children.

1571. There were two children?—Yes, but she had a succession of them. We found two in the grave; and her business was to get another two from somewhere else; she continuously took children.

1572. What was the profit that induced her to do this?—She received 7s. 6d. a week for each of these children, and also a handsome sum of money for their death.

1573. Receiving 7s. 6d. a week would seem to be a motive for keeping them alive?—No, I think not. I should like to deal with that later on if I may be allowed to do so.

Chairman.

1574. Have you anything more to say with reference to the motives for nursing?—There is the case at Swindon where a farmer was unable to do his work through rheumatic fever, and his wife undertook to nurse children. We found eight children in the house at one time, and they were all starving; one died.

1575. What sort of ages were the children?—They varied from about seven months to five years; and the man got nine months' imprisonment in that case and the woman two years. Only one child died, and the rest we removed to our shelter and nursed back to life again; they were constitutionally strong, but they were being destroyed quietly and slowly.

1576. And this man was a farmer?—He had been, but he had become incapable of work, and his wife took these children in to get a living. She took with two of these children sums of money down; we could not say how much; she admitted to 10l. in each case. We have had a case recently in very high life indeed where a lady has taken to this sort of business, and at the second case (50l. had been paid for each) we were able to detect the proceedings, and brought them to the knowledge of the authorities, under whose favour she was living, and she had to resign her appointment.

Lord Kinnaird.

1577. What appointment?—I would rather not mention the case; she had a very important appointment in public life, a public, or semi-public, appointment.

Chairman.

1578. You do not mean an appointment in connection with the rearing of children; not an appointment by an institution?—No.

1579. You mean something quite independent?—Quite independent.

1580. When you mentioned 50l., do you mean that she got a lump sum down with each?—With each of the two she had taken; and these children were both illegitimate, and both over six years

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

years of age, and they both ran away from her house in consequence of the tortures they had to suffer. One came into our hands; the other we have been unable to find; and though it is six months since she ran away, there has been no discovery of her at all; nobody knows where she is. That is a case where 50l. was paid down, and in a few weeks the girl was gone.

1581. And was there her weekly payment as well?—No.

1582. Was it a case of starvation or of ill-treatment?—Ill-treatment; deliberate.

1583. With the purpose of killing them, do you say?—That I cannot say; it is very difficult to interpret motives; it was, perhaps, to get rid of them. We have had another case, where some were taken with weekly payments and some with lump sums, but all equally badly treated. It was a case that became rather notorious at the time, in which there were ten years' penal servitude given. In the cellar of this lady's house (she was the wife of a lawyer, who, owing to her success in her business, had retired practically from his profession) we found three hundred disused garments of children, all, or nearly all, under three years of age. The woman was a very accomplished woman, and her husband was an accomplished man; I may say with regard to this case that it is a rather peculiar fact that they had been conducting their business for some years, living next door to a constable, and on the ground, as the lawyer said, that the constable was the only man who could never interfere with his neighbour, which is true. Somebody must make a charge before a constable can interfere with any house. The skill of the man in the selection of this spot shows how, understanding the law, people can pretty well screen themselves.

Lord Kinnaird.

1584. Was this public; did it come out in the papers?—Yes; 10 years' penal servitude was the sentence. Mr. Justice Hawkins was the judge.

Chairman.

1585. How long ago was this?—In March 1891. In March 1892 we had another high-life case, a very ladylike person; the lord of the manor and a clergyman of the district were her principal witnesses. Fifteen years' penal servitude was the sentence. That was a weekly payment case. I have mentioned these because some are weekly, some are lump sums, and some are both; and for these reasons I selected them.

1586. Then with reference to the system of remuneration; perhaps you would state now any views that you have with reference to the two systems of a lump sum down and a weekly payment?—I should think we have had during the last seven years at least an average of 100 a year of nurse cases that we have had to warn or otherwise deal with. During that time we have carefully classified the system of remuneration in every case; and I have come to the conclusion that the question of remuneration has absolutely nothing whatever to do with the way in which the children are treated. The sole point is, the character of the woman receiving them. A (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

question was asked, I think by the Lord Bishop of Winchester, as to the matter of weekly payment.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1587. You have now said that remuneration has nothing to do with the case?—Nothing whatever.

1588. Supposing the payment to be, we will say, 7s. a week, and there has been no lump sum paid, is it still in the interest of the recipient to get rid of the child?—Certainly, on this ground: that if the child can be made to die on a shilling a week the woman nets 6s.; but if it required 5s. for the child to live, the woman would net only 2s. The succession of these things makes it profitable. There is any quantity to be got.

Lord Belper.

1589. I do not quite follow you; do you mean that the payment goes on after the child is dead?—Frequently for months.

1590. That the people who put the child out do not take the trouble before making the payment to inquire whether the child is alive or not?—I do not say that they do not take the trouble; they would like, many of them, to do it, but they dare not risk the exposure of their connection with the sad story; they would rather keep away from it entirely.

1591. Your argument is founded really on the fact that the same payment is continued in many cases after the child is dead?—I would not found it upon that, that I would admit; what happens is that another child comes into the house immediately the first is dead, but the same child is continued through the year, and often photographs of the same child are sent to the mothers of three, four, or five children; one child answering for that number.

1592. But if the payment ceases absolutely at death, the person makes no more profit out of getting rid of one child and taking in another, than she would by keeping the first alive?—But excuse me; supposing that a person is in receipt say of 5s. a child; the child will die on 1s. a week, and you can keep the 1s. a week going all the year through, and all next year, and all the year after, so as to provide sufficient nourishment for the child to die of inanition. Teething is the time when they chiefly go off; natural convulsions, the result supervening on too frail a system to throw them off.

1593. Then what you mean is that practically they spend so very little on the nourishment of the child that the child dies, and they are always able to replace it by another child which they can treat in the same way?—Yes, and which the parents do not know that they are treating in the same way, but which some if they did know would be very thankful to know. In this case, the persons interested in getting rid of the child are the people paying for its maintenance; hence comes the fact that there is no check against the destruction of the child on the easy lines of starvation. It would be well if they all strangled, as Mrs. Dyer has done. She is the most saintly of baby farmers I have come across; she gives six seconds of pain, and the

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

the others give six weeks of it. England is wrong altogether about this giving sudden pain and sudden death, and we hang those who do it; but six weeks of pain, six weeks of faintness and dizziness, and finally a collapse, all that is legally little. It may be caused by want of power to assimilate food. I could baby-farm a million a year in this country and never be convicted, and make a good fortune.

Lord Thring.

1594. What do you mean when you say that you could baby-farm a million a year?—Physically I should not be able to do it; but I mean that if the young child is underfed, it will not recover from the ailments of childhood. I mean that any quantity of children may be disposed of by starvation in their infancy. If ailments of infancy supervene upon their emaciated condition they die.

1595. But we have had evidence after evidence that very few children indeed are ill-treated?—In the society which I represent here we have given 9,000 persons imprisonment for 1,600 years in the aggregate for ill-treatment of children since the passing of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act.

1596. That is in seven years?—Yes.

1597. I only wish to point out to you that it is an exaggeration to talk of baby-farming a million a year?—Possibly it is; but I meant to point the statement that there are methods of destroying child-life much more safe than strangulation.

1598. We are quite aware of that; but very often these methods are resorted to through sheer ignorance?—And very often there must be criminal intent there because they are punished.

1599. The number punished is infinitesimally small compared with the number killed by ignorance, is it not?—Would you permit me to make this observation: that there are medical men in England who cannot tell whether a child has died from insufficient food or from inability to assimilate food, whilst it is under six months of age.

1600. That is the very point I put to you; the point I put to you was this, when you talked of this enormous number of children killed, many of them may be killed, at all events, through sheer ignorance?—Yes; that we assume, because we provide for ignorance in the pamphlet I have handed in; the object of that pamphlet is to instruct the ignorant.

1601. Only that is inconsistent with your proposition that so many babies are put out of the way criminally?—Well, it is impossible in early life to say whether the motive is criminal. When there is a profit from allowing a child to die, and a loss from keeping it alive, it is a matter of individual opinion which way the temptation will lie.

Chairman.

1602. Is it not a fact, with reference to these people who advertise, that they almost invariably stipulate for a premium, not for a weekly payment?—No, I think not in the advertisement; I did not read them in that light. I may say

Chairman—continued.

that we have 600 of doubtful character on our register.

1603. Do you follow up advertisements?—We do; and for three or four years, with a view to studying this question, we followed them up systematically. A doctor and a detective were, for that period, employed by us entirely on advertisements; but during that time the advertisements that we answered were not, I think, classified under the heads, advertiser advertised for a lump sum, and advertiser for weekly payments. My impression is that this arrangement is generally a private one, made by correspondence, and not announced in the advertisements. That is the general impression left on my mind.

1604. Therefore, you think that there are many more baby farmers besides those who actually advertise?—A great many. The advertiser is, in many cases, what would be called a middle-man in the market, who receives great numbers of children and disposes of them to persons who are willing to take 5s. a week, or anything that he may arrange with them amongst whom children are distributed.

1605. And those are people whom you have classed just now as the professionals who take in children and get rid of them quickly?—Yes, professionals; and many of them have no children at any time on their premises.

1606. They simply act as intermediaries and pass them on, and make a profit out of the transaction?—Yes.

1607. Can the nursing children business be suppressed, in your opinion?—It is not desirable to suppress it even if it could be suppressed; it is a necessity in the country. We have 50,000 children born out of wedlock in the United Kingdom every year, or thereabouts; I am speaking in round numbers; I believe that is about the number. These are born in various ranks of life, chiefly amongst the poor, but it is impossible for their mothers to maintain the children whilst the children are at their breasts or in their arms; they must be nursed for them, if the mothers are to provide for them. Therefore it is necessary, as it appears to me, that we should have some system which can give a kind of public certificate that a mother will find a proper place for her child, and that the woman who will nurse it will be under proper supervision. I believe that a great many women who in distress part with their children would be delighted to know that they were doing well, but at present they have to depend either upon a monthly nurse at the union or upon a local advertisement in one of the county papers or upon an advertisement in one of the London papers. On the face of the advertisement there appears everything they want, and many of them are bitterly grieved when they discover that they have been deceived, and that the money they gave was used for the life of the person that got it and not for the life of their baby. I have had some sad cases of that kind in the course of our proceedings where the mothers have come confidentially to Harpur Street, fearing that they might be summoned to appear in the case. We never summon the parent;

our

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

our starting point is this; that the child is a citizen; it must be fed properly, and it is not fed properly; prove that to the court, and in that the case is completed. The fact that it is illegitimate or legitimate, that it has a mother or has not, has nothing whatever to do with public duty. Therefore, I do not think that in any case, except where there has been a necessity we have called the mother of the child as a witness.

1608. Therefore you are rather in favour of regulating the business, than of attempting to suppress it?—Very much. It is a necessary business, and if wisely conducted is a business that will be a great advantage to a very distressed part of the community.

Lord Kinnaird.

1609. You said that there are 50,000 children born out of wedlock in the year?—Yes; I believe the return shows that.

1610. The majority of whom have to be brought up by someone other than the mother?—Yes.

1611. Have you any figures as to the number of children born per annum of other families whose parents could not bring them up, because they have to go and work?—There are a great many cases in such towns as Blackburn and Preston where children need day nursing, but we do not call their nurses baby farmers. Mothers go to the factories at six in the morning and return at six o'clock at night.

1612. I only want to know the numbers?—I have not the least idea; it does not come within my knowledge; but we do not call those nursing for-profit-people, those who simply take a child in the morning and return it in the evening, it is only of cases where they are kept for more than 24 hours that I am speaking of.

Lord Thring.

1613. They are nursed for profit as much as in the other cases?—Yes; they are nursed for profit, but under conditions which secure for the child proper treatment. The parent sees the child in the morning and in the evening.

1614-15. Are you not aware that the death-rate is appalling in those crèches?—I am, but it is not crèches I am thinking of so much now as the neighbours who for 3d. will nurse another person's child for the day.

1616. You told Lord Kinnaird that these children were taken in, but, as I understood you to say, not for profit?—I understand that crèches are conducted for charity; and, as I conducted one myself at a loss of 70l. a year for many years, I should be surprised to find that any one made a profit out of a crèche.

Lord Belper.

1617. Would you not correct your reply by saying, a properly conducted crèche?—That I should say: I have never met with an improperly conducted crèche; that is to say, my experience of this society has not led me to prosecute a single case of such a kind, but I should like to say further that I think it is an exceedingly bad (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

thing on many grounds to put a large number of infants of a similar age into one place; they are sure to kill one another; by the mere atmosphere they inhale they are killed.

Chairman.

1618. When you say you have never come across an improperly conducted crèche, what is your actual definition of a crèche?—A place to which various children are taken for the day at a payment.

1619. Do you mean a public institution, or do you mean some old woman who takes in half-a-dozen children?—I mean an institution conducted by a committee, such as a great many parishes have.

Lord Belper.

1620-1. Then your definition of a crèche is an extremely limited one?—It is very large in one way, I should think, for in manufacturing districts large numbers of churches in their parishes make provision of that kind, I believe.

Chairman.

1622. When you talk of regulating this business, I gather that you wish practically to make it easy for any mother who has an illegitimate child to put out, to put it out in a place where it will be looked after?—I do.

1623. Some people, you know, think (I am not expressing any opinion myself) that that might be regarded as what I might call a sort of premium on immorality, by removing one of the deterrents to immorality?—I do not understand immorality which should have a premium put upon it; I think it is far too rude and impetuous a thing to be influenced by remote considerations of that sort.

1624. Therefore you do not think that any harm would be done in that way; I only want to know your opinion?—No, and if it would, I should put a child's life before morality.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1625. One question upon that last answer; I only want to know what it means; do you mean that you think it better that a large number of illegitimate children should be born provided they could be kept alive, than that they should never be born?—No; I mean that when an illegitimate child is born it is a public duty to see that it is treated as a citizen and fed, and properly fed, and treated as one entitled to all the rights of a subject of the Crown; and if in the discharge of that duty we do incidentally seem to put some premium upon immorality, I would say it is our duty to do it. But I doubt it; I do not see any reason to think that it is so.

Chairman.

1626. Have you any experience justifying the hope of any successful regulation of this traffic?—Yes, indeed, a very great deal. Our experience of persons, who are nursing children, is that considerably more than one half of them are doing it to the best of their ability, and are exceedingly thankful for any hints as to a better way

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

way of doing it. Quite one-half of the cases, with a little supervision together with the hints that we give, improve, and very rapidly improve.

1627. You mean to say that quite half are, we will call them "baby farmers"?—I do not like that word, if you would kindly not put it into my mouth.

1628. Quite half, we will say, of the nurses you come across you mean to say are glad of supervision and inspection?—They are not glad of supervision; they are glad to do right by the children.

1629. They are glad of advice?—They accept advice and reform defects.

Lord Belper.

1630. Would they object if they were compelled to be registered?—If reasonable, they would be very glad, because, if I may give a reason, they will become more popular with mothers who want to put their children out, and they will have a larger business, which will make them more profit; it seems like registering a medical practitioner. A registered medical practitioner is a man who stands higher than a man who is practising unregistered. I do not make any comparison between the two in other respects.

Lord Thring.

1631. Are you aware that unless a medical man is registered he cannot recover his fees?—I was not aware of that.

1632. And not only that, he cannot take any appointment, and his certificate is of no value; and consequently an unregistered medical practitioner cannot make his living except by underhand surreptitious methods; what possible analogy is there therefore between that case and taking in children for hire?—I want to make the analogy complete so that no person taking in a nurse child shall be able to carry on, except surreptitiously, the business of nursing children, that is to say unless registered. I would further make it a parallel and say I would not allow them to recover payment unless they were registered as in the case of a doctor. I would make the case as completely analogous as your Lordship's remarks would suggest. It is not analogous at present, but my contention is that it ought to be.

Chairman.

1633. And what is your experience of the parents' desire for the proper treatment of their children when they are out at nurse?—We have given notice this last year to 20 or 30 parents that their children have not been properly treated, and within a few weeks those children have been removed; indicating their anxiety that their child should be well treated. That is an illustration as it appears to me of the desire of a great number (I could not say what proportion), of the parents of the children born out of wedlock, to have them properly treated and to maintain them.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1634. You gave notice to the parents that the children are not properly treated?—To the parents.

Chairman.

1635. How many cases per year of nursing children for profit do you find that you consider bad ones?—We have prosecuted last year about 30. We prosecuted one yesterday at Marlborough-street Police Court, where the magistrate gave six weeks to a woman who was neglecting a child. That we should consider in the class of bad cases; but it is not a bad case of its class; we catch it too soon. You see our business is to prevent a calamity, and we arrest the case before it becomes so serious as to be what would be called a bad case from the public point of view, but the conditions were bad conditions and the tendencies were bad. Therefore, it would be incorrect to say that even all the cases that we have had can be bad cases, so far as the results in the child's life are concerned. The conditions were bad.

1636. And what course do you take with such cases?—We give warnings; and if they are in a country village we give to the person who brought our attention to it a postcard, called the "repeated cruelty" postcard, and we give the name and address of the nearest officer of our society, and we ask that neighbour who called our attention to the fact in a village (they are very largely in villages these cases of bad nursing of children) to be good enough to post that the moment any reversion to the old practice appears. A complaint comes to us, say from a village in Leicestershire, to our inspector at Leicester or at Loughborough; we have two in that county. That complaint is then investigated, and if there be truth in it the woman is informed that she is badly feeding the child, and told what is the proper way of feeding it; also that she is running the risk of six months' imprisonment if this child is found with unnecessary suffering; and she is warned that if she persists in this method of feeding she may come to evil consequences, and that we are desirous of preventing that.

1637. By whom is that postcard posted?—The informant sends it as a postcard to us.

1638. Therefore you proclaim the fact on the postcard?—No, only the case number. The number would be, we will suppose, 19,700 on our books; it is entered; it comes to the society's office. That case number 19,700 is then looked out, and information is sent to the inspector in the district, in England, Wales, or Ireland: "Please call and see this woman." This is not exceptional treatment; we treat all cases of cruelty, domestic and nursing cases, in the same way. And if I may be allowed to refer to the power of this mode of treatment, I may add that the system of warnings is reducing the necessity for precautions very greatly. The system of supervision by the inspector is reducing it right through the country. Whereas seven years ago we had to prosecute in one case of three of complaints, to-day we have only to prosecute in one case in 9. People are beginning to know the law, and to conform their conduct to its requirements.

1639. Before I come to the question of your Bill, with reference to the general question of registration, I may take it that you think that the extension of registration will be decidedly of advantage to the children?—Decidedly.

1640. And

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

1640. And you think that registration, *per se*, does do good?—I do.

Lord Thring.

1641. Would you say why?—I think it gives a standing. If the registration is by an authoritative and competent body it is like a license, and gives a standing.

1642. You do it for the benefit of the person registered?—Both of the child and the person registered; but I was going to qualify my remarks as soon as the questions were finished. May I qualify what I said as to registration? The Chairman asked the question whether I thought registration in itself good. It would not be adequate if it were not supplemented by medical supervision; that I will deal with later.

1643. What do you mean by medical supervision?—I do not know whether I shall be asked any questions on the Safety of Nurse Children Bill.

Chairman.

1644. We are going into that presently?—Then it would come out naturally in the course of my examination on that Bill.

1645. We only wanted to get your general opinions first, before we went into the actual details of the Bill?—I think registration, where it is by a competent authority, by an authoritative body of people who can give standing by registration, and where it is also accompanied by other and adequate arrangements, may be both for the safety of life, to the benefit of the house, and to the great benefit of the sad mothers of these infants.

1646. I do not suppose that people of the worst class that we wish to get hold of would come and submit to registration voluntarily?—Well, if the provisions of the Bill that you propose to ask me questions about were made law, they could not nurse without it.

1647. Therefore those who are interested in this question hope that by making it illegal to keep children in this way we shall have a greater hold over them by making illegal what is practically legal now?—That is the point.

Lord Belper.

1648. What is your experience of the way that the law, as far as it now goes, is carried out?—That it is not carried out at all; I would not say that there are no inspectors under the Act appointed in other parts of England, but my impression is that we have only met with one in the whole seven years, and I think that was at Bristol, but I do not think the man is there now.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1649. Outside London?—I am speaking now of all England.

1650. And outside London?—Yes, I should have said with the exception of London.

Lord Belper.

1651. Would not your opinion be that, before making up our minds whether it is necessary to amend the present law, we should see what would be the effect of the law as it exists being properly carried out?—No, I think not; I think (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

the law as it exists is not carried out, because nobody thinks it worth while to carry it out; there is a general idea that a law which protects children in a house where there are two infants residing under one year old, and will not protect the same children if there is only one infant under one year old, is not a law that it is desirable to enforce; and it is difficult, I believe, because the removal of one child from the nurse's home to any of her friends, if it be under twelve months of age, will at once render the necessity for registration null and void.

1652. You think that the local authority is justified, without taking any steps to satisfy themselves of it, to neglect the law because they think it is not likely to be as efficacious as it ought to be?—No, I should not say that, nor should I indict the whole country for neglect of it. It does not seem to have been anybody's particular business to carry it out, and that probably has been a reason for its not being carried out.

Viscount Llandaff.

1653. It is the business of the local authority everywhere to carry it out, is it not?—It is permissive, but permissive Acts are not imperative.

Chairman.

1654. It is not a permissive Act?—Virtually it is so, for it has been passed since 1872, and I do not think there are three boroughs in England that have taken any notice of it. I do not know whether I am correct in saying three; it may be more.

Lord Belper.

1655. The Act, as I understand, makes it illegal to do certain things, and it puts upon the local authority the duty of dealing with the question; that is hardly a permissive Act?—The practical application of an Act is very difficult if by the shifting of a child from one house to the next house in 24 hours you have rendered the application of it null and void.

1656. You are bringing me back to my question, whether you are justified in assuming that an Act would not be efficacious, if you make no effort to carry it out?—I should not like to say that the Act is permissive in the legal sense of the word; but if it is not, somebody has neglected a duty, and ought to be punished for the neglect of it. As a matter of fact it is not enforced.

1657. There is, however, one authority that has done its best to carry it out, in the metropolis; is that not so?—Yes.

1658. Both under the Metropolitan Board of Works, and now under the London County Council?—Yes, and very efficiently too, as far as our observation goes.

1659. Should you be prepared to endorse the opinions which have been expressed, that the houses at present registered in London, which, I think, number 41, are the whole of the houses where more than one child under one year is kept?—I have no knowledge.

1660. You cannot express an opinion?—I have no data at all on which to do so.

N 3

1661. May

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

1661. May I ask if any of the cases which you have mentioned are in houses which would come under the present law?—I should say that a great many of them are in houses that would come under the present law of registration, still, we have never dealt with them on that ground; we have only dealt with the child's life.

1662. However, if the local authority in which those houses are situated had carried out the law, at all events it would have prevented the cruelty that took place in those houses?—I doubt it; if it was mere registration, and if there was no supervision. They have power, of course, to appoint an officer; but to appoint an officer for one baby farm in a big part of a borough, or for one baby farm in the major part of a county, I think would be considered very ineffectual; anyway, it is not done.

1663. As I understand, the system in force in London is that the houses must be registered; and before they are registered they must fulfil certain conditions, which shows that the house is properly managed?—Yes.

1664. Why is not that possible to do in the country also?—There is no authority or agency like you have had in London to supervise these things and look into them, and keep them continuously under the eye of the central authority. There is no officer like Mr. Babey appointed in the country.

1665. The authority ought to appoint some one to carry out the duties necessary to be carried out?—They might appoint some one.

1666. There is the same authority in the country for carrying out the duties as in London?—Yes; the local authorities have power everywhere.

1667. And the reason it is not carried out is, in your opinion, because they do not appoint an inspector to do it?—Quite so.

1668. There is nothing to prevent them from appointing one?—That is so.

Viscount Llandaff.

1669. And you are aware that London only appointed an inspector when it was stimulated by the Secretary of State?—Yes.

Chairman.

1670. But in rural districts it is not necessary to appoint a special inspector; the police would deal with it I presume?—

Lord Belper.

1671. I think you said that you found that these cases of cruelty to young nursing children were very largely in the villages?—I do not say that there is cruelty largely in the villages; the business is carried on largely in villages.

1672. I understood that your answer was that you have complaints that call your attention to cases that you have to inquire into, very largely in villages?—I gave an illustration of a village to show the use in country stations of these post-cards. The number of cruelty cases is not necessarily large, but the business is large in villages.

1673. You only mean that a great many

Lord Belper—continued.

children are put out in villages?—Yes, and the proportion of cases of cruelty would be the same in villages as in towns.

1674. Do you think that there is frequently as much cruelty or ill-treatment of children in villages as in large towns?—I should say a little more.

1675. At all events, it is largely found in villages?—It is. Violence is greater in villages, according to our returns, than in towns.

1676. Have you had any cases where you have had to take action, where children have been put from institutions into these houses?—Yes, we have had cases where children have been boarded out by institutions; we have called the attention of the institution to the condition of the children, and they have immediately addressed themselves to set it right.

1677. Then would you think it desirable, however respectable an institution may be, to allow those houses in the country which take children from the institutions to be exempted from registration?—Under the condition that those houses were under some medical supervision.

1678. You would exempt them if each house was under some medical supervision?—Yes, periodical supervision.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1679. For clearness sake perhaps you will answer this question; you think that the local authorities throughout England who have not put this Act into operation have deliberately abstained from doing so (that is to say, from appointing inspectors) because they thought that the Act as it exists was not worth it?—I should not like to put the word "deliberately" in. The impression which I have gathered from a great many authorities with whom I have spoken with reference to this subject is that the Act is not worth enforcing; secondly, that the number of cases are small; and that to appoint an inspector would be expensive. I should say that those three things have combined: first, that the Act itself is not worth enforcing from one of its conditions; secondly, that there are very few cases in which it would be necessary to even attempt to enforce it; and, thirdly, that the expense of appointing an inspector to carry out the provisions of the Act would be wholly out of proportion to the work that would have to be done.

1680. Take a place like Manchester; what would you say to the reasons there, for example, why the Act has not been applied?—I could not answer except speaking generally over the country; there is no specific place as to which I could give an answer. We have not been in Manchester much more than 12 months; we have only had a branch there for 12 months, and I am, therefore, very little acquainted with the Manchester local authorities. I, therefore, could give no answer about Manchester in particular.

1681. We had a witness at our last meeting, who had been Medical Officer of Health in Manchester, and who told us that the work, which it would be possible to do under the Act, was being much better done by other agencies at present at work in Manchester. Have you any knowledge of

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

of anything of that sort?—I should say that our agencies are doing the work of supervising nurse children all over England, and with great efficiency and success.

1682. He was not referring to your society?—Then I do not know what he referred to.

1683. But you have no special knowledge of the agencies to which he referred which are subsidised from the rates?—I have not.

1684. You told us that in your opinion quite half the number of nurses who now take children would be glad to be registered; do you mean, would be glad to be registered, or do you mean ought to be glad to be registered?—No; my opinion is based on their character. The inspector who has been at this work for a long time past, Mr. Dowsett, who has been travelling about the country for a long time, and who has answered advertisements, is of opinion that many of them, and I speak roughly when I say quite one-half, would have no objection at all to be registered.

1685. Then how do you account for the fact that so very few are registered now, if, as you told us just now, the fact of being registered would give them a sort of *cachet* which would make people trust them?—I should say that the great bulk of them have no idea that there is such a statute as the Infant Life Protection Act. The great bulk of persons nursing children to-day have never had their attention called to it.

1686. That is in curious contrast with the evidence of at least one of the Coroners who have been before us, who told us that he had never had a witness who did not seem familiar with the Act?—Was that in London, may I ask?

1687. In London?—I am speaking of out of London; I am speaking of England, Wales and Ireland, not London. I can quite understand that in London there would be very few people who do this business who had not some opportunity of knowing the Act.

1688. Then if the Act, as it at present exists were better known, and people all over England were to be familiar with the Act as it stands, you think a great many more would register than are registered now?—Possibly; but the Act only requires registration if two infants are taken under 12 months old, and the practice with nearly all the nurses that we have to do with is not to take two infants under 12 months; they cannot attend to them; but to take one under 12 months, another a year old, and another older.

1689. That is just what I want to elicit; your view then is that even if the Act were to be rigidly enforced by close inspection throughout England to-day there would be a comparatively small number of those who take nurse-children who ought to come under it?—A very small number.

1690. In London at this moment there are 41 houses registered?—So I have heard.

1691. But you told us that you had no idea whether a large extension of that ought at once to take place under the present law?—No.

1692. But in England you think a very small number of those taking nurse-children are registered?—(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

gistered?—Yes. I do not know about London; the London County Council know better than we do. If we find a registered baby farm in London we do not keep it under supervision because we know that baby farms are there under proper supervision at present.

1693. What proportion, roughly speaking, of the children under your supervision are illegitimate?—I am sorry to say that I have not got the facts.

1694. Because in the paper which you have handed in to us here, and which is a paper rather to frighten people than to give any definite information, I suppose?—A paper to shew them that the law is against neglecting children.

1695. I should say, after glancing at a large number of those cases, that in more than 90 per cent. the persons convicted are father or mother?—Yes, that is so.

1696. Therefore that would not look as if you had the protection mainly of illegitimate children?—That is so; but more than 90 per cent. of the children of the country are legitimate.

1697. Yes, but that is not the point: Are 90 per cent. of the children we want to protect legitimate?—Under this Act do you mean?

1698. Under the general aim that such legislation has?—No, certainly not. If you include the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act the bulk of the cases, quite 90 per cent., are cases where the parental instinct has lapsed and vice has supervened and they have become unnatural parents.

1699. Then if a large proportion, something like 90 per cent. of the children we ought to protect are illegitimate, and your society is protecting mainly the legitimate children?—Yours form the 90 per cent. of the 50,000; mine are the 90 per cent. of 16,000,000; and that does not permit of comparison. There are 16,000,000 children in Great Britain and Ireland under 16 years of age or thereabouts, but 90 per cent. of 16,000,000 would be one thing, and 90 per cent. of 50,000 would be another.

1700. The evidence, speaking generally, that has come before us, so far as it has gone, and so far as I have gathered it, is that the overwhelming proportion of the children we want to protect are illegitimate children?—That is so.

1701. That you do not dispute?—No, not at all.

1702. But taking the evidence shown by the actual work of your society, the proportion of illegitimate children is extremely small, and you have given us the reason why?—Yes.

1703. But now you agree that we want to protect mainly the illegitimate children by such an Act as is now proposed; and you suggest, as I understand, that what is desirable is this: that some plan should be devised for facilitating the unmarried mother's knowing where she may respectably send her child?—Yes.

1704. Have you any plan by which that would be brought about?—The Bill that has been drafted, has been drafted on that line; the Safety of Nurse Children Bill, which has been referred to.

1705. We shall be asking you about that presently?—That embodies, in the first part of it,

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

provisoes and provisions which would meet that, I think.

1706. If it passed it would secure that the house in which a child was to be put should be registered?—It would.

1707. But it would not facilitate the mother's knowledge of those places, unless you propose that there should be a publication broadcast of the list of registered houses?—I should suggest that advertisements for children, if not rendered illegal, ought to be understood to be surreptitious, unless the house is registered, and I think that the good nurses, those who are well-intentioned, would be glad to announce that they were registered.

1708. But you do not put any such provision in the Bill?—No.

1709. Then if this Bill became law to-morrow an unmarried mother would have no place to which she could go if she wanted to find out where to send her children?—That is quite true, unless the practice came in, which I believe would soon come in, arising from its being profitable, that the announcement "Registered" would accompany the advertisement.

1710. Now, as to the average respectable mother, or married couple in London, who take children in for nursing, or take a child in for nursing; you have not, I think, yet told us how far you consider they would have an objection to be registered under the Act?—That I do not know.

1711. It is an important point, is it not?—It is an important point; but I should say that the objection should be set aside if it is in the interest of children at large that this registration should be made. I have not any means of knowing what view would be taken in a particular case of that kind.

1712. I should like to read you two or three sentences from a letter written to me. I do not mention the name of the writer of the letter, but it is a person of great experience in London, who writes this: "I cannot but think that such legislation as is now proposed will be found to be very vexatious in quarters where it is not needed, and would seriously interfere with a great deal of disinterested kindness which now obtains among our poor people. For instance, the respectable couple with two or three children are sometimes ready to undertake the charge of a child of a friend at a fair price, and it is often, in my opinion, the best possible arrangement both for parent and child; but if such an arrangement could not be made without registration, inspection, &c., it is pretty certain not to be made at all; in fact, the very persons who are most likely to do well by the child would refuse to submit their homes to the requirements specified in these Bills; I should fear that the result of such legislation would be to send many children who under existing laws are well cared for in respectable families into either (1) baby farms, the number of which would be greatly increased, or (2) institutions such as (I will not name them), a result most deplorable."—Such cases no doubt are numerous, and there are a good many others that I could mention that we have come in contact with; but in the first

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

section of the Bill I have tried to cover and meet such a case by the words "subject to the opinion of the Court, that in view of all the circumstances of the case it is in the interest of the child."

Viscount Llandaff.

1713. I understand that you have agents who pretty well cover the whole of the country, both Great Britain and Ireland?—Not cover it, I am sorry to say. We are working in that direction; we have 150 stationed in the country now.

1714. Whose business it is to find out every case in which a child is maltreated?—Yes.

1715. And do you think you are approaching a tolerably complete inspection of the whole country?—Wonderfully rapidly.

1716. I see you have in seven years punished 9,000 persons?—Yes.

1717. Could you tell us how many of those 9,000 were cases of nurse children?—The persons punished of that class were a very small number.

1718. Therefore the greatest evils arise in the case of children at home under their own fathers and mothers?—For the reason that they are more easily detected.

1719. Have you any reason to believe that you failed to detect cases of cruelty among nurse children?—Yes.

1720. Do you not apply your operations to nurse children?—Yes; we have a woman that ought to have been hanged three times over, and for three years we have not been able to catch her.

1721. How many mothers have you hanged?—None; the Public Prosecutor takes murders.

1722. You cannot give me the number of nurse children in the 9,000?—I have not the particulars.

1723. How do you get your information?—Chiefly from a neighbour, who knows that something is going on wrong in a house next-door; he forwards a complaint to our office of which he has the address; we give to every house in our area of the country a notice of the law and its provisions as they apply to children, and where a complaint may be made. We have 12 correspondents in Leicestershire; they are all in the market towns in Leicestershire; but we deluge the villages with the information, that in their market town there is a Mr. Brown at such-and-such a house who will receive any complaint on behalf of a child illegally treated; that the names of informants are kept strictly private; that all expenses and inquiries are undertaken by the society; and it is through these leaflets, of which we have printed millions, that our work comes to us.

1724. Then you would propose, as it were, to duplicate that agency by another set of leaflets and inspectors acting on behalf of the local authority?—I would like the local authority to appoint our men; I am satisfied that in that case they would employ a competent and able man to enforce this Act.

1725. Employ them and pay them, you mean?—And pay them by a grant to the central office;

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

office; we should be glad to do it free if we had the funds, because it is a part of our work.

1726. You think, therefore, the existing machinery you employ would be sufficient for detection if taken over by the local authority?—No, not taken over; I would not like the local authority to manage it, but to authorise it.

1727. Why would you not like the local authority to take it over?—The conduct of our work is most delicate and difficult, and once let it get out of experienced and sympathetic hands, there will be greater fiascoes than the country has ever seen, I think. The most delicate and difficult work, I think, is to interfere between parent and child, and our work, therefore, is delicate and difficult, and no public authority could discharge our duties.

1728. Does that apply only to interference between parent and child, or does it apply to interference between foster-mother and nurse-child?—I think it applies chiefly where there is parental right as to which the public is sensitive; but the public is rather cruel about baby farmers, and prepared to adopt any innovation upon a baby farmer; so it would not be dangerous in that case. At the same time, I think it would be an advantage if the whole law in the interests of the children were worked by one institution.

1729. You think you would do the work better than any local authority?—Our men are so trained for the work; they have had large experience.

Lord Thring.

1730. I should like to ask you one or two questions: I quite understand the very great benefit of your society, and you have the greatest possible experience, but I wish to direct your attention to the object we have in view; first of all you quoted a case of opium poisoning; that is a case of murder; it is perfectly clear that registration would not have prevented that?—Mere registration would not have prevented that, but, as I said before, registration in the Bill that we have drafted on our own experience is to be supplemented by the supervision of an inspector and a medical officer.

1731. That is perfectly true, but in cases where they intend to murder the child, surely they would take care to put it in a place where there was no supervision?—Possibly they would, but the difficulties would be very great when the public came to know throughout the whole county or town the new law, which we should circulate to every house, of what was illegal, and that information should be given to such-and-such a person. The thing might be possible just as theft is possible, though illegal, but sooner or later it seems to me that the illicit business would die out.

1732. I cannot understand it; we are aware that there are a great number of illegitimate children, and that there is the strongest possible motive in the case of certain illegitimate children, I am sorry to say, to get rid of them?—Yes.

1733. Do you really think that these unfortunate mothers who get rid of their children, not because they wish to get rid of them, but because (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

they wish to enter respectably into life again, would put their children into registered houses?—I do, a great many of them.

1734. My point is this, that I cannot understand, with regard to these ghastly stories of cases where children are either quickly or slowly murdered, where there is an intention to murder a child either slowly or quickly, how registration is to prevent it?—But if the public could be informed that some murder was going to take place, or that some person was likely to commit a murder, and the place at which it was to be committed was pointed out, does not your Lordship think it would tend to prevent the committal of the murder?

1735. I consider that to be the whole point of the case which you have missed entirely; in all these things the difficulty is to detect the crime; if you can once find out where a child is going to be murdered or where it is going to be injured, clearly the police regulations are quite sufficient to prevent it. I want to know how the fact of registration would enable detection to be secured?—It would bring the authorities into contact with the character of the woman, with her daily habits, and with such features in her conduct as would arouse in any sensible medical man suspicion.

1736. I am afraid my question was misunderstood; under the existing law and under any proposed law, before you register a house you examine the house to ascertain the character of the woman; and you ascertain if she has a good character and if the house is well kept?—Yes.

1737. I say, in cases of intended murder or intended extreme cruelty to children, how would the fact of registering houses facilitate the detection; because by your own hypothesis those crimes would not be committed in the houses that were registered?—I see your point; in other words that if we limit the number of places in which murders can be committed or crime can be committed, by such limitations and by bringing all these under supervision we do not limit the crime; that is your point.

1738. You drive it into other places?—If there is an absolute determination to do something criminal, I quite agree with you; but my experience is that persons commit crime by a gently, steadily pursued course, from which, if our inspector gets into their company, and they know that he will visit them once a fortnight, they will desist.

1739. Is it not true, as you said yourself I think, that the object of these registered houses is to enable poor women to know where their children can be well kept?—Yes.

1740. Therefore the object of your Bill is to enable houses to advertise themselves as being registered with a view to show that they are well kept?—Yes.

1741. Then I do not understand why, at the present moment, if registration is so great a benefit, we are told that it is so little used, why do not people apply for it?—I cannot answer that except first, that persons who take in children to nurse are not required to register unless they take in two children under 12 months; secondly, that they are not aware

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

aware of the *modus operandi* or the existence of the power.

1742. I perfectly understand why it might be right to advertise the existing law more than is done at present, and why the local authorities ought to take it up more; but that does not answer my question. My question is, whether, in effect, the whole reason for our extending the law would not be to enable houses to advertise themselves more fully as registered houses, and thereby enable people who wanted to place their children out well to ascertain the houses where they could do so; is it not rather inconsistent with the fact that, at the present moment, there are few applications, and also that, above all things, the better class of nurses do not wish to be registered?—I could not say what will be the result of this new and better system, but my impression is that it will accomplish the purpose that you fear it will not, namely, reduce the facilities for, and reduce the danger of, the destruction of child-life.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1743. There are a certain number of these unfortunate women who, when they have a child, only desire to get rid of it somehow?—Yes.

1744. Is it not therefore likely that if their child were placed in these registered houses, where they knew they would be well taken care of, they would be afraid that they would be kept more in touch with the children than they would wish to be?—There would no doubt be a certain proportion that would answer to that description.

1745. You said a short time ago that half the cases would be glad of advice?—I think they would be glad of a doctor coming in now and again.

1746. Would they not object to compulsory inspection apart from medical supervision?—Some of the people who have had a little taste of sanitary inspectors and their arbitrary ways might imagine that the same arbitrariness was going to be carried into nursing children; but it is not necessary; there may be the most courteous treatment of these people; it will all depend upon the spirit in which the Act is carried out.

1747. Do these nurses make a profit, as a rule?—Yes, they do it for the profit.

1748. We were told that in very few cases they made a profit?—If the child is properly kept its nurse makes very little profit, but if she lets the child dwindle away on a small proportion of the money she receives for it she is making a large profit.

1749. Then, practically, on the registered houses there would be no profit?—I doubt very much whether there would be much profit if there was only one child; the business being larger there would be fair profit.

1750. The business being larger the children would be more crowded together, and consequently more liable to die?—If the registration is of a house for three children you cannot crowd them together, because the registration would limit the number.

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

1751. With regard to these cases of cruelty which you spoke of in the villages, do they concern cases under 12 months; most of your cases of cruelty are in the villages?—Most of our general cases, but not baby-farming cases.

1752. It would not include children under 12 months old?—Our ordinary cases include babies in the houses of their mothers and fathers from the day of birth.

1753. Would you say that they were mostly under 12 months, these cases of cruelty in the villages?—(Oh dear, no; they are distributed as in ordinary family life, at various ages.

Viscount Llandaff.

1754. As to Ireland: have you had any personal experience of the work of your society in Ireland?—Yes.

1755. Are you acquainted with the debate in 1890 on a Bill resembling the one that we are considering?—Mr. Stuart Wortley's Bill do you mean; yes, I saw him on the subject.

1756. You remember that the Irish Members raised the strongest objection to extending that Bill to Ireland?—I remember they did, but why I do not know. My own objection to the Bill was that it labelled the whole thing "illegitimate child," and that it required evidence to be given that would drag to light the shame of the mother. It appeared to me that it might have that result.

1757. The Second Reading debate was before the word "illegitimate" was put into the Bill?—Was it; it was a very bad amendment.

Lord Kinnaird.

1758. With regard to one or two questions asked you by Lord Thring, you would not admit that it is proved that there would be universal objection to registration?—I think that nothing is proved on the subject. I do not think we have more than evidence of probability, and my impression is that the probability is the other way.

1759. Then I understand that while you think that no Act probably would make it impossible that crime should be committed, you want to make it more difficult?—That is so.

1760. And that you are partly crippled for want of funds; if you had more funds you could put an agent in every district?—Yes.

1761. And you would rather that some grant in aid was made to you than that it was given entirely to a public authority to carry out?—I would rather that a public authority registered and looked to us to carry out the provisions of the Bill.

1762. Why would you not leave it to the local authority to carry out the Act?—Because I think it is a delicate thing to do, and it requires very special machinery for the doing of it wisely and well, and our machinery is specially adapted for the doing of it.

1763. I did not quite understand the figures you gave; you stated to the Committee that last year you dealt with 250 cases?—That is of nurse children.

1764. And you said that the average per year, for seven years, was 100?—About that.

1765. Is that number of 250 due to the fact that

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

that you are doing the work more efficiently?—That we have a larger number of inspectors; we had very few cases in the first year; we had only two inspectors in 1889, and we have 140 or 150 to-day.

1766. So that your figures do not show the proportion of cruelty, compared to what it was seven years ago?—They only show the proportion of detected cruelty now to what was detected seven years ago.

Viscount Llandaff.

1767. The 250 children are nurse cases only, I understand?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1768. What are these, in this list of convictions which you have shown us?—Almost all parents; they are not necessarily all married persons. There are many cases in which mothers are nursing their own children, illegitimate children.

1769. Now, in reference to a question which Lord Belper asked you, you said that though a nurse could get 6s. or 7s. a week for a child, it would be more profitable to make a big profit for a few weeks than to make a small profit of 1s. a week for the entire time that the child was with the nurse?—Yes; if I rightly understand your question I should say, yes; that it is more profitable to take 5s. a week for herself and use 1s. for the child for a few weeks, and then get another and do the same with that.

1770. Then we have heard that London is the only town which is efficiently worked by an inspector; do you maintain that most of the other towns are inefficiently worked, or do you take it that your officers take the place in them of the London inspector?—Our officers do the work, not of the London inspector, because we are not limited to the case of a child in a registered house. We deal with any child badly dealt with. In London there is a special officer to deal with these special houses only, in other parts of the land we deal with all houses.

1771. Have you ever made any public statement as to what proportion of English children are not properly looked after?—No; I should say that in all the country there is a residuum of character rather than population by which a child is not valued but rather hated as a nuisance, and in that the tendency to ill-treatment exists.

1772. If the old Act which has been in force for 25 years has been for the most part a dead letter, what difference do you think would a new Act of Parliament make; would it not share the fate of the old one?—If it was inefficient it probably would, but if it was an efficient Act, it would be enforced, as efficient Acts generally are.

1773. Who would enforce it?—As soon as it was passed, I should take the liberty to write to every county council and authority in England, calling their attention to it.

1774. But could you not do that now?—It is not worth doing.

(0.95.)

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

1775. You cannot protect children, you mean?—Not under the Infant Life Protection Act; you can protect them far better than under that Act by enforcing the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act; even in baby farms the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act to-day is the better of the two Acts for the children; but a great improvement will be made, and a prevention of the necessity of interference on the ground of cruelty, if we can get people who take nurse-children started in their business with credentials that justify public trust.

1776. And do you give it as your opinion that over a large part of England there is a great deal of preventible cruelty?—I think that all cruelty is preventible. The alternative before the mind, "Proper treatment, or a just forfeiture of liberty," is the cure.

1777. What would be the effect, do you think, if the Act were limited to illegitimate children?—I think it would be to brand the children when they come out in after-life. I think the sooner the fact that they are illegitimate is forgotten the better.

Lord Belper.

1778. I should like to ask you one question before we go to your Bill. I think I gathered from your general description of your views, that you would like to see this law extended, but would like to see it extended with very considerable reservations and exceptions?—Yes, I would.

1779. And not only special exceptions, which may or may not be possible accurately to define, but also general exceptions, which would be left to the criminal courts?—Certainly.

1780. And you would not like to see a Bill become law without providing for these exceptional cases?—No, I should not; there would be great hardships if it did not.

Chairman.

1781. Shall we go through your Bill now, the Bill for the Safety of Nurse Children?—I am quite at the service of the Committee.

1782. Perhaps you would like to say something first of all as regards the general lines of the Bill; looking at it, first of all, as to how it differs from the existing law and how it differs from the Bill which I introduced into the House?—I am afraid if I were to compare the three I should take a very long time.

1783. The first clause begins: "Subject to the opinion of the Court that in view of all the circumstances of the case it is in the interests of a child, and as in this section mentioned;" that is very vague, is it not?—It is necessarily so, I think, and the phrase is quite new to legislation so far as I know, and therefore it cannot be defined very well. But in the enforcement of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children I have so many times seen that people have been brought technically within the law and were punishable, who ought not to have been brought within the law; who, by mere accident so to speak, have been brought within it; and, dealing with these I never allow prosecutions; I constitute myself a sort of grand jury. I direct all the prosecutions

O 2

of

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

of the United Kingdom, and I disallow the prosecution of 25 per cent. of the cases sent up from the country, on the ground that while technically within the provisions of the Act, they ought not to have been, and they must not, therefore, be proceeded against. That is my reason for inserting the words you have read into an Act that is to be administered, probably, by another body.

1784. What do you mean by "another body"?—The County Council, at the present time, so it is proposed.

Viscount Llandaff.

1785. I understand the first section to mean this, that if a person receives for profit a child under seven years of age, and is proceeded against before a justice of the peace for that offence, receiving the child without being registered, the justice of the peace shall be at liberty, if he thinks that in view of all the circumstances the child is well off, to dismiss the prosecution?—That is so; that is the object of it.

Lord Thring.

1786. It is to give him a dispensing power, in fact?—It is; and it is to set up the interest of the child and not of the Statute itself. The predominant thing is not the Act but the child.

1787. He may over-ride the law?—He may say that it ought not to apply.

Viscount Llandaff.

1788. That is to say, that the general rule would work so much injustice in that case that it is not to be applied to that case?—That is so.

Chairman.

1789. Then we go on to Sub-section (a) which says, "Any person who shall retain or receive for profit any child under the age of seven years for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such child apart from its parent for a longer consecutive period than twenty-four hours;" that is practically the same idea as that which exists in the Bill which we have before us?—It is.

1790. Only it is extended to seven years. What do you mean by the word "retain"; do you mean retaining the child against the will of the parent?—No; it means to have and possess; it is the word, I think, which is used in the original Act.

Lord Belper.

1791. I should like to ask you the meaning of the word "profit" in your Bill?—It is defined at the end.

1792. We have two Bills before us, one which says "hire and reward," and the other, namely, yours, which says "profit." Which page is that definition on?—It ought to be in the definitions; but I see it is not in them. I will make a note of that point.

1793. Then as it is not defined, would you tell me whether you mean taking any hire or reward for it, or only taking such a sum as they can make a profit by?—No, I mean taking any money whatever in return for the care of the child.

Lord Belper—continued.

1794. I do not know whether you would not think the words "hire or reward" better than "profit"?—I think they are.

1795. It is not meant that you shall have to prove that the person made a profit?—No. Without a definition it is an unfortunate word to use.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1796. Will you give us your reasons for increasing the limit of age to seven years in this Bill?—We have just had two cases of children in a woman's care, both over five years old, in their sixth year, and they were badly treated and ran away.

1797. They came under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act?—They came under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, but the woman under the Bill I am now proposing would not have been allowed to take them without registration; that is the point; the object is not so much to deal with cruelty as to prevent its occurrence.

Chairman.

1798. Then you say in Sub-section (b) of Section 1: "Any person who shall retain or receive to maintain a child under the age of 12 years apart from its parents for a longer consecutive period than 24 hours, with a view to deriving profit either immediately, or at any future time, for any act or performance of the child, or from exhibiting the child?"—That is intended to deal with the acrobatic institutions for the training of children. They are taken in usually about six or seven years of age, and come out about twelve years of age, and this is to require them to take a license for the training of children and for keeping the place under supervision.

1799. Do you come across many cases of that description in which strict supervision is necessary?—We did years ago, but we have nearly driven the trade out of the country. I am told that it is chiefly conducted in Antwerp, and on the Continent in various places. There are a great many children sent out of England to be trained for acrobatic work in consequence of our interference with the training here.

Lord Thring.

1800. Suppose I take a child at five years old with the intention of deriving profit at a future time, when he is 21, from his performing the act of shoe-making; is that what you wish to prevent?—How could you make a profit on a boy over 16 years of age who was not your boy, when, by the common law, he is his own master?

1801. I take him and apprentice him, we will say, with a view of making a profit?—An apprentice is taken for the purpose of education.

1802. That is in the exceptions?—That is provided for in the sub-section.

1803. Then what is the meaning of the word "act"?—"Act or performance." I have taken the phrase, I think, from the Dangerous Performances Act, and I am dealing now with the training

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

training of children for the acts and performances before they are acted or performed.

1804. Then this clause simply means "dangerous acts or performances" in the mode of acrobats?—Not necessarily limited to dangerous performances, but to dangerous training; for instance, putting a boy to do the "splits."

1805. You must put in "dangerous" or some qualification, because the word "act" applies to every action of a boy?—

Viscount Llandaff.

1806. A farmer who takes in a boy with a view to having a boy to scare the crows would be within this Act? Would that be "deriving profit"?—I do not think so; he pays a wage for what the boy is doing, fees him; that would not be "deriving profit."

1807. The clause reads: "Any person who shall retain or receive to maintain a child under the age of 12 years apart from its parents for a longer consecutive period than twenty-four hours with a view to deriving profit either immediately or at any future time from any act or performance of the child, or from exhibiting the child." A farmer who takes in a boy to scare crows would come within that clause, would he not?—That case ought not to come within the clause, and it is not intended to do so.

Lord Thring.

1808. I only want to point out to you that this clause would require amendment in view of such a case as I put to you?—Surely the provision "subject to the opinion of the Court" which comes at the very beginning covers a case like that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1809. Would it not be much shorter to say that anybody who receives a child may be called before a Justice of the Peace to show whether that child is properly treated?—It is a matter of legal phraseology which I am not clever at. I am not responsible for the phraseology of this Bill.

Lord Thring.

1810. I only meant that these words could not pass in their present form and I asked what you meant; did you mean dangerous performances;—I mean more than that; I mean that though the performance is not necessarily dangerous, if the training for the performance is painful.

Viscount Llandaff.

1811. This is an amendment of the Prevention of Cruelty Act?—It is an extension of it and the title of the Bill is "An Act to amend the Law for the Protection of Nurse-children, and Children on Exhibition or in physical training."

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1812. As a general question on the Bill, are you not trying to mix up two very different sorts of offences together?—Yes; I do not like to treat either of them as offences; two different

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

sorts of business, but having a common point in the fact that the persons have helpless children in their care for profit.

1813. It would be more simply done if you kept the two things apart?—Possibly; there was in our Act of 1894 a provision similar to this, but not going far enough; it did not require registration; the only alteration made in regard to the acrobatic children I think was that parents were allowed to train without supervision. It was modified to permit a parent to train his own child.

Chairman.

1814. Then you oblige any person who takes any child as mentioned, to "register the same or cause it to be registered" within seven days?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

1815. You put seven days' deliberately?—It is convenient to allow a week.

1816. You think 24 hours too short?—Very much; the distance to the County Council for a woman in a village might be considerable. you see I am not thinking of London, but of the country.

1817. We have been told that people habitually evade the present law, by parting with the child before they have had it 24 hours?—That is true; but once a woman is registered that cannot occur again.

Lord Thring.

1818. I thought in all the Acts the great thing was to register the house before the child is received?—Most desirable.

1819. Here it is seven days after?—They are bound to do it by that time.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1820. They would have now to go to the Rural District Council, not to the County Council, to register?—Even the Rural District Council they are great distances sometimes.

Lord Thring.

1821. Is it not the great thing to register the house before the child is received?—The practical difficulties suggested in the discussion of this original Bill years ago was this: how can you expect a person in the first instance to register before she has had a customer.

1822. What is the good of the existing Act if the registration is not to take place before the child is received?—For the first child it is not any, but once registered the nurse and house would be under the supervision of the Council.

1823. It would, in fact, repeal the existing Act, requiring registration before reception of the children; do you mean that?—No, I do not. As to the details of this Act I am only prepared, I am sorry to say, to answer on the principal object and its provisions.

1824. There is the difference between taking evidence after a man is sentenced and taking it before; the Act requires, or the Bill before us requires, that before the children shall be received the character of the person shall be investigated,

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

tigated, the house shall be investigated, and every circumstance necessary to show that it is a proper place; surely if you allow the child to have been there seven days before this investigation takes place it will be quite a different thing?—Maybe; but many children are deposited there and then at these houses. Somebody comes; a child is brought; it is now or never; the nurse to be cannot say, "Go back again," and it is to meet those cases that the provision is put in.

1825. I only wish you to consider the inconsistency between the existing Act and your Bill?—That I should not feel quite fatal to it; I do not like the existing Act.

Chairman.

1826. Then you do not think it necessary that a person should register before taking the child?—Should register in the first instance do you mean? I do not think it would be practicable to enforce this before taking a child.

1827. That is practically the present Act?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1828. Then you rather think these registered houses would be carried on for the purpose of a profit?—Yes, partly that.

1829. Do not most people, when they start a business, start it on the chance of customers?—Yes, in ordinary business. As a matter of fact a great many people in distress come with a child; the woman wants to get rid of the child, to place it with somebody in the neighbourhood known to be willing to take a child. To meet these people and treat them reasonably, and not harass them at the very start, would be, I think, desirable. I would not object to the other if it were reasonable.

Lord Thring.

1830. You have told us that you wish houses to be registered in order that it might be stated in the advertisements that they were registered, and that these unfortunate people should know where to send their children; how on earth can a woman know where to send her child when you allow the place to be registered seven days after the child is taken?—There are a great many avenues to these nurses. I mentioned one, but there are a great many others. I might write an article on how children get into the nurses' hands. Granted that there is an objection to giving seven days in the first case, all subsequent children will come into a registered house. It is not seven days' notice with each child; if a woman takes 20 children in any year and goes on 20 years, once registered it is only in the first instance that the seven days' applies, and every other child enters a registered house.

Viscount Llandaff.

1831. The registration is to be renewed every year?—Yes.

1832. So that a child a year may go into a non-registered house?—Yes.

Chairman.

1833. If a house takes three or four children

Chairman—continued.

you would only register the first child?—The house would be registered from the first child.

1834. And then suppose it came to her taking five or six children?—If her house is registered for less than that number there would be a breach of the regulations, and the children might have to be removed to a place of safety. I have defined what the law has constituted "a place of safety," an union, hospital, surgery, or place of a like kind.

1835. Then you deal with the exemptions?—Yes.

1836. Your first exemption says that the section "shall not extend to any person who receives a child (a) for any reasonable and temporary purpose," who is to interpret that?—A court. Suppose I have an invalid child, and I send it down to a woman in the country for a week's convalescence; a thing common enough by my society; we send a child for a single week down to some person, a friend of the society, who is willing to take a child, but requires some payment for its maintenance.

Lord Thring.

1837. It should not come before a court at all?—It should not come before the court at all, and it would not in practical working; if the court has the discretion, the people who proceed will exercise their discretion before proceeding to the court.

1838. You mean where the people in the village think it is for a "reasonable and temporary" purpose there would be no proceedings taken at all?—I do not say the people in the village. Suppose we confine ourselves to London. Mr. Babey is the inspector; attention is called to the fact that a woman has a child for which she is receiving profit; the child is there, say, for hospital treatment, it is going back in a week or a fortnight; that is a case obviously not to be brought to the court, and the inspector under the Act would soon lose his situation if he brought it to the court.

1839. It is the discretion of the inspector then?—It is the discretion of the court, and the inspector knowing that exercises his judgment whether he shall bring it into court.

1840. Then should not the villages be inspected?—The inspector would be the person acting under this general provision.

1841. Supposing there is no inspector?—Supposing there is no inspector the authority for the enforcement of the Act would not exist, I suppose, except with the police.

1842. Then it would be in the discretion of an ordinary constable?—An ordinary constable would, as I understand, have no right to exercise discretion; he would have to bring it to the court; I may say that in administering our own Act of Parliament I am daily exercising considerable discretion, and have done so for seven years, and everybody seems to think it is successfully done; the difficulties which present themselves to your Lordship do not seem to me to arise at all, perhaps only because I am not a lawyer.

1843. I admit the benefit that your society has been, but I point out to you that whether

you

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

you leave or do not leave it to the discretion of an inspector or constable, is not according to my notion, a trifling matter?—Who is to interpret the word "wilful" in our statutes? A child has been neglected and is taken ill; who is to interpret whether it is by wilful neglect or not? Should we sweep all children suffering from disease into the Court, for the Court to exercise its discretion whether the child ought to have been brought to it. That is not the way. The discretion is exercised by the person who discusses with himself, Shall I take proceedings? Not till then does the Court decide whether the proceedings are wise or unwise, and in practical work whoever undertook to enforce this Statute, if suitable for the purpose, would see that it was not enforced when the purpose of the Act was obviously not to have it enforced.

Chairman.

1844. "Wholly or mainly for the purpose of education" is the next exemption?—It excludes institutions taking children, such as Dr. Barnardo's institution, and others; they would not object to supervision, but not under this particular Bill probably.

1845. Supposing this lawyer's wife you were telling us about had simply said that she was keeping these children partly or mainly for the purpose of education, sending them to school every day?—It would be for the persons entrusted with the authority to enforce this Act, if they were satisfied that the children were going to school every day and were thus brought into contact with ordinary outside life every day, so that nothing could be done harmful to them without the ordinary public having the chance to see, under those circumstances I should say there was no need to enforce the Act; but if it was a mere pretext, then it would be the duty of the authorities to bring up the case before the Court.

Lord Thring.

1846. I send a child to a London lodging-house keeper; I take lodgings for the boy and send him there for the purpose of his being sent to a day school, and the child is ill-treated by that lodging-house keeper; why on earth should he be exempted?—The lodging-house keeper then would come under another Act, the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; for that a lodging-house would not require to be registered.

1847. This is again an amendment of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—Yes, the protection of infant life is a part of the whole scheme; you cannot separate the main motive for what is now proposed from the main motive of the Society's Act.

1848. The Act may be always evaded where it is wished to be evaded, because almost every child may be alleged to be sent "wholly or mainly for the purpose of education"?—There are not many of these cases of ill-treatment by nurses except under five years of age, and the bulk of them are under three.

1849. Suppose a young child in the case I put is ill-treated at a school, why should that case be exempted?—There is no reason to put

(O.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

schools under this Act; the object of this proviso is to prevent the application of the Act in cases which would be technical and vexatious, and beyond the scope of it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1850. That is exactly the point on which you need to be very careful?—Most careful.

1851. And the gist of the difficulty in an Act of this kind lies in the exemptions?—It does.

1852. Therefore we are necessarily to look very carefully to the wording of these particular clauses, because it is there that the real cause of the difficulty lies?—Yes.

Chairman.

1853. We have to avoid the two extremes; making the Act unreasonably severe where it is not intended to be severe; and, at the same time, to avoid drawing clauses through which cases would slip which we want to catch?—My own feeling is that the first Bill before the Committee of your Lordships is drawn without sufficiently recognising these dangers.

Viscount Llandaff.

1854. You know, perhaps, that the witnesses who have appeared here for the County Council have said that even the exemptions in the Bill of 1890, which are much less large than yours, would render the Act nugatory; they would not care to accept it with them?—I do not know what those exemptions are.

Lord Thring.

1855. Supposing it were possible to amend entirely to your own satisfaction your own Act, the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, and supposing we could supply you with sufficient money to conduct your investigations as you liked, do you think there is any use in the original Act, or in this Bill at all?—I think this Bill of ours would be of very much greater use; it would be much more an indirect preventive of cruelty. The Prevention of Cruelty Act is a direct preventive of cruelty.

Chairman.

1856. We had got as far as sub-section (b); now (c) is "a hospital, or convalescent home, or place of the like kind"?—The object of that is to prevent unnecessary irritation by the enforcement of the Act.

Viscount Llandaff.

1857. Do you include an orphanage, for instance, in "a place of the like kind," with a hospital or convalescent home; you seem to confine it to places where there are sick children?—That is one exception; there are others you will find later.

1858. In Mr. Loch's list of institutions where children are taken, there are a vast number that would not be of the like kind with a hospital or convalescent home?—I should be strongly in favour of including in the exemptions any institutions conducted by responsible committees.

1859. Or responsible persons?—Well, "persons," I am in a little doubt about that.

O 4

1860. Then

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

1860. Then (d), "into a place which is, or may be hereafter, under Government inspection, or is conducted under a committee with the authority of the Local Government Board, or under any Act in pursuance of the relief of the poor." That is more or less exempted under the present Act?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1861. "Hereafter," that would include all time?—Why should you repeal the Act by universal inspection?

Chairman.

1862. Then (e) "into any place under the regular supervision of a registered medical practitioner." That opens rather a large question?—Well, it is a desirable exemption where a medical man is attending constantly; and there are plenty of places that are private places conducted by excellent people who would not like to register; there are persons of fortune who desire to be kind to children and who have a nurse whom they pay so much a year to, and servants to take the children, and they would not like to be registered because they are not doing it (though receiving pay in some cases; not always) for profit in the common sense, but still they do receive hire or reward as the Act would be interpreted; and if a medical officer is regularly in charge of the institution I think that would be a sufficient ground for exemption.

Lord Thring.

1863. Surely you are aware that the investigations we have had have shown that a registered medical practitioner is not always a sufficient safeguard for child life?—I think if an Act of Parliament cast upon him the responsibility of exempting from a Statute, the influence of that fact would be to give him great seriousness in the doing of his work.

1864. You must be aware that in the hospital investigations and various others that we have had it has been shown that registered medical practitioners are not always desirable guardians of children?—That is quite true; I quite know that there are black sheep in all flocks, and that if a medical practitioner's certificate would necessarily exempt a place, perhaps in one case in one hundred he would not be worthy.

1865. But, of course, there are certain bad people who wish to evade the law; we know, and you are quite well aware of it, that institutions might get a registered medical practitioner who would not be a proper person to safeguard children and that he might evade the law?—Yes, I am afraid that is quite true, and that there are cases in which it would be very undesirable to leave it in his power.

1866. Then do not you think that that exemption is not quite right?—I wish we could make it obligatory upon the medical authorities to turn out a lot of scamps in England; I could give them a few dozen to begin with.

1867. I think you will admit that that is rather too wide a provision in your Bill?—It is wide, I admit.

Chairman.

1868. Clause 2; have you anything to say as to that?—No, except that there are three things that are required; that the person shall be suitable, that the house shall be suitable, and that the number of children for which the house is adequate shall be specified.

1869. But, then, by your previous clause the person does not get registered before taking a child, but takes a child and then gives notice?—Yes.

1870. Then supposing the inspector comes and finds the house unsuitable, the person must give up the child, I suppose?—Give up the child, or be liable to the penalty.

1871. In the first part of Clause 2 I thought you registered the house and the woman; the second part is as to the registration of the child?—There is a register to be kept at the house by the woman, according to this Bill, and she is to put in it the child's name, address, and the person from whom she received it; registration of the house and the woman is by the local authority.

Viscount Llandaff.

1872. The effect of this clause is that none but first-class people and first-class houses will ever get registered at all, is it not?—I do not think that "first-class" would be quite the term ordinary common sense would treat these cases as in domestic cases. If a house is a reasonable house for a family of five children, the next door neighbour perhaps having five, it should pass; I hope it would never be carried out on the line of having model institutions created.

1873. At any rate the ignorant nurses and the indifferent houses would never get registration?—I do not think they would.

1874. Then your view is that they would be shut out altogether from the nursing business?—Yes, and that a better class would take their place.

Chairman.

1875. There is a slight error in the drafting here; it cannot be right as it stands; "The Local Authority of every district shall," and then there ought to be (1) in a parenthesis, so that it would read "(1) Cause a register to be kept," and then, secondly, "Immediately on the registration of a child make or cause to be made?"—That is wrong; it is a matter of printing.

1876. Then Clause 3, that is practically the same as the Act?—The same substantially as the present Act.

1877. Then Clause 4, I think, is rather different?—Slightly different.

1878. The sub-section is rather different from the other in that it puts "name and address of the person from whom every child was received," I think it is rather more clearly defined in the other which speaks of the places where the person has resided for six months; you think it is advisable to be able to trace the persons, do you not?—If you mean their parents, no.

1879. The person who brings the child?—I think it is desirable to know who brought the child, but as little as possible to drag the parents into the case. I think the Bill you have your name

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

name to, states that the time and place of the birth are to be put in.

1880. "Shall state truly in writing the name, sex and age of the infant"?—Yes. It appears to me that we have nothing to do but to protect the life of the child.

1881. You have "the registered name, age and sex of every child received"?—Yes.

1882. Practically the same?—I do not go so far as to give the birth; there is a little further provision in your Bill.

1883. "The place and time of its birth and the place or places at which he has resided during the period of six months?"—If the place and time of birth were put down there would be probably some scandals as the result, which could not, as far as I can see, be of any advantage to the child. I am most anxious to avoid scandal in these things, and simply seek the welfare of the little thing that is entrusted to the nurse.

1884. Are you in favour of obtaining the sanction of the Local Authority before removing a child from a registered house, except in certain exceptions, as in the cases of relatives or guardians?—No, I should not interfere too much with them; if you do you will turn out of it the finest spirits; they cannot bear too much interference; the less the thing is interfered with the better; after the genuineness of the woman and the suitability of the house and the number of children are certified, with the supervision of the medical officer of health of the district, then as little as possible interfere with anything, and the more respectable people will then conduct the business.

Lord Thring.

1885. The second sub-section of that clause amounts to this: that if I take a child under a false statement I am responsible for the false statement unless I can prove that it was made without any connivance or consent on my part, or without any knowledge on my part that it was false; but I cannot possibly prove a negative?—I do not think, my Lord, you would go into this business. The women who do go into it do make false statements, there is no doubt; and the only object one has in this clause is to prevent deception which would end in disaster to the child.

1886. This clause would do exactly what I think you would wish not to do, deter honest persons from undertaking the business, because I, the keeper of the house, should be responsible and had up for a false statement unless I could prove what it is impossible to prove, that it is made without my connivance or consent or without knowledge on my part; therefore I should have to be had up before the magistrate to disprove a thing that I cannot disprove?—It would not be necessary that you should go before the magistrates if the authorities prosecuting in the case took into consideration what you had to say.

1887. I only wanted to draw your attention to it; I think it does exactly contrary to what you wish, places an obstacle in the way of honest people?—The more of such obstacles there are removed the better; I quite agree with you.

(0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

1888. So I think that had better go out!—But I do not see the point myself.

Viscount Llandaff.

1889. The person who takes a child would, under your Bill, be obliged to announce that he had got it, unless he was already a registered person?—Yes.

1890. Why do you want to double the machinery?—Not "unless," but if she is registered. The registered nurse would not have to comply with this.

1891. Whoever takes that child, if the child is under seven, under your Bill, will have to give notice at the register?—No, the entry would have to be made into the register kept by the woman.

1892. That is book-keeping; if your Bill is enforced you would get hold of a child in this new place by a notice from the person who takes it?—Quite so.

1893. I do not see quite what you gain, except correct book-keeping, by forcing the person who parts with the child to make these entries?—When a child is within a few weeks of death it is frequently transferred from one to another, and three or four persons then have it in order to divide the responsibility. The cause of death is what we want to trace, and to get back to the original person who for months, say, had it in charge. It is the subtlest business when criminal intent is in it that there ever was.

Lord Thring.

1894. Clause 5. The same remark applies to Sub-section 2 of Clause 5; I need not repeat it?—It is to prevent untruthfulness; there is nothing in it that is not practically provided for in the original Act.

Viscount Llandaff.

1895. There is no presumption in the original Act, but here you say: "he shall be deemed to have wilfully and knowingly given these false particulars unless he shows that the false statement was made" without connivance on his part?—That is the person who keeps the house.

1896. There is the presumption of wilful falsehood against him?—In that case.

Lord Thring.

1897. I consider it obviously unjust to make a man guilty of a crime committed by another person unless he can show that he was not privy to the crime?—I think it would be very unfair to do so, but is that actually the bearing of this? An entry is made of a false kind contrary to the Act, and it has been wilfully or negligently done; it is assumed that that has been the case until the man brings some proof that this document, or this letter that he has received, or statement that he has received in the presence of somebody, was an authority which a reasonable and honest man would accept. That is the object of the clause.

Viscount Llandaff.

1898. You do not by your Bill allow the defendant to give evidence for himself?—It would

P

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

would be a great defect if it was so; but he is permitted in Section 12, which applies, Section 12 of the Act of 1894.

1899. Yes, I beg your pardon?—That section provides for that. I may say that I attach great importance to the evidence of accused persons.

Chairman.

1900. Clause 6, "Power to local authority to cancel licence;" that is practically as in the other Bill?—Yes.

1901. Clause 7, "Obligations to give notice of death to coroner;" that is the law at the present moment?—Quite so. It recites a great deal of the old Act because it proposes to repeal it. The reason for doing this is, that I much prefer one Act.

1902. Clause 8, "Punishment of offences"?—This Bill requires a written authority, which differs from your own Bill. The person having power of entry must be authorised in writing to enter; he cannot go with a free hand to go where he likes, but he must have a specific authority for the purpose.

1903. You are talking of Clause 10 now, "Power of entry"?—Yes.

1904. I am, myself, I may say, going to bring up an amendment that the entry shall be by means of warrant?—Warrant! I think that is most undesirable.

1905. You have it under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act; you have right to enter under warrant?—Yes, but to get a warrant in this case brings such an enormous hammer to bear on a trifling thing. We only enter with warrants where we are satisfied that the crime is of a serious kind and is being concealed; but in dealing with the nursing of children where crime is not assumed that would be a most undesirable thing.

1906. But if the Act were passed it would then become an illegal thing to keep children in a house not registered?—Quite so; but if they are fat and happy, it ought not to be dealt with as a crime. I would not use a warrant to enter; it is such a serious thing for people to have their house entered by warrant.

1907. Who is it to be authorised by in writing?—By the local authority.

1908. Has the local authority power to compel a person to admit?—By this Bill it would have it.

1909. It is practically giving a new power to the local authority?—It is giving a new power to the local authority.

Viscount Llandaff.

1910. You have deliberately, in Clause 8, cut down the imprisonment to a month instead of six months, and the fine you raise to 10*l.* instead of 5*l.*?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1911. This would alter the provisions of the existing law relating to imprisonment and fine?—It would, and I think it very desirable that those provisions should be modified.

Chairman.

1912. You provide for entry by warrant in Sub-section (2) of Clause 10?—In Sub-section (2) of Clause 10; that would be on some information before the magistrate justifying such procedure; that would be on a genuinely criminal ground.

1913. I do not see anything more in the Act myself that calls for particular remark, except that I do not know whether the Committee have anything to ask you with reference to the "definitions" in Clause 15?—I would like to say a word if I might on Clause 14. I attach considerable value to all those provisions. In the cases in which we have proceeded under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act we have sometimes only had a child as witness, an assistant nurse, a child of seven perhaps, and her evidence has been momentous; it has been everything to link the crime and the criminal; but without the provision as to the evidence of a child of tender age, and without that presumption of age clause, and without the general provisions of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, we should not have been able to have convicted the people, because the main point in the evidence would have been excluded from the court. They are matters which have been given a great deal of attention to, and whatever the Bill is, they should be introduced.

1914. Have you anything to say on the definition clause?—No, I have not, except that I am sorry to find that "profit" is not defined, and I should say, for my own part, that your own phrase "hire or reward" is a better term to employ.

1915. We have no provision in the other Bill for removing the children?—No; when you close a house your Bill leaves the children.

1916. Do we now?—Yes. You have no provision for removing the children. You have no future place of care for them.

1917. I do not think the children are left there?—I daresay they are not, but in the Act no provision is made for removing them.

Viscount Llandaff.

1918. The workhouse is the place they would be removed to under the ordinary law, is it not?—The workhouse under the ordinary law for any child presenting itself, or any parent presenting a child; but an ordinary person presenting a child I do not think comes under the ordinary law.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1919. Could not the inspector take it to the workhouse?—He could take them, but the workhouse authorities are not bound to take a child from an inspector. We have had to get a special power to get magistrates' orders admitted into the union. Any parent presenting himself with a child, or any destitute child presenting itself, would be admitted.

Viscount Llandaff.

1920. Or anybody presenting a child of tender years found, say, in the street?—If it is found in

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

in the street the constable can take it under the Industrial Schools Act, to be dealt with temporarily; but he cannot take it to the union authorities to be dealt with by them permanently. In our Consolidated Act we got powers, in Section 11 I think it is, to compel unions to receive, with the sanction of the Local Government Board. The union authorities say, If persons could make ventures in public institutions, and, on finding they were a failure, cast the children on the workhouse, where would the parish rates be in some districts? If a person is found destitute in the street at any age a constable may take him to the union.

Chairman.

1921. Would not the ordinary law be sufficient on this point?—We have had a large experience of the ordinary law, and found workhouses shut by the dozen to us, and we went to Parliament with a brief justifying Parliament in passing a

Chairman—continued.

new section requiring guardians, when children were sent by magistrates, to be received. It was only in a few cases that that was necessary, because on the whole the guardians work amicably with us, and have always done so; but I think it very desirable that there should be some provision that it should be in the power of the authority, whoever it may be, legally to use the workhouse and at once.

1922. In Clause 16, you say: "In the application of this Act to Scotland"; does it apply to Ireland?—This Act is to be applied in the same way as the old Act. It is intended to apply to the United Kingdom.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1923. This Bill of yours now before us is called "Safety of Nurse Children"; you gave another title, I think, some time ago?—I spoke of it as an Act for the "protection of nurse children and of children trained for profit."

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been recalled, is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1924. You put in a return which was asked for the other day recording the legitimate and illegitimate births and deaths in Salford?—That is so, for a large number of years.

1925. From 1877 to 1894?—Yes (*handing in the return; see Appendix*).

1926. From which I see that of legitimate infants there were 121,816 births, and 21,366 deaths under one year; and of illegitimate infants there were 5,372 births, and 1,993 deaths; and the proportion of deaths to 1,000 births was, in the case of legitimate infants, 175, and in the case of illegitimate infants 371?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1927. But that is subject to the deduction which you referred to the other day as to the number of children who are registered at their birth as legitimate and at death as illegitimate?—Yes; I referred to a law which prevails almost universally through England and Wales.

1928. By a law you do not mean an enactment?—No, I meant to say it is what one really observes to be a law. My reason for putting that return before the Committee, in addition to the others which I have already put in, is, that I could not get out the figures when last I was examined in time for your Lordships. I cannot, and I am afraid you cannot, get any more information on that subject; it is complete as far as I know; and your Lordships will allow that the figures for those three towns give particulars of a large number of legitimate and illegitimate deaths in the aggregate; I think the figures are as reliable as they can be made.

(0.95.)

P 2

mothers'

7 May 1896.]

MR. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

mothers' meetings of their districts, to use all their influence to induce those they visit to attend regularly at their respective places of worship, and to send their children to school. In their weekly report they must (i.) mention general sanitary state of house visited. (a) Number of rooms and number of occupants. (b) Presence of bad smells; if present, are they such as to arise from deficient ventilation or from bad drainage? (c) State of the walls and floors. (ii.) Report upon general mode of living, especially with regard to personal and general cleanliness. (iii.) Report upon the feeding of children, especially of those under two years old. (a) Is the baby nursed by the mother, or partly nursed and partly fed by hand? If the latter, state upon what it is fed. (iv.) Report upon any case or cases of illness in the house. (a) Nature of disease. If contagious, when and how supposed to have been contracted. (b) How many of the family are affected? (c) Is there a doctor in attendance? If so, state how far and in what way they have assisted" (that is how far the district visitors have assisted) "the people in carrying out his orders with regard to sanitary precautions." Your Lordships will see that the rules laid down for the guidance of the district visitors are about as complete as they could be.

1931. There is an enormous amount of clerical work to be done, apparently?—An enormous amount.

Viscount Llandaff.

1932. These ladies have no right to enter any house?—And I think that is the secret of their success.

1933. That is what I thought. Do they meet with any difficulties practically?—If I might associate myself with them I would say that we did not go about as policemen.

1934. I mean, do they meet with difficulties, or are they admitted willingly to all the houses?—Very willingly.

1935. They come as friends, and there is no objection to their coming in?—That is so.

1936. There is no necessity to put a clause in the Act of Parliament giving them the right of entry?—No, if this were done there would be a difficulty at once.

1937. "Irrespective of creed and circumstances" you read. Do they visit the houses of shopkeepers?—As a rule they visit the cottages of the poor; and on the sixth page of this same report you will see the number of cottages in each district, that is to say the number practically of houses with less than four rooms, or with four or three or two rooms in each. The number of cottages your Lordships will see is given for each district in Manchester, and the number of visits paid to each of those cottages. There are 13 districts in Manchester, and the number of cottages in each of those districts is shown, and also the number of visits paid to the houses in each district.

1938. Then there are two visits to each cottage per annum?—Yes, it averages about that.

1939. Nineteen thousand cottages and 35,000 ordinary visits?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1940. And do these districts cover the whole of Manchester?—They cover the whole of Manchester. I beg pardon, that is not the case; they cover the whole of the poorer parts of Manchester. I am sure that the ladies would say that they wanted to extend their operations if they could; it is a question of money.

1941. May we practically take it that, speaking of the poor parts of Manchester generally, every house is thus being visited now?—As far as possible and as far as the visiting powers go.

Viscount Llandaff.

1942. Every house of the cottage class?—Every house of the cottage class; we specifically term them cottages.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1943. But it is a system which, roughly speaking, is co-extensive with the whole town of Manchester, the poor parts of it I mean?—I would rather say the poorest parts; I am afraid not all the poor parts. That is in contemplation and will be carried out we hope some day.

Chairman.

1944. Where do the funds come from; these people are paid salaries?—A portion of those funds are derived by subscriptions, and you will see that the various ladies subscribe a very considerable sum every year towards the payment of these women, and the rest is contributed by the Corporation.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1945. Can you give us roughly an idea what the Corporation pay to them in a year?—I am afraid I cannot give you the figures.

1946. In the balance sheet here those payments do not appear?—No, and I am not able to explain why; I am not quite sure about it.

Viscount Llandaff.

1947. Look at page 44; you see a donation there, "Lord Mayor of Manchester, Clarke and Marshall's bequest," but it is only 5*l.*?—That is since my time.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1948. But you speak with some hesitation as to whether the system is subsidised from the rates?—I know that it is, definitely.

Viscount Llandaff.

1949. But under what authority?—The work of the Ladies' Health Society Visitors is a sanitary work, and is done under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health, and as such of course can be paid for by the Corporation. It is definite sanitary work, and, if I may say so, is work of the very first possible importance from a sanitary point of view.

Chairman.

1950. And does it have a beneficial result in the death-rate of Manchester, so that it is less there than in other large towns?—The death-rate of Manchester is steadily falling; it has fallen in recent years to a lower figure than it ever reached before

7 May 1896.]

MR. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

before the last extension of the city; but that is probably to a great extent because of that extension.

1951. I am afraid we are getting a little wide of our subject, but I will put this question: Do these ladies come across many of these children that are put out?—I have no doubt they do.

1952. You do not know what their proceedings are when they do come across them?—Yes; their course of proceeding would be at once to communicate with the Medical Officer of Health. If it was a case to refer to the police it would be referred to the police; but we never used to like to do that if we could possibly help it.

1953. I believe there is one registered house in Manchester?—I cannot speak definitely on that point; there are a large number of houses in which children are looked after, and looked after satisfactorily in the way of charity; but that is not what your Lordship means, I take it?

1954. No; I mean under the Act?—I cannot tell you about that.

1955. I presume from what you told us the other day that the re-act on the Act is not administered as an Act in Manchester, is because of the efficient supervision which this large committee of lady visitors is able to give?—So far as I was concerned, whilst I was there as Medical Officer of Health, I found no necessity to put the Act in operation. I suppose in certain cases it must be in operation; I cannot say.

1956. Then this arrangement is purely a voluntary arrangement on the part of the inhabitants?—Entirely.

1957. Do you know if such a society exists anywhere else?—I believe that in Glasgow a certain number of health visitors have been employed for many years by the Sanitary Department; but there is nothing of the kind in England, so far as I know, except in Manchester and Salford.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

MR. THOMAS JOHN BARNARDO, F.R.C.S., is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1964. You are the founder of the homes which go by your name?—Yes.

1965. And you board out a considerable number of children at the present moment?—Yes.

1966. I believe about 1,900?—The exact numbers are 1,751.

1967. One thousand seven hundred and fifty-one boys and girls?—Boys and girls and infants.

1968. They are boarded out?—They are boarded out at present.

1969. All over the country?—Yes.

1970. And how many of these are under five years of age, and would come under the Bill?—448.

1971. That is about 30 per cent. of them?—Yes, a little less than that; and of that number 292 are under two years.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

1958. I understand you to say that in the Public Health Act there is enough to enable this machinery to be put in force anywhere?—I should think so, regarded in the light of sanitary work.

1959. About the cost, nothing appears in the balance-sheet about any contribution by the Corporation?—I am afraid I cannot explain that. I think I can put it pretty clearly before the Committee by saying that a definite number of the female district health visitors are paid by the Corporation, and they are, therefore, the servants of the Corporation.

Chairman.

1960. They are paid directly by the Corporation, and their salaries would not appear in these accounts, you mean?—I presume they would not; I cannot say that that is the reason why they do not appear, but of the facts I was mentioning I have accurate information.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1961. Are you speaking of a substantial contribution, not a mere question of 5*l.*?—No; the visitors I speak of are paid; they are the servants of the Corporation, but they are connected with the Ladies' Health Society in this respect, that their work is superintended by the ladies of the Health Society on behalf of the Corporation.

Chairman.

1962. I do not know whether you made it quite clear to the Committee whether your experience makes you in favour of the Bill as a whole, or against it?—I am, on the whole, decidedly in favour of it.

1963. You are in favour of an extension of the law?—Yes, I am sure that it is wanted; it is, I understand, a general Bill, and refers to the whole country.

Chairman—continued.

1972. You have careful rules with regard to the boarding out of your children, have you not?—Yes.

1973. And you exercise supervision over them?—Yes, very close supervision; I produce a copy of our rules for ordinary boarding out (*handing in the same*). You asked me if I boarded out all over the country, and I said, yes; that is not strictly true; that is true only as regards 137 of the auxiliary boarding-out scheme; 1,614, who are among the generally boarded out, are in these districts marked on this map, that is to say in the south and east of England; the 137 who are boarded out under what we call our auxiliary boarding-out scheme, are all over the kingdom, some being in Scotland.

1974. Do you find that you have considerable difficulty

P 3

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

difficulty in finding suitable foster-parents?—There is some difficulty but not such as opposes a real barrier to boarding out.

1975. Do you think that the provisions of the Bill would interfere with your being able to obtain respectable foster-parents?—If it is passed as now printed, yes.

1976. I think I may say on the part of the Committee that there is no desire to subject institutions which are responsibly and carefully managed, to registration and inspection as provided by the Bill?—The principal Act, which is referred to in this Bill, excludes in the 13th Section, absolutely, institutions established for the protection and care of infants; but even if that be carried into the new Bill it is not sufficient for our purpose, because if you demand the registration of those with whom we board out children you oppose an effectual barrier to our getting good foster-parents, and the better the foster-parents are, the more certainly will they object to registration and consequent inspection.

1977. Inspection by whom?—By the officers appointed by the Bill.

1978. Do you find that they object to inspection by local committees?—No, because the local committee is formed in the village or hamlet where the woman lives. The local committee have recommended her to us as a suitable foster-parent, and therefore they are regarded as her friends. That local committee generally consists of say the clergyman of the parish and of ladies who are well known, and their visits are rather acceptable than otherwise.

1979. Then is what you mean, that in your opinion the provisions of this Bill are not needed for such societies as yours?—That is so; and not only so, but that they ought not to be extended to those with whom we board out children.

1980. It has been suggested to us by the secretary of a kindred society to yours that the difficulty might possibly be got over by the society being certified or licensed by some central authority, by some Government Department, and that then the society so licensed should practically have a free hand under details to be settled by that Government Department; is that your opinion?—That might meet the case so far as societies like my own are concerned if freedom from registration was not to be obtained on any other terms.

1981. You would not object to that?—I would not object to that except in a case of this sort. Many of our institutions are already certified under the Local Government Board.

1982. Then they would be exempt?—They would be; but some of our institutions are not, and the Local Government Board would probably not certify them simply on the ground, say, that the fabric was not such as meets with their approval in the first instance. But it is good enough for our purpose; and these uncertified branches are under the same management as the certified branches; yet according to the Act we would not be able to board out a child from an uncertified branch.

1983. That is not quite the point. I want to know this: Would you have any objection to one of the Government Departments, either the Home Office or the Local Government Board,

Chairman—continued.

making inquiries into your system of boarding out, the *bona fides* and the status of your committee, your rules, and various other items to satisfy themselves as to the stability of the society. I am assuming that you are an unknown society which applies for registration; would you in such circumstances have any objection to submitting yourself to the Local Government Board in order to obtain a certificate?—It would depend very much upon what that would involve. If it was merely a question of registration we could have no objection; but it might involve such changes in administration, for example, as we would not be prepared to carry out. I could not say that on the face of the thing there would be no objection to registration under a Government Department.

1984. What do you mean by your "uncertified branches"?—Our whole institutions are voluntary institutions as contrasted with certified institutions, but being voluntary and not certified under the Reformatories Act or the Industrial Schools Act, we apply to the Local Government Board to certify some of our branches, and they have examined certain of our institutions and have issued their certificate in their favour, while others remain without certificates.

Viscount Llandaff.

1985. Then you have several houses, have you, scattered over the country?—We have 82 branches scattered all over the country, and some of these are certified. Our object in getting certified under the Local Government Board, which does not interfere with our administration, is to enable boards of guardians to transfer children to these branches and make payments for their maintenance which otherwise the Local Government Board would not sanction.

Chairman.

1986. Amongst those 82 institutions do you include any of the places that you have just mentioned to us where these children are boarded out?—No; children who are boarded out are necessarily not in institutions at all.

1987. I did not know what you called an institution?—A home having its children resident in it, and a resident staff appointed for the purpose of control and training and education.

1988. What is the average number you have in these 82 branches, in each?—They differ so much I could not give you an average number, because the smallest have but 15 girls and the largest have 480 boys. We are especially anxious that this Bill may not be permitted to check or hinder our boarding out system, because, apart from its other great advantages, the mortality and sickness of children boarded out is so much smaller than in the case of children brought up in any other way whatever.

1989. What age are the children when they generally come to you?—They come to us mere babes of even a few hours old up to great fellows of 17 years of age.

1990. Do you take them in at once without any inquiry?—Certainly not; our investigation is very keen and very thorough. We do not admit any unless absolutely destitute; unless there

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

there are no relatives of any sort upon whom a legal claim can be made for the child's support.

1991. Are your children, those that you have in your charge, mostly legitimate or illegitimate?—I would say mostly legitimate, but with a very large number of illegitimate.

1992. And what do you do in the case of an illegitimate child that is brought to you by the mother who wants to get a home for it?—We would first institute a searching inquiry into all the circumstances of the candidate. For example, if the child was under one year old, we would endeavour to discover the putative father, and compel the mother to apply for an affiliation order, and if she declined, we would decline to assist her, on the ground that otherwise our institutions might be made mere coverts for licentiousness. Suppose that a woman applies for an affiliation order and does not obtain it, or, having obtained it, obtains a small grant, a weekly grant for the maintenance of the child, we would then assist her in some adequate way to maintain her child.

1993. And then you put these children out with foster parents?—A large number of the children so admitted are placed out with foster parents.

1994. And, of course, the infants have to be hand-nursed, I suppose?—Yes; but I must inform the Committee that I have a home for infants as well. We have a large institution of our own, for infants under two years of age, which it would not be suitable to board out, infants which come to us, for example, subject to disease.

1995. Then you do not board out infants till they get to two years of age?—We board out infants at the very earliest age if they are such as could be boarded out; but to board out a child who needs constant surgical or medical care in a hamlet with a poor woman who has little knowledge of such cases would be unwise.

1996. And then, having boarded them out, you take every precaution to see that they are properly visited and fed and looked after?—Yes; if you refer to the rule book you will observe that the boarding-out rules involve a weekly visit by the local committee; but in addition to that we have our own visitors, properly qualified medical women, among whom all our boarded-out children are divided.

1997. What do you mean by "medical women"?—I mean educated, who are qualified as medical practitioners; and these ladies visit the cases and, with such experience as only a woman can employ in these matters, report upon the children, and that is independent of the report of the local committee. Such visits are paid at the very least twice in the year; I mean the surprise visits of medical women.

1998. Do you find that the foster parents object to the visits of these people at all?—Well, we have had objection raised, but it is generally overcome, because, not being bound by any hard-and-fast rule, we adapt our action to the particular case.

Viscount Llandaff.

1999. Does that mean that you do not visit those who object?—No; but we endeavour to convince them of the value of visitation, and to visit them as seldom as we can.

(0.95.)

Chairman.

2000. Have you any personal experience of the registered and unregistered houses under the existing Act?—No; I mean to say I have no experience of the necessity of registration, and have not made inquiries. To avoid trouble I have never placed out more than one infant under 12 months old in any one house, to meet the requirements of the principal Act.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2001. Would you do so if the Act allowed it?—No.

2002. It is not because of the Act that you abstain?—No; I would not in any case consider it right to place out more than one infant under 12 months old in any house. May I suggest that neither of the Acts, neither the principal Act nor this Bill, proposes to put any limitation upon the number of young children under two or three years who are taken into any registered house.

Chairman.

2003. I think that is left to be decided by the registering authority?—I know that you give discretion to the registering authority, but I thought that I might mention the point.

2004. Then you cannot speak from your own knowledge either of the advantages or the disadvantages of registration?—I can only say that as a member of the public taking an interest in the subject I have formed an opinion.

2005. What is your opinion?—My opinion is that registration would be of great benefit in the generality of cases, but unless registration is accompanied by some other provisions I can hardly see how the waste of infant life will be checked.

2006. You think, therefore, that in the generality of cases registration would do much good, but that you require considerable exemptions to protect *bona fide* charity; is that what you mean?—That is so; and that something more than registration will be needed if the waste of infant life is to be checked.

2007. What do you mean by "something more than registration"?—I mean that if a house is only registered, if the woman who seeks registration satisfies the authority who grants her registration, and she desires, at the first application, to be registered for, say, five or six infants, the moment that is done the door is opened for the waste of infant life to continue, as these children, who cannot be identified, who cannot in any way be marked so as to be known, may be changed over several times, and the fact, therefore, that the house is registered may rather give a facility for crime than otherwise.

2008. You are talking of cases like these Reading ones?—Yes; these crimes now before the public. I mean that a great criminal would perhaps find the Bill as it now is rather a help to the commission of crime than a hindrance.

2009. I do not quite follow you there. If a house was registered, registration implies also visitation?—Yes.

2010. If the person who visited the house was worth anything at all, I should think he or she would be able to detect before very long that a

P 4

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7 May 1896]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

rapid change of infants was going on?—Everything would depend upon the area of their visitation and the number of infants in each house. Everyone knows that the illegitimate infants, the children of unmarried mothers, are generally in a very poor state of health; the change that takes place in two months is such as to make it impossible to identify them. On this subject I have closely questioned my own experienced helpers, and they say the changes that take place in two or three months in any young infant make it impossible for those who only casually see it to recognise it again.

2011. Have you any suggestions to meet those defects which you say exist?—Yes. The suggestion I would make would be, first, that the number under three years of age admitted into any registered house shall be absolutely limited by the Bill, not by the discretion of the registrar, to one, unless in the case of twins; then that the inspection of such registered houses where infants under the age of three years are, should be not less often than fortnightly, or at most monthly; and that the area for each inspector (who, of course, must be a woman) should be limited. The reason why I mention three years of age as the limitation is this: that after that they can talk, under three or under two years of age they cannot talk; and that is a very important element in the whole subject of identification.

2012. But your first proposal would not prevent a person, who was determined to commit crime, from taking in one child at a time and getting rid of it and taking another?—It would render detection, I think, much more likely and more rapid. An inspector who visits a house will, of course, take notes of her visitation, and such notes would comprehend a general description of the child.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2013. Could you or anybody give such a description of a child of 11 months old as would enable it without fail to be identified two months afterwards?—Not perhaps by others and if it were mixed up with other children; but I am supposing that the inspector is a woman, and that her visits are repeated and not less frequent than a fortnight or a month. I think then she could, and only thus can she, retain any clear conception in her mind of the personality of each individual child. I think if there was but one infant in each house and the conditions remained the same, it is possible that identification would be much more rapid.

Chairman.

2014. May I take it, then, that you are in favour of an extension of the law provided it does not interfere with your institution?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2015. Why do you think it is that the existing Act is not put in practice more widely in England than it is by the appointment of inspectors and so forth?—That has always been a puzzle to me. I do not quite know why. We have always wondered why the existing Act was not carried out more. I am afraid I cannot offer an opinion as to why it is.

2016. Have you come in contact at all with

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

problems connected with the Act, that is to say, in your work in so many places have you ever found yourself liable to be checked by the Act if you had been acting illegally?—I think if I had sought, for example, to place two where only one was permitted, I might have been brought in some way under the restrictions of the Act.

2017. Of course you might legally, but do you mean that it would have probably happened?—I think it is possible that I might have boarded out more than the number of infants permitted by the Act in houses which were not registered, and no opposition would have been offered to my doing so.

2018. You are speaking, of course, of outside London; you exempt London?—I am speaking of the suburbs.

2019. But in London the Act is in full operation?—I think in London it is more difficult; but we board out very little in London.

2020. Do you ever use registered houses?—No, I have never boarded out children in registered houses. We have made inquiries in a few instances, and we would have liked to use them, but they are not, as a rule, of a sufficiently good quality, and that is an important point; that the registered houses under the Act are not, I think, of as high a quality as houses which are unregistered and are available to us for boarding out; and I explain that by saying that the best houses will not register.

2021. And do you think that the fact that the best houses do not register at present is due to the fear of the foster parent lest by applying for registration she should be ticketed as a baby farmer; or do you think it is for some other cause?—I think it is more likely the fear of inspection and interference; it may also of course arise from a desire to avoid the odium of the term, but I rather think it is the shrinking from anyone coming into the house by right to examine it when they like.

2022. But you are speaking there rather conjecturally than from experience, because you tell us that practically, the Act being a dead letter elsewhere than in London, the question has not arisen?—No; but in some instances, shortly after the passing of the Act, inquiries were made by our people as to the effect of registration.

2023. What do you mean "our people"?—The people whom I have under my control, our administrators who seek out these foster-parents; and then we found a very strong objection to register on the score that they were not willing to submit to inspection; they were not willing to have an officer come into their house whenever he thought proper.

2024. Do you think that would equally apply to a lady, if the officer were a lady?—No, I think probably it would be less likely to apply to a lady.

2025. What they are afraid of is a man in uniform?—They are afraid of official inspection. The official character of it frightens a large number of people who would be very willing indeed to take children, and would be probably the best foster-parents.

2026. Under the boarding-out system, sanctioned by the Local Government Board, there is inspection of the houses where the children are boarded?—That inspection is very much like our

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7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

own inspection; that is to say, they send a medical woman, or some other qualified person, generally a lady, to inspect the houses where the children are, and subsequently to inspect the children themselves.

2027. And if similar provisions were made for such inspection as this Act contemplates, the objection to it would *pro tanto* disappear?—Probably; but there would be very great difficulties in doing it.

2028. In what direction?—In carrying out such inspection under this Bill the expense would be enormous. The Local Government Board not only sends its inspector but places out the children; consequently it selects a given area, and when the inspector has to go she only travels over a given area; but let it be supposed that no central authority had the placing out of the children, but that they were placed out by unmarried mothers all over the kingdom wherever they could get a foster-parent, that would involve long journeys for inspection, and there might only be one or two houses registered and to be inspected over a wide area.

2029. And therefore no proper inspector appointed, you mean?—That might come to be so because of the great expense involved. By this map you see we limit our boarding out to definite areas so as to render the cost of inspection less. The more widely we scatter the greater the cost; and if the placing out of the children were done, not by a central authority, but by women everywhere who desire to find a home with foster-parents, that difficulty would be increased immensely.

2030. Would you say that, speaking generally, we are right in believing that the huge majority of the children whose protection is contemplated in such legislation as this are illegitimate?—Certainly.

2031. What is the ordinary course in your experience of a woman, a girl, who has a child, and wishes to dispose of it properly and respectably; I mean one that is poor. I note your paper here, with this auxiliary boarding out branch; but what is your experience of what she ordinarily does now?—Her first effort is to get a foster-parent; that she does either by the recommendation of some one whom she knows or she advertises, or replies to an advertisement, and as in these cases secrecy and privacy is a large element in it, so far as her character is concerned, she prefers to reply to an advertisement.

2032. Have you made it part of your work at all to follow up advertisements?—I did a few years ago; I replied to every advertisement that appeared in four or five of the leading papers; and as I said, in answer to another question, I found out that in hardly one of those cases where the advertisement was issued, and we replied to it, were they people that we would place the child with under any circumstances.

Viscount Llandaff.

2033. Not fit, you mean?—Not fit, neither the surroundings nor the character. Then when a girl (to continue my answer to the Bishop's question) gets such a foster-parent, her first desire is to obtain relief from the burden of the child. She agrees to pay

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Viscount Llandaff—continued.

practically any sum they ask; 4s., or 5s., or 6s. a week for the child, and does pay it for two or three weeks, or perhaps a month, or perhaps a little longer. She is then no longer able to pay, and she practically deserts the child, who is thrown upon the foster-parent. In some cases a sum of money would be paid down, but those are the exceptional cases, where the girls have been in a better position, and have not been either domestic servants or employed in factories or workshops. Then the foster-parent finds the child thrown on her hands; it is not properly paid for, and as a consequence it very often is not properly attended to, a kind of rough justice being meted out to it: "This child is not paid for, *ergo*, this child is not to be carefully attended to;" and even if there be other children in the foster-parent's house, I have known the child who is not paid for to suffer, while the others were properly provided for.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2034. To come back to your general view as to this proposed Bill; what are the directions in which you think that such legislation would be specially beneficial, because several of your previous answers have rather seemed to show that the benefit would be doubtful?—I have no doubt in my own mind that, generally speaking, registration would be a benefit. I think the benefit would be increased if the number of infants under three years of age to be admitted to any registered house were strictly limited by the Bill to one. And then I add what the Chairman has already said, that not only institutions like our own should be exempted from registration, but that the foster-parents we select should also be exempted from registration.

2035. The dislike to registration which you spoke of just now would of course have to be faced by a very much larger number of people if this Bill became law, and especially if there were such further restrictions as you have just now spoken of: do you consider that that objection would disappear in experience or not?—I am not quite clear what further restrictions I have suggested which would be a hindrance, except the limitation of numbers where a child was so young.

2036. That is it?—It is difficult to say whether in the working of it the objection to registration would disappear or not, so much would depend upon the way it was worked. It might be worked in the letter; it might be worked in a very aggravating form so as to create a strong feeling of aversion in a locality; for example, against registering at all, and if it did then it might be impossible to find a foster-parent in that locality because a prejudice would have been created against registration.

2037. We understood you to tell us just now that you would object to have the foster-parents you employed registered, because you would find it more difficult to get the best people to take children owing to their dislike to registration; but you recommend that for the country generally we should demand such registration. Should we not then, with the exception of those who come under your society and similar societies, deter those foster-parents who are now ready to take children respectably from doing

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7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

so?—I think you would, undoubtedly; I think you would generally lower the class and quality of the foster-parent throughout the country.

2038. You would deter the best class of foster-parents from assuming that position?—Undoubtedly.

2039. And you admit that that would be what would happen if we passed the Bill?—I think so.

2040. And yet you would still say, Go ahead?—Yes, because the advantages to be gained are even greater than the disadvantages to be feared.

2041. Will you expand that a little?—I think cases of cruelty and neglect due to baby farming would absolutely disappear. Limit the number of infants to one, and then apply registration generally, and the great mortality arising out of baby farming would disappear.

Chairman.

2042. There would always be babies to be farmed, would there not?—There would, but then they would be dealt with in the legitimate channels suggested by the Bill.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2043. Lord Thring suggests to me this: In order to save a few baby farmers you would condemn the average boarded-out child to worse foster-parents?—"Worse," of course, is a relative term. When one speaks of the quality of foster-parents one has necessarily to speak in respect to a very superior standard, but when the large mortality of illegitimate children is contrasted with the mortality of legitimate children one feels that the gain to be obtained by the registration of all would be a very large gain, and not a small one, even if it lessened the mortality of illegitimate children by only one-half.

Viscount Llandaff.

2044. But you ought to compare illegitimate and legitimate children put out to nurse; there is no difference then?—But the greater number of those who will be boarded out and who are taken into baby farms are not legitimate but illegitimate.

2045. What kills the illegitimate more quickly is the fact that they have no parental care, and are put under strangers and huddled about the country?—That is so; and especially when the payments by the mother cease as is often the case within a few weeks; this breeds indifference on the part of those who have them in charge.

2046. But I understood you to say that registration by itself is worth nothing; you must have inspection also?—Of course registration by itself is a mere word, except so far as it means some investigation of the character of the foster-parent beforehand.

2047. And you think no inspection is worth talking about unless fortnightly and over a small area?—Not exactly; I only suggested that for children who could not talk, those under three, with regard to whom identification is difficult; but a great many children are boarded out who are over three, and to whom such exact stipulations need not apply.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2048. You said just now that if the stringency of this law were extended and the law universally

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

applied, baby-farming would disappear (I do not press the exact words), but is it not the case that in the worst sense of that word, that is to say in the cases of children who are deliberately made away with, who are taken not for purposes of profit of a legitimate sort or a plausible sort, but deliberately to make away with them, those are not people who would come under any law, make it what you like—I mean they would evade any restrictions; the people who are likely to register are not the scoundrels who intend to murder the children, and that process of murdering would be apparently, as far as I can see, carried on where it is carried on now without much greater difficulty?—But if this Bill becomes law the foster-parents who accept children must register; if they accept children without registration they immediately bring upon themselves police surveillance, and the evil is checked shortly. A woman may perhaps receive and keep some three or four children for a week or a fortnight without registration, but you cannot contemplate her having them much longer, if this becomes law, without its coming under the observation of those upon whom the law has cast the duty of carrying it out; that is my answer.

Chairman.

2049. Are many nurse children, that is children rescued from baby farms, brought to you?—We have had some, but very few.

2050. Not many?—Not many; they have been chiefly brought to me through Mr. Waugh's society, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; we receive children from them continually.

2051. I understood Mr. Waugh to express an exactly contrary opinion to what you gave just now as to the effects of registration; I understood Mr. Waugh to say that he thought that if registration was extended it would tend to level up the class of baby farmers, and that we should have a better class and not a worse class?—Mr. Waugh can only offer an opinion and a conjecture, and it is possible that his opinion and conjecture are better founded than mine; nevertheless, I stand by my own view.

2052. You told the Bishop, I think, at the beginning of his examination that you had not had any experience of registered houses?—I have never visited children in registered houses.

2053. I am informed that you are now contributing to three children in registered houses?—It is quite likely; but if so this is an exceptional case, and an exception that has not come under my personal notice; it is dealt with as an exception.

Viscount Llandaff.

2054. Do you avoid registered houses?—No, I do not avoid them, but we do not need them; our system of boarding out has not rendered it necessary; registration, I take it, under the old Act, applied only to where more than one infant under 12 months was boarded out, but as we never board out more than one under 12 months in one house I have not found it necessary to have resort to registered houses.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2055. Do you consider the system of taking children for hire to be one which can be profitably

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

ably carried on if the children are rightly cared for?—Profitably by the foster-parents, do you mean?—Undoubtedly.

2056. What terms would you consider profitable?—Our average payment is 5s. 6d., but we pay 7s. for children under three, 6s. until the child reaches four, and after four, 5s. A child under three requires the care of one person, if it is to be properly attended to. At those rates there is undoubtedly a profit.

2057. Those rates, of course, are very high as practice goes?—No, we average 5s. 6d.

2058. What is the Poor Law average?—Five shillings, I think.

Chairman.

2059. And the Foundling Hospital is 6s.?—Yes. I know that in some country parishes, where the boarding out is done immediately round the local union, they get them at lower rates, 4s., and so on, but where I have inspected some of these justice has not been done to the children, in my opinion.

Viscount Llandaff.

2060. Four shillings, and 5s. for infants?—I think all round; they do not make a difference.

2061. I mean they only pay 4s. or 5s. for a child for whom you would pay 7s.?—Only in some cases; in those cases where they are boarded out immediately round the local union. I do not think I have stated the number I have boarded out. The total number we have boarded out since we began has been 3,841.

2062. How many years have you been boarding out?—We began boarding out in October 1886.

2063. You have got 1,751 boarded out now, and in all those years the total is what you have stated?—Yes, the total number is 3,841.

2064. It began on a small scale?—Yes, it began on a small scale; and as children remain boarded out until 14 or thereabouts, the changes are not very frequent.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2065. Why do you have so many institutions where the children are congregated, if, as I understood you to say and as others say, it is so much better for the children to be boarded out; is it on grounds of economy?—No, but because boarding out is not applicable to every child; it is only applicable to certain classes of children. For example, we have to consider in boarding out the age of the child, we have to consider its physical condition, and its relatives. The latter are often a great barrier; in some cases the relatives insist upon seeing the child so often in the year; those cases we cannot board out. Then, again, no boarding out is in our judgment of value unless it is begun before the child is seven years of age. Well, a great number of our children come to us over seven; consequently they are not eligible for boarding out.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered,—That this Committee be adjourned to Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 12^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH, IN THE CHAIR.

MR. HUGH PERCY DUNN, F.R.C.S., having been called in ; is Examined, as follows :

Chairman.

2073. You are a Fellow, I believe, of the Royal College of Surgeons of England?—Yes.

2074. And you are on the staff of the West London Hospital?—Yes.

2075. May I ask how many years' experience you have had as a medical practitioner?—I qualified in 1876 ; I took my Fellowship in the year 1880.

2076. I believe that you have been interested in this question of what is known as baby-farming?—I have.

2077. And you have been writing some special articles and making inquiries, I believe, on behalf of the "British Medical Journal"?—I have, at the desire of the editor, Mr. Ernest Hart.

2078. May I ask what sort of investigation you have made ; how you proceeded?—I first of all ascertained all the facts in connection with the former inquiry in 1871 ; I went carefully through the Blue Book of that date, and ascertained all that I could learn in respect to the inquiry then ; and subsequently I was appointed a Commissioner to interview certain gentlemen who had paid a good deal of attention to the subject, and from whom was thought that I could acquire information.

2079. When you say you were appointed a Commissioner, you mean that you were sent as a Commissioner by the editor of the "British Medical Journal"?—Yes.

2080. And what did you do then ; how did you get your information ; did you go and investigate any cases yourself?—No, I did nothing of that sort, because I found that when I went to Mr. Spencer of the London County Council a great deal of that ground had been covered, and it did not appear to be necessary then to make further inquiries beyond those that had been so admirably done by the London County Council.

2081. Therefore you have no personal knowledge of registered or unregistered houses?—No.

2082. And you have no personal knowledge as to the effect of registration?—No.

2083. You have read the Bill, I believe, which is before the House now?—I have, and I (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

incorporated it in my report in the "British Medical Journal."

2084. Have you got a copy of your report?—I have. It consists of six articles, beginning on the 22nd of February and going on to the 28th of March. I merely brought it down here to answer questions from.

2085. Speaking on the general principles of the Bill, are you in favour of the second clause of the Bill which provides for the extension of the provisions of the present Act to children of five years of age?—As the result of my investigations into this, I am decidedly in favour of the extension of the Act.

2086. Can you give any special reasons?—Well, I think it is proved by the investigations which I made from the chief constables of England, that the Act really is a dead letter in the provinces ; that is to say that under present circumstances there are only two registered houses in England apart from London.

2087-8. You made inquiries in the provinces?—Yes, after doing so in London. These are incorporated also in my report.

Chairman.] But the Committee have not had an opportunity of seeing your report, you will remember.

Lord Kinnaird.

2089. Did your inquiries extend all over England?—I made inquiries of the chief constables of about 28 of the largest towns in England.

Chairman.

2090. Did you see them or write to them?—I wrote to them ; I have their answers here.

Lord Kinnaird.

2091. Did you include Scotland?—Scotland, as far as Edinburgh only.

Q 3

2092. In

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

2092. In the first portion of your report you deal with the baby farming system and its evils, and you give its history; but I think the Committee are fairly well acquainted with the general lines on which baby farming is carried out. And you also give an account of the working of the Infant Life Protection Act in London, with which, I think, we are also familiar; and now, I think, comes your report on this Bill. With regard to the extension of the age, you say that from the information which you obtained in the provinces you found that the Act was to a great extent a dead letter?—That is so.

2093. How many registered houses have you come across in the provinces?—Only two throughout the provinces.

2094. Where were they?—One was at Manchester and the other was at Bath.

2095. Do you know how many children were kept in each house?—No information was given me upon that subject; it was only that the houses were registered.

2096. And, I suppose, they were registered by the ordinary local authority; there was no special inspector told off for them?—No.

2097. Have you got any remarks to make with regard to the numbers of illegitimate births in these large towns?—Yes; I made an analysis of the number of illegitimate births as recorded in the Registrar General's Report for the year 1894, which was the nearest that I could get to this date, and I made out that, excluding Manchester and Bath, the number of illegitimate children born in that year, 1894, in 27 of the large towns in England, was, approximately, 5,000.

2098. That list does not include London, I suppose?—It excludes London; and it also excludes Manchester and Bath, because there was a registered house in Manchester, and a registered house in Bath. To this large total the Infant Life Protection Act has been shown not to apply.

2099. How has it been shown not to apply?—Because, from the answers of the chief constables, I learnt that there were no registered houses in those towns.

2100. That does not necessarily show that the Act did not apply to them; it might point to the fact that the Act was not enforced?—But that comes to the same thing, almost, does it not?

Chairman.] No, I do not think it does at all.

Viscount Llandaff.

2101. So far as I have gone, and so far as the constables' answers have gone, they all say that the police make diligent inquiry, and that there is no evasion of the Act?—I refer to that in my report.

2102. For instance, I read this in one of the letters: "Persistent and regular steps are taken by the police to ascertain whether the Act is evaded. No cases of evasion are known to me"?—Yes.

2103. Here, again, a chief constable writes, in reply to your circular, "I am only able to say that in Leeds some years ago the matter was

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

taken in hand, but it was found there was little or nothing to supervise or register, so that the matter may be said to have comparatively dropped. I have received a long letter from our medical officer of health, and from that it would appear that there was really nothing in Leeds to register"?—But there were 435 illegitimate children in Leeds in 1894. The population was 222,154 in 1891, and in 1894 the births of illegitimate children were 435.

2104. Where do you get that figure from?—From the Registrar General's Report; that is to say, that 435 illegitimate children had no benefit from the Act.

2105. It does not follow that they were all put out to nurse?—That may be so; but it does not show that the Act was in force.

Chairman.

2106. If the extracts which Lord Llandaff has just read may be taken as fair samples, your inquiries may be taken to have resulted in showing that under the Act, so far as it goes, due inquiries were made in all large towns with regard to it; that is what you mean, is it not?—One conclusion that I formed with regard to the chief constables' letters was this: it would appear that no systematic inspection is resorted to by the police; that is to say, that no officials, as in London, are especially made responsible for the inquiries respecting the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act in the districts. So far as the two registered houses are concerned, no information was given with regard to the inspection carried out in the one at Manchester, while in the other it was stated that the house was visited by an inspector of police.

2107. But what I mean is this, that as far as you can gather from the replies that you have got to your questions to the chief constables, you believe that due inquiries are made by the police with regard to the existence or non-existence of baby farming in those towns in the provinces; that is what they say, is it not?—Well, the impression that I formed was that they did not know much about the Act; I may have been wrong in that impression; that was the impression I formed because their results were so entirely negative.

2108. But if they do make inquiries, and find that there is no evasion of the Act, that may point to the fact that, owing to the limited scope of the Act, there may still be a considerable number of children put out who are outside the limits of the existing Act?—That was the impression that I formed.

2109. And, therefore, that is the reason why you say that you would like to see the Act extended to children of five years of age?—That is so. Now I may also refer to this; I issued four questions; they are included in one of the letters; you will find, first, the number of licensed houses under the Act in the district; second, the system of inspection carried out; third, the cases of evasion of the Act known to the chief constable himself; and fourth, the defects in the Act, as proved by local experience of it.

2110. I have

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2110. I have the answer of the chief constable of Sunderland before me, and the answer was "nil" to all four questions?—Yes; I think I was justified in my conclusion; there are several others of the same kind.

Chairman.

2111. I see that there is one from Plymouth. Plymouth is a place, I should think, where there would be a great number of children put out. The chief constable says, "The Infant Life Protection Act has not been enforced in this borough, no circumstances having arisen to call for such action. We have an officer of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in the town, who works in conjunction with the police, and whose work undoubtedly acts as a deterrent to those who would, if they had the opportunity, infringe the Act." Here is another from Portsmouth. The town clerk says, "Your letter of the 27th ultimo to the chief constable has been handed to me, and, in reply, I beg to say that there are no licensed houses in this borough under the Infant Life Protection Act. There is, of course, therefore, no inspection of such houses. I understand, from the medical officer of health, that he has only heard of one case of evasion, and in that case the practice was discontinued before, in fact, the evasion was found out"?—I should like to draw attention to the following answer as a perfectly unique one. This was a reply to the question of systematic inspection, and the answer was, "In strict conformity with the Acts of Parliament." I have not included it in this report, but the letter is there.

Viscount Llandaff.

2112. From what place?—I cannot remember without looking at the bundle. I may say that very few chief constables categorically answered the questions.

Chairman.

2113. Do you think that extending the necessity for registration to children of five years of age would interfere with such cases as have been mentioned before this Committee; cases of children whose mother dies, or the cases of children being sent home from India and other hot climates to England?—My view is this: That Indian children are usually sent over for purposes of education, and that that being the case they are generally over five years of age. I have had several friends, at all events, who have had children sent over from India to England for education; they have all been above five years of age. I do not think the Bill would interfere with them at all.

2114. Have you anything else to call attention to with regard to the reasons for the non-administration of the Act outside London?—My reasons are explained in this report.

2115. I should be glad if you would state them to us?—Perhaps I may be allowed to read the article.

2116. I think that would be the best thing?—"It is very evident, as may be gathered from a close scrutiny of the Bill, that much time and

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

care have been expended upon the details of its clauses. Moreover, there is evidence that the details have been elaborated by those who have had an intimate acquaintance with the defective working of the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872. In this connection the hope may be expressed that due weight will be given to these facts by those who may evince a disposition to amend the Bill when it comes to be discussed by the Legislature. Upon the whole, the alterations proposed are to be approved. The clause in which it is laid down that it shall be unlawful for any person to receive for hire or reward in that behalf any infant under the age of five years, except in a registered house, is excellent. In the principal Act it will be remembered that the corresponding clause permits a person to receive one infant under the age of one year, a privilege that has done more than anything else to render the working of the Act abortive. That is my opinion. Another important clause in the Bill is that which prohibits the transference of infants from persons who receive them for hire or reward to another person without the consent of the local authority. Obviously, the principal Act makes it quite possible for evasion to be practised in this respect. A few remarks may now be made with reference to certain details with which the Bill might have dealt with advantage. In the first place, the principal Act requires amendment in the clause relating to the holding of an inquest upon the death of an infant occurring in a registered house. The discretion of whether or not an inquest is necessary is in the hands of the coroner for the district, and if a certificate of death signed by a qualified medical practitioner, be forwarded to the coroner, it is open to the latter to give an order for the burial of the infant without further inquiry. The amendment, however, which the circumstances of the case seem to call for, is to make it compulsory for an inquest to be held in every case of the death of an illegitimate child living apart from its mother. The deterrent effects of those public proceedings could not fail to stimulate the baby farmers to do their best for their charges, so as to avoid official inquiry. It may here be observed that a clause with this provision forms part of the Infant Life Protection Act of Australia, passed in the year 1890, and the coroners of the district there are of the opinion that it has had a most beneficial effect in lessening the evils of the baby-farming system. Of course, in London such a clause might not be necessary, but it should be remembered that the amendments of the Act printed above are intended to apply to the whole of the United Kingdom, in parts of which it cannot be said that the coroners and the local authorities have shown as much vigilance in enforcing the Infant Life Protection Act as is displayed by the officers of the Public Control Department of the London County Council. But there is another point to which attention may be drawn. It is possible that the best results of the working of the Act would be obtained if the local authority in all cases save that of London were made to mean the police."

Q 4

2117. That

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2117. That is, the police to register the house and inspect it?—Yes.

2118. You think that would have a conciliatory effect?—It would have a deterrent effect. That is the kind of thing I want to point out.

Chairman.

2119. You mentioned an Infant Life Protection Act in Australia; there is an Act in force there, I believe?—Yes, passed in 1890; it came into force a few years afterwards.

2120. Do you remember what particular lines that Act is on?—It is a very much more stringent Act than we could have in this country.

2121. In what way more stringent?—As to inquests; as to the thorough inspection which is carried out in the baby farms.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2122. Have you a copy of the Act you allude to?—I have here a *précis* of the Act, which I took from an Australian medical journal.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2123. In what part of Australia is the Act in force?—In Victoria; I do not think it applies to the whole of Australia, though it is called the Australian Act. It was passed in Melbourne. It was passed by the Legislature in 1890, but did not come into force till January 1893; that is to say, it did not come into force till three years afterwards.

Chairman.

2124. Dealing with the question of inquests, I gather from what you said just now, that this Australian Act makes it obligatory on the coroners in Victoria to hold an inquest on every illegitimate child that dies apart from its mother?—That is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2125. Will you give us the *précis* of the Act?—The following is a brief summary of the leading features of the Act (my impression is that it is a *précis* of it): "No person is allowed to adopt or maintain a child, apart from its mother, for a longer period than three days, unless registered by the police under the Act. The chief commissioner of police keeps a list of all persons so registered, with a description of the house, &c. The term of registration lasts only until the last day of December in the year of registration, and a new application has to be made for each year, but no fees are charged either for registration or its renewal. The police have right of entry into these registered houses, and may take a medical man with them if they deem it necessary. Each nurse is bound to keep a roll in which she enters the name, age, sex of each child below two years coming under her charge, the date of admission, and full particulars of the person from whom the child was received. In case the child is removed from the nurse, the name, address, and signature of the person receiving the child have to be entered on the roll, together with the date of removal. A copy of each such entry has to be sent to the chief commissioner of police within three days

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

of the reception or removal of each child. The police have the right to ask for these rolls and inspect them, and, if they deem fit, retain them. Falsifying the roll or furnishing false particulars of any matter that is required to be entered in the roll is punishable under the Act. If, from information received, it seems advisable to the commissioner of police to remove a registered nurse from the roll, he is empowered to at once remove the children from her charge, and place them in the charge of the department for neglected children, and leave a notice at the registered house that the registration will be cancelled within ten days. The nurse may give written notice within seven days of her intention to appeal against this removal, if she deposits the sum of 20s. with her notice. The chief secretary then appoints a time to hear the appeal, and his decision is final. Every person registered under this Act is compelled to report the death of any of her charges within 24 hours at the nearest police station, and an inquest is held on the body of the infant. A death certificate cannot be received from a medical man or registered by the registrar for deaths when it applies to an illegitimate child living apart from its mother. No infant dying under three years of age while in the care of a registered person can be buried without the production of a coroner's certificate. It lies in the power of the chief secretary to give a written order for the Act not to apply in the case of a public institution for the reception of infants, or in any special case in which he may deem it advisable. The occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child is born is obliged to give notice in writing to the deputy registrar of births in the district within three days of the birth."

Chairman.

2126. Well, the principal thing that I observe there is, first of all, that they insist upon registration of children kept more than three days apart from their mother?—Yes.

2127. Whereas in our Act it is 24 hours apart from the mother?—Yes.

2128. Have you any opinion to express upon that?—I do not think that is a very material matter. I should say that 24 hours is a very much better limit than three days; a child may easily die within three days.

2129. And they put in this first clause that, "No person is allowed to adopt or maintain a child apart from its mother," and so on, but they do not put any age; and then further down they say, "Each nurse is bound to keep a roll in which she enters the name, age, sex of each child below two years." I take it then when they speak of a child they mean a child under two years?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

2130. What is the penalty of a breach of the Act; have you got that?—It was not included in this *précis*.

Chairman.

2131. I think you might read the rest of your analysis?—It will thus be seen that the chief features

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

features of this Act differ very materially from those constituting the amendments to the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872, which appear in the Bill published in these columns last week. Perhaps the most noticeable difference in this regard is the prominent position assigned to the police in the administration of the Australian Act. Practically the whole responsibility of the Act is placed in the hands of the police authorities. A plain clothes constable is told off in each district to see that the provisions of the Act are properly complied with. Moreover, the police are expected to take the initiative in the organisation of details, the adoption of which might seem to render the Act more perfect in its working. For example, it was found soon after the Act came into force, that the baby farmers displayed generally gross ignorance of the care and feeding of infants. The police accordingly applied to a well-known authority in children's diseases in Melbourne, who drew up for them a schedule containing full directions in respect to the care and culture of children. This schedule was printed and distributed by the police among all registered houses, and ordered to be hung in a conspicuous position in some room thereof. The administration of the Infant Life Protection Act by the police in Australia has undeniably added weight to the views already expressed in favour of the adoption of the same course being followed in the administration of the corresponding Act in this country. In London indeed, as was pointed out, no necessity exists for the police to assume any such responsibility, owing to the very admirable manner in which the Act is carried out by the Public Control Department of the London County Council. But there are strong reasons for the belief that in other centres, as well as in rural districts in the United Kingdom, the police alone can administer the Act."

2132. Will you give us your opinion as to the prevention of these cases; you might read the last paragraph?—"It will be further observed that in the Australian Act no age limit is mentioned, so far as this relates to the reception of a child or children; but in a somewhat indefinite manner it states that the names of all children under two years of age must be entered on a list with their age, sex, and date of admission, &c., into a registered house. In this connection a question arises as to what is done with regard to illegitimate children who are over the age of two years. The Australian Act contains another clause which refers to a somewhat important point, and that is the power of appeal against the cancelling of her license, which is afforded the baby-farmer. Possibly the granting of this concession really only amounts to a matter of form, nevertheless no harm would be likely to accrue if it were incorporated in the Amendment Bill which is now before the House of Lords. The next important point in the above Act is the clause relating to the holding of an inquest upon the body of every infant under three years of age, whose death occurs while under the care of a registered person. The Act, it will be observed, lays down that in these cases a death certificate from a medical man cannot be received or registered by the registrar for deaths. This (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

detail, from several points of view, can only be regarded as expedient. It appears also to be the rule of the coroners in Melbourne to hold inquests upon the bodies of illegitimate children, even when residing in the same house with their mothers, unless the infants are certified to have died from some disease not due to errors of diet."

2133. You do not, I suppose, know how many registered houses there are in Melbourne or in Victoria?—No, I have no means of getting that information.

Lord Kinnaird.

2134. Nor the number of illegitimate children?—I think it would be possible to make out the number, but it would be very difficult.

Chairman.

2135. Have you ever seen any report other than this one which you have quoted to us as to the working of the Australian Act?—No.

2136. You do not know of anybody of practical experience from there who could give us any evidence as to the actual working of the Act?—I should think some information might be obtained from the Agent General for Victoria; he certainly would have a copy of the Act, I should think.

2137. If an inquest were insisted on in the case of every illegitimate child that died apart from its parent, there would be an enormous increase in the number of inquests in the country?—There would; but a great many of such inquests might be necessary.

Viscount Llandaff.

2138. What is the cost of an inquest; there is, first, the fee to the coroner?—There is the medical man's fee, if there is a *post mortem*, of two guineas.

2139. The cost of summoning the jury?—I do not know what the jury get.

2140. The jury are 24, are they not?—Twelve; seldom more than 12. The coroner is paid by salary.

2141. Do they not get any additional fees?—No; his salary is based upon the number of inquests. When the salaries were fixed by the County Council for the new districts the coroners had to send a return of the number of inquests they had in their districts, and I think the salaries were based on that.

2142. Is the salary revised as the number of inquests increases?—I think not; that is beyond my knowledge.

Chairman.

2143. We have had some evidence given here in the course of this inquiry as to the subject of lying-in houses, and we have been told that it is the practice in these lying-in houses to send the children away to these professional baby farmers of the worst class; have you any experience of that yourself?—No, that has not been within my experience.

2144. Have you any evidence or opinions to give us with regard to these lying-in houses?—No direct evidence at all; my inquiry did not include

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

include any investigation with respect to these lying-in houses.

2145. It has been suggested that all lying-in houses that are habitually used for the purpose of confinement should be registered, with a view of keeping some sort of control, or obtaining accurate knowledge of the births that occurred; is it your opinion, as a medical man, that such a regulation would be much resented by the medical profession?—I do not see that it could be practically carried out.

2146. You do not think it could be carried out?—It could not be carried out.

2147. Why?—Because it would be impossible to define what a lying-in house is.

2148. There are a great many private lodging-houses to which people in the country come up for the purpose of confinement?—That is so to a large extent.

2149. Perfectly respectable and well-kept houses, which are attended by leading practitioners?—Yes, usually lodgings.

2150. Would there be any objection to registering those?—I think a lady who wanted to come and be attended by her special medical man in London would very much object to have the house that she went into submitted to any sort of supervision. The position of affairs is this: the hotels will not take such ladies; the proprietors object to children crying and so forth; the nursing homes will not take such ladies; they have objections of their own; and so there is nothing else left for these ladies who want to come to London to be attended by well-known obstetricians than to take private apartments; and what is done is this, they take rooms as close to their medical man as they can, and there they are confined; and these apartments are simply lodgings. The confinement takes place, the attendance is carried out, and the lady goes.

2151. Therefore you mean to say it would be very difficult to draw the line between a lodging-house keeper who takes in one lady for her confinement, and lets the rest of her house to other lodgers, and another lodging-house keeper who devotes her house to that purpose?—That is so.

2152. Can you suggest any way of ensuring a better supervision of the children that are sent out from the low-class lying-in houses?—My impression is that the way of meeting that evil would be by registering every still-birth. In these lying-in houses, according to my information and what I have read, it is possible clandestinely to interrupt the life of these children; and that was proved also in the evidence of the 1871 Committee. There is very strong evidence indeed there showing that those houses were the great source of infanticide, and that they were also the houses from which the baby farmers acquired the material for their trade.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2153. You have given us your experience, or what you were led to believe, in writing these articles; but have you any experience as a medical man of the subject at all personally?—Personally I have not.

2154. Have you had any experience from work or visiting among the poor, I mean any large

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

experience?—Not among baby farmers. In earlier days, about 1883, I used to attend some patients who were in a low class.

2155. The object of my question is this; as far as I gather the value of your evidence will depend really upon what knowledge it is based upon; you have put in the answers from the constables, from the chief constables, or rather you have shown us what these answers are, and you have told us that you have read up the Act and so forth; but you do not claim to be able to speak from any further knowledge; you merely speak as one who has looked into the question as any of us might?—That is so.

2156. You having looked into it and formed your opinion you tell us that you think that the Act ought now to be strengthened, because it is a dead letter everywhere else than in London. To me it would seem that it did not lead to that conclusion; it would rather seem that some new system might conceivably be wanted altogether, but not that you should strengthen an Act which even in its present form is not practically put into operation?—My answer to that would be that in London there are only a few registered houses, but the County Council inspectors have found out a very large number of unregistered houses.

2157. Then you do not base your opinion upon the fact that the Act is a dead letter in the provinces?—If there are such a large number of unregistered houses in London, and only a small number of registered houses, I should infer that there are a good many houses in the provinces, the existence of which is unknown to the authorities.

2158. What sort of houses?—Unregistered houses; that is to say, baby farms. I was told that there were 600 baby farms in England, out of London.

2159. Who told you that?—I think you will have the witness before you who gave me that information.

2160. When you or this witness say that there are 600 baby farms, what do you mean by baby farms?—That is what he told me; that is to say, houses in which children are continually received for hire.

2161. You might call anything a baby farm in which a single child is kept?—No, I should not be inclined to say that a single child being kept would constitute the house a baby farm.

Viscount Llandaff.

2162. Do you mean houses that ought to be registered under the existing Act, in which more than one child under 12 months is kept?—I could not say that.

2163. That is the point?—I could not say that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2164. Then, to come to another point, you said that inspection by the police would, in your opinion, have a deterrent effect; deterrent on what; on the reception of children, or on the maltreatment of children?—I merely meant on the reception of children.

2165. Exactly the conclusion that I should form, that the inspection by the police would have a deterrent effect upon the reception of children.

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

children. The children must still remain under present circumstances unhappily; they will go somewhere?—Women would not embark on baby farming if they knew that they had to be so thoroughly inspected. The point is, that if they knew that they were liable to be continually inspected it would not be a trade in which they would care to embark.

2166. Now look at it from the other side; there are a large number of illegitimate babies in England to-day; what is the proper mode in which, when this deterrent effect has been exercised, the mothers are to dispose of babies for whom it is increasingly difficult to find a home?—That involves a large question.

2167. The very question we are set here to consider; the babies exist, and they have got to be kept somewhere; what we have to try to do is to find a place where they can be put, where they can be properly seen to, and not either by carelessness or maltreatment die, and we want your help and the help of other witnesses in showing us how that is to be done?—I think that all those women who wish to conduct baby farms honestly will not object to registration, it is a perfectly legitimate trade if carried on legitimately; but this Act, I contend, allows dishonest women to conduct the trade dishonestly.

2168. Then, do you consider that the inspection by the police to which you have referred as having a deterrent effect would only be deterrent upon bad foster-parents, and not upon good ones?—That is my impression.

2169. Have you considered at all the point whether inspection by the police in such a way as you have described as prevailing in Australia would be a popular thing with the respectable foster-parents?—Well, I think I should have to be in Australia myself to answer that.

2170. Let us leave Australia out; do you think in London or England generally it would, or would not, be a popular thing for the respectable foster-parents to be constantly inspected by the police?—I think, if the police found that a baby farm was being properly conducted they would use all their tact in not making the Act disagreeable.

2171. But the ordinary policeman before he found that out must in the exercise of his tact pay a great many visits?—At first, in the exercise of his duty it would be necessary for him to do so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2172. With regard to your reply to the Chairman's question as to how this Bill would affect people sending children home from India, assuming that some are sent under five years of age, the people who took charge of them would have to be registered, would they not?—I do not think I could assume that from my own knowledge.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

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R 2

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

2173. You spoke with regard to these lying-in houses; with regard to those houses, there are many kept, are there not, by midwives, people of not very respectable character, but who keep them for the lying-in of women?—I do not think I ought to answer that question, not having any personal knowledge of the subject.

Lord Kinnaird.

2174. Do you think that medical men would or would not object to the lying-in houses that they attended being registered?—I think the medical profession would object to the registration of lying-in houses, that is to say, that if a lady wanted to come up and be attended by a practitioner I think he certainly would object having to send his patient to a house, then to find that that house was visited afterwards by a police officer or some other authority. It is a private matter altogether with reputable medical men attending ladies in confinement in that way.

2175. Then you think they are to be protected in a way which others in a different class would not be?—I said it would be impossible to give any definition of a lying-in house, and that I could not see the possibility of registration of such houses for that reason.

2176. You have given in Leeds 435 illegitimate births; how many of those, within your personal knowledge, ought to be in some registered house?—I could not answer that.

2177. Your investigation did not show that?—No.

2178. Did you form any opinion of registration as to whether children are protected under quite other Acts than the Infant Life Act; I mean you do not think, do you, that the chief constables in the whole of England would ignore the fact that a great many infants were not protected as they ought to be; if that were known by them to be the fact they would bring the Act into play?—Might I answer the question by reading this? "It might be well that the Legislature should call for a return from all the large towns in the kingdom, showing as nearly as possible the number of unregistered houses to which the present Act does not apply. If full details were forthcoming in this particular, including the number of the children received, their ages and the rate of mortality, the data would undeniably be of use in showing how far the need for some change in the Act was urgent, as would appear to be the case."

2179. Have you in your hospital many infants who apparently have been ill-treated?—I cannot answer that question without consulting one of the house surgeons. I have no doubt they would be able to say something on that.

2180. You would know it if there were many?—Yes, but I do not think that a person who ill-treats her child would take the trouble to bring it to a hospital. We do not get any cases of the kind, at all events within my experience.

12 May 1896.

[Continued.]

DEACONESS GILMORE, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2181. You are the head of the Deaconesses' Institution of the Diocese of Rochester?—Yes.

2182. And the Home of the Institution is in Battersea?—The Home of the Institution is on Clapham Common.

2183. The work lies in the poor parishes of Battersea?—Yes.

2184. Your work consists, if I understand it rightly, partly in personally visiting the houses of the poor, and partly in training other ladies who are going to be deaconesses, to do the same?—Yes.

2185. You have under your care a considerable number of probationers; ladies who are being so trained?—Yes.

2186. And the district in which your work lies is a characteristically poor one, including some of the poorest parts of Battersea?—Yes.

2187. The whole district in which your work thus lies, as I gather, contains about 20,000 people?—Yes; the people we work amongst; it does not entirely cover the whole of the parishes.

2188. And therefore you have a fairly complete knowledge of the life of the poor population over that large area?—Yes.

2189. Have you given any special attention to the working of this particular Act, or to the question of registration?—No.

2190. But without doing that you have been able to form, no doubt, some general opinion of your own as to the frequency or otherwise of the existence of nurse children in such districts?—Yes.

2191. You have placed in my hands a paper taking one division of that large district, containing 129 houses, or 256 families. In the case of that district you have tried, as far as memory serves or notes serve, to recall the number of nurse children whose cases have come under your notice within the last two years?—Nurse children who are not related to the people who have them.

2192. Not related to their foster parents?—Not related to their foster parents.

2193. And you find that 16 such children in that comparatively small district have come under your notice in this year and-a-half?—In about three years. That, of course, does not, I think, cover the number of children; because, of course, it would be exceedingly difficult for us to find out when there were nurse children in a house. You notice a baby there, and are told that it is a baby brought in for the day; you have no evidence to prove that that child is only there for the day; it is possible that it may be a nurse child. It is only when you see it constantly that you suspect that it is a nurse child. We may have had many more cases than that, but those are the cases of nurse children actually paid for and there as nurse children. It is quite possible that those cases which they told us were day cases were nurse children.

2194. Roughly speaking, all these children are illegitimate?—Yes, roughly speaking, I think nearly all; I do not remember any that were not.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

2195. And you do not include illegitimate children who were being nursed by their own relations, grandmother or mother's sister?—No, not even her own sister. The most common case is that of a girl in service; she comes home to her sister to be confined and leaves her child there.

2196. To a married sister?—To a married sister; that is a very common occurrence; oftener than with her own parents.

2197. And those are cases of receiving for hire, where the child would be received by a relation?—Yes.

2198. But still for hire?—Still for hire, generally speaking.

2199. What is your impression as to the advantage or disadvantage of making more stringent regulations about such children?—I think it is a most difficult question. I am afraid it would be constantly evaded in some way; they would find means to evade it.

2200. You mean that if registration were required they would find means to evade it?—Yes, judging as I do by the class of people who take these children. In several of the districts in which one works there is a very respectable artisan class, and among those you hardly ever find these children; if you do it is under exceedingly exceptional circumstances; and the class that we find taking them is the casual labourer class, and even lower than that; they move about so.

2201. You do not find nurse children among the artisan class?—Among the respectable artisan class, the upper artisan class, we do not.

2202. But they are among the poorer labouring class?—Yes.

2203. And the difficulty there is increased by the constant fluctuation and movement of that class?—Yes. In that district which I have given you I often find that there have been 30 moves in one month.

2204. Out of 129 houses there have been 30 movements in one month?—Yes.

2205. Now would you go on with what you were about to say?—I think they would evade it in that way by moving, because I know how difficult it is for the School Board people to trace them; they find great difficulty in these very degraded districts in tracing people; and I think in the same way you would find a great difficulty when the houses became registered; they would manage to evade it by moving to another part; and it is very difficult in London to trace them.

2206. That is to say, a house once registered, the occupant would be moving immediately somewhere else?—They give no notice to the police of their moving or to the Local Government Board if they wish to evade the law, and I fancy they could do it very easily. I know that they do it very easily with the School Board officer.

2207. Do you think that the process of registration would be unpopular with that class?—Not if it is done wisely, with, I should think, women

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

women visitors; but if it were done by the police I think it would be fatal to it immediately. In some of these streets which I give you there where these children have been found, a policeman could hardly go except two or three together; they could not go into places that would be perfectly safe for me.

2208. You mean that you would fear that the registration you mean would be a non-reality because it would be so evaded; or I will put it thus: Do you think that the endeavour to give increased stringency to the rule of registration is desirable or not?—Judging from what one sees of frightful neglect among these children I should think that something ought to be done, but what, it is impossible for me to say.

2209. In what way does that neglect come under your notice; is it deliberate ill treatment, or is it from ignorance or poverty?—Mostly from ignorance, and I think very often from poverty. I have found children taken at 3s. 6d. a week; it is perfectly impossible to keep a child for 3s. 6d. a week with any profit.

2210. And would that payment of 3s. 6d. a week in such cases be likely to be regular?—Constantly, not regular. For instance, I had a case of a woman with a child a little while ago; for five or six weeks she had nothing, she was keeping it herself; and we find constantly that these servants leave the children with these people; they pay for them for a few weeks, and then the foster parents never get anything more from them, in fact they vanish altogether. I know of several of those cases. There was a case of a child of eight years old; she was left in one of those lying-in houses that you were speaking of, a house of very bad character indeed, and I knew her before that age, but about that time I found out that she was a confirmed drunkard; she was sent to Canada.

2211. That is to say, you give that as an instance of the kind of neglect that has produced such an indifferent class of people?—Yes.

2212. You give here other instances. "Lodger's child died through neglect; woman reprimanded?"—Yes.

2213. Another case, "two nurse-children, one died at the age of nine months, weighing five pounds," and another case "Lodger's child starved, dead; aged two years, weighing seven pounds." Another "Baby starved; woman imprisoned." Now, are all these cases which you would describe as non-criminal neglect?—Some of them amount to criminal neglect, but how far it was through ignorance, or how far it was from any intention to do it, it would be almost impossible to say. I think in one case, the case of the woman —, it was intentional.

2214. Should you say, speaking generally, that wrong doing of the kind that has come under your notice was intentional, or that it was from poverty and ignorance?—Unintentional, very often through the woman who has the child being a drunkard. That I think is the commonest of all, the woman who has the child being a drunkard.

2215. And should you say that a large proportion of foster parents in whose houses you have found nurse-children were people who (0.95.)

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

could not properly have been registered under any well-administered Act?—Certainly, if you come to regard it as a matter of character. I have been asked occasionally by women (I dare say you know that they get children from the Lying-in Hospital and the Maternity Society), to write a letter for them, saying that they are fit people to have such children in their care. Of course in doing that I have always been most careful that they should be women, clean, and having a fair knowledge how to bring up children.

2216. The Maternity Hospitals, that is to say, who send their children to Battersea, apply to you for the character of the foster-parent, or the foster-parent asks you for a testimonial which she may take to the Lying-in Hospital?—Yes, that is what it really is; the woman asks me, and she takes it to the Lying-in Hospital; and they know that these children are to be had, and that the pay which they guarantee them is 5s. a week.

2217. Is that a common system in the district that you have to do with?—Yes.

2218. To receive the children at 5s. a week from the Maternity Hospital?—Yes; both the Lying-in Hospital and the Maternity Hospital.

2219. For what length of time does the hospital continue such payments?—I do not think the hospital finds the payments, but they guarantee that the servant whose child it is shall pay it, and they see that it is paid.

2220. For how long?—I cannot tell you how long.

2221. And do you think that unsuitable people obtain children in that way from respectable institutions such as the Maternity Hospital?—No. I have not found any evidence of that.

2222. Because they ask for some certificate of character on the part of the foster parent?—Yes.

2223. But if such certificate were required by the authorities before registration many of the foster parents you have known would be unable to obtain it?—Decidedly.

2224. And for that reason you would think it a good thing so far that there should be some system of registration if it could be properly worked?—Yes; but on the other hand one is very much afraid of increasing the evil of infanticide if there were greater difficulties put in the way.

2225. Do you consider that at this moment a girl in that district who has an illegitimate child finds it usually difficult to obtain a home for the child?—I think so.

2226. Would there be a competition among people to obtain the child at low terms?—If the girl is known in the district there would not be a difficulty, but supposing she comes as a stranger, as they do sometimes, to be confined in some poor, out-of-the-way place, then I think she would find great difficulty in getting the child taken in; it is then that one would have fear of its leading to murder.

2227. Then your general impression; you have told us that you have given no particular attention to the working of the Act?—None.

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12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2228. But your general impression is that some increased stringency in the system is desirable, though you are not prepared to say exactly what it ought to be?—No.

2229. Would that fairly represent your view?—Yes, that would fairly represent my view. It has been a matter of trouble that one sees these children constantly in these horrible houses with drunken foster parents, and in the most terrible surroundings. The Act of 1881 is practically a dead letter. For instance, I mean children living in a house frequented by prostitutes.

2230. You mean the Criminal Law Amendment Act when you say the Act is a dead letter?—Yes, the Criminal Law Amendment Act; it is practically a dead letter. We constantly find children in houses of this class, and they generally go to the same life of immorality. It was so in the case that I spoke of just now. That house was a very typical house; it was a house of ill-fame; but one could not bring it under the law; and yet we have known cases of girls who have been confined in that house, who have gone on living there lives of bad character; and girls have been taken there and drugged; and altogether it is as evil a house as you could possibly imagine. These children have been left behind by these girls in the house, and some of them have grown up there. The woman owns to about five or six houses altogether.

2231. And you would desire to see some system of registration in order to check the possibility of that?—For instance, in the case of that woman, when first I got to know her, I told her that my great aim would be to bring her in some way under the law if I could (but I have never been able to do it), and I let her know that we were watching her.

2232. How far do you consider that a change of the law in the direction of increasing the age is desirable; that is to say, at present, as you know, the law says that after 12 months there is no restriction upon the children who are taken in; is it in that way that you would desire increased stringency, or merely with regard to the registration, at all?—I think it is most necessary to increase the age.

2233. Do you think the wrong doing is often done to children more than 12 months old?—Yes, certainly older children, they are grossly neglected, if they are not absolutely made away with. Of course you have to consider, have you not, not only the children murdered but also the fact that they are kept in such a state that it absolutely unfits them for life hereafter.

2234. Of course we are considering at present the protection of life, but undoubtedly the other question is very closely allied to it?—Stringency in registering would improve the condition, would it not?

Viscount Llandaff.

2235. You have spoken of a large class of poor miserable people having only casual labour who take in foster children?—Yes.

2236. Have they children of their own?—Yes.

2237. Is there a marked difference between the treatment of their own children and that of the foster children?—No.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2238. Then it is the misery of a whole class we are dealing with, not merely the nurse children taken by that class?—No; the only thing is that these people are utterly unfit to have the care of these children.

2239. They are unfit to have the care of their own children, are they not?—Yes, they are.

2240. Take such a house of this bad character that you spoke of, nobody would dream of registering it?—No.

2241. What would become of the children there?—There would be no children in that house except these illegitimate children.

2242. You ought to take away the children and put them into the workhouse. How can we by any measure deal with those children?—Certainly you should take them out of such a house as that. We have two of those lying-in houses in that district, and I think that is the worse of the two; the other is nearly as bad.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2243. Are not the mothers there with their children?—I think the evidence goes to prove that the mothers were there a short time ago.

Viscount Llandaff.

2244. Do the women voluntarily keep these children?—I do not think the children were kept for a long time; what becomes of them we do not know. In the case of the other lying-in house, we have had grave suspicions for some years, and have not been able to prove anything; the woman there is a midwife, and the registration of midwives would be some help. These unregistered midwives often keep these lying-in houses.

2245. Where did you send this drunken girl you spoke of?—To Canada; she was sent away to Dr. Barnardo's Home, and then sent to Canada. That is one case.

2246. You suggest that we should pick out these illegitimate children, and leave these women with their own children?—In those two cases, neither of the women had young children of their own, they had grown-up girls.

2247. That is houses of ill-fame, but I was thinking of the larger class, casual labourers with children of their own. It seems a little invidious to pick out the nurse children for preferential treatment over the legitimate children?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2248. I will ask you this question: Would your argument be that we cannot help their having their own children, but, at least, we can prevent their taking other people's?—I should look upon it that they have their natural protectors; that the illegitimate child has no protector, its mother practically cannot protect it; therefore the State should step in and protect that child.

Viscount Llandaff.

2249. Where would you recommend us to send those children; you are to shut up the house, I understand?—Board them out under some system, or else in the country, where people could be properly inspected and visited.

2250. If

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird.

2250. If necessary, at the public expense?—Yes. Many of these girls who have children, do not get at the outside more than 12l. or 14l., or 15l. a year, and it is perfectly impossible for them to pay 5s. a week and buy clothes as well.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2251. Therefore, the payment must be what they can promise to give to the foster parent?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

2252. Have you formed an opinion of the least weekly payment that would keep a child in good condition under 12 months old?—I have never allowed anyone to take a child under 12 months for less than 5s. a week if she is to clothe it and feed it.

2253. The practical result would be that the State would have to take charge of all the illegitimate children who could not be provided for by the payment of that sum?—Yes.

Chairman.

2254. Do you think that that might tend to encourage immorality?—I am afraid it might in one way. You see, the great fear one always has of these people being watched, is that they will evade the law in some horrible way or other. I do not think we ought to make it more difficult for the unhappy girl herself to find a home for her child; it is already sufficiently difficult.

2255. Do you adopt then the opinion which Mr. Waugh I think expressed, when he said that he did not want to see baby farming suppressed; he only wanted to see it regulated?—Yes, certainly not suppressed.

2256. It is what you may call a necessary evil which you desire to regulate?—Yes.

2257. May I ask do you know the proposal in this Bill, to extend the Act to children of five years of age?—Yes.

2258. Do you think that that would be a good thing?—I am sure it would.

2259. From your knowledge of the poorer classes do you think that an extended system of compulsory registration in these cases would tend to raise or to lower the class of existing foster parents, because we have had two contrary opinions expressed. Some people think that registration would tend to bring forward a better class of people who would be willing to take children in?—I should hope so.

2260. Others, on the other hand, say that it might tend to prevent any respectable person coming in, and therefore you would have rather a worse class of baby farming carried on *sub rosa* than goes on at present?—I find this, that the respectable people have no objection whatever to the sanitary officer of the parish coming into their houses, but the disreputable class have an immense objection to his coming in.

2261. And those are just the people from whom you wish to rescue these children?—Yes; and that gives one the idea that they do not object to inspection if they are not afraid of inspection.

2262. Then these casual labourers you spoke of (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

of, how do they generally get hold of the children?—I cannot tell you.

2263. Do you think that they generally answer advertisements?—I think what happens is, that a servant girl comes to be confined in that district.

2264. But how does the servant girl know them; you spoke of servant girls who come as strangers to the district?—I remember one case in point of a girl who went into a room that was to be let; she came from the West-end of London; she knew nothing about the neighbourhood; all she wanted was to hide herself, and what she wanted when she left was to leave her child with some one and to go back to work. It would be known among the women in that street or in those few houses near, that she wanted to leave the child and that she had promised to pay a certain amount and to find the clothes. We got that girl into the Maternity Hospital.

Lord Belper.

2265. You do not mean that these places systematically advertise for children; but that when they are offered they take them?—When a girl has been confined these poor women know everything that is going on; one will say that she will take the baby. Some are naturally very kind-hearted with all their bad habits and drunkenness.

2266. They say that they are willing to take the baby; they have not made a system of taking babies or keeping them, or allowing them to die from starvation or neglect, but they are people who do it casually in different cases?—Yes.

Chairman.

2267. May I ask whether in the course of your visitations among the poor, or generally, you have ever come across any of these professional baby farmers?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2268. Have you noticed any respectable foster parents whose treatment of their children was unobjectionable?—Yes.

2269. About how many?—I could not tell you.

2270. Would it be dozens or a few?—A good many dozens.

2271. Do they do it for gain or pay chiefly?—A woman said to me once that they found that the 5s., although it is not much, coming in as it does in a lump, helps them to keep house; I am speaking of respectable women that one does really believe are tidy, decent women.

Chairman.

2272. But those respectable foster parents are the ones you say who would not have any objection to registration?—I think not.

2273. Or to inspection by anybody except the uniformed police?—They would not like the police going into the house.

2274. Do you know personally the two inspectors of the County Council that we have had here?—No.

2275. Do they visit in your district?—I dare-

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

say they do, but I have not the pleasure of knowing them.

2276. I did not know whether you might come across them?—No.

2277. Do you know whether they have any of the registered houses in your district?—I have not the least idea.

2278. You spoke of these children who are kept in these houses of ill-fame; are those children found out by the School Board officer?—Yes.

2279. They go to school?—Yes, pretty often; when they can get them there; it is a great difficulty.

Viscount Llandaff.

2280. They are able to summon them?—I should think the School Board officer could give evidence as to such cases being left behind.

2281. You spoke of the 129 houses which you visited, I understand, in a certain district, does that mean to say that that includes all the houses in that district?—Yes; you see I divide off the work for a probationer; she has to visit all the families in that district, and know fairly well all about them as far as possible.

2282. You never find any difficulty in getting admission to these houses?—No, never into that class of house.

2283. And do you think that even if the Act was extended it would still be possible to trace these children; to a certain extent you would find out sooner or later whether there were children in the house?—It is very difficult in a low neighbourhood like that to find out; it is very difficult for us to find out actually how many people there are living in those houses.

2284. You have an average of two families per house?—Yes, fairly.

2285. In some three or four?—Yes, but it is difficult to find out what people are actually living there; they take so many lodgers.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2286. This is a mere specimen section?—It is a mere specimen section where I should expect to find nurse children, and do find them.

Viscount Llandaff.

2287. Probably the worst?—Yes, quite; it is marked in Booth's map as very poor and semi-criminal, but I should mark it blacker.

2288. And yet even in that district you say there are a good many decent and reputable foster-parents?—Yes, very poor.

Lord Belper.

2289. I understand your experience is in London?—Yes.

2290. You have not had experience of the people who take children in the country?—No, I have no experience at all of country visitation.

2291. You could not express an opinion as to whether your remark that the respectable parents do not object to being registered would apply to the country?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2292. I gather your experience to be that these houses you complain of are past cure; they could not be inspected and made better?—No.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2293. You think there is nothing to be done with the children in them except to take them away?—I think so.

2294. I mean you cannot suggest any system of inspection for the purpose of instructing the foster-parents, and telling them how to take care of the children?—No; these houses are very difficult, except now and again, to do anything with.

2295. Those houses of ill-fame we must put out of the question?—I do not think such houses are uncommon.

Lord Kinnaird.

2296. You do not think there is anything special in those houses of ill-fame?—I expect there would be plenty of such houses.

Viscount Llandaff.

2297. Where children left by the former inmates are brought up by the subsequent inmates?—They have been left behind; there would not be many such.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2298. The Criminal Law Amendment Act does take care of such cases as that, or the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children does allow you to take them out, does it not?—But there must be some distinct cruelty towards the child before you could put the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act in force; even starvation is not enough unless it is a serious case.

2299. Can you possibly state how many of such houses there are in your own special district?—No.

2300. You mentioned two in this division?—Yes, in that small division; there are only about a thousand people in that district, it is a very bad district.

Lord Kinnaird.

2301. Have you a vigilant society in your district?—I do not think they are very active there.

2302. Do not you think that the illegitimate children brought up by relations are well looked after?—Yes.

2303. Speaking of the class of servant girls, those with first babies, they do not wish to be unkind to their children?—No, they are very fond of them.

2304. And they would be glad to find some home where they could put them safely?—Yes; we look upon it as a great means of reclaiming the girl.

2305. Then your evidence would be that the better class of artisans do not take these children?—No.

2306. They are mostly the more casual labourers of the worst class?—Yes.

2307. And you would not mind how stringent the law was with regard to them?—No.

2308. And the artisan would not mind how stringent it was?—No, I am quite certain that the visitation must not be by the police.

2309. The police you think they would object to?—Yes.

2310. The

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

2310. The County Council inspector you have not come across?—No.

2311. Do you think they mind Mr. Waugh's inspectors?—I have not come across them among these people.

2312. I do not know whether you have already given this clearly; do you think there is a great deal of cruelty, making a need for some extension of the law?—I am sure there is need for an extension of the law.

2313. Then as to your evidence with regard to the moving, of course London is the worst part in that respect?—Yes.

2314. And the law would be for the whole country, and you can quite imagine that excepting big towns you could easily follow the foster parent moving about?—Yes.

2315. So that your evidence on that point would not be a reason why you would not like the law strengthened?—No.

Chairman.

2316. There are several registered houses in Battersea (*handing a list to the Witness*); would you tell me whether any of them are in your district; do you know them?—I know Ingrave-street, but it is not actually in the parish; we have probationers and a deaconess working in that parish, but we do not know it from personal visitation, Simpson-street; I know that street, but I do not visit it personally.

2317. You do not know personally any of those names?—I do not know by personal visitation any of the streets in this list.

Viscount Llandaff.

2318. So that even you, familiar with the district as you are, do not know the registered houses?—No.

2319. But the places where those houses are, are places where a deaconess is at work, and more or less away from your immediate supervision?—She might know of those houses.

2320. But you know two of the streets?—I know the streets.

2321. It is suggested to us that registration gives an advantageous publicity if a girl wants to know where to send her child?—If the law was extended I should immediately go to the registration list, and see who was registered if I found a child was in the house.

2322. In your district, I understand you to say you would not register a single house?—I do not say that. Even in that very degraded part we have some poor decent people. I should not be afraid to put a poor girl's child there; a poor girl could only look for a poor home.

Chairman.

2323. I wanted to know one thing with regard to the case we have had named several times, of a man who goes away to work, whose wife is dead or has left him; or the case of a man whose wife is lying ill, and he wants to make some temporary arrangement for his children to put them out somewhere; can you say from your experience what the general method adopted in cases of that sort is?—They generally divide the children among their relations.

(95.)

Chairman—continued.

2324. You think they generally send them to their relations?—Yes, nearly always. When a young mother dies the baby is generally sent off to the grandmother, and within a few days I have known three children divided up among relations.

Viscount Llandaff.

2325. Then is some payment made?—It does not always follow.

Chairman.

2326. But there might be?—There might be. 2327. In the Bill that was before the House of Commons in 1890 relatives are excluded from the necessity for registration; but is it not a fact that the word "relative" is a very vague one amongst the poorer classes?—Yes, very much so. 2328. Very vague indeed?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

2329. What do they understand by it?—I do not know; it is very vague; they would hardly know the meaning of the word.

Chairman.

2330. It has been suggested, therefore, to define the word "relative" in the Act as meaning anybody within the degree of first cousinship; do you think some sort of definition of that kind would be useful?—It might be useful; it would not meet the case entirely; I do not know what would; I have known these people not know their own relations' names, but only their nicknames. That gives you some sort of idea how little they would know what the actual relationship was.

Lord Kinnaird.

2331. You cannot trust the names very much among the poor?—No; some people go by two or three names, and I have asked them sometimes why.

Chairman.

2332. Do you mean surnames or christian names?—Surnames. For instance, I have had a register come to me and I have been told, "It is our right name but we are always called so-and-so," "why?" sometimes it is a man who has come; he has worked with another man of that name; they have given it to him and he has kept it.

2333. What is the general practice amongst the poor in the case of a man who goes away for the inside of a week to work; for instance, in the case of a bricklayer, or a man engaged in the building trade who goes to a distance and comes back at the end of a week?—He leaves the wife and children behind.

2334. Suppose he has not got a wife?—I cannot tell you.

2335. We have been told that such a man rarely remains unmarried long?—It is very rare to send the children away; they get a woman to come in.

2336. Do they generally get some one to come in, or do they put them out?—Generally get some one to come in.

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2337. There

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2337. There is another very common case which must be familiar to you; a mother goes into a hospital for a week or a fortnight or a month; that is a very common event indeed; what would you say was the normal practice in such a case as that?—With little children they would send them to a friend or relation; with the older ones they would get someone to come in and do for them, send them off to school in the morning. Sometimes we help to find a woman who will do that for them.

2338. And there would you say that registration would be somewhat irritating. If a mother was going into a hospital and a neighbour was going to take her child for a day or two or a week and that required registration, would that be somewhat irritating?—I think it would be a great difficulty.

2339. A thing you would hardly wish to see enforced by law?—No; you would have to educate people very much to get them up to that point.

Lord Kinnaird.

2340. But if the law were properly carried out you do not think that suitable persons would mind, in order to protect the lives of children, putting themselves under registration and inspection?—I am quite certain that the good ones would not object if it was put before them in that way that it was done to protect the lives of children who had no protection.

2341. You think the Act must be stringent to be any good?—I am sure it must.

Chairman.

2342. When you talk of the respectable people who would not mind being registered, what class of people are they?—The poor labourers' families; they are perfectly respectable, but the man earns, say, at the outside a pound a week, and it is very difficult for those people to maintain a family at a pound; the wife gets another woman's child, at 5s. a week; that helps the whole resources; she says, "One amongst a number, the food that it has is not missed." If she has no little baby of her own, it is quite possible that she can do very well for the child; and in

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss MARIAN H. MASON is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2353. You are, I believe, the Local Government Board inspector with reference to boarding-out children?—Yes, beyond the union; beyond the union all the children must be placed under committees certified by the Local Government Board. The committees are committees of ladies; there may be gentlemen upon them, but there must be ladies. I have not the inspection within the union, but that beyond the union to which the children are chargeable.

Chairman—continued.

the case of respectable women I should not object to their having them in the least.

Lord Kinnaird.

2343. You mean that if we say Class 1 is the artizan, he does not take these nurse children, practically?—No.

2344. The second would be the class in which the bricklayer's labourer and people of that kind would come, and they might take them?—

2345. And Class 4 you would exclude altogether?—Yes, those would be the semi-criminal class.

Viscount Llandaff.

2346. There are illegitimate children in Class 4?—They would get them.

2347. Have you formed any opinion as to what sort of authority would be the best to administer this stringent Act that you are inclined to; would it be poor law officials or justices of the peace, or district councils; or what authority would you suggest as being the most sympathetic and likely to do good?—I suppose one must judge by the existing officers; our present sanitary officers, the medical officers, work very well with the people; they would come under the Local Government Board.

2348. They are popular with the poor, are they?—Yes, fairly popular.

2349. You would recommend, I suppose, either women or medical men to inspect these houses?—I should think the ladies would do it better; a thoroughly good type of woman, not a mere working woman; that would not do.

2350. On the other hand, I am afraid there is no existing body of ladies in the service of any of these local authorities; you would have to create fresh officers if you appoint ladies?—It would hardly do for a man to be always interfering with woman in bringing up children; a woman would do it so much better.

2351. I mean it would involve the appointment of fresh officers?—Yes.

2352. Is there any existing class of ladies of that description?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2354. A board of guardians that boards out children within its own union makes its own arrangement for inspection?—Yes.

2355. And if they board them out outside the union it devolves upon you to inspect?—Yes. Within the union, of course, they are also subject to the regulations of the Local Government Board, but they do not come within my inspection; that is to say, if the London children are sent, for instance, to Devonshire, or

to

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

to Westmoreland, or sent even to Middlesex beyond the union to which they are chargeable, then they come under, and their committee also comes under, my inspection.

Chairman.

2356. When were you appointed?—On the 2nd of November 1885.

2357. And you have been at work continuously ever since then?—Yes.

2358. And before that time you had, I believe, great experience amongst the poor?—Yes, that was why the Local Government Board asked me to undertake this work. I have lived amongst the poor people, the labouring people, the people of all classes, helping them all my life, and my family too; and then for some years I, at the guardians' request, inspected the children boarded out within the union for six unions out of the eight in Nottinghamshire, and I organised a staff of ladies to look after them under my supervision.

2359. At the guardians' request?—Yes, voluntarily.

2360. You also, I believe, drew up the manual of infant life protection?—Boarding out and infant life protection. I have put some cards on your table of the manual. It is not under my own name because officials may not publish in their own names. This (pointing to a book) is the manual; there is not very much reference to infant life protection, but it is just to show where it comes in, with boarding out. It is a manual for guardians and boarding-out committees.

2361. It is a manual of instruction for the guardians, not for the people you put the children out with?—No, for the guardians and for the boarding-out committees.

2362. Can you say how many children you inspect annually?—No, I never could say that, because I sometimes see the same child many times; sometimes I go to visit a child and it may be away, another time I see the child without intending to visit it; and I often settle myself in a district for a week or several weeks at a time, and while I am inspecting one committee, driving perhaps a distance 20 miles off, I am seeing the committee in the midst of which I am settled every day. It would scarcely be possible to say how many committees, and never possible to say how many children, I see, or how many times I see them.

2363. But you have an idea how many children you have on your books?—Yes, it is about 1,800, roughly.

2364. Does that include England and Wales?—There are no children actually boarded out in Wales beyond the union, not one. There were three, and now there are none. Those three have ceased to be chargeable. Wales is within my district, but as it happens there are no children boarded out there beyond the union.

2365. Is there any reason for that; there are some very populous towns in South Wales, large manufacturing districts?—No, I do not know of any reason why they should not.

Viscount Llandaff.

2366. In what district are the 1,800?—In England, all over England, nearly every county. (0.95.)

Chairman.

2367. Do you inspect the children themselves as much as possible?—Yes.

2368. Do you go to the homes when you go down to a district; you say you see the committees every day; you also see the children, I suppose?—Yes, I inspect the homes, and I inspect the children themselves most carefully; partly undressing them. I inspect every room in the house, and overhaul the children's stock of clothing, and put down every single garment they possess in my note book in case of reference.

2369. What weekly sum is generally paid to those who take the children in?—London and the larger towns pay 4s. a week for maintenance, 10s. a quarter for clothing, any schooling expenses there may be, about 10s. a year for the doctor for each child, and extra nourishment if they are ill, or any other expenses, cod liver oil, or any extra nourishment or anything else that they may want.

2370. And what profit is there to be made out of children paid for on this scale?—The country guardians, I should say, pay a little less, such as Nottingham and Plymouth; they pay about 3s. 6d. a week, and a little less for clothing; but I think the way to count how the profit is made is not by saying how much one person eats in a week; but if you take a labourer's wages, say 15s. a week perhaps (of course in some places they receive more, in others less), supposing that a man and his wife and three children have to live on 15s. a week, that gives 3s. a head all round. Out of that must come the rent and the clothing for the whole family, and the man's working clothes and boots and Sunday clothes, and perhaps the rate, besides the maintenance of the whole family. Then, if you put even one child into that family with 4s. a week, and 2l. a year for clothing, and the doctor and everything else besides paid for it, you must see that it is easier for six persons to live on 19s. a week besides 2l. a year for clothes, and the doctor, &c., than it is for five persons to live on 15s. And then there are cases where some of the foster-parents have nothing at all to live upon, and they simply live on the children.

2371. Do you find that the condition of the children varies very much with the amount that is paid for them?—No, I do not think that the amount that is paid for them has much to do with their treatment. I think a conscientious person will treat a child as well for 3s. a week as she would for 4s.

2372. Can you say anything with regard to the number of good homes and foster-parents?—It must be limited; it is quite impossible to find a very large number of really satisfactory homes. If you take, for instance, any village that you know, and go through it, either there is not enough room in the house, or else the people may not be suitable in character, or they have too many children of their own, or there is something else; so that when you come to take a village house by house, and ask which house you would put a child in, it is not very easy to find a large number of really proper ones. There are places in England, a great many places yet, where there are no committees, where homes might be found; but I mean taking each place, you cannot

s 2

not

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

not place a very large number of children suitably in any one parish. You may perhaps have been told by voluntary societies that the number is almost unlimited; but I should like to point out that they are not tied as the Local Government Board are by rules. They make rules, but practically they make as many exceptions; and then they are not strict about having the children under committees; you see we are very strict about our committees; we must have three people at least to look after them, three people on a committee. We allow no boarding-out committee, no local committee, without at least three persons upon it.

2373. Three persons in the district, that is?—Yes.

2374. Not three people in the village?—No, three people in the area defined for the particular committee. But with reference to the voluntary societies, they do not follow that rule, and they just put the children out with somebody to look after them, an individual perhaps, and not a committee; and as far as I know, I think they have no radius, no area within which they must be placed; their supervision is very much less careful than ours; they scatter their children broadcast, but we do not; we have them in certain areas which we limit by parishes; and where we have a committee they are bound to be kept up to their number and to their duties.

2375. How many of these committees have you got under your control?—I could not say the exact number, but it is nominally between 150 and 160.

2376. That is committees?—Yes; but some of those committees are dying off; you see they have done their work, and they perhaps have only one child left; then others perhaps after they started have not been able to find homes, so that those committees are only nominal; it is nominally about 155 now.

2377. Why should they die off; there is always an everlasting supply of children to put out?—Yes, but the committees are not immortal; they sometimes die themselves; and then, too, the persons leave the neighbourhood sometimes, and those who succeed them in the same houses may not be interested in the matter, or competent, or capable.

2378. Do you find it difficult to get people to serve on these committees?—I do not find the committees.

2379. Who arranges that?—They start it themselves; anybody who has a desire to bring pauper children down to their neighbourhood to put into cottages may form a committee in their own place, and apply to the Local Government Board for sanction, for authorisation; they are formally authorised by a regularly drawn up form.

2380. What are the conditions required before they are authorised; must there be a certain number?—Yes, there must be three people, one of whom must necessarily be a lady. If it is one parish we consider three sufficient; if it is two parishes we generally do not think three enough; according to the number of parishes which they take in so we insist on the number of workers in proportion to the area. Then they have to report on the children to the guardians; they have to enter into an agreement first with the board of guardians from whom

Chairman—continued.

they propose to take children. This agreement, with the scale of payments, has first to be sanctioned by the Local Government Board. The committees have to engage to keep the regulations, and to visit the children at least once in six weeks, and report upon them to the guardians. They have also to send in returns every half-year to the Local Government Board of their own number, to show that they are still alive and looking after the children.

2381. Can you say anything as regards the motives of boarding-out committees?—Yes. With regard to the reasons why they take these children, some of them, of course, do it from interest in the children themselves; some of these people who live in the country are interested in London children, and have the children for their own sake; others have them for the sake of their poor people, quite avowedly, because their payments are a help to them. There are a great many motives; and speaking of the inspection of infants, I think you will have to remember that there are always those local motives to contend with in inspecting them. You will understand that I am seeking to help you, and I do not want to bring in any names, nor to bring any difficulties; but I could tell you of cases where really the children are paying the rents of the cottages. When we come to the question of the difficulties of inspection, the inspector has to contend not only with the homes in which the children are, but with the motives from which the ladies and gentlemen in the place have the children there. As I say, sometimes the payments of the children are actually paying the rent.

Viscount Llanduff.

2382. Like the pig?—Yes, only that the pig is the property of the tenant and not of the landlord. In the case of the children the children are the property of the landlord, which increases the difficulty.

Chairman.

2383. Then with reference to these voluntary societies, do you often in the course of your inquiries come across children that are put out by the various societies?—Yes, constantly.

2384. Do you find that as a rule they are pretty well looked after?—Yes, some are; but you see I cannot answer so certainly for them as I can for my own, because I undress my own, and I have no power to undress others. Therefore, if they are neglected, if they are dirty, or if they are beaten, I should not know it so long as their outside was tidy.

2385. But have you come across many cases in which they are not, in which they are palpably badly looked after?—I think you cannot talk of palpably, because outside appearances are so deceptive; there are very few palpable cases. I sometimes find children placed by voluntary societies or persons in comparatively large numbers in the houses; they do not keep to the regulations as we do as to numbers; professedly they do, but they make many exceptions.

2386. Do most of the voluntary societies that you know of have a local committee of some sort, or local individuals, to look after children that they put out?—Yes, local individuals; but I know none that have real committees.

2387. You do not know any voluntary societies that

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that simply put their children out and do not bother to look after them afterwards?—No; they have someone to look after them, though not a committee. Then, in speaking of why the ladies and gentlemen take children, I should say that they do it to help their poor people sometimes, and sometimes they do it even to help an old servant. I could find you cases where the old servants are provided for in that way.

2388. And are the children well looked after in those sort of cases?—Some are, some are not; but when they are not it is very difficult to get them away from an old servant.

2389. What do you do when you go round?—I report on every case indifferently, whether good or bad; I report on each child in each case; and whether the committee will remove the child of their own accord entirely depends upon the particular committee. Some are quite ready to do it directly they know the facts; others say, "That was my housemaid, and I trust her entirely."

2390. What happens then?—It depends upon the board of guardians, whether they take the part of the housemaid.

2391. It depends entirely upon the board of guardians, does it?—The Local Government Board sometimes say that they think the children ought to be removed, but as a rule they leave the responsibility to the board of guardians. I report to the Local Government Board both on the committees and on the children. My report on the committees is confidential, but the report on the children is forwarded to the board of guardians, and they have to act upon it.

2392. I suppose you find a great deal of difference between committees; you find some very much better than others?—Yes, very much.

2393. And where the committees are not so good, I suppose you find the children in a worse condition?—Yes, undoubtedly.

2394. Therefore, we may say that the well-being of the children depends to a very great extent upon how they are looked after, after they are put out?—Altogether.

2395. Even in the case of respectable foster-parents, if they are not properly looked after they may be apt to neglect the children, you think?—Well, some people, some of the foster-parents, look after the children thoroughly well and conscientiously, even though the committee may not be looking after them; but then there are others who do not, and of course you do not know till you prove them which will turn out good and which will not, and those of whom you would least expect it sometimes are those that fail you.

2396. At what sort of age do you generally put these children out?—No earlier than two, and nominally no later than 10, years of age, but the elder age is rather elastic.

2397. And you have some rule, I fancy, with reference to the number of children which the foster-parent already may possess; you do not put a child into a house if there are already a certain number of children in it, do you?—No. From every source there must be no more than five; you cannot put one of the poor law children into a house where there is more than one other boarded out from some other source; that is to say, you cannot put a poor law child into a house where there is more than one nurse baby.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

2398. Families sometimes increase?—We do not make a rule that they shall not increase, but we only say that when the boarded-out children are first put there, there must not be more than a certain number of children. That rule was made in consequence of the number of children that we found boarded out voluntarily, especially by Dr. Barnardo; there were such a number of his children placed in the same houses that I inspected. The rule was made in 1889, in the last boarding-out Order, that there should be a limit to the numbers who might be boarded out from other sources; before that, I once found a home where I saw six children besides those I had to do with boarded out in one house, and I heard that these were not all; I do not know where they all came from.

2399. Do you find that in houses like that, even when they are well looked after, there is considerable mortality, merely from the fact of there being an unusual number of children on the premises?—You see I do not follow the careers of those children whom I have nothing to do with, so I could not say.

2400. But when you go round to inspect a certain house that you have perhaps seen before, I suppose you compare your notes on that occasion with the notes on the previous occasion?—You see, since 1889, I have not found them in my houses except now and then, so that there has been practically scarcely any overcrowding since 1889; and in those few cases either the poor law children or the others have been removed, so that I have not seen the house again under the same conditions.

2401. And what do you find is the general attitude of foster-parents towards inspection?—I have been now inspecting more than ten and a half years, and I do not think I could say that I have found 12 foster-parents who have resented inspection.

2402. By you?—By me; and in every case where they resented my inspection they had very good reason for not wishing me to find out the facts. Even those who are not doing right do not resent it openly, because they know it is right; and those who are doing their duty are always rejoiced that you should inspect. My difficulty is to get away from the place without inspecting everything belonging to the foster-parents themselves, and without seeing the people that I have known before. Even when their children have gone, I continually have to pay them friendly visits, because they would be hurt if I did not. For instance, I was spending one Sunday at Amptill, where there was a committee, in order to inspect committees further off; and the Amptill children saw me in church, and waited outside the church, and asked me to come and see their foster-parents, because they said they would be hurt if they heard I was there; so I had to make a visit on Sunday to see them.

2403. You know that it has been raised as an objection against an extension of the present law that it might interfere with the work that is done by these voluntary societies if they were included in it. It is said that if all the foster-parents with whom they put children had to be inspected they would find it very difficult to get the more respectable class of foster-parents to take the children in; do you think that is correct?—I think that would entirely depend

s 3

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

depend upon who the inspectors were. For instance, within the last year I had a case where children were boarded out with a foster-parent who was rather a grand lady. She made no trouble about my inspection, but she said she would not stand the visits of "paltry people," as she called them; she told me there was not a "real lady" in the parish whom she would admit; there was a committee which boarded out there, and I understand that a lady they put on was turned out with ignominy.

2404. That is rather an exceptional case, I suppose?—Yes, it is; but at the same time they always tell me they will only have real ladies; they discriminate; they are very particular.

2405. And therefore you think that an inspection is much better carried out by a woman than by a man?—I do not think that a man can carry it out; in the case of girls he cannot, he might in the case of boys; but I find that you cannot know the facts unless you see the children's necks and arms and feet, to see whether they are kept clean or not; and you cannot tell whether they are beaten by asking questions, because no one would tell you, least of all the child.

2406. Do you find many cases which you have come across, cases of ill-treatment like that?—Yes, a good many.

2407. And beating?—Yes.

2408. What do you do then?—Then I report it like the rest; I have no power to take the child away; I wish I had.

2409. Have you thought over the best method of carrying out inspection under this Bill, if it became law?—I do not know very much about how the local authorities are found to act, but I believe that they do not do all they should do, do they?

2410. The evidence that has been given before us rather tends to show that the local authorities do not pay so much attention to the existing Act as they might?—That was what I wanted to answer. I think the reason is that it is because they are local, they are so much afraid of giving local offence to their neighbours; that is the difficulty of inspection; that is the difficulty with the boarding-out committees of ladies; they are very often afraid of offending their neighbours, and as I was saying, some of these nurse children are put with the people by the ladies themselves. I gave a case in this report (*pointing to a report*) of such a child. There was a child boarded out in Devonshire; it was a case near Plymouth; the foster-parent was sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude for manslaughter of a baby; two or three children had died in that house, and there was one child who was boarded out under a committee; as a matter of fact the ladies of the place had helped that woman; the very same ladies who had supervised my boarded-out child had actually put these nurse children with the same woman in order to maintain her, and they took her part when she was sentenced, and declared that she could not have ill-treated the child; they would not receive any evidence, they would not believe it. She is in prison now doing her time.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2411. What sort of age were the children?—These children were all under one or two years.

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

2412. They probably came under the existing Act?—They did.

2413. Was the house registered?—No, the house was not registered.

Chairman.

2414. How does that case bear upon your objections to the local authorities as inspectors?—Because the local authorities are interested; I mean the committees themselves, who put the children out, are interested in the person they put the child with; and you see the local authority does not like very much interfering with the interest of the local neighbours.

2415. You do not think, therefore, that the inspectors should be local people?—I think that it is a good thing to have a local supervisor, and I would not destroy the local authority; but I think that there should also be an inspector from a distance, from a centre, who should also inspect as well as the local authority; so that she should be behind the local authority. I mean that there should be someone for the local inspector to fall back upon and to support her.

2416. It has been suggested by some that the police are the proper people to administer the Act; is that your view?—No, I do not think the police are, because I do not think that many respectable people would like the police inspecting. I think that there should be a woman appointed, and I think that there should be a central woman behind that woman; that there should be a local supervisor made responsible, and there should be a central inspector behind the local supervisor to strengthen her hands.

2417. When you say a central woman, you mean a person appointed either by the Local Government Board or one of the Government Departments?—I should say by the Home Office, because she would have the police behind them in the case of emergency, and because the object is not the relief of the poor, but the detection; and I think that the inspector should either be appointed by the county council or by the Home Office direct; I am not sure whether even the county council would not be too local.

2418. There would hardly be enough work for a separate inspector for each county council, would there?—If not, two or three counties might combine to appoint one.

2419. Then it has been suggested that the local medical officer of health might visit the children?—I do not think that would be a good plan; because they have their private practice. I have the very highest opinion of doctors; I think they are most devoted and most good; but when it comes to a matter of reporting upon a child, I find them quite ready to certify for one of their own ladies that a child is all right, when I have found it in a state very much the opposite. I mean that they do that if the lady who has placed out the child is a patient.

2420. All this evidence that you have now been giving deals more or less with the children when you have found them out; of course, part of the Act, you understand, is discovering the children in these homes, finding them out?—Yes.

2421. And

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

2421. And therefore that would be another argument against the medical officer of health; he would be hardly the proper person to engage in the detective work of finding out the children?—No, I do not think he ought to be; I think it ought to be some one unprofessional and independent; an independent local inspector or supervisor, and an independent central one.

2422. You see the work which your committees do is really only one-half of the question; your committees simply look after the children when once they are put there?—No, they place them.

2423. They find out the homes for them, you mean?—Yes.

2424. But what we want to find out is the proper authority for administering this Act, more especially in the rural districts, and that local authority will have to find out children that are kept in unregistered houses and insist upon those houses being registered if they come within the Act, and then look after the children after they have discovered them?—Yes; then I think that should be a person, a woman, quite independent of anything else.

2425. Do you think a woman is a proper person to go round and do the detective part of the work and find out where children are?—Yes. I do not think a policeman, to begin with, could get in, and I do not think a local policeman, above all, is the person; I think it should be a woman, and a woman who is independent; but at the same time, I do not think she should be the sole authority, because I think, even for a woman, it would be most difficult to interfere with the neighbours; it would be a most unpopular task, in any case, where they are doing wrong, I mean; where they are doing right, I am sure she would be welcomed.

2426. Another difficulty, of course, which arises is this, that supposing you had an inspector, a lady inspector if you like, told off to look after a certain district and make inquiries, if she went into a village, you know how people get known in a village, when they know them once they know them again?—Yes.

2427. Supposing she went on a second voyage to that village inquiring about children being kept at any unregistered houses, if there were any such, the children would be very soon hidden out of sight before she got there?—Yes; and that is an additional reason for not leaving the inspection to a local inspector alone. She would be better known by sight than one from a distance. But in the country I think you could generally find out from someone whether there is a baby in the place. I had one case where a woman would not let me go upstairs and see the room; she refused; I thought the children ought to be removed, and I recommended it, but the guardians did not carry it out. I let two years pass, and then I went again, and this time I took the chairman of the board of guardians with me as a witness; that woman kept me waiting for about a quarter of an hour before she let me go upstairs; meantime I saw two nurse children in the house, but she must have hidden some others away. I was certain

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Chairman—continued.

there were some others, and I got to know about it afterwards.

2428. You think that the fact of a woman having a nurse child in a village is generally pretty well known to her neighbours?—Yes, nearly always; the neighbours, in a village, will always know it, almost.

2429. Therefore it is easier to find them out in the country than it is in towns?—Much. Those nurse children I was speaking of last had also all been placed there by the ladies themselves individually, and they had not told each other.

2430. Your evidence rather tends to point to this, that your local committees require just as much looking after as anybody else?—My whole life is spent in looking after them. I am speaking now of those that concern your point; many of the committees do their work excellently, and many of the foster parents are excellent.

2431. You are in these remarks talking of certain individuals?—Yes; I am only speaking of those that concern your point.

2432. Do you think it would be in any way possible or feasible for your existing committees to undertake any work under this Act?—I think some would, but most would not, and they are too local. They would be afraid of giving offence, and would not inspect thoroughly. It is all I can do to get them to inspect thoroughly the children whom they place out themselves, and for whom they are actually responsible, for this reason. They are so needlessly afraid of giving offence.

2433. Are these children that are put out by the poor law authorities mostly illegitimate?—No, they are orphans, or deserted, for the most part; they are all nominally orphans or deserted; but the term orphan is very widely extended to mean a child of a parent who is bed-ridden or in prison; in fact, it takes in almost all the permanent children.

2434. Therefore they are not classed as being either legitimate or illegitimate?—No.

2435. May I ask whether you are generally in favour of the Bill which we are considering; I am presuming that you are acquainted with the provisions of the Bill?—I have not read the whole Bill through, but as far as I know its provisions, I think it is very much wanted. I understand that you propose to raise the age.

2536. We propose to raise the age to five years?—Yes.

2437. And do you think that any hardship would be caused by the provisions which apply this registration in the case of a child only kept 24 hours away from its parents?—I think it would be almost impossible. The mother goes away for perhaps one night, and might put the child with a neighbour; it would be hard if she could not do that.

2438. And gives the neighbour something to look after it for her?—Yes; I think a week would be better.

2439. Then perhaps you are not aware that the objection to that proposal is, that the people that we wish to get at very often do not have the children in their own house; sometimes but a very short space of time, sometimes not at all,

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12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

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Chairman—continued.

and they simply act as intermediaries and pass the children on?—Yes.

2440. And, therefore, in a week's time the child might be passed on to three or four different people and all trace of it be lost?—I have not thought enough about what should be done, but I think the fact that the person has the child should be declared and registered, though the house itself need not be registered; if you see what I mean, that the fact that she has had the child should be registered, although her house should not be a permanently registered house. The fact should be notified, I mean.

2441. To whom; the local authority?—To the local authority, perhaps.

2442. Therefore, you mean to say that you are more in favour of a mere notification from the person who takes the child in than the actual registration of the house?—I think it would be scarcely possible to register every house where a woman takes in a child for one night for a friend.

2443. That sort of thing is very common, I suppose?—Yes, and often quite harmless. If a mother has to go away she must leave her baby with somebody; and then there are cases where you cannot exactly say whether the nurse children are paid for or not; I know many cases where a mother places her child with somebody on payment, and she practically deserts it and pays nothing for it, and the woman will take to that child and bring it up as her own without having a penny for it; I know numbers of those cases, most deserving people; and those would be most difficult cases, because you could hardly say whether the woman was paid or not; still they might be registered; and I am sure such women would only be too glad to welcome inspection to show what they had done for the child, and they desire that it should be known.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2444. Have you considered, speaking generally, the advantage of increased stringency as proved to your satisfaction?—Yes.

2445. The evidence you have given us, of course, has been mainly drawn from, if one may use the word, the professional experience you have had in the last 10 years; but speaking generally, with your knowledge of the life of the working classes as a whole, do you think that that increased stringency would inflict much hardship or not?—It would inflict, I should almost say, no hardship at all on the working classes.

2446. Even the registration of children up to five, or as one Bill proposes seven, years?—No, I think not. Perhaps I might give you another case. One of my foster parents (it was at Axminster, and we have published the case) was a farmer, a churchwarden, communicant, everything; he was considered the parish model; they took a child four years old and beat it continuously; no one knew till at last one day its screams attracted the neighbours, and they found it tied by the thumbs to the bedpost, its thumbs almost cut through, and beaten so as to be a mass of bruises. They were, I think, both sent to prison; but all the other foster parents whom I visited in that neighbourhood hailed me as a

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

deliverer, because they said, "You can certify for us that we are doing our duty; I am so glad you have come," they said, "because you can certify that we are doing right by our children."

2447. Why do you think it is that the Act is practically a dead letter in England outside London?—Because I think London is a large enough area for the inspector not to be local.

2448. And do you think that if arrangements were made for a non-local inspector the authorities who have at present failed to put or decided against putting the Act into operation would at once put it into operation?—No, they would not unless they were obliged to; but as far as I know what the present authorities are, I do not think they are the right people. I am not sure whom they now are.

2449. The district councils who have the power under the Act of appointing an inspector, but who neglect to appoint an inspector; and without saying that they do not administer the Act, practically they do not do so because they appoint another agent to do it?—I see.

2450. It would hardly seem obvious that your objection to a local inspector would set that difficulty right?—I think apparently they do not take enough interest in the matter, and I do not think they would; I do not think for the most part they care who have babies in their houses; I should not say the district council of my own neighbourhood would trouble themselves at all about it; I am not sure whether they are even aware that they have got the power.

2451. Let us put it like this: you know what the present law is; the proposal now before us is that that law should be made more stringent in two directions; first, that it should be forbidden to take, without registration, even one child, while at present you are allowed one and no more under 12 months; and, secondly, that the age should be raised from 12 months to five or seven years; I do not follow how that Act, if it became law to-morrow, would mend matters, from your point of view?—No; but I think the district councils do not take enough trouble. I should appoint a central inspector, with county council inspectors under her, to see that the district councils appoint their own, and carry out the Act. The district councils are too local to act by themselves.

2452. Then if you were given power to-morrow to set the present wrongs right, as far as the law could, it would not be by passing such a Bill as is now proposed?—I would pass the Bill, but I would not give it to the district council to administer alone.

Viscount Llandaff.

2453. To whom would you give it?—Supposing you gave it to the county council, or to the Home Office, then it would not be local. I am quite sure that 99 out of 100 district councils would not care; they do not know that they have got it, and if you told them, they would not trouble about it, and whom would they be able to find? I do not know any local persons who would do it or who could do it alone. I will take my own district council; I am quite sure that there is no one that the district council could find.

2454. But

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2454. But you do think that such an Act is wanted?—I do; but I think that it cannot be carried out by too small localities alone and unsupported.

2455. Your recommendation would be: Pass some such Act as is now suggested, but give the administration of it to the authorities of a larger area?—Quite so.

2456. And you do not think that there would be a hardship in either of two directions, either the case of the mother who is temporarily absent, or the case of the widower, let us say, whose children are left without a mother?—No, not if the mother might only notify the fact that she left her child, without putting it in an actually registered house, because you might not find one registered house in the parish, and yet she would want a woman to take care of her child. I think those cases should be notified, but certain houses also registered.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2457. In country parishes, to whom should she notify?—She might notify to the local inspector. I think she should be obliged to notify to the local inspector.

Viscount Llandaff.

2458. She must notify to the authority that has the administration of the Act?—She could notify to the local inspector, or to the clerk to the district council, or to whoever appoints the inspector.

2459. You suggested the County Council or Home Office?—Yes; but I think you might appoint some one in the place to whom she should notify. I have not had time to think of that. I think that would not be an insuperable objection.

2460. Then to pass to another point about the amount of payment, have you a large experience of illegitimate children boarded out by others than the guardians; I mean not professional experience, but have you observed it much?—Yes, a great deal.

2461. What do you consider is the minimum payment for which such a child in the country can be properly received?—Some parents pay, I think I have known, as little as 1s. 6d. a week; some 5s.; 2s. or 3s. is the average for babies; 5s., perhaps, for bigger children.

2462. But what do you consider is the minimum sum for which such a child can be properly done for?—That is most difficult to say, because they live so much on their wages and the produce of their garden, and it depends upon whether the person who has the child keeps a pig, or whether she has a garden. It is impossible to fix a sum in money, because it all depends upon the particular circumstances.

2463. That is all in the country?—I am only speaking of the country; I have no experience of London.

2464. Do you think that, speaking generally, a girl who has an illegitimate child in the country, whose home is in the country, finds a difficulty in respectably disposing of it?—That depends rather upon what you mean by "respectably disposing of it." They are not always places that I should put the children in; I find them (0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

sometimes in very undesirable places; and so long as the baby is very young it takes up no room, and it does not matter where it is put so far as space goes, so long as it is well nursed, I mean well fed. I am speaking of little children, babies, because they only want milk.

2465. Have many instances come under your notice in which a girl has been honestly put in a difficulty as to finding a home, even if she was ready to pay for it, for her baby?—Yes, often, because there are not so very many suitable people to take them. There are so many girls who have been in difficulties, and that is why some of the ladies I have mentioned have helped them. And they have done it partly to help the mother. In some of these cases these ladies have done it not merely for the woman who receives the baby, but for the parent who places it.

2466. Do you think that that would be remedied in any way by an increased rule of registration?—No, I do not think that would touch the matter one way or other. It would not help you to find homes, only to see that the children were properly treated when they were in the homes.

2467. Might it not increase the difficulty of finding the homes?—No, I do not think that.

2468. Are there not a great many respectable working people who would be quite willing to take in a child, not as a common business, but occasionally once in a way, if you like, who would entirely refuse to be registered for that purpose?—I do not think many.

2469. Is it not a very much more formal step on the part of a respectable couple in a small country village to go to the County Council and ask to be registered to take in a child, than quietly to take it in without saying anything about it?—You have not given me time to think to whom they should notify it. You ask me all in a moment a thing you have been considering yourselves for some months, but I will think it over and think to whom you might notify. I think they might be registered and inspected by a local authority, but the inspection should not be only local; the inspector should have an authority from a distance.

2470. I do not follow that; you have not quite met my point, which is, would there not be many a quiet couple who would be ready enough to take in a child in an emergency, but who, if they were obliged officially to have their house registered for that purpose, would say, We do not want that registration implying inspection?—No, I do not think so. You would only propose to register that house if the child remains, say, over a week. I think the fact should be notified that the child is there, and that it should be liable to inspection; but I do not see that the house need be registered as a house for infants. The fact that a particular infant is in a house ought to be registered locally, and then it should be liable to inspection by the local and central inspectors; but it would not be necessary that that house should be for all time registered as a house for babies.

Chairman.

2471. But that would imply when the place came

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12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

came to be inspected, when it was found to be unsuitable or overcrowded, that the inspector ought to have the power of taking the child away?—Yes, quite so; anyone registered as having a baby in the house ought to be liable to inspection, but I do not think it necessary that the house should be a registered house for babies.

Viscount Llandaff.

2472. The Lord Bishop put to you the case of decent people who want to take a child permanently, but would rather go without the child than go through the formality of registration?—I do not think it would often happen; I think that these decent people would be quite willing to submit to it.

2473. They would like the inspection of somebody sent down from the Home Office, you think?—I do not think they would object if they were doing their duty; I do not find that they do so myself. I never find that they object to my committees' inspection, if they are doing right. I have seldom had a complaint of anyone doing it carefully and kindly.

2474. Is there not a great difference between the inspection of a neighbour, who comes in the light of a friend, and the inspection of an official who comes from the Home Office?—I think it does not matter if it is done kindly.

2475. You think that an official is as friendly as neighbours?—Yes, and possibly more so. I think it should be an official who would do it in a friendly way; but if you send a policeman down or a rough person, or a "paltry person," as I was told, that is an objection; but it entirely depends upon who she is, and how she does it. You might send someone either from the village, or from a distance, who would set them all up in arms. It is not the fact of an official lady's call or inspection that would make them angry.

Lord Belper.

2476. You think they would not object to the mere fact of registering, having their names sent to the local authority, so that everyone could see them?—No; I think they would regard it only as permission to have the child.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2477. But you have drawn a clear distinction between two things; namely, on the one hand, notification to the authority that a child is there, in the same sort of way as an infectious disease is notified, and, on the other hand, registration of the house as a place for the reception of babies?—Yes, I meant that.

Lord Belper.

2478. If that is to lead to anything else, it must mean that the fact that the child being there is registered; you may not call it registration of the house, but at all events the result would be, that the local authority must put that name and address on some sort of a register to which people can refer?—If the child is only there a night or two there can be no grievance, because the child would be gone when the inspector came.

Viscount Llandaff.

2479. I understand you to confine your recommendation of a notice that the child is there to the transient case, not the permanent one?—Yes; it would be merely the fact, in case there should be any question afterwards as to what had become of that child; you would be able to trace it and know where it was; for instance, in such a case as those Reading cases, you would be able to trace the child by the fact of its being notified.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2480. In your experience in the country, does a girl who has to find a home for a baby usually have to pay?—Yes.

2481. Or frequently obtain a home with relations without payment?—I think she always pays; she always professes to do so; she always pays at first; sometimes it is with relations that she puts the child, her mother or her sister; but even with a sister she pays, as a rule.

2482. That is what I want to get at; would you or would you not exempt those people from your notification; I use the term notification rather than registration; ought a sister to be registered if she takes an illegitimate child?—Scarcely; and yet there are cases where, of course, the sister's object is to get rid of it. I think that is a very difficult point. I think it is a point that wants a great deal of thinking over, because in the first place, in most instances, the sister would be the kindest, but on the other hand it is the sister who would more wish than anybody else, perhaps, to get rid of it; so that I think it would want very careful thinking over to say on which side the balance lies.

2483. You would not be prepared at present to speak as to where you would limit the need of registration?—Not all in one moment.

Lord Kinnaird.

2484. A respectable woman who was not in any way a criminal would be afraid to do anything to bring herself within the law?—No; I think it is so easy to get rid of a baby, that it does not require any science; you have only not to give it enough milk, and it is gone.

2485. You think they are getting to know that?—I think everybody knows it; too many of them know it. I think nature tells you that if you put the feeding bottle outside the cradle the child will not last long; I mean I could not give a hard-and-fast opinion about it, because I think that, as a rule, the sisters would be kind, and are kind; but there are cases where sisters, like the mothers, are only too glad to get rid of the babies.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2486. But with all the possible drawbacks you are in favour of some fresh legislation for the protection of infants?—I quite think that there ought to be such legislation.

Viscount Llandaff.

2487. I have not quite gathered the extent of your experience; did your inspection extend to the whole of the 155 committees that board out children?—Yes.

2488. And

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2488. And that is the total of the committees, as I understand, in England and Wales?—Yes.

2489. Do you remember the number of unions?—Yes, but that has nothing to do with the number of unions.

2490. No, I know, but I wanted to know how many unions adopt this system?—I should say, speaking roughly, between 40 and 50.

2491. How many unions are there in England and Wales?—I think the number is 647, or it is very nearly that; and of those I should say between 40 and 50 board out beyond the union.

2492. Then why are there 155 committees; is there more than one committee for a union?—Yes; they are not committees for a union. If I might give you an example, there is a committee at Windermere, a committee of local ladies there; they receive children from, I think, six different London unions and I think one country one. There is, again, a committee at Sidmouth in Devonshire; that receives children from three London unions.

2493. I do not want the details; there are then 40 or 50 unions out of the six hundred odd which adopt the boarding-out system?—Yes, outside their union.

2494. Then you say that those unions contribute 1,800 children in all?—Yes.

2495. We should have to deal with a number something like 20 or 30 times that if we extended this Act?—You would.

2496. We should have to deal with the great bulk of illegitimate children in the country?—Yes.

2497. And a great number of the orphan and deserted children?—Yes.

2498. It is not fair to ask you what the number would be?—I have not the least idea; you would know better than I should; but I think for that you would require an inspector for each county almost.

2499. A central inspector you mean for each county besides the local supervisor?—Yes; I would make the local supervisor responsible for at any rate informing the central inspector of any children who might be put out to nurse in the local supervisor's district.

2500. Now you have told us that some of your committees practically use this boarding out system to benefit the poor people in the neighbourhood, or even to benefit their own old servants?—Yes.

2501. About what proportion of the 155 comes under those two categories?—Well, I should say that taking those who use it to benefit the people, almost half or one-third.

2502. May I take it as a rule that where the boarded-out children are sought for in order to benefit the people, those people are poor and they are in a miserable condition of life?—Some are miserable, but by no means all; even when they are pretty fairly off, a boarded-out child or two, that is 8s. a week say, and 2l. a year for dress for each child, besides other things, is a great advantage to them.

2503. Do you find that in those districts under those committees the children do less well than under the really philanthropic ones?—Yes, on the whole; but I think the motives are mixed.

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Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2504. The mixed motive does not hurt the child, you think?—No, not always. In nearly all of them, in the first instance, they take the child for profit; but they say, "We are paid for this, and we ought to do right by the child," and they do their duty. You cannot imagine that they would take a child from love that they have never seen and as to which they do not know what it is like; nor that they would simply take it for company when they have got children of their own.

2505. Now, in all your experience, in 10 years how many criminal cases have you come across?—Do you mean by criminal, where the people have been sent to prison for ill-treatment of a child; or where they have been convicted of crimes independently?

2506. No, I mean when convicted of some crime connected with the child; wilful neglect or wilful injury done to the child; how many criminal cases of that sort have you known?—You mean of persons sent away to prison?

2507. Take those first; how many cases of conviction have you known?—You are asking me, you see, to run over 10½ years in a moment.

2508. Give it me approximately?—Four.

2509. Are there more numerous cases where you have suspected criminal conduct?—There are cases where I think if an inspector of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society had found them, he would have prosecuted them; but I do not prosecute; I only report and recommend that the child shall be taken away, but I think if other people had seen what I have seen, they would have prosecuted.

2510. In the class of parent you employ, is that sort of conduct, cruelty or wilful neglect, common or uncommon?—It is not uncommon.

2511. About what is the proportion?—I am always afraid of stating figures, and "cruelty" and "wilful neglect," you see, are a matter of degree and opinion.

2512. I will tell you why I ask the question: yours is a picked class of foster-parents?—It is.

2513. If there is a large proportion of those people who in your experience are guilty of cruelty or neglect, the question is, what precautions should we have to take with regard to others not belonging that picked class?—Exactly, I understand.

2514. Can you give me any idea of the sort of proportion in which cruelty or neglect has existed, in your opinion?—As to what I call a bad case of neglect or cruelty, when I am going round inspecting every day or every other day, I find a bad case of that kind about once a fortnight; perhaps one in every 15 or 20 cases.

Lord Kinnaird.

2515. How many cases do you inspect in a day?—Sometimes I have inspected as many as 30 in the day; sometimes I inspect only one.

Viscount Llandaff.

2516. There is one case in 20 then of the boarded-out children where, in your opinion, there has been cruelty or neglect?—Yes, where I think the child ought to be removed.

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12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2517. Do you recommend the removal of one child in 20 of those you inspect?—Yes, I should think perhaps about that.

Viscount Llandaff.

2518. That is the severest condemnation of the boarding-out system I have heard?—I think it wants the utmost care; but then if the child is moved you may find a better home for it. I would not stop the system for that, but I would move the child.

2519. But in your case you have first the selection and supervision by a local committee then the approval by the guardians, and lastly the supervising examination by the Local Government Board?—Yes.

2520. And that is the result you are landed in, that one in 20 turn out unfit?—I think so. I think the system is excellent. Nothing is so good as the system when the child is in a good home; but it does require the utmost care, because even the local people are deceived as to the people they put the child out with.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2521. And you are sometimes deceived in the local committees, I suppose?—Yes, sometimes. But not much. I know them too well. I try to keep them up to the mark, and also I let them put anything on my broad shoulders that they like.

Viscount Llandaff.

2522. Your inspection is in the country?—Yes, but I have had children boarded out by a committee even in the town of Birmingham itself.

2523. Have you met with much difficulty from the foster parents disappearing, changing their residence and going away?—No, because the committee and the guardians are bound to let us know every alternate three months where the children are. Before that regulation was made I used to have a great deal of difficulty, but in 1889 we issued a new order, and by that the guardians are bound every April and October to send us a return of the children with their foster parents' names and addresses, and the committees have to do it in January and July.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2524. I suppose it might be possible that if you took an average of 100 homes where the parents are with their own children you might find one case in 30 where a child would be almost better off if you placed it somewhere else. Your standard, I mean, of what is required for a child is a high one; there are many homes in which that standard is not reached by parents for their own children?—I take the poor people's own standard; I go by what they think or what they say.

2525. I am not sure that you understand me. I am speaking of this, that human frailty being what it is all the world over, there are a certain number of homes where people dealing with them according to what anybody who is a wise judge would think desirable, and you might find one home in 30 which might seem to you to be conducted in a way which, if the children were nurse children, you would think required

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

removal?—In that sort of case I do not think that the people generally ill-treat their own children in the way that they would ill-treat or neglect a nurse child, but I should certainly say that such a large proportion of the men drink that I think other people might be better in charge of their children, because of their moral character, taking them all round, and of course the children I inspect are supposed to be with those of good moral character.

2526. That is to say the drunken father who is left responsible for his children would be condemned by you as a foster-parent?—Quite so; for a child under the Government you would not choose that man; but at the same time the wife of the drunken man would very likely take care of her own children and treat them well.

Viscount Llandaff.

2527. Among the local authorities suggested for administration are the poor law authorities; are they suitable for the administration of such a Bill as this, do you think?—I would rather not have those children in communication with the poor law.

2528. The poor law and the police should be excluded altogether, you think?—Yes; but the police should be in reserve in case of resistance to the inspector.

2529. The poor law authorities have a medical staff ready to hand; but you think, as I gather, that they are too busy with their private practice?—The doctor is in a very awkward position when he has to report upon a child placed in a house by one of his own patients, or even in the house of one of his patients; there are so many ins and outs, you see.

Lord Belper.

2530. I rather want to understand what your proposal is; I rather gather that you, in the first instance, would suggest that anybody who takes in a child into their house should have to notify the fact to some conveniently near authority; we will not now specify what the authority is?—Yes.

2531. That that authority should not have any powers of inspection, but that the powers of inspection should be given to some central authority, either a department of Government or possibly the County Council?—Yes. That there should be central authority and inspection behind the local.

2532. Have you yourself formed any opinion as to which you think would be the best authority for the purpose of inspection. I do not want to press you on it if you have not?—You see my hands have been very full, and I had only two days' notice; but if you like I will think it over and let you know; but I think there should be no smaller area than a county.

2533. I understand you think it should be at all events something in the form of a central authority, so that no local influence could come into play?—Yes, and I do not think anything else would be fair upon the local people; you must expect them to have human motives.

2534. You think there are no places or districts where there would be an objection to that

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

that sort of notification and to inspection by a central authority?—I think there are no places; I do not say there are no individuals, but no places where that feeling would be generally held.

2535. Not in the country?—No, I am sure there would be no general feeling against it; I could not say no individual feeling, but I am sure no general feeling.

2536. Do you think that the necessity for such an inspection is larger in the country districts than it is in the populous places, or the reverse?—I do not know so much of populous places; but I should say that there would be a good deal more necessity for inspection in populous places, because there the neighbours know less of what goes on. And for the same reason, the inspection by local authorities is more difficult in the country districts than in populous places, for neighbours know each other too well.

2537. Most of your work lies in country parishes?—Yes, and most of my life has lain in country parishes too.

2538. But you are strongly of opinion that there is a necessity for such inspection in country parishes?—I think so.

2539. Therefore you would not like to see an extension of the present law which would make exceptions with reference to them?—Oh, no.

2540. And I rather understand that you would like to see an even larger discretion given to such inspectors with reference to the question of the child being removed or of any child being put in that house at all, a larger discretion than ever would be given under regulations such as the County Council have issued?—I am afraid I do not know enough about the regulations that the County Council have issued.

2541. I mean that they issue certain definite regulations; they do not register a house unless they consider that the house comes within those regulations?—Yes.

2542. But I rather understand that your suggestion is that the inspector should have a very large discretion, and that without being able to say that a house is not within the regulations, he should be able to say "I do not think the child is being as well looked after here as he ought to be, therefore I shall remove him to another house"?—Yes, in cases where ill-treatment or cruelty is found.

2543. Practically it would give a very large discretion to the inspector?—Yes.

2544. I rather gathered from your evidence that that was the view you took, that a house might not be an improper house for a child to be in, but that it might be found out that he was not looked after as well as he ought to be; in that case you think the inspector might require removal?—That is so much a matter of degree. The inspector might have too high a standard; and if the parent was satisfied that the child was tolerably done by, it would be rather difficult to interfere.

2545. I did not mean to suggest that the inspector should do it with a high hand; but there is the greatest difference between a hard and fast rule and discretion?—Yes, there is.

2546. And as far as your experience goes, you

(0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

would like to see discretion come into play?—Yes, I think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

2547. You said that the number of satisfactory houses in the country was limited?—Yes.

2548. Can you give us any sort of estimate how many satisfactory houses you could find throughout England?—Scarcely; because one place is so good, and another is so bad, as a rule. Sometimes when I go to a village, I am surprised at the number of good ones that I find in one place.

2549. Do you think there would be any difficulty in finding homes say for 100,000 children instead of 1,800?—You mean boarded out. Yes, very great difficulty.

2550. I have not calculated the number of children we should have to deal with under this Act, but they would be extremely large?—But you see, you would not have to place them; they are placed already; you have not the responsibility of placing them.

2551. We should have to find proper places and houses?—If you took them away.

2552. We should have to put them into houses fit for registration?—Yes. I think you will not find a very large number. But I do not understand that the authority who took them away would have to find more than a temporary place of refuge for them.

2553. It has been represented to us by many witnesses that the supply of good foster parents is practically unlimited; that you can find as many as you want?—Well, that is really not the case.

Chairman.

2554. In the cases of children who are boarded out in the country in the holidays, they do not have much difficulty with them?—They only put them out a fortnight at a time; and then, too, they crowd them a great deal, not as much as they did, because owing to my reports the principal society asked me to recommend them a lady as inspector, and she now inspects the homes and sees, as far as she can, that they do not put too many in one home; but, at the same time, they have not the regulations that we have, and I know places where they put a great many in, in the summer; there are so many different societies and agencies who send holiday children out; some of them use very unsuitable places, and I hear continually that they crowd the villages. That is temporary, you see, and I do not think you can compare the two, and it does not matter so much if they crowd for a little time.

Lord Kinnaird.

2555. Do you think that there would be a difficulty in getting houses for the children boarded out if the number were greatly increased?—Yes, there will be certainly a great difficulty in getting proper homes for a very large number; but there are districts in England quite untouched, and where you might find new centres for a great many more.

2556. And if they take them to a certain extent for profit the price might affect it?—I do not think that would come in at all; the price is high enough already.

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2557. It

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2557. It is almost a condition of this Bill that you should find these proper houses in every district; you would not expect a poor girl with an illegitimate child to go to a distance to find a home for it?—I did not understand that the authority should find a home.

2558. But they are to register the home, and the homes must be there to be found by somebody; it is proposed that every place where a nurse child is permanently taken in should pass the ordeal of registration, and be a fit and proper place, therefore, for a child to be taken to?—Yes. But I do not think that the fact of registration should carry with it any certificate of fitness of the house or home. It should be clearly understood that registration merely places them under inspection in order to provide, as far as possible, for the actual safety of the child.

2559. By the necessity of the case you must have it somewhere in the neighbourhood of the mother who has just had the child?—You would be able to find more homes for young babies than you would for older children; that is to say, if they are only temporary, because the mother will take them by-and-bye; they do not go there for good; and besides you can put a little baby in a place where you could not put an older child; it sleeps in a cradle beside the mother; you do not want a separate room for it; you do not want to divide the boys and girls when the children are so very young; so that you would have less difficulty in finding homes for very young children than you would for older ones; and, moreover, if the foster-parents take care of the child, I do not think that their character signifies so much, if it is only for a baby. You cannot attempt to have too high a standard, and I think you might be satisfied with a lower standard where the mother puts her own infant into such a home temporarily. It is impossible for any authority to find or choose homes for people's own children, or to make themselves responsible for their fitness; all they can do is to protect the child's life.

2560. These registered houses, if this Bill becomes law, must be scattered pretty well all over the country?—They must certainly.

2561. The mothers of these children would not have to go long journeys to find a place where to put their children?—No, certainly not; I should have them everywhere that I could.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. CROWDER, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2562. I BELIEVE you are a guardian?—No, my husband is a guardian; I am not. I am one of the honorary secretaries of the Charity Organisation Society and a Board School manager in St. George's-in-the-East.

2563. And you have had considerable experience among the poor of that district?—Yes, some 11 years. I have been about there constantly.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

[I should make it quite clear that I did not mean to recommend the *substitution* of central for local inspection, but the strengthening and enforcing of local inspection by central. I should propose the appointment, as at present, of a paid inspector by the district council, but also the appointment of a paid inspector by the county council, in order to ascertain whether the district councils have made these appointments, and to see that the inspectors of the district councils do their work. I would also suggest the appointment of one paid central inspector by the Home Office, to supervise, in the same manner, the appointments of the county councils, and the work of their inspectors. The placing of children in each district should be notified to the inspector of the district council, who should be responsible for the district, and should report to the county inspector; and if local circumstances make it difficult for the local inspector to carry out particular inspections, she should apply to the county inspector to carry them out in her place. The county inspector should be able, in the same manner, to call in the central inspector. I would have it most clearly understood that the fact of registration of houses does not carry with it any certification of their fitness, but only places them under inspection which shall, as far as possible, provide for the safety of the children. It is not possible either to find an unlimited number of satisfactory homes, nor to prevent the placing, by private persons, of children, especially if their own, anywhere they please, except so far as to prevent gross neglect or ill-treatment. The Government, by official inspection, cannot be responsible for more than this. The Government do not board out these children, nor find the homes, and cannot undertake more than the protection of the children from injury. With regard to the classes for exception, a register might be kept, at the Home Office, where each should be entered. I would not allow voluntary or philanthropic societies to be generally excepted under the Act, but they should be registered separately in the register to be provided for in the Act. Forms of return, with the names and addresses of the children and foster parents, like those furnished to the Local Government Board every three months, should be filled in by the district inspectors, and forwarded by them to the county inspectors].

Chairman—continued.

2564. Can you give us any opinion with reference to the points of this Bill?—The general opinion of those I have spoken to, and my own opinion, is that it is too interfering; that it would hinder many acts of kindness and help that neighbours show to each other now by taking children in time of sickness or other special circumstances.

2565. Because they would object to being compelled

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

compelled to register, you mean?—For temporary cases they would not be inclined to take the trouble; they would feel that there was a sort of law against them, that they could not do it without permission, and they would make that an excuse probably for not assisting their neighbours.

2566. Are you in favour of the extension of the age of children to be registered to five years?—I really do not know that if they had to register at all it would matter much continuing it up to that age.

2567. You have not thought that matter over?—No. Five years of age is rather high; it would interfere with the sending away of children to convalescent homes or sending them away to friends in the country, which we do in a poor district like ours. We continually send them at the age of three, and it would be inconvenient to have to register them. I often send them to persons at the seaside whom we know.

2568. I suppose in the same way as is done in connection with the Country Holiday Fund?—Yes, I do not personally work on it, but I generally take the children who are not quite suitable to send away in that way, perhaps children who are too young for the Country Holiday Fund, and who want a longer time; and we often send a child away for three or four months.

2569. You pay so much per patient?—Yes.

2570. And do you have it supervised while it is away?—I generally send it to some person in the country who has been recommended to me by a lady living at the place.

2571. And that lady would look after it?—She would look after it sometimes more, sometimes less; but she would recommend somebody who was personally known to her to take the child.

2572. You heard the proposals put forward by Miss Mason with reference to the notification; do you see any objection to the woman in such a case notifying that she was taking in a child in the same way as a person would have to notify that she had got measles in the house?—I think it would hinder in many cases acts of kindness among neighbours. We find widows apply to us, and they tell us that a neighbour or a relation, a cousin or a married sister, has taken one of the children for them during the time of their distress; and such a requirement would very much hinder them, I think, especially if they were of a little better class. I think you would find generally that those of a lower class are accustomed to being visited by district nurses and other visitors; they do not seem to mind how much inspection they have; but the minute you reach rather a better class they resent interference; persons like the parents of old servants; and servants themselves even in my employ, have told me that their parents have often had nurse-children, and they tell me they would not have them if they had to be inspected. I have asked them whether if relations or persons of that class had nurse-children they would submit to inspection; and they say absolutely no, that they would not take the child on those conditions; and one of them knows the practice well; her mother has (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

had such a child, and she says it has grown up like one of themselves.

2573. We had one case of an old servant mentioned by Miss Mason; that was a most necessary case for inspection?—Yes, it may have been.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2574. You are speaking entirely of London, are you not?—This particular case was in the country; the relations live a little way out of London. Many of these poor people in St. George's-in-the-East would choose a friend who lived a little more on the outskirts of London, St. George's being absolutely town. If they had a relation a little way out of London, that would be the one they would select; probably one in a little better circumstances than themselves.

Chairman.

2575. We had a witness from Poplar, a member of the County Council, who is strongly in favour of this Bill, and he scouted the idea of any resenting of the interference; can you give any reason for what you suppose to be likely to be the feeling?—I think the higher the class you go to the more self-respect they have, and the less they would like to feel that all their private affairs were known.

2576. Which would be the highest class, Poplar or St. George's-in-the-East?—I meant the higher the class of person who takes the child in. The St. George's-in-the-East people would resent inspection very little; but then we are in and out of their houses and bed-rooms. They do not seem to have any objection to inspection; but they are not the higher class people; those people like a little more privacy.

2577. But we have been told by two witnesses to-day that the better class rather welcome inspection?—I think the last witness was speaking of a better class, though a very poor class.

2578. If the inspection was by a lady, she said?—I think the last witness was speaking entirely of a class earning very small wages; a very poor class, though no doubt very respectable; as I understand your Bill, it would apply to all.

2579. We could not distinguish one class from another?—It would reach a much higher class than at present comes within the Act; it would apply to relations, too, would it not.

2580. That is a matter to be settled; the present Act does apply to relatives; but your objections to the Bill are limited to a general fear that it might stop benevolent action?—Yes, and make it exceedingly difficult for persons to know where to place their children when they could not keep them themselves; it would add to the difficulty instead of making it less; and speaking of the particular class you wish to deal with, it would almost make it impossible for some of them to find homes for their children.

2581. That objection, if it is a valid one, would apply equally to other things; I mean it would be a universal objection if it was proved to be a valid one?—Yes.

2582. Have you come across any of these people who take in children for hire or reward?—Not those who do it regularly as a practice,

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

or as a living; but a few who have taken children in, and in those cases they have been exceedingly kind and careful of the children; I am talking of infants. The only case of unkindness to a nurse-child that I have seen was in the case of a child who would have been too old to come under this Bill, a school child; there the payments were very irregular; the father had charge of the child and in the result they were unkind.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2583. What has been the nature of your experience as a worker; you have spoken of your being secretary to the Charity Organization Committee; but besides official work of that kind you have had a great deal to do, I believe, with the actual work of visitation?—I visit every case almost that applies for relief.

2584. That applies, you mean, to the Charity Organization Society for relief?—That applies to the Charity Organization Society for relief. I go into their homes and visit every room in their house and see their children.

2585. That has been for a great many years? Ten or 11 years.

2586. And during those 10 or 11 years you have had a very large experience of the working-class homes in the district of St. George's-in-the-East?—Yes, certainly.

2587. The children whom we have to consider are in large proportion illegitimate?—Yes, I understand so.

2588. You must have seen during that time a very large amount of the difficulties from one point of view and another in regard to the disposal of illegitimate children?—Not so large an experience as you would think, perhaps. Somehow or other the children become absorbed in the family; the grandmother perhaps takes the child, and it is not till you visit it once or twice that you know that it is not of the family.

2589. But that child, as a matter of fact, is being received for hire?—Yes.

2590. And that child would come under the Act if it were passed without the exemption of relatives, and they would require to register it?—Yes.

2591. And your view would be that the grandmother would resent very much having to register it?—I should think she would not take it if she had to produce it for inspection. I should almost say that these homes would never pass the inspection that a country home would pass. They treat the child as a part of their family; but there are a great many homes in St. George's where the treatment of the children would not pass any inspector.

2592. And you think that what you have described by what seems to me a happy phrase as the absorption of these children into the ordinary family life of the neighbourhood, would be hampered by a system of detailed registration?—Yes, I certainly think it would.

2593. And I gather that you think that the people who would object to it would be the upper-class, more than the lower-class of foster-parents?—Yes, I should say they would object

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

to it mostly; but I should think that relations would always object.

2594. Do you find an objection felt to the Act about notification of infectious illness, and so on, which implies inspection?—It is the doctor who notifies that.

2595. There is such a thing taking place, in that case, I mean?—They do not like it when it results in the child being taken away sometimes; but they are often very grateful when the child is taken away. I think they would resent it more in a higher class. Now and then they complain "you have taken away my child."

2596. Do you think that in the district in which you have had so large an experience there is, as a matter of fact, much difficulty for the mother of an illegitimate baby in finding a place for it?—I should say there is difficulty; I think there always is. I have been speaking to Miss Steer, who has a large experience in that way, and she says it is very difficult indeed, because most of these mothers in that district are weak lethargic girls, and not worth very high wages, and therefore they earn in wages if they go to service only about 14*l.* a year, and they are called upon to pay away 12*l.* a year for the support of their child.

2597. That is the fact as it is?—They cannot all do it, and therefore it is very difficult for them to find homes for their children, because they are not prepared to pay the full price.

2598. And would your idea be, that if a foster parent was required to register she would be entitled to insist more strictly on getting her money?—I suppose she would, and it would make it more difficult certainly; it would be more of a process to be gone through.

2599. But, on the other hand, you admit that it would be a better protection to the children?—Yes; I should think it would when they were taken, but then what would you do with those who did not get taken; would they be driven to the workhouse, where they certainly never thrive. The question is, what would become of the mother who could not get her child taken care of for her by a weekly payment.

2600. The alternative, I suppose, would be the mother having to find a home for her child where the people are ready to take it for an inadequate payment; that is one alternative; or the other is the workhouse?—Yes.

2601. And of those two alternatives which do you consider the worst?—Well, it depends how inadequate the payment is.

2602. What would you call a totally inadequate payment; or rather, what would you call a minimum adequate payment?—Five shillings is the proper payment, and that is what institutions give; and Miss Steer and other people would always pay that for a child; and I understand that out of that people are supposed to clear about 2*s.* or 1*s.* 9*d.*

2603. That is to say, that the child can really be kept for 3*s.*?—Three shillings and threepence, they put it down that the child is able to be put out for; that is, exclusive of clothes.

2604. Who puts it down at that?—Miss Steer, who has had an immense experience of that class.

2605. Do

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2605. Do the mothers for whom such agencies as Miss Steer's care find, as a matter of fact, difficulty, even with their help, in getting homes for their babies?—She has great difficulty in getting homes for them; because you are talking of very young infants. There is not much difficulty in finding a home for a child of three or two and a half years, but up to two years old it is very difficult; people do not like the responsibility. Most of these children are very delicate.

2606. Even for the sake of the 5*s.* payment, which Miss Steer guarantees in some way or other, there is difficulty in finding a home?—Yes; because these people are not actuated only by the desire to gain money; they want to do the best they can for the child, and these children are often delicate. We give credit to the human good feeling of the foster parents towards the children.

2607. Who are "we"?—I mean by "we" St. George's-in-the-East; the workers among the poor that I know there. We think that the evil of the treatment of these children is somewhat exaggerated.

2608. You put it a little time ago that they are treated very much as other children, and absorbed into the general life of the neighbourhood?—A great many are.

2609. Then, of course, the homes that Miss Mason described were country homes of a different class from those you are speaking of; they are homes where they ought to be well treated?—Yes; Miss Mason must have a very high standard, I think. I know some of the homes she spoke of in the country. Miss Steer rather told me that the great difficulty is that these unfortunate girls have not the means to pay properly for their children for the first two years; that they have to make a most tremendous sacrifice of everything that they receive in wages for the sake of their child; and she considers that the object of every institution, or of anything that is done by law, should be to try and help the mother, by encouraging her to make that sacrifice, and not to take the child absolutely off her hands if she fails to make it.

2610. And do you consider that if this Bill becomes law it will have that effect?—I think the suggestion was, that if the child was not in a proper home it was to be taken charge of by some other authority.

2611. I do not think anyone has suggested that the mother should be relieved of such responsibility as she can bear in the matter, but merely that we should not allow the child to be put into an intolerable home owing to the mother's inability to pay for it?—Of course we are against her paying a sum down; but we think that the course of legislation should be to encourage the mother to keep herself in touch with the child as much as possible, and so the maternal feelings would become more and more developed, and she would watch over the child herself.

2612. But in what way will the legislation proposed hinder that?—I thought there was a provision of that sort if the child was not properly cared for.

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Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2613. But, roughly, the gist of your evidence and your opinion is, that on the whole the hardship or inconvenience caused by making the Act more stringent would be greater than the advantage that would result from it?—Exactly so; making it so stringent that it would interfere with the action of neighbours towards each other too much, and would interfere with the relations assisting each other.

2614. Then, if the Act did pass in any such form you would be very strongly in favour of an exemption clause for relations?—Yes.

2615. You would admit, I suppose, that you would wish to protect an illegitimate child which was not with relations, but you would consider that we might go further in the protection of an illegitimate child not with relations than we should think it necessary to go where it was with relations?—Certainly.

Lord Belper.

2616. I rather understand that your view is that a great deal of the insufficient nourishment, to use no stronger term, that is provided for children, is not owing to the carelessness so much or the cruelty of the people with whom they are put, as to the very small amount of payment, and the inadequate payment, that is given for the purpose?—Yes.

2617. And you say that so many servant girls, I understand, if they were to give sufficient for the child would be giving practically about the whole of their wages?—Yes.

2618. It is clear that they cannot do that?—Yes.

2619. And therefore they give what they can?—Yes, and very often that is not enough, unless there is a kindly relation who will help the child.

2620. Therefore, you think that any system of registration which would keep a control over these houses would not effect its purpose unless there was some payment made to supplement the mother's payment?—I am not speaking of houses where they take more than one, but where they take one. I should think they did it more out of kindness for the mother than for gain, or what they would get out of the payment.

2621. You think that that kindness would not be given in the same way if they were forced to register?—Yes, and also I believe in better class persons it would prevent their taking children, especially in cases where, after the child is two or three years old, they get so fond of the child as to keep it and adopt it. That cuts off the ground that supplies these cases. Personally I should know more of how it affects an ordinary person, a widow or widower suffering from temporary illness, say, who sent their children to a neighbour in the country.

2622. Generally speaking, you are afraid of its interfering with natural kindness and assistance given by a neighbourly friend?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2623. Only when that assistance is given for money?—Very often there is a small payment.

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2624. Not

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper.

2624. Not a *quid pro quo*, but a small payment is made and they give a great deal more than the actual money they receive?—Yes; sometimes the mother says, "I will clothe it," but she does not pay the whole expenses.

Viscount Llandaff.

2625. Supposing this Bill be enlarged in the way suggested, it would cover a vast proportion of the illegitimate children born in the country, I take it?—Yes.

2626. They are largely put out as nurse children?—I suppose they are, in the domestic servant class. The working girl that goes to the factory leaves her baby to be cared for by day, and when she goes home she has it with her at night; or she might work at home; that would be what you would call the lowest class.

2627. However, in the class that you come across, I suppose the poor girl naturally has her child in secret, as far as she can; she hides herself somewhere for her confinement?—Yes, if she has any self-respect.

2628. Of course it is vital that she should find some place where she can place the child as quickly as possible?—Of course those who have no sister or no one to take care of them would go to the workhouse infirmary.

2629. Then the child would remain in the workhouse?—No, the mother would have to take it away when she left.

2630. What was in my mind was this: you say it is difficult now for her to find a home?—So I understand, because the people are so afraid of the responsibility of having the care of an infant.

2631. It will become more difficult if this Bill passes?—Certainly.

2632. Because you weed out a great many houses which now do take them in?—Yes.

2633. And this girl would have her difficulty

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

of finding a place increased?—It would drive mother and child more into institutions or workhouses.

2634. Or to worse still?—Or to worse still.

2635. Surely it would not be a benefit to the class we are dealing with, unless you get these registered houses dotted all over the country, and easily accessible to everybody?—No.

2636. Do you believe that in your region it is possible to have a number of picked places?—I think a great many of them would resent being registered, who do not do for a child what we think ought to be done. They would generally do as well for nurse children as they do for their own.

2637. You put a scale that a poor servant girl could not possibly reach, 5s. a week?—Some of them who earn 14*l.* a year could for two years go on paying 12*l.* a year for the child; and Miss Steer feels that very often there ought to be more feeling shown to these poor girls who have taken such immense pains for their children. Instead of all this registration, she wants to raise the tone of these girls themselves, and increase the sympathy of their relations towards those who have done their utmost for their children.

2638. Have you got any houses in St. George's-in-the-East where they take any babies in as a business, if I may so call it?—Not that I am personally acquainted with. Where they take in one child perhaps, but I am not acquainted personally with anywhere they take in more.

2639. Is that done for the sake of the profit, or from a mixed motive?—A little bit of both; partly for profit I should think in the case of most of them; the people very often call them by their own name, so that it may be some time before you became aware that they are really nurse children.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Friday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 15 Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.

Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord KINNAIRD.

Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH, IN THE CHAIR.

Mrs. HARDIE, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2640. I BELIEVE you are the President and one of the Secretaries of the Ladies' Health Society, Manchester?—I am chairwoman of the working committee.

2641. May I ask how long you have been connected with it?—Since, I think, 1880; 16 years.

2642. And would you mind telling the Committee what the particular relation of this Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association is to the town authorities, how you work the association, I mean?—The association began first as a voluntary one entirely, and about six years ago, I think it was, it occurred to the corporation that as we were working on lines of which they approved, and which they had tried themselves unsuccessfully, it would be a good thing if we could to a certain extent amalgamate and work together. That gave rise to our connection with the corporation.

2643. Are you the oldest voluntary society of the kind in England?—We are the only one, as far as I am aware; I mean working on our lines.

2644. Working on those particular lines?—Yes; there has been one started in Leeds during this last year, but they have no connection with the corporation, and they have only one health visitor; it is an experiment.

2645. What is your particular connection with the corporation; do the corporation find any of the funds?—Yes, the corporation find the salaries of six health visitors. The idea on our part was originally that the corporation should find half, and that we should find half; however it has generally been that we have found more than the corporation. At present we have either 13 or 14 visitors, and the salary of six of those is paid by the corporation.

Viscount Llandaff.

2646. Under the Public Health Act, is that?—I do not know. I believe under the authority of the sanitary committee of the town council. (0.95.)

Chairman.

2647. How is this society organised; do you have district committees in different parts of the town?—We have not committees, but lady superintendents; one lady superintendent at least for each health visitor, possibly with one or two other ladies to assist her, but she is responsible. We have a central committee which meets once a month when cheques and subscriptions are paid, and the various subjects that come up before us are discussed by the ladies of the working committee. I think you have seen a copy of our report; a list of the working committee is given there. Each lady manages her district entirely on her own lines, subject to fulfilling certain rules, very simple rules.

2648. And your health visitors are all salaried?—All the health visitors are salaried.

2649. May I ask what you pay them?—Fourteen shillings a week.

2650. And how many have you?—We have 14 in Manchester, and six in Salford. I may say that we did not begin in Salford at the same time as in Manchester. It was two or three years later before we worked with the corporation there.

2651. I take it, then, that the health visitors are told off to certain districts, that they have certain duties to perform in the matter of visiting houses, and inquiring into the sanitary state of those houses and the state of the people, and that then they report to the central committee. I take it that that is the general way in which it is organised?—Yes; they fill up every day a record of the visits they have made. Might I show you one of the forms filled up; it would give a clearer idea, and a more rapid idea than anything that I could explain (*handing in some forms*). They send in those report sheets every day to the medical officer of health of Manchester, possibly two or three; and I may say that this gives a very imperfect idea and does very little justice, in fact, does not do justice at all to our health visitors. It has always been a difficulty with us to get them to do justice to themselves.

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

If they call at a house they do not put it down as a visit unless there is something specially said or done, and besides that, they work very often much longer than their appointed hours. Their agreement with us is for six hours every week-day except Saturday, and I am quite sure there is not a woman among them but devotes a great deal more time than that to the work; and she is at the beck and call of the people at all hours as a labour of love, which it is, quite as much and more than a salaried affair.

2652. They are all women, are they not?—All women.

2653. You have a column here, I see, for "Remarks as to Sickness, Overcrowding, &c.," and in this column I see you have remarks about the condition of the children that you find in these houses?—Yes; of course if they come across anything abnormal it is put down. At the back of the sheets you will observe that there are often remarks made, but those are more for the ladies. I do not think that the medical officer of health takes much notice of anything that is put on the back. These reports go into the town hall; they are posted every day, and at the end of the week they are returned to the lady superintendent of each district for her inspection. Of course she sees her health visitor at least once a week, and sometimes oftener; but these are handed to the lady at the end of the week, and they are returned in three months to the town hall.

2654. Have you seen the Bill which is before the Committee with regard to the Protection of Infant Life?—No, I have not.

2655. Are you acquainted with the particular points at issue?—I do not know that I am particularly.

2656. You know that there is an Act that was passed in 1872?—I am aware of that.

2657. For the purpose of preventing anybody from keeping more than one child under 12 months of age apart from the mother, for hire or reward, in a house that is not registered; you know that?—I do not know the number, but I knew there was something of the kind.

2658. Then the authorities in Manchester have never specially brought the provisions of this Act to your notice?—No; I do not think that it was necessary in our work; and in the condition of the poor in Manchester I do not see how it would apply very well. If a woman goes out to work, and has a child to leave behind her, if she has a mother, the child goes to the mother, as a rule, or to an aunt; failing relations, it goes to some neighbour, as a rule. There are two *crèches*.

2659. That is a different question; you are talking of children only put out for a day?—I am speaking only of children put out for a day.

2660. I am referring to children put out to nurse for a longer period than 24 hours?—There are not many of those in Manchester. We talked it over the other day; we were speaking of that, some of the members of the working committee, and we arrived at the conclusion that it hardly touched the people among whom we worked, the lower classes in Manchester; it seemed to apply more to people in a higher grade of society (unless they were domestic

Chairman—continued.

servants) who wished to hide something. It concerns merely the mill hands and working people of Manchester, who marry so very young that really there is nothing there for them to hide of that kind, or to lead them to wish to put out children.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2661. No illegitimate children?—I do not say that there are not any, but there are comparatively few, I should think; and if there are any they are taken care of by their relatives.

Chairman.

2662. Do your health visitors pay any special attention to the condition of these illegitimate children whom they may find in houses when they are going round?—Not specially more than to others, but they look after all the children as much as they possibly can.

2663. But your visitors have not practically paid much attention, or have not had their attention called to the existing law with reference to the registration of houses?—No, I am not aware that they even know of the registration of houses. But might I just consult these few notes that I took from the women the other day.

2664. Certainly?—There is one remark made here by one of the health visitors in one of the lowest parts of Manchester, where there are a great many lodging-houses, very large lodging-houses indeed, and they say that there the mortality is very great indeed. I dare say that there there is also a tremendous deal of illegitimacy among the people.

2665. When you speak of mortality, do you mean infant mortality or general mortality?—Infant mortality; for that matter I might say general mortality, but I am speaking of infant mortality at present. Frequently the mothers there are in prison, or may have to go to the workhouse; in that case the other dwellers in these lodging houses will take over the children, and will even hide them; I believe they do the best for them in their ignorant way; so that the children are not a bit the worse because their mothers are away. We find that there is some ill-treatment, principally due to ignorance, and intemperance, practised as much by the mothers as by the care-takers. In fact, we find that there are two principal causes of infant mortality; the one, perhaps, results from the other. The great one, and it is one which applies both to intemperate people and to ignorant people, is the bad feeding of the children, the improper feeding of the children; but that is very largely caused, very often, by intemperate mothers. That is a second great cause, the intemperance of the mothers, and the consequent carelessness.

2666. Do you find that the people in Manchester in any way resent the visits of your health visitors?—It is the very rarest thing that they do, and if it occurs at all it must be in a new district that we have begun, or where strangers have come for the first time. Our women go as friends, we keep as much as possible the official aspect out of view; in fact, it would, I believe, quite nullify the good effect that we have on the people if they thought that we went

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

as inspectors. Our women go as friends, and as servants of the Ladies' Health Society.

2667. Yes, but I suppose it is generally known that your society has a very close connection with the corporation, and with the sanitary authorities?—Yes, it is known, especially among the better classes, but we never bring it forward any more than we can help. Still the poor people will often complain to the health visitors; if there is anything wrong in the sanitary arrangements of the houses they will draw their attention to it. I think in some of the sheets which I have handed in you will notice remarks on over-crowding, and on the babies being badly fed.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2668. "A little baby who lodges with its mother in this house is very much neglected," that is the entry in one case?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

2669. Who says that with regard to that particular baby?—The visitor has discovered it in some way or other, or has seen with her own eyes that it is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2670. Here is another such case: "Reported a case to the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society. The mother is hardly ever sober; she has a baby eight months old, which is shamefully neglected; her husband is a jewel-case maker, and she receives in all 2l. every week, and I do not think they have a blanket in the house"?—Yes.

Chairman.

2671. I suppose your health visitors are practically powerless to do much good in cases of that sort unless they can prove actual cruelty to children which brings it under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act?—Yes; we rely on that society for doing anything for us in such cases.

2672. Do you find that they work cordially with you?—We do, but we endeavour as little as possible to come into collision with the people, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children have met us in a very friendly way. Our information is given to them, and they undertake to find witnesses apart from us; our information is given not publicly but privately. If the people got the idea that our women were going about spying it would do great injury to their work. Might I show you the cards in regard to the deaths, especially of children, which are issued by the corporation, and which our women have to fill up; this side, you will see, is filled in by the medical officer of health or his assistants, and this side is filled in by our women. I should like to put these in (*handing in some cards*). See Appendix.

2673. Do you notify every death you come across?—No; so many of these are sent to each health visitor; whenever a death has been notified at the town hall, if the medical officer of health wants the information, he sends to the visitor a card filled in on one side at the town hall, and the other side she fills up herself. (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

I have marked them, and you will see the questions she has to reply to. It places in the hands of the medical officer of health the full details as to the causes of death and all that sort of thing, as a family history in many cases.

Viscount Llandaff.

2674. Why are some of these cards pink and some of other colours?—Because they distinguish the different ages and various little matters. These are a few suggestions for the ladies, privately distributed among ourselves for the guidance of beginners in the work, and so on (*handing in a printed paper of suggestions*).

Chairman.

2675. I see the first of the suggestions in the paper relates to the sale of soap?—Yes, we sell as much soap as we can in Manchester; we get it at a cheap rate in Manchester; we do not in Salford, we have to buy it and sell it again. The corporation both supply us with carbolic powder, and with linewash and brushes. They also have supplied us at various times with these papers, as regards the feeding of children, for circulation (*producing the same*), and our health visitors use them very extensively. We can always get as many as ever we like to apply for. There are other papers which have been given to us to make use of in various emergencies, in case of epidemic or anything of that kind, which our women circulate and leave; these also I should like to put in (*handing them in*).

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2676. The health visitors, I gather, circulate different papers giving information upon sanitary and other matters that would be useful in those houses?—Yes, and very specially with regard to the care of children.

Chairman.

2677. Do you find as a rule that the visits of your health visitors result in the children being better looked after?—Decidedly; I am not good at figures, but I believe the population of Manchester alone is over 500,000, and it must be remembered that there are only 14 health visitors; we should want four times as many to do what we would like to do. Naturally, they do not get over their districts in the regular routine more than at the outside three or four times in the year, and many times not perhaps quite so often as that.

2678. You mean they do not get to the same houses more often than that?—Except in special cases which they are particularly interested in looking after. We have mothers' meetings in each district once a week, where sanitary subjects are taught much more than in the general run of mothers' meetings; and if any of those women are ill, or their children ill, or in want of any particular care, the health visitor visits them of course a great deal oftener.

2679. Can you account for the very high infant mortality in Manchester, if you take all these precautions, because it is very large?—It is very high in some particular parts of it. If

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

you go to the better parts on the outside of Manchester, I believe the mortality would perhaps prove to be rather low.

Lord Kinnaird.

2680. That makes it worse in the other parts?—It makes it worse in certain parts.

Chairman.

2681. And I suppose that these worse parts are the very places to which you devote much attention?—As much as we possibly can we do.

2682. You do not trouble yourselves about the better parts?—Not at all.

2683. Therefore the efforts of your society have not been very successful in the way of checking infant mortality?—I do not know what the efforts of our society may have done specially, but I understand that the rate of infant mortality has fallen very considerably during the last years in Manchester; but we still find that there is plenty to do. One great cause in Manchester, I think, of the infant mortality is the very youthful marriages that they make. In Manchester a boy and girl are practically independent of their parents almost directly they leave school; they earn such good wages, and the first thing they do is to get married, totally ignorant of the duties they take in hand. And the children live in unhealthy neighbourhoods; the air is saturated with smoke and chemical vapour. The work to keep a house clean in Manchester in the poorest parts must be, I should think, three times what it is in London in any part; and that joined to the intemperance, which I am sorry to say in the lowest parts prevails so much, causes, I think, the great rate of infant mortality. But of course there are very respectable working people in some places, and it would be a scandal to include the whole of the working population in those remarks.

2684. You say that they marry very young in Manchester?—They do.

2685. What sort of age?—Oh, you will have boys and girls of 15, 16, 17, and 18.

2686. Marriages at those ages are frequent?—Very frequent; especially the lower you get among that class of people the more marriages there are.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2687. I am rather interested in the evidence you gave as to the small number of illegitimate births, because it is with illegitimate children that we have mainly to do in considering the protection of infant life which such an Act as is now contemplated would encourage. In the evidence Dr. Tatham gave us we are told that in the years that he referred to there were 2,807 illegitimate births, and of these 1,099 died under the age of one year; does that surprise you in connection with what you have just told us?—No, not at all. The mortality in the low parts of the town is very great among all classes both illegitimate and legitimate, and if there must be any difference I should suppose that the mortality would be greater among the illegitimate, not because the caretakers neglect them, but because their parents neglect them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2688. You say, "if there should be any difference." According to Dr. Tatham's evidence, which he qualified owing to certain particulars, but still, taking it roughly, the proportion of legitimate infants who died under one year was 174 per 1,000, and of illegitimate infants 392 per 1,000?—Yes.

2689. That is a contrast, you observe; more than double?—Yes, but I think that the statistics of the births of the legitimate children include the births in all the better classes, not only in the lower parts of the town, both the better-class working quarters, and the residential parts; and there the children are, as a matter of course, well taken care of. There are some parts in Manchester, Angel Meadow, one portion of Ancoats, parts of Hulme, and Deansgate, where there is a very low moral tone altogether; those people think less of it, naturally, than the respectable working people would do. These are places where rents are high, but where these people are obliged to live; but respectable working men get away from those places as fast as ever they can. If they go there it is only as a temporary thing, or because of sickness or some reason like that, which causes them to live there; but their neighbours are too uncongenial for them to live there any longer than they can help; and I think it is there that the great death-rate of illegitimate children would take place.

2690. Well, however we explain it, and wherever the locality may be, it is clear that there are in Manchester, as elsewhere, unhappily, a large number of these illegitimate births?—Yes.

2691. Do you think that, as a rule, the mother of an illegitimate child does find in those neighbourhoods, we will say, any great difficulty in discovering a home or foster parents for her baby?—They do not appear to find much difficulty; there is always some old woman ready to take a child for 5s. a week; in some parts of the town, for 2s. 6d. or three shillings a week.

2692. There is always some old woman you say ready to do it. Are those old women people who seem to you, I will not say ideal nurses, but are they sufficiently good usually to do well by their charges?—Usually they are, as well as they know how, and quite as well in many cases as the mother would do by them. In reading this little paper in my hand I notice that I say here, "In Angel Meadow, in Ancoats West, and in Deansgate there are great black patches, showing a death-rate of upwards of 40 per thousand." (When I say "these black patches" I must inform you that that refers to a map that was published in one of Dr. Tatham's books. In reading this paper I had this map enlarged in order that these black patches might be seen.) "And that is the average of the best and worst parts of each district put together, for, taking Angel Meadow for instance, what do you find? Here is a diagram of that district divided into sections, and in none do you find the death-rate under 45, whilst in this section just behind Miller-street it is 58.4. And in one way even that is not the worst, for the deaths in two large lodging-houses, if included, would bring it up to over

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

over 80. Very justly, Dr. Tatham has not included those, as the deaths in them take place among tramps and strangers to the city. And if you look at the map you find that irregularly, up and down the whole of Ancoats in Hulme, and in Deansgate, the black shows in almost as large areas."

2693. That does not refer to children particularly; that is the general death-rate?—That is the general death-rate; but of course the children figure in it very largely.

2694. But speaking generally, do you consider that any system of registration, either what the present law nominally enforces or what is contemplated under this Act, is desirable, or do you think it necessary?—We consider it desirable; it could at least do no harm and it might be useful in other parts of the country, and we might find it useful.

2695. If I understood rightly, the purport of your evidence, taken with what Dr. Tatham told us, is this: "What is proposed by this Act is not really necessary in Manchester, because we can do better. We have got a system at work there which covers the ground roughly, and practically gives us, at all events, what the existing law could give us if it were enforced, and a great deal of what would be even if the law were more stringent?"—I think that would have to be somewhat qualified, for various reasons. In the first place this society of ours is entirely voluntary, and a cessation of subscriptions would stop it at once. Also, it is within the power of the corporation to change their minds and withdraw the sympathy, if you call it so, that they give us. It is simply a perfectly voluntary thing which might be brushed away at any moment; therefore, I think that the law would be very necessary in view of that if nothing else.

2696. And if the law, as here sketched, were to become law to-morrow, and it was put in force, do you yourself see reason to think that much hardship would result?—No hardship whatever that I can see; but I do not know what the Act is.

2697. What is proposed, roughly, is this, that no one shall be allowed to take a nurse-child, even one nurse child, under the age of five years, except in a house registered for the purpose, certain large exceptions being given to charitable institutions?—These people you must remember are very poor; would registration involve a money payment?

2698. No, absolutely no payment for procuring registration; but registration involves inspection, and what we want to get at is, will such registration, with the consequent inspection that follows, be a hardship to foster-parents, people who ought to be allowed in a free country to take children by whom they mean to do well?—I think in the lower classes it would be no hardship at all. I do not think their feelings are so very keen that they would feel hurt by inspection; and if they were, I think that the child's welfare ought to be the first interest. But I do not know that it would always be possible to enforce it. For instance, a child might be sent to an aunt or a grandmother only temporarily, as long as the mother was at work; she might have work only

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

for a month; she might have work only for a fortnight; and I question in such a case if the woman receiving the child would think it worth while to register, and it would be very difficult to check it.

2699. That is a very important point; then you consider that even if registration were desirable or practicable with regard to the permanent care of such children, it would be undesirable or unworkable with reference to the temporary care of them?—Well, I do not at all say it would be undesirable, but I think that possibly it might be difficult.

2700. The Bill proposes that for any period longer than 24 hours there must be registration?—Well, if you could get it drilled into these people's heads, I do not see where the hardship comes in. The difficulty would be to get it into their minds.

2701. And you would not be afraid of difficulties arising from the inspection, from their resenting it?—I think that they are a law-abiding people, and when they know that a thing is the law, they are willing to submit to it. I suppose it would come in as something under the same category as the school board and school inspector. Of course we all know that very often the parents evade that law; they will keep a little girl or boy at home to take care of some other children, and the inspectors have a very lively time in looking after those boys and girls; and it is to be expected that the same thing would occur with this.

2702. You have in Manchester, I suppose, some large lying-in hospitals or institutions where women are confined?—Well, there are, of course, the workhouse hospitals, very large workhouse hospitals, but I think there is only one, as far as I am aware, where they take in women for confinement, unless it is an abnormal case; they take them in abnormal cases, but there is only one I think which takes them in in the natural course of things.

2703. Then you have no special experience of difficulties which such institutions as that might find, or those who visit there might find, in discovering suitable foster-mothers for illegitimate children whose mothers have to go to work?—That hardly comes within the category of our work, but from what I gather from other ladies who have visited in the workhouse hospitals where such cases are more certain to occur, and where the death-rate is extremely high, there is serious difficulty because of the expense, not that other working women would not be kind and good to them, and take them in; but where is the money to come from to pay for them. The real mother when she goes to work barely makes money enough for her own living.

2704. And she has to pay what she can to a foster-parent who will take the child?—Yes, to a foster-parent who will take the child.

2705. Do you think that registration would make it more difficult for her, by cutting off, so to speak, the supply of foster-mothers who would be prepared to take the child very cheap?—I do not think that it would, but I do not know sufficiently about it to say exactly. If it is of any value to you, I can tell you what the rates

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are

15 May 1896.]

MRS. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

are that these poor people generally pay for a child going out.

2706. Will you please do so?—In one district, for instance, in Regent-road, one of our health visitors stated that, among the people she visited, she only knew one house where they take in three children. I was asking the women very particularly if they knew of any houses in their districts where the people take in more than one, and this woman who really knows the district very well, says she only knows of one house, and this person takes in three children, and they are the children of her sister, who goes out to work. Then in another district there is one where the grandmother takes in two illegitimate children.

Viscount Llandaff.

2707. Of her daughter's?—Of her daughter's; and she is paid 2s. and 2s. 6d. for them per week. Of course there is less given to her, being the grandmother, than there would be to a stranger. In the same district where this sister takes the three children, there is another child cared for by a blind girl, she gets 5s. a week for taking care of this child, and provides whatever food it gets. She had one before, which died. She is very kind to the child and very fond of it; it is a servant's illegitimate child. Then I find that 5s. is about the highest rate that is paid. In Hulme the prices are 2s. 6d. to 3s. per week, and sometimes milk is given with it; that is to say, the mother pays for the milk; and it is a very common occurrence, if the child is young, for the mother when she comes out of the mill to come to the house and nurse her child in the middle of the day. Yes, I find that these sums, from 2s. 6d. to 5s., are what is paid.

2708. I gather from your evidence that you have not much experience of what are commonly called baby-farms, that is, places which make a business of taking these children?—No, almost none; whether that is owing to the nature of our work I cannot tell, but I do not think there is much baby-farming, properly so called, in Manchester.

2709. You say that you think registration and inspection would be no hardship to the lower classes; do you mean by that the classes who inhabit those two or three black districts that you so graphically described to us?—Yes, in the first instance.

2710. Do you think those are people likely to get registration?—Not if they can help it, certainly.

2711. But you are aware that in London and, I suppose, everywhere else, there would be strict conditions as to the state of the house, the capacity of the foster-parent to take care of children and so on, conditions that would exclude, I should have thought, these lower classes?—Well, they have a wonderful knack of slipping out of things.

2712. What would be the good of registration if it were to be slipped out of; the object of registration is to secure a sanitary house with almost ideal surroundings for these nurse children?—That is not possible, I think, in

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

Manchester, as far as I can gather; but I think, you know, that there are degrees of poverty and of morality, and if you come just a shade above the very lowest, I think that there would be no difficulty at all about the registration; and it would be for the inspectors, I suppose, to judge whether a house was suitable or not. I cannot tell what the result would be, but I certainly think it would be no hardship, and I think it would be a very desirable thing. We all think that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2713. What does that mean, "We all think that;" that is an important point?—Perhaps I am speaking a little too generally; but those members of our working committee whom I have consulted think it would be very desirable.

2714. They are in favour, in short, of such a Bill, as far as they have understood it, as is now proposed to Parliament?—Exactly.

Viscount Llandaff.

2715. On the other hand, you said that official inspection would nullify all the good you do?—Yes, but we should not inspect; we should have nothing to do with it.

2716. But there must be official inspectors?—Yes; but our women would never be allowed to inspect in that way.

2717. Would not the inspection of these official inspectors come under your condemnation, that official inspection would be resented by the people, and be disliked by them?—We should not care to run any risk, and I do not see that that comes within our province at all. The inspector very probably might inform the lady superintendents, and we should endeavour to keep the people up to the mark.

2718. Then do you think that the visits of official inspectors, appointed under this Bill, would not be resented by the people whose houses they visited?—To a certain extent they might be; I am not prepared to say that they would never be resented.

2719. Would they not be habitually resented by all the more decent people?—I do not know that they would.

Lord Thring.

2720. I should like to ask you a question or two; I do not quite understand the gist of your evidence; I do not think you quite understand what this Bill proposes to do. Registration means this: that no person shall keep more than a certain number of children in a house unless the house is registered?—I understand that.

2721. Before the children are kept the house has to be registered?—Yes.

2722. Before the children are kept the occupant of the house must apply for registration?—Yes.

2723. Whereupon the official authority examines this house, and, above all, ascertains that the person who wants to keep the baby is competent to keep a baby, and understands how to treat a baby, and is a proper person to keep it; and that the sanitary condition of the house

is

15 May 1896.]

MRS. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

is proper and good for the baby; do you follow me?—Yes.

2724. Now, I will assume that this Act is passed; what happens in Manchester: do you imagine that in these black patches they will apply for registration, because that is the question; they have got to apply?—I do not think they would unless they were obliged to do so.

2725. You cannot oblige them to apply; do you imagine that if they applied from these very bad places they would get registration; in other words, would the foster-mother in most of these places be competent to feed the child, when not one mother in 100 knows how to treat her child; do you think that they would apply for registration, and get it?—I do not think they would in most instances, in fact.

2726. We have this fact, that in Manchester, in these black patches, the people would not apply; and if they did apply they would not get the registration. Therefore, where are the babies to go who are now kept in these insanitary places?—That is what I do not know.

2727. I thought that would be your answer; but I want to draw your attention to your evidence, because you tell us that the foster-parents are hardly ever cruel, that they treat their nurse children as well as they treat their own children?—Yes.

2728. Then you tell us that in the case of Manchester we need not go into that question of rescue work in the ordinary sense, because there is very little of that required; but how would you deal with the great mass of Manchester children who are now maintained in houses which could not possibly get registration, if you pass an Act saying they shall not be kept except in registered houses; how would it be practicable?—I do not know.

2729. Then with respect to these poor foster-parents, what you have told us is that the foster-parents do their best. You also tell us, virtually, that the majority of these foster-parents are not very competent to keep the children. If you exclude the majority of the foster-parents, where are these unfortunate women who now get their children put with their friends and neighbours to keep them?—That is what I do not know; but I would like to draw your attention to the fact that I do not think these people who at present take care of children take any worse care of them than their own dissipated mothers would.

2730. The foster-parents are not cruel, you say; they do their best for the children, but they are very often incompetent?—Yes.

2731. If we strike out the incompetent foster-parents, which is one of the objects of this Bill, where are they to go to?—Might I ask, would you consider the foster-parents capable of taking charge of the children if they were on a par with the mothers themselves?

2732. Certainly not, according to the Act; the mothers themselves are, *ex hypothesi*, very often incompetent; the Act requires that the foster-parents should be competent?—That is where the difficulty comes in. I do not see how you can demand a higher state of competency (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

from the foster-parents than you can demand from the parents themselves.

2733. Then let us go a little further; I am not in the least degree wishing to puzzle you in any way, but do you not see that we are in this dilemma; you cannot by an enactment provide competent foster-parents or sanitary houses; no Act in the world will make a competent foster-parent or sanitary house; they cannot be created by legislation; then, if we pass the Act, do we not inflict a great hardship on these poor people who, at all events, exist and maintain their children somehow, and who, if we passed this Act, would not be able to maintain them anyhow?—No.

2734. And to maintain them somehow is better than doing it nohow?—That seems to me the difficulty all along. The only thing is this, that my experience is very narrow and simply applies to Manchester and Salford, I cannot in the least tell how it would apply to London or to other towns.

2735. Then I wanted to ask you one other question; you said, and I daresay it is so, that yours is the only society of the same nature, except one or two; you are aware that there are in London what they call ladies' societies for the protection of friendless girls, and the Pimlico Ladies' Association for taking care of friendless girls; the object of those societies is this: they find that a poor girl has gone wrong, we will say in service; she is either going to have a child or has had one immediately before; they take the mother and put her in a home and they keep the child near her in order to keep up the supervision, if possible, of the mother over the child, and not trench upon the maternal instincts; they then do their best after a time to get this mother into service and reclaim her character; now, in order to do that it is necessary to have a good foster-mother; next to have a home for the mother; lastly, that it should not be publicly known that this particular child belongs to this particular mother; now, supposing that that were made a difficult thing, would not it be a great hardship on those poor mothers who could not recover their character?—Yes, I think it would be if these ladies took every care as to the homes into which the mother would be introduced, but I think that also it might be a hardship for a mistress to have a young woman of immoral character introduced into her family, perhaps among young children, without knowing something of her previous history.

2736. Pardon me, it is a rule of the society that these ladies never conceal from the person who takes the girl her error?—That would be right.

2737. Then in time the woman re-establishes her character, and perhaps does not fall back for all the rest of her life?—That is perfectly right.

2738. Then does it not come to this, that the Bill is, I will not say impossible, but one extremely difficult to work in Manchester supposing we passed it?—I think it would be.

2739. And what good would it do in Manchester?—There is a great deal of suffering and sin in Manchester.

2740. How would it relieve the suffering?—
X Well,

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Well, I do not know. As I say, our work is limited, and is of a precarious nature to this extent, that various things might do away with it.

2741. Supposing we wait to bring in the Act till your society is abolished, that would suit you very well, would it not?—There is no objection to the Act at all; I do not see that it would touch us at all; but I think that it would be very difficult to work.

Viscount Llandaff.

2742. Assume this, that the local authority are not to register any house unless they are satisfied that such house is suitable for the purpose, and unless they are satisfied, by the production of certificates, that the person applying to be registered is of good character and able to maintain the infants; how many of these people who take foster-children in Manchester would satisfy those conditions?—Very, very few I should think; they would hardly be worth mentioning. If I might say so, it appears to me that the standard you propose is very high.

2743. You say that very few foster-parents in Manchester would come up to that standard?—I should say very few.

2744. I suppose your suggestion would be that we should take the people who do not come up to that standard and give them good advice and improve their houses as much as possible?—That is just what we are doing every day.

2745. And that is what you would like the official inspector under the Bill to do?—I am afraid you must leave me an open mind as to that Bill; I do not feel prepared to give any opinion on it. We are a very old-fashioned, simple-minded sort of people and really know nothing about Acts of Parliament.

Lord Kinnaird.

2746. You mentioned that the corporation had done some work in this line and have not succeeded; what did you mean by that?—The corporation for a great many years had felt that the work of the male inspectors did not do all that they require; for instance, women would not complain to men of things or explain to men things which they would to a woman; therefore, about 16 or 17 years ago (I cannot be quite sure as to the time) they engaged a woman as an experiment, and they laid down their own rules, which were (I do not know) perhaps something similar to ours; but she was more in the capacity of an inspector pure and simple. The result was that at the end of nine months at the outside she could bear it no longer. The constant seeing of so much sin and suffering and dirt, without any outside influence to uphold her, without any power to relieve suffering, was too much for her, and she resigned her position. About a year afterwards our society engaged that woman for us, she did most admirable work, but she was obliged to give up owing to ill-health. We found her full of tact and consideration and liked by the people. The reason of her giving up with the corporation was this, as I tell you, because she found it such an overpowering experience.

Viscount Llandaff.

2747. But why was it more overpowering under the corporation than under you?—Because in our case she had a lady superintendent behind her. In a case of extreme poverty, or deserving people (very often undeserving, but at all events suffering people), the lady steps in and helps, and the lady also communicates a spirit of encouragement, and the woman has her fellow-workers, whom she meets occasionally, and when things get too bad for her she can always go to a lady superintendent for advice and for sympathy and seek help. On that occasion the Corporation forgot this; I suppose a new series of town councillors had arrived in Manchester, and so on; and they knew nothing of this past experience, but again they found the very same thing, the same difficulty, and they applied to us for advice and again they started an experiment and engaged two visitors. These women kept books and filled in the forms for the corporation, whatever they were, but they very soon found that it was done in a very perfunctory manner. It was simply a means of earning their bread, and the Corporation found it so useless that again it was given up, and it was on the cessation of this that their connection with us began.

2748. I do not quite gather what the case is; we heard some days ago that there was no need for the corporation to do the work which the inspectors of the London County Council are doing, because your society did it; now, what I gather from your evidence is that your society is a philanthropic society?—It is so.

2749. And you have further told us that you would not like your visitors to pry into too many questions, because it would interfere with their work?—Yes.

2750. They will not find out crime?—Yes, they know all the people and all the people know them, and it is wonderful how they know everything that goes on without any questions. It comes to them naturally.

2751. I do not like to ask you again questions on figures, but your evidence makes the figures of Dr. Tatham worse, because he says that taking the whole of Manchester the percentage of deaths among illegitimate children is 392 per 1,000. Now you say, "Oh, it is only a small part of the district which we work;" therefore, if you take it in your black district, probably that number would get up to 500 or 600; do you think that something should be done to stop that, because there is no more reason that an illegitimate child should die of smoke or the fumes of chemicals, is there, than a legitimate child?—No.

2752. Therefore, taking even Dr. Tatham's figures, which are appalling, does not something want to be done more than merely friendly visits and friendly advice?—There certainly wants something to be done; the difficulty, it appears to me, is how to do it.

2753. Which side do you take, because on this question there are two clearly different opinions; all acknowledge that there is something wrong; but some think that it is so difficult to get at and that Acts of Parliament fail so much, that they would do nothing; others say they would pass an Act even if it is not carried out, in order to

try

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

try and stop it; which side would you and your committee go with, those who try to do something, or those who sit still?—I think we have always to try to do the best we can; and so as you say it might be well to pass an Act even if it did not succeed, at least to try it.

2754. Do you prefer any other existing authority better than making a new one to carry out this; would you like to give it to the medical officer of health, for instance?—I could give no opinion on that.

2755. Your committee has never talked over that subject, what authority they would give it to; because it is a pity to multiply authorities in these days, is it not?—Most certainly.

2756. Perhaps the local authorities, either police or sanitary, or county councils, might have powers which they could put in force, delegated to them?—Yes; I think that the medical officers of health have so many duties that they have hard enough work to get over what they have at present.

2757. I do not know whether it is fair to ask you this question; it was hinted that the charge for making houses sanitary would fall on the tenant; that would not be the case in the least, would it; it would fall on the landlord; supposing that an Act was passed that no child should be brought up in an unsanitary house, somebody would have to provide a house of the same rent?—I may say that in certain parts of Manchester a great deal of property has been pulled down, owing to railway extension, and so on, and in the near neighbourhood no other houses have been built, and the people simply do not know where to go to, and the result is that it is increasing the overcrowding in some places.

2758. Then with reference to the foster parents, if this Act were passed, if incompetent people living in insanitary houses could not take in a child, do not you think that a number of competent parents would gradually grow up to take charge of these children. If you could send your 14 ladies to tell these women of a number of people who would be willing to take them in, making some profit, could you not help them?—We could advise them to find out proper people.

2759. And, therefore, would it not be possible if this Act were passed, that gradually a better class of foster parents would grow up?—Possibly; it would be very largely a question of money it seems to me.

2760. If there was a sufficient demand the supply would grow up; is that what you mean?—No doubt if it was made to the interest of the foster parents.

2761. If it could not be done for 5s.; then 5s. 6d. or 6s. would produce it?—Yes, it would pay the people.

2762. Do you not see a difference between giving a licence to a foster parent to take in these children, and bringing in an Act to force a parent to be a good parent?—You cannot force a parent in that way.

2763. But you can propose that anyone who is going to make profit of it shall do it efficiently?—Yes.

2764. Do you think that it could be done for (0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2s. 6d.?—You must remember that in the instance in which I gave you that figure, that was the grandmother.

2765. I thought you said old women would take them in at, from 5s. to 2s. 6d., or 3s.?—From 3s. to 5s.

2766. I took down your first answer as being, that old women would take them in for, from 5s. to 2s. 6d., or 3s.?—I believe it was in an exceptional district, I said 2s. 6d. to 3s. In Hulme, it is a very poor district.

2767. And you said that grandmothers would take them cheaper?—This grandmother did. I do not know that you could infer a great deal from a single case.

2768. Do you think that the evil is great enough at present to call for a stricter supervision which might even cause some hardship to a few parents. Which side do you take; there are two; some are for liberty, allowing this to go on; others want to try and stop it, even if it gives some hardship to a few, and they believe that the intelligent working people will not object to try to stop this awful mortality. Do you take that view, or would you be afraid that there would be an outcry against it?—I am afraid I have not considered it enough to answer, yes or no.

2769. Do you think that there is much crime with reference to the treatment of illegitimate children in Manchester, making away with them?—I do not think that there is straight out deliberate crime of that kind. I think the Manchester people as a rule are fond of their children, and I believe I noticed in some evidence of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, that they found not nearly so much cruelty practised in Manchester and in Lancashire generally, as in London.

2770. What is your relation to this Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society?—Nothing, except that we co-operate with every society that will help us in any way.

2771. If there was a case that you did not want to bring your visitors into trouble about, would you hand over that case to the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society?—We should; we report to them frequently.

2772. Could you say how many you have handed over to them?—I could not; I have a very bad head for figures; but I do find from my practical knowledge of the state of various parts of Manchester that my experience always coincides with figures when it comes across them. For instance, I may refer to Dr. Tatham's statistics; I could have told him the worst part without figures at all.

2773. You said that in Manchester you have large workhouse hospitals where many of the mothers go to be confined; you said that the mother cannot afford to pay for the child such an amount as 5s.; what happens to those children born in a workhouse hospital?—A large proportion of those born in the workhouse hospitals belong, of course, to immoral women, and they go out with them, and the children get battered and knocked about, and they come back again to the workhouse just to be nursed up again, and a large number of them die.

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2774. Would

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2774. Would you not rather that they should be kept there instead of being allowed to go out and brought back to die?—What are you to do? These children are the women's children; when the mothers go out you cannot keep the children; we have reported in many cases to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and in many cases it is difficult for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to work. Take the case of a drunken mother; as long as the father does his very best, and places enough food before these children by hook or by crook, the mother may neglect them in every other way, and allow them to grow up in immoral habits, and all the rest of it, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children can do nothing.

2775. If it could be shown by figures which are given by public authorities that other towns, with something of the same conditions as Manchester, by applying certain Acts have improved their infant mortality, and illegitimate mortality, if London could show it by figures which could not be broken down by any cross-examination; then do not you think that Manchester would set to work to bring her mortality down to the others?—I am quite sure of that; there is nothing that we more desire in Manchester.

2776. You would be glad of an Act that would help you to such a result, would you not?—Most certainly.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. BOSTOCK, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2781. You are one of the health visitors of whom we have heard from Mrs. Hardie?—Yes.

2782. And you have worked under the Ladies' Health Society for how long?—Six years.

2783. Where?—In Ancoats.

2784. A very poor district?—Yes; but we have poorer parts in Ancoats, south.

2785. You live in the district in which you work?—Yes.

2786. Do you know about what, roughly, the population of the district in which your work is?—About 1,500 houses, I believe.

2787. Will you give us some particulars of your domiciliary visits to the poor cottagers?—We go to them in the first place and bring them disinfectant powder, ask them about the state of their drains and that sort of thing, and we speak about their children, especially if we find infants in their house, and ask them what they are fed on; and if they cannot read we sit down and read this paper to them, call again and find out how the children are going on.

2788. You make special note, I suppose, of any bad cases that come under your notice?—Yes, we do.

2789. If you find children in a bad condition you go and pay another visit?—Yes, perhaps the next day.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2777. Do you think it would be any good to compel the grandmother and sister you spoke of to register?—It appears to me that it would be a hardship in those cases decidedly.

2778. You would make an exemption of children put with their relatives?—I should think so decidedly because who else would take an interest in them if their own relatives would not.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2779. Would you use the word "relatives" in making an exemption; because we were told by someone that these people hardly knew what relatives were?—I think, speaking of the class that go to work, that is somewhat of a libel.

Chairman.

2780. I think we have asked you all the questions we can think of, and I think I may safely say on behalf of the Committee that we all should like to compliment you on the excellent way in which you have given your evidence; and it has been most interesting; and I think we may also compliment you and your fellow workers in Manchester on the good work you are doing now?—Thank you, my Lord; I may say that we are exceedingly proud of our health visitors. For very little remuneration they do a very noble work.

Chairman—continued.

2790. Do you find as a rule that your visits have a good effect upon the parents?—The people are always glad to see us again.

2791. And they do not resent your coming?—Not in any case that I know of.

2792. And do they look upon you as being connected in any way with the sanitary authorities?—They nearly all seem to know it, but they do not mind.

2793. Do you ever have to report them to the sanitary authorities, or to call the attention of the sanitary officer to the bad state of things in their houses?—Yes; but it is in some cases the neglect of the landlord, and the tenants are rather glad that we do this, because it gets the work done.

2794. And then you pay these visits to the houses, and then you send in these reports, I take it, that Mrs. Hardie has put in?—Yes.

2795. Do you visit all the 1,500 houses in your district?—Yes.

2796. Are you able to get round them pretty often?—Well, not to them all very often, because I go three times in one week to one house, or to five houses in one street. If they are pretty fairly tidy people we do not get to them under three months. Living in the midst of the district we know the people so well that

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. BOSTOCK.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that we soon find out where it is necessary for us to go to them often.

2797. Do you keep in touch with the corporation inspector and with the medical officer of health?—We report to the medical officer of health.

2798. You report to him as well as to your own committee?—The forms go every night to the medical officer of health, and we receive those death-cards that Mrs. Hardie has handed round, and I have got one here filled in. This is a child whose mother died in child-birth and left twins, and one of them is dead; these are the questions which we ask (*handing in a card*).

2799. Then what do you do when you receive notice of a death; do you go and make enquiries and fill up these cards?—Yes, it shows how the child is being fed; whether it is being neglected or not.

2800. How do you deal with cases of sickness and overcrowding, and destitution?—If they are overcrowded we report the case, and sometimes the inspectors come and have them removed.

2801. And cases of destitution and deserted children?—We do not meet many deserted children. If they are very poor we try to get some benevolent people to give us something to help them. Often our ladies give us something to relieve these very poor people; we never come across a child that we think is starving without they do something.

2802. Do you distribute charity at all?—We are not bound to distribute charity, but if we meet a case of direct poverty, we help them.

2803. From what fund?—The ladies give us that; sometimes we go to the District Provident Association, and they give a little help; or we might apply to the workhouse for them.

2804. Do you come across any cases of what are known as nurse-children?—Not many; there are some children put out to nurse, but they are not badly cared for.

2805. Are they generally taken in by people who have got children of their own?—Yes, or sometimes the grandmother. Often, in our experience, the wife goes to work, and the child is left in the care of the grandmother; that is often our experience.

2806. That is not what I mean by nurse-children; I mean principally illegitimate children who are put out; the children of domestic servants and others who cannot have the children with them; do you come across many cases of them?—Not many.

2807. Have you ever had your attention called to the Act which is in existence for the registering of houses in which more than one child of under 12 months is kept?—No, I have not.

2808. You do not know of the existence of the Act?—No.

2809. You do not know anything with regard to the necessity or otherwise of registering houses in which such children are?—No.

2810. So that when you go round you do not pay any attention to the question of registration?—No, I have not done so. We always advise them for the best what to do under the circumstances; to take care of the children of course.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

2811. I see, in a report I have got of yours, you say this: "There is something appalling about the dense ignorance, even among affectionate well-meaning mothers, on this all-important point, namely, infant feeding; but many, especially young mothers, in first cases, are willing to listen and learn"?—Yes; that is why I say we sit and read this paper to them; they are so ignorant that they could not read it, and they would not understand it unless I explained it thoroughly.

2812. I have three of your reports in my hands; your reports to the officer of health, I mean; and I see that out of 18 houses you only report two as dirty?—Well, I should be in a very tidy street that day.

2813. The streets are Newby-street, Kirk-street, Stone-street, Johnson-street, Russell-street, Thompson-street, Junction-street; are those very tidy places?—Stone street especially has just been improved; the houses were very bad before.

2814. The other streets, are they among the bad part of Ancoats?—They are principally improved streets.

2815. I only find two that you report as dirty?—I have some much worse.

2816. You say you have not many foster-children?—Not many in our district.

2817. Are they mostly legitimate or illegitimate?—We have very few illegitimate children.

2818. You have no people then who make a livelihood by taking in nurse-children?—Yes; we have a few cases where they take a child in, charwomen principally. They perhaps keep a big girl to look after it while they are out one or two days in the week; but we have no case where they are badly neglected.

2819. The few cases you have then are fairly well taken care of?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2820. If there was a bad case in the district, would you be sure to know of it?—Yes, I think so.

Lord Thring.

2821. We have often been told that infants are usually killed by ignorance, not by intentional neglect?—I think that is the case, especially in the feeding in some cases.

2822. And, I suppose, improper feeding?—Yes.

Chairman.

2823. Do you think that improper feeding takes place more frequently with regard to these illegitimate nurse-children than with legitimate children living with their mothers?—No, I do not think so.

2824. But the proportion of the death-rate of illegitimate children is very much larger than the death-rate of legitimate children?—Very few of these things have come to my notice.

Lord Kinnaird.

2825. Would the evidence you give be very much the same as that given by other visitors in different parts, or would some come across these cases

x 3

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. BOSTOCK.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

cases of nurse children more than you do?—We meet with rare occasions of the sort.

2826. How many would you meet with?—We meet possibly with a case once in a month of a servant girl's child, something of that kind, put out to be nursed, but we do not meet cases where they distinctly ill-treat them.

2827. Would the sentiments of the people be against ill-treatment; would some people in the neighbourhood come and tell you if there was any cruelty?—Yes, they would come to us because they would know that the name would not be divulged, that their names would not be heard of in the matter.

2828. You said that you can only go over your district three times in the year; but you can get to all the houses that it is necessary to visit as often as you wish, cannot you?—Time does not permit us to get round very often; if we know of an extreme case we go to it.

2829. There is no reason to go to a street where all is going on well?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2830. Have you ever been refused admission?—No.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been re-called; is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2835. You want to hand in something, I understand?—Two forms which you asked for on a previous occasion; one is the form of the medical certificate of the cause of death, and the other is a copy of the death register.

2836. This is the ordinary certificate that is given?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

2837. Would you like any addition to be made to this form?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2838. The registrar asks the name of the parent in the registration of death?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

2839. Could you fine them if they refused to give it?—I am not aware that anything of that sort has been done.

2840. You have the power to do it?—The power, I told you of, the last time I was here.

Chairman.

2841. Since you gave your evidence the other day has anything further occurred to you by which you can offer any satisfactory explanation of this very high death-rate amongst illegitimates in Manchester as compared with legitimate children?—I have looked over my evidence and nothing further occurs to me at present. It is a very difficult subject, as your Lordship must know, of course.

Chairman.

2831. If you do go to a house, what is the way you proceed; do you knock at the door?—Yes, and I carry a bag of disinfecting powder; where we are known we do not need to carry that with us; I only mean in the case of a strange householder.

Lord Kinnaird.

2832. You come to them as an official to that extent?—They do not regard us as officials; they come to us in any difficulty. If a child was in a fit some mothers would rush to me about it.

Chairman.

2833. You do not think that the people have any objection really to ladies coming and doing the work that you do?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2834. And I suppose they know that you give help as well as disinfectant powder?—We have a very good mothers' meeting once a week, and the ladies come and get 150 of the women there, and give them a good talking to; they get to know us, and of course they get to know the ladies, and they like them.

Chairman—continued.

2842. You still think that it is partly owing to the deaths being registered better than the births?—Yes, I feel certain of that.

2843. So that you think that the actual proportion is not really so large as it appears?—I think it is not, and I think I have very good grounds for that conclusion.

Viscount Llandaff.

2844. We have heard another suggestion from Mrs. Hardie, namely, that the illegitimate births are mostly in the lowest class of the population of Manchester; consequently that they are less well cared for than the other children?—Unfortunately the illegitimate births do not take place exclusively amongst the very lowest of the population, and Mrs. Hardie, I think, mentioned cases in which they did not; it is a sad thing to be obliged to own that it is so. I understood Mrs. Hardie to say that some of those illegitimate children were the children of servant girls who, of course, reside in the better parts of Manchester.

Lord Kinnaird.

2845. Do you think that the charge of making the houses sanitary would fall upon the inhabitants of those houses?—No, it would fall on the owners of the houses, of course.

2846. And it would not necessarily raise rents?—I do not think it would, except very exceptionally.

2847. It

15 May 1896.]

Mr. J. F. W. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

2847. It is only structural sanitary alterations that would fall upon the owner?—Structural alterations I am speaking of.

Lord Kinnaird.

2848. Internal structural alterations included?—Yes, altogether.

Lord Thring.

2849. Does the owner whitewash?—As a matter of fact he often does.

2850. I fancied that the ordinary whitewashing and cleansing out of drains would fall upon the tenant?—As a matter of practice, in tenement property that is very largely done by the owners in Manchester.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. WETHERED, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2855. You are a member of the Committee of the Paddington and Marylebone Association for the Rescue and Care of Friendless Girls?—Yes.

2856. And also a member of the Committee of the London Diocesan Council for Rescue and Preventive Work?—Yes.

2857. And to-day you have an additional authority as representing a large meeting of rescue workers and ladies interested in the care of friendless girls, who have, so to speak, deputed you to represent them to day?—That is so.

2858. And you have handed in here a list of the delegates who were present at the meeting in question when this Bill was under consideration?—Yes.

2859. There were delegates from 18 different associations in London and the neighbourhood, all of whom are connected with associations of this character for the protection of friendless girls?—Yes.

2860. And engaged more or less directly in rescue work?—Yes.

2861. And therefore you really represent a large body of opinion upon the subject of the arrangements possible or necessary for the care of the children of such girls?—Yes.

2862. I think you would like me to read, as summarising the points that you wish to emphasise, a letter that you have written to me?—If you think it would make my evidence clearer.

2863. "I am sending you a few typical cases to explain how Clause 2 would practically injure one of the most important branches of our rescue work, and in my opinion would increase child murder and suicides by making it so very difficult for friendless girls to find suitable nurse-mothers. Many girls are bitterly ashamed of the first false step. Now shame and despair, without time to consider, drive girls to suicide and to child murder; and the publicity and difficulty of finding suitable nurse-mothers would intensify these feelings; and, again, friends who are now

(0.95.)

Lord Kinnaird.

2851. And the landlord would have to do it in order to keep a tenant?—Or in order to comply with the requirements of the sanitary authority.

2852. And the proper working of the Sanitary Act would not be a hardship on the working men occupying those houses?—I do not think it would be a hardship.

2853. Somebody else would do it in order to get their rent?—Somebody else would do it in order, I would rather say, to comply with the requirements of the sanitary authority; that is the great lever.

2854. The sanitary authority is not harder on the poor people than on others?—No, certainly not.

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

ready and willing to give a girl they know a helping hand by receiving her child, would utterly refuse to allow themselves to be registered as receivers of illegitimate children. We, rescue workers, are trying most earnestly to raise the moral tone of these girls, and to encourage them in every way to take up the responsibilities of motherhood. In many cases no better inspector can be found than the mother, and the closer the tie between the mother and the child the better. In the Act of 1872, based on the Report of the House of Commons Select Committee of 1871, Clause 2 seems to have been drawn up with a view to meet the cases I have described; and now it is proposed that this Clause should be repealed, and a rigid one with no elasticity substituted. The London workhouses are realising the importance of voluntary work. Our association was asked by the Marylebone Guardians to send a worker to their lying-in ward, and we have now a workhouse-aid committee. There are at least 13 workhouses in London helped in this way. The Act does not deal specially with the adoption of babies, with a sum paid down, and yet this is manifestly the root of baby farming in its worst form. No registration or inspection could be too stringent for this class of case. The financial side seems also to be ignored. Registration will not attract nurse-mothers unless it makes the payment more secure. Who will be responsible for this? If the State, then surely that means making vice easy, and encouraging the very sin we are all trying to check. It is quite right to make the mothers pay, and as a rule there is no difficulty about this, but the wages are often inadequate. It would be well if more men could be persuaded that they are responsible for their children. Who will be the inspectors, men or women? It is evident that the only efficient inspection of babies would be the inspection by well-chosen women. Whether the Act was administered by the police or by any other authority the actual inspection should be by women?"—

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2864. "We

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2864. "We have just had our annual ladies' meeting. The Bill proposed by Lord Denbigh was fully discussed. I forward the two resolutions proposed and unanimously carried. I can now say when I give evidence on Friday that it will not only be in my private capacity, but as the representative of the most experienced lady rescue workers in London." That is the letter which describes your views?—Yes.

2865. The resolutions are these: Resolution No. 1: "We, the delegates from the above-named associations" (which are all named here, 18 of them) "gathered together in council, 13th May 1896, desire to record our belief that the proposed repeal of Clause 2, in the 'Act for the Better Protection of Infant Life' (25th July 1872) and the substitution of Clause 2 in Lord Denbigh's Bill, would be highly detrimental to the interests of infants necessarily separated from their mothers, because it would cut off the supply of more respectable nurse-mothers, who would refuse to be registered, and would thus increase the danger of suicide, desertion, and infanticide." The second resolution was, "That it ought to be rendered illegal for institutions or individuals to adopt one or more infants or children on the payment of a lump sum of money unless such institutions and individuals are registered and inspected"; and then there follows a list of all the ladies who were present; and this you desire to put in because it shows the representative character of the meeting?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

2866. That may be considered as representing the views of the Pimlico Ladies' Association?—Yes, I think so; there were six representatives from Pimlico; the Duchess of Bedford did not come herself; the six members who were there came as representatives, and they helped to draw up these resolutions.

2867. Their evidence would be probably the same as that of yourself?—I do not know that, but we are entirely at one on this subject.

2868. But what you say, as far as you know, represents the views of the Pimlico Association?—Yes; but you might be glad to have somebody else as a witness.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2869. One of the points you desire to emphasize to us to-day is, that there are two kinds of nurse-mothers, and you want to draw out the difference between them?—Yes.

2870. Will you tell us that yourself?—May I take one of my cases to illustrate the two? The two distinct classes of foster-parents are nurse-mothers, and baby-farmers whom we all want to aim at. I think this clause would interfere with good nurse-mothers without checking the evils of baby-farming. I will take a typical case from my own experience, "Ellen C—, a girl of 21, with first child a month old, no friends, no money; in her despair tried to smother the child. I visited her and took her and the child straight to our Refuge. On investigating the case I found she had good past characters; so, after a few weeks, she was placed with a lady who was told

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

her history, and the child with a very good middle-class woman. Ellen, with a little help, pays for her child. Once a month, when she has a 'day out,' she spends it with her child at the nurse-mother's, and is devoted to the child. This nurse would certainly not submit to being registered, nor would the husband allow it." So that, in that case, the girl would have lost the opportunity of placing the child with a very suitable woman; and she would also have lost a very good friend in the nurse-mother. This child is inspected by me and by our matron, and by the mother herself.

2871. That is one case?—That is one case. That is an instance of a nurse-mother, I should say, who loved children and wanted to have a child, but could not quite afford to keep a child without some payment. In most cases we should arrange for 5s. a week; but if the girls arrange they can make any arrangements they like. There is one nurse-mother taking 3s. a week because she is a friend of the girl's. Now, for my next case, "Beatrice S—, age, 18. "This is a young dressmaker who had a child, and herself found a nice young couple to take the child, and for a time she paid for it; then she went utterly wrong, and came under my care. I found that the best chance of reforming her was to send her to a two years' home, but the child was the difficulty, as the foster parents said they would not keep him without payment." (It is expensive to pay for a child in a home and to pay for the mother in the penitentiary at the same time; our funds do not allow of it), "Dr. Barnardo said he would receive the child free during the two years the mother was in this home on condition that he was told when she went to service, and that then she should contribute towards its support. This was arranged. After I had put the child with Dr. Barnardo, the foster-mother came to the Refuge, miserable at having given up the child, and stated that her husband offered to have it back and adopt it altogether. I feel so strongly against cutting a mother off from her child that I made it a stipulation that they should only have the child on Dr. Barnardo's condition, viz., that when the mother earned wages she should make some payment for the child. These people certainly would not allow themselves to be registered as this Act proposes, and many of such kind homes would be shut to these poor children." It was a great responsibility to take the child away from Dr. Barnardo after I had placed it there, and I asked the woman what would happen if she died, and she said, "If I die my sister has promised to take it"; and she said that she cried all night because she saw the little cot empty. That was a real case of mother's love, and I felt it better to take the child from Dr. Barnardo and put it with her. I could give many such cases. This next one is rather different: "Fanny P., a girl aged 22; first fall with good previous characters; I sent her to the Main Memorial Home, 49, Burton-crescent; she was received there before her confinement, and taken back again with her child when discharged from Queen Charlotte's Hospital. Fanny was placed in service and the child boarded out with one of the staff

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

staff of nurse-mothers. The payment of 5s. a week in this case is entirely paid by the mother herself." (She can earn 20l. a year; she is a cook.) When wages are less than 20l., 1s. a week is given from a fund for that purpose. The nurse-mothers are most carefully chosen; they bring the child, if possible, once a week to this home to be paid, and are inspected by a lady who is a trained nurse, and the mother of the child is encouraged and expected to come as often as she can to see her child. About 50 nurse-mothers are on the books at this moment. Mrs. Bonham-Carter tells me in the last six years she has had only two cases of babies thrown on her hands, deserted by their mothers.

2872. On the list of nurse-mothers you refer to, there are about 50, you say?—Yes.

2873. Those nurse-mothers always keep in touch with the child's actual mother?—Yes.

2874. And to that point you attach the greatest importance?—The greatest importance.

2875. There are only two cases within these six years of failure on the part of the actual mother to keep in touch with the nurse-mother with whom the child is placed?—Yes; of course that number 50 is liable to be increased or diminished according to the demand.

2876. Then are any of the nurse-mothers registered?—Yes, there are some of them registered under the old Act.

2877. Have you any reason to think that on this list of 50 nurse-mothers there are some who are taking more than one child under 12 months old?—Yes, certainly.

2878. They are therefore registered?—They are therefore registered; but they are a lower class of nurse-mothers than the others. Mrs. Bonham-Carter tells me that her better nurse-mothers would refuse to be registered; it would shut the door to her work considerably. Then I have another case of a girl of 20 sent to Miss Darling, 61, St. Charles-square. (Ours is a refuge, and we pass our girls on.) The child has been placed out from there, and the nurses there are most carefully chosen and inspected. Miss Darling says the proposed clause would hinder her work sadly. "Mary C., sent to 31, Arbour-square" (another home in connection with our work, and they are kept there for six months, which is very desirable if you want to keep a mother and a child rather longer together). I have a letter from Miss White (Honorary Superintendent) which I should like to read.

2879. I will read it for you. This (pointing to a letter) is the letter from Miss White. "Dear Mrs. Wethered, Thank you for letting me see the resolutions passed at the meeting of the Rescue Associations with regard to Clause 2 in Lord Denbigh's Bill. I most cordially agree with what is said in those Resolutions. I have had, as you know, an experience of 10 or 11 years in rescue work, and I have devoted a great deal of time to the finding of good nurse-mothers for illegitimate children. I do not know of one single case of cruelty in all these years, and scarcely any of neglect; I feel sure that if all houses have to

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

be registered where illegitimate infants are it will greatly hinder a most important part of rescue work; I have long thought that it is not the weekly or monthly payments which are the temptation to nurse-mothers, but, as you say, sums of money paid down and children adopted"?—Yes.

2880. Have you any more cases?—This one only, of a girl aged 26. She had very bad companions in London, so it seemed better to send her out of London, and I sent her with her child to Miss Bell's Home in Eastbourne. There is a laundry attached to it and an admirable system of boarding out in connection with the home. I have not had time to write to Miss Bell, but I feel sure she would agree with us. I could multiply homes and illustrations.

2881. What you are afraid of in the case of such registration is that the better class of foster-parents would be afraid to register because of the inspection which would follow registration, and of, one might also say, the stigma that would attach to them?—That is what I should be afraid of. I do not think they would be afraid of voluntary inspection; we all inspect them; but they would not like the stigma of receiving illegitimate children, nor the official inspection.

2882. If by any means we could adopt a system of registration which carried with it no stigma, and avoided anything like the appearance of what would be vulgarly called baby-farming, that objection might possibly be obviated?—No, I think not; there are so many practical difficulties. For instance, I wanted a nurse-mother for a child in a great hurry, and I wrote to a woman I knew; she said she could not take it, but her sister would, and we sent the child to her. The child proved to be a very crying child, and a short time afterwards the husband appeared at the Refuge, and said he was very glad for his wife to have a child, but he could not stand having his nights disturbed; he was a working man on the line, and if his wife was to have a baby he must ask me to get one that did not cry. I wanted this child, who was delicate, to go to this woman, because I knew it would be well taken care of. I have now given them a child of a year old, which I hope will not disturb them. They kept the crying child temporarily till other arrangements were made.

2883. So that what you are afraid of is not inspection, but the stigma?—Yes, registration, which means both.

2884. Have you considered at all whether any system short of what would be ordinarily called registration, such as merely giving notice to some authority that there was such a child in the house, would meet the case?—No.

2885. Of course we do give notice, or notice is given for us in all of our houses when there is infectious disease, and so forth; has it occurred to you that a similar notice, something short of what might be called registration, might meet this case?—I think it would not. There is a natural love for babies in many women,

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

and constantly when they have no children of their own the wife arranges to have a baby in her care and the husband is willing if it does not put him out; but if he thought it was necessary to have registration he would not consent. And a great many of our girls are very superior and their one idea is to hide it, and that is a good feeling to foster.

2886. That is another point; let us keep to this point now. In some of the letters that you put in the phrase was used "registered as a house for taking illegitimate children." That one can obviously see would arouse the strongest objection on the part of almost everybody; but there might be some form of registration far short of that which is no greater stigma than notice that there has been scarlet fever in one's house. You still think that, however modified in its form, there would be on the part of the man, if not on the part of the woman a radical objection to intimations to any authority?—I think there is a widespread objection to an official inspection.

2887. Now comes the point you mention; you say you do, as a matter of fact, register?—Yes, we enter the names and addresses of our nurse-parents in our books. A nurse mother when she takes a child from us would not mind my going down to see the child. I can go whenever I choose. Our matron would run down perhaps in the evening just in time to put it to bed for her. The mothers themselves spend as much time with the children as they can.

2888. You wish to show here how important it is to keep up the mother's personal care and charge over her infant?—That is the chief point.

2889. But that does not directly interfere with registration?—No, but you would get a different class of person under the proposed registration. The nurse who asks to be registered does so because she wants to make a livelihood. It means that she is taking in more than one child for the money's sake. That person ought to be inspected; but those people who take a child because of their love for the child, or for its mother, are on quite a different footing.

Viscount Llandaff.

2890. You could not distinguish them in an Act of Parliament?—It would be difficult; in our work we distinguish between these different kinds of nurse-mothers, and there are the nurse-mothers found by the girls themselves.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2891. You think that the nurse-mother who takes in a child, or children, for profit, ought to be, we will not say registered, but inspected, supervised?—Certainly, I think that we should apply the registration to those cases.

2892. But the registration at present is only children under 12 months of age, and you would

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

not, I presume, limit it to that?—No, but I thought, under the present Act, you could take one child, but not two, without registration.

2893. Yes, certainly?—I should keep to that, I think the old Act was better. If you only give 3s. 6d., or 4s., or 5s. a week, there cannot be much profit made.

Viscount Llandaff.

2894. It has been suggested to us that a woman can spend 1s. only out of the 5s. for the child, and it will probably die in a month, and then she will get another?—I have not met with them. It may be so in some cases.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2895. But that class of cases has not come under your notice?—No, because a weekly payment, to a certain extent, means supervision or inspection.

2896. Then still keeping to the point of the manner of registration, what would you say to a plan whereby such an association as any one of those to which you have referred was obliged itself to be in some way registered, and that then powers were given to the ladies of that association to supervise the nurse-parents?—That would suit us, because we should not mind being registered; but it would not meet the case of the nurse-mothers found by the girls without the association.

2897. No, except so far as the girl if she was in touch with your association could intimate to you the home she had found, and that over that home would be cast the protection of your association?—Yes, but then there are a great many girls who find nurse-mothers without being in touch with any association.

2898. Are those safe?—If there is a cousin or somebody belonging to them they need not come to us at all.

2899. But I am afraid you must admit the fact that a very large number of illegitimate babies are put in quite unsuitable homes where they may die. We want in some way or other to protect them; you say that lest we should interfere with a girl who is going to find a suitable home, we must not make a law which would interfere with one that will find an unsuitable one?—We must be sure that the law would do what we want to do. I do not think the proposed clause would do so.

2900. Still you want inspection?—We want inspection, but the best sort of inspection.

2901. You are strong upon the point that the inspector must be a woman?—Absolutely. I think inspection of babies should be carried out by carefully chosen women. It is ridiculous to have anything else; a man, as a rule, cannot even nurse a baby, and it is absurd to suppose that he can inspect it.

2902. In London at this moment there is a gentleman who has been inspecting babies for, I forget how many years, 20 years?—That is probably not the kind of inspection that I mean.

2903. Then

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2903. Then you wish to say something about the financial side?—It seems to me that these people will only register if you guarantee payment, and who is going to pay? They would not take a child without some certainty of being paid.

2904. The argument of some people is that if there were a great number of registered houses a girl who wanted to find a proper home would find it much easier to find one?—A penniless girl would not; they would not take her child.

2905. In your notes you have put down "How to check baby-farming"?—We consider that all institutions and individuals who receive children for a lump sum should be registered and inspected. If a woman can get a child with 5l. and then kill that child and get another with 5l., there is a distinct object in getting rid of it.

2906. Your wish is that we should if we can legislate so as to prevent the taking of a lump sum?—Yes.

2907. Have you at all thought of any process by which we shall be able to find out whether a lump sum is paid?—That will be one of the difficulties. I think adoption of babies with payment without registration should be made illegal, and when advertisements are seen in the papers asking for a child to adopt, that person ought to be visited and asked for credentials. Constantly girls have brought me these advertisements and shown them to me, and I have always said "have nothing to do with that." I should like to read a bit from a lady's note who has taken this up a great deal: "I answer advertisements and ask if I may call, not giving my name or proper address, but the name and address sent to me by some person anxious to help in some small sort of way; they appoint a time to see me, and you can gather from what you see, and from the woman herself, quite enough to condemn her if you wish. My relieving officer can only tell me of cases, but I have very often used my knowledge to reclaim the woman from her awful crimes and I have, under God, been the means of persuading several women to give up their awful trade, and they are now respectable members of the community. I should not care to specify cases; that would not be fair on those who have sought God's blessing, and found it."

Chairman.

2908-9. By "her awful crimes" she means what?—The making away with the children.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2910. You have written here "Who are the most likely people to carry out the law"?—I have not thought that out, but it occurs to me that the Poor Law officials might afford a better machinery than the county council; and if they were in touch with voluntary associations like ours, the law might be more efficiently carried out and, working together, we might make a strong body of inspectors, and help to enforce the Act.

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2911. What you mean is inspectors who should be partly under the supervision of the Poor Law authorities, and partly volunteers?—Yes, like the lady whose letter I have quoted.

Chairman.

2912. You stated just now that you thought there would be great objection to registering only one child?—Yes.

2913. But do you feel equal objections to raising the age?—No; I have not thought that out, but I think it would be desirable.

2914. You know, I suppose, that the present Act applies only to cases where there is more than one child of under one year of age?—Yes, that is how I understood it.

2915. So that if a person keeps one child of under one year with half-a-dozen of over one year, there is no necessity for them to register?—Yes, I should like to alter that.

2916. Therefore, when you said just now you would like to see the old Act remain as it is, you had not got that in your mind?—No, I was not thinking of the age.

2917. Do you see any really practicable way of drawing a legal distinction between what you call a nurse-mother and a baby-farmer?—Yes, I think the one to whom a weekly sum is paid is a nurse-mother; I think the one to whom the lump sum is paid down is the baby-farmer.

Viscount Llandaff.

2918. It is not the one child or the two children, but the lump sum that makes the difference?—Yes, because that is the temptation; if you can go on piling up 5l., 10l., 30l., you get a very large income.

Chairman.

2919. But have you considered the question how you are to find out whether a child has been paid for by a lump sum, or whether it is paid for by weekly payments?—It is very difficult, but if it was illegal to do it I think it would be possible to set to work and find it out.

2920. How would you find out that it was not a mere instalment of a weekly payment? These professional baby-farmers are very ingenious people, and they have the reputation of being able to evade the law if you give them a loophole?—They will probably do their utmost to evade it.

2921. And, therefore, if you simply make it illegal to accept a lump sum with a child, it would be very simple to say, "We have received 10l., but we are going to receive 5l. next month"?—It would be difficult to prevent that sort of thing, and there might be cases where a lump sum paid down was perhaps the best way of doing it.

2922. I think we are fully alive to the fact that most of the worst cases of professional baby-farming are traced to lump sums; I do not press

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

you on the point; I think we are rather anxious to find a satisfactory way of stopping it?—I think that a lump sum down ought to be struck at. I think it would be a pity to injure the enormous amount of good rescue work with the possible idea of getting at the baby-farmer. I do not think the proposed registering of these one-baby cases would do it.

2923. I take it your only hostility to the Bill is that it would interfere with the good work done by your society and similar societies?—A great deal more than merely the effect on our societies; it is the girls themselves that I am thinking of. I think you would be making it so hard for them; they would be driven into a corner. I think this clause would tend to drive some girls to suicide and to child-murder. By our association, and associations like ours, no doubt it would be considered objectionable, but it is the girls themselves I am thinking of.

2924. But the girls themselves generally obtain foster-mothers for their children through these advertisements, do they not?—In some cases, but not generally.

2925. Generally privately?—Yes, through friends, relations, and chance acquaintances, and in many other ways.

2926. How do you generally proceed in your questions?—We have been at work for 15 years, so that we have a very large circle of acquaintances, and people know us. When nurse-mothers apply for a child we make preliminary inquiries, personal inspection of the house, take up references, &c.

2927. Then there was another thing I remember in your evidence. You said you generally tried to keep the mothers in touch with the children after you have put them out?—Yes.

2928. That is exactly the contrary policy to that of the Foundling Hospital; they lay the greatest stress on the necessity of entirely cutting off the mothers from the children?—They have never done any rescue work on our lines. We try not only to save the babies, but to reform the mothers.

2929. I was only remarking on the fact of the difference of the two policies?—We endeavour to develop the mother's love for the child. In the first beginning they think of the shame and disgrace. As a rule child-murder takes place in the first few weeks. After that the mother's love springs up, if it has not already shown itself.

Viscount Llandaff.

2930. You spoke of 50 nurse-mothers, were those 50 in houses in connection with your Paddington Association?—No, in connection with the Main Memorial Home.

2931. There are more than 50 nurse-mothers employed by all these associations you mentioned?—Hundreds; that is only one home.

2932. Of your 50, you said some were registered, how many?—Mrs. Bonham-Carter did not tell me that. We have a refuge, an open-all-

Chairman—continued.

night refuge; we get our girls in all sorts of ways, mothers and babies are only one branch of our work. When we have got these we have to sort them; I can only send Mrs. Bonham-Carter girls who have previous good characters, and are likely to do well.

2933. What does Mrs. Bonham-Carter represent?—The committee and the management of the Main Memorial Home.

2934. You said that the registered houses amongst those 50 were of a lower class?—Yes, because they are the class of women who want to make a living out of it; it is perfectly legitimate; I do not mean that they are not nice women, but they are women who are taking the children with the hope of adding to their income.

2935. Have you ever had any cases of insuring the children you put out with nurse-mothers, by the nurse-mother?—No, it is done, but I have never known it.

2936. Would it be as objectionable as the lump sum, in your opinion?—Well, very near akin to it.

Lord Thring.

2937. You said, I think, in answer to the Bishop, that the nurse-mothers did not object to inspection; I presume you meant inspection by ladies, such as yourself; voluntary inspection?—Yes.

2938. But would they be equally content with official inspection?—I think not.

2939. Then your opinion with regard to the Bill generally, is, as I understand it, this; that there are at present a number of nurse-mothers who are not prompted by gain, but by maternal instinct?—Yes.

2940. And those are the very best class of nurse-mothers, and you think that the Bill would in fact exclude that class?—Yes, it would to a great extent.

2941. Then you said that you thought the guardians were better than the County Council?—That is my impression.

2942. I will not press you; have you had much experience of country guardians?—No, only in London. The relieving officer seems to know so much about everybody.

2943. But have you had much experience of country guardians?—No; I did not begin rescue work until I came to London.

2944. Then you are not at all warm on that question?—No, it was simply an idea that came to me, whether it was possible the best people have not been chosen to administer the Act. I only threw that out as a suggestion.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2945. Your reason was that the guardians have already officers going round?—Yes, ready to hand.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2946. If I understand, while you are hostile to the idea of this Bill, in so far as it insists upon

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

upon the registration of every foster parent who keeps even one child, you are not at all hostile to the raising of the age where registration is necessary?—No, nor to having registration where two children are kept.

Viscount Llandaff.

2947. Have you had any experience whether the existing Act has done much good in London?—I do not know that it has made any difference; I think they would be just as good without it.

2948. The good ones as good and the bad ones no better?—Yes, I think so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2949. You do not think it is because they are inspected that they are good?—I do not think so, but inspection helps to keep them up to the mark.

Viscount Llandaff.

2950. Have you formed any idea why there are so few houses registered in London; do you think there are many that evade the present Act?—Yes, I think so.

2951. In spite of all the care that the London County Council take to find out the houses, you think that many escape?—Yes.

2952. Have you come across many cases of houses with more than one child under 12 months that do not register?—I should not like to assert it positively. I have heard of several cases from a trustworthy source.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2953. In your opinion there must be a great many more than 41 houses that ought to be registered?—Yes.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss STEER, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2962. You are the honorary superintendent of the Bridge of Hope?—Yes.

2963. What is that, a rescue institution?—It is a sort of general mission in Ratcliff Highway chiefly for the rescue of women and children.

2964. It is the Bridge of Hope Home?—Yes, or mission.

2965. And it is established in Ratcliff Highway?—Yes.

2966. For that purpose?—For the purpose of helping the women and children there.

2967. Have you been many years connected with the work?—Just 17.
(0.95.)

Chairman.

2954. Still, that is only an opinion; you do not know it as a matter of fact?—I have not gone into that.

Viscount Llandaff.

2955. We have had evidence that considerable trouble was taken by the officers employed by the London County Council to find out all the houses?—I still think that the Poor Law guardians would be the more natural people to carry it out, because they have got more local machinery that they could use; but that is only my private opinion.

2956. All the cases that you have mentioned that have come under your immediate notice would be very difficult to trace if they did not register; take the girl who picks out her friend, there would be nothing to assist in finding out that case?—Nothing.

2957. Unless the officer went from house to house?—Yes, and had the truth told him.

Chairman.

2958. Is it not very desirable, in the cases of these unfortunate girls, to conceal in some degree the fact of their misfortune?—Yes, most important.

2959. Therefore, while you wish your society to have great powers of inspection, practically you take care to conceal the poor women who have fallen into these difficulties?—Yes, so far as I can do so conscientiously.

2960. And you attach great importance to the possibility of that concealment?—Yes, there are many cases in which it is necessary.

Viscount Llandaff.

2961. You have not said a word about Section 3; would you approve of sending to gaol for six months a girl who would not give her true name and address?—Most certainly not.

Chairman—continued.

2968. So that you have got considerable experience?—Yes.

2969. Are you acquainted with the proposals of the Bill which is before the Committee?—Not fully. I think I understand the general intention.

2970. I may ask you this: do you know that the present law only insists on the registration of houses in which more than one child of under 12 months of age is kept for hire or reward apart from its parent?—Yes.

2971. And our proposal is to extend the Act to any child up to five years of age?—Yes, I think I understand as much as that already.

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2972. And

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

2972. And the reason is that it is believed that there are many houses in which such children are taken in which are now outside the scope of the present Act, and which it would be very desirable to bring under some sort of regulation and control?—Yes.

2973. Have you any views to offer the Committee on that point as to whether it would be desirable or not to extend the Act in that way?—I think it would be desirable to extend the Act so that all children taken in by other than relatives should come under registration. I do not see any objection to it. I board out several children; I am constantly boarding them out with foster mothers; we always have several children boarded out with foster-mothers.

2974. Have you to find homes for these children?—Yes.

2975. I suppose all of them illegitimate children?—Yes.

2976. And do you think that some sort of control over the foster-parents would interfere with your obtaining suitable homes for the children?—It is somewhat difficult to obtain good foster-mothers for the children because respectable women are afraid. These children are very delicate and difficult to bring up, and I have found a difficulty in getting respectable women to take them, and I think we never do get them except when we will be at the back of the woman to superintend and provide doctor's expenses and that sort of thing.

2977. Then when you have boarded out a child in this sort of way you exercise supervision afterwards?—Yes, always.

2978. How do you do it; have you any committee?—Yes, of workers in the mission. With regard to the children, the children are brought to us one week usually and we usually visit them the next.

2979. Are the children boarded out in London usually?—In the suburbs of London, usually, where we can get at them.

2980. What sort of amounts do you pay?—Five shillings a week, and provide them with clothes and medical expenses. I always pay the women well, because I expect the children to be well cared for. I do not think the women can take care of the children for profit for less. Of course, if they wish to retain it out of kindness, they can do it for 3s. a week; but to do it for any kind of profit they cannot do it well under 5s. a week.

Lord Thring.

2981. And you clothe them and find them medicine?—We always clothe the children. The foster-mothers are usually very kind to the children; some of them err through ignorance, but it is generally through ignorance, I think. When the payment comes regularly there is no temptation for them to ill-use the child.

Chairman.

2982. Have you any experience of the regular professional people who take in children of this

Chairman—continued.

class, who take them in for lump sums?—No, I have always so discouraged it.

2983. Have you ever come across such in the course of your work among the poor?—No, I have not come across people who do it in that way.

2984. Therefore, you have no knowledge of the actual working of the system?—No, not when a certain sum is paid down at the time, I have never come across that. I think that with the class of foster-mothers that take the children and do badly by them for 2s. or 3s. a week, it is simply a matter of poverty; the mother is unable to afford a larger sum. When the mother is able to pay 5s. a week, or when she is helped to pay 5s. a week, the child is better looked after; we can get a better class of foster-mother to look after the children in such cases, and there is no difficulty or danger about it. It is where a mother is left alone, and has nobody to help her, and has not enough money to pay for it, that the child is neglected, owing to the smallness of the sum she is able to pay. I have occasionally rescued a child when the mother has not been able to pay for it, or has only been able to pay a small sum, and then I have found that the child has been neglected.

2985. You do not keep the children at all in your mission home for any length of time, I gather?—I find that babies do not get on so well by putting them together several in a house; I prefer to board them out, because they get on better.

2986. Do you board them out at once after they come to you?—When they are three months old, usually; I generally keep the mothers till that time, if possible.

2987. Do they come to your home to be confined?—No.

2988. You do not take them till afterwards?—No, I do not take them till afterwards; I generally take St. George's and Whitechapel workhouse cases.

2989. People who have gone to the workhouse for the purpose of being confined, and you take them afterwards for the purpose of trying to reclaim them?—Yes.

2990. There is a certain class of lying-in houses which have been mentioned to this Committee; do you know anything about them?—No, I do not send any cases to those lying-in houses; I send them to the hospitals.

2991. Some of these women come to you before their confinement, and ask for your advice?—Yes; I very often have to pay for boarding them out before they are confined.

2992. What class of women are they, as a rule?—Nearly always domestic servants, those that I have to deal with; sometimes they are young women in shops; sometimes of a little higher class, but usually domestic servants. I always take the mother's wages, or a portion of the mother's wages, and assist her in paying for the child.

2993. You do not find that the foster-mothers, when

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

when you put children out, object to the visits of your committee?—No, not in the least.

2994. Do you think that the people whom you put your children out with would object to notifying the local authority in some way, or being registered?—I should think they would not, because I am careful that I have thoroughly respectable people, who, I should think, would be glad to be recognised.

2995. You do not think that the respectable people would object to being registered?—I should think not.

2996. Have you ever asked any of them?—No, I have not; of course, excepting this, that when I have given a second child under 12 months of age to a woman, I have had to say, "Are you registered; can you take the child?"

2997. You do sometimes send a second?—I have occasionally done so; I do not often do it.

2998. Have you come across any of the registered houses at all; do you know any of them?—Oh, yes. Of course some of the foster-mothers I have, have been registered; because they may already have had a child from somewhere else, when I have given them a child, and I have found that they have been registered.

2999. Do you communicate at all with the officers of the County Council who administer this Act?—No; we visit these women to see that the children are well kept.

3000. But when a woman tells you that she is registered, do you do anything for the purpose of verifying her statements?—No, I have not. That has not occurred lately, because I have been careful to give only one little child to a woman.

3001. What do you mean by "lately"?—The last five or six years. I am quite sure it is largely a question of money. It is because the mothers cannot afford to pay properly for the children that they get a low class of women to take them, who are not very conscientious. I know that that is the reason; I feel sure in my own mind that that is the reason why they do it. When they are obliged to put out a child, and can only afford 3s. or 4s. a week, they must get anybody to take it. Of course it is extremely likely that there would be a higher average of mortality among these children than among other children, because they are generally much more delicate, and everything is against them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3001*. Roughly speaking, how many children might you have at a time boarded out?—I should think about a dozen at a time. When I get a baby three or four years old I take it into one of my cottage homes.

3002. Do you exercise supervision over them from the time of their first boarding out, if that is early after birth, to three or four years of age?—Yes, unless the child is adopted. It is sometimes adopted by the foster-parent. Sometimes the mother marries or takes away the child for some (0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

reason or another. As long as we help to pay for the child, we supervise it.

3003. You spoke of the larger number of the mothers with whom you have to deal, being domestic servants?—Yes.

3004. Do you attribute that fact to the larger number of the young women being in domestic service, or to the fact that such things are more likely to occur with those who have gone into domestic service?—You see if such a thing happens to a girl who is in domestic service she cannot go on with her work, as a factory girl can; the factory girl can have her child at home and look after it and yet go on with her work.

3005. You mean that you have to do with cases of domestic servants, but it does not necessarily follow that you are having, so to speak, a fair average of illegitimate children?—I think that that accounts for our having the domestic servants in our homes. It is only from what we hear that I can speak, but we hear that more domestic servants have those children than any other class.

3006. Did you hear the evidence that Mrs. Wethered gave a little while ago?—No.

3007. Mrs. Wethered was speaking very strongly, from obviously a large experience, as to the objection which many of the foster-parents with whom she has had to do would certainly have to registration of any sort or kind: your experience differs from hers?—Yes, of course. I work in the East-end, and I do not think there would be much objection there. I cannot see that it would be well to register every home for one child, because so often a relative will take a child; and as I think some one said this morning, you will very often find a grandmother or an aunt who will take a child for 2s. 6d. a week; that just pays her out-of-pocket expenses, and she gives the care of the child for nothing; and in those cases I think registration would be found difficult. But I know how difficult it is to make exceptions. I think everybody having the care of two children should be registered.

3008. Do you desire to change the existing law?—I think it might be prolonged till the child is five years old, not limited to 12 months.

3009. Of the two aims which the Bill has, firstly to prohibit even a single child being kept under 12 months of age, and secondly to enlarge the limit of age up to five years, you would be clearly in favour of the second?—When there was more than one child.

3010. Only when there was more than one child? Would you not register a house where there was only one child if it was two years old?—So many poor people you see are willing to help a mother of an illegitimate child in that way. Sometimes if they have no children of their own they will not mind helping a girl by taking one child. I do not suppose they would make a business of it and take two children, but it is often the case that they will take one child perhaps for less than 5s. if they know the girl; they may be relatives, and it would be very difficult to register a house under those circumstances, would it not?

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3011. Of

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

3011. Of course much depends upon what you mean by registration; if registration means being placed upon a list which is open to inspection, and which gives the impression of such registered houses being what were described to-day as places for receiving illegitimate children, many people would object who might not object to merely having to give an intimation to some authority of the fact that they had a child who was not their own?—But to give notice that they have a child who is not their own even for 24 hours, seems to me rather stringent.

3012. You would object to that; you would wish a longer period than 24 hours named in the Act?—Yes.

3013. But suppose that period to be named, let us suppose that a week is named, what do you say then?—I perfectly well see all the danger of it, and the objection to it, that many a relation or a friend will take a child while the mother goes to the hospital for instance, or to a convalescent home, or has to be absent for some reason or another; they will often take a child for a few weeks, perhaps for nothing, or for only a very little payment.

3014. If for any kind of payment, that would come under the Act directly?—Yes, of course.

3015. We wish to see which way the balance of your judgment inclines; would it be a good thing that registration should be required there, or would the harm be greater than the benefit?—I think they might leave the registration for one child alone; but I think when it comes to more than one child the question of profit comes in, and then I think the house ought to be registered, and the people ought to be looked after.

3016. I quite see that you speak guardedly, but your general impression is that it is in that way that the Act wants strengthening; that we should register every house in which more than one child was kept, even if the children are anything under five years old?—Yes; but I think there is great difficulty in requiring registration if there is only one child.

3017. Do you attach much weight to the importance or desirableness of keeping the mother in touch with her child?—A great deal; it is everything to do that as far as possible.

3018. You would regard the system of the Foundling Hospital and such institutions as being on a mistaken ground, therefore?—As only fit for exceptional cases; all those places are wanted for exceptional cases.

3019. But speaking generally, I mean?—Speaking generally I should say keep the mother in touch with her child. It is so very difficult for that mother herself when in a situation, and perhaps only having a day's holiday once a month, to see or supervise her child.

3020. I am not clear about the class of people who are the foster-parents that you are familiar with?—They are generally widows, single women, women with daughters; sometimes a woman who has brought up her own family and has a girl of

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

13 or 14 years of age for whom she is glad to have a little occupation at home.

3021. Do you find many cases in which a married couple with a family of their own desire to take a nurse-child?—Sometimes, especially where it fits in with the other children.

3022. Where there is a big girl, you mean, who can mind them?—Yes, sometimes there is a big girl who can mind them, and a little child that comes in is well taken care of.

3023. In such a case would you still feel that 5s. is the least for which such a foster-mother could profitably, or suitably, keep a child?—I should never, myself, offer less than 5s.; I could not conscientiously do it.

Viscount Llandaff.

3024. Do you find in your experience that the mother contributes towards that 5s.?—Always gladly. It is only that they pay, according to their wages, 2s. to 4s. a week; it is always willingly given, and I think it is wonderfully well kept up. I have very few cases of desertion; of course occasionally I have such, but not often.

3025. You have told us two things; in the first place you have said that the foster-mothers are usually very kind?—Yes.

3026. And that where there was neglect of the children, it was because they had not enough money paid to them to enable them to do their duty by them in fact?—Yes. I do not come across those foster-mothers much; because I always see that they are paid; but I believe that to be the case.

3027. I do not quite see how these large provisions of this Bill would help that difficulty of cases of neglect and injury to the child through poverty; how would this Bill help that?—I do not know. I think it looks over the fact that poverty is at the bottom of it all; the mother cannot afford it, and that is how it all happens.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3028. You would not mend that by legislation?—No.

3029. You must not expect too much even if you pass such an Act as this?—The Act would do something.

3030. That opens up the question of affiliation?—Until some way is found of money being regularly paid to help the girl, I do not see how it is to be dealt with. A girl with 14l. a year cannot pay properly for a child; that is why we give so much time and money to subsidise the mother's wages.

Viscount Llandaff.

3031. Would not the result of the Bill be this, that foster-parents who only get 2s. 6d. would be excluded from registration, and those children would have to go to the workhouse?—Yes; the mothers would have to go with them.

3032. I understand

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3032. I understand your opinions to be that the maternal instinct is so strong that women as a general rule only wish to get rid of their children when they cannot afford to keep them?—Generally speaking.

3033. And that when they can afford to keep them they do their best to have them well kept?—I think on the whole they do wonderfully. Of course there are exceptions to the rule.

3034. Therefore, it would not be expedient to do away with places where women who cannot afford to keep their children at the 5s. limit could get them taken in at a lower limit?—I should think it would be a very good thing to do away with such places, excepting in the case of relations, or when it is done from kind feeling.

3035. How would these poor women who only pay 2s. 6d. a week, find a home for their children then?—They would have to go to the workhouse.

3036. You think that would be the proper remedy?—No, I do not; but it might awaken more public sympathy.

3037. You mean that a society like yours, might, as the result, get more assistance?—No; what I mean is, that I think the girls might be helped more individually, by individual ladies.

3038. By charity, in fact?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3039. Do you think all your foster mothers would pass the ordeal, if I may use the phrase, of registration?—I think so.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. ALFRED SPENCER, having been re-called, is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

3045. IN the evidence of Mr. Rudolf, the Secretary of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, he stated that a home for infants was handed over to the society by Lady Derby, and that this home was registered, but that the society found that the aggregation of a number of infants in one home was seriously injurious to the infants, and had therefore broken up the home; Mr. Rudolf stated that the home was in the north of London, and was registered under the Infant Life Protection Act; can you give the Committee any information as to this home?—I have ascertained from Mr. Rudolf that the home was situated at 143, Carlton-road, Kilburn. This road is now called Carlton Vale, and the greater part of it (including the site of what used to be the home), is not in London but in the parish of Willesden, in the county of Middlesex. It is, therefore, not registered or known to the Metropolitan authorities. Formerly the home was under the jurisdiction of the (0.95.)

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

3040. If the mother has to go to the house, it prevents her hiding the fact of the child's illegitimacy?—Yes. Of course there are difficulties everywhere.

3041. And it is very difficult to balance the difficulties?—Yes. I should like to say that I think, when a girl has been in court, and when a certain sum has been adjudged to her, it ought not to be left to her to get the money. That is where I think the present law is very weak. You see if the magistrates had the money paid into court that difficulty would be met.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3042. You mean in an affiliation order?—In an affiliation order. There is the difficulty. It is not difficult to get the affiliation order, but when you have got it the difficulty is to get the money. We have had to pay 2l. or 3l. to try and get the money back, and then it does not pay the legal expenses; the man leaves off paying again, and we have to institute the same sort of thing over again.

Viscount Llandaff.

3043. Have you any cases where the father contributes to the payment?—Yes, sometimes the whole 5s., sometimes he pays 2s. 6d., and the mother pays 2s. 6d.; but we see that the child is cared for.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3044. Do you insist on an endeavour to obtain an affiliation order?—No, not in all cases, because sometimes they plead so very earnestly that we should not try it.

Chairman—continued.

justices of the Kensington Petty Sessional Division for the county of Middlesex, and if registered it would have been registered by that authority.

3046. In one of the former Committees the police put in evidence with regard to the number of infants found dead in the street, picked up dead; have you ascertained the number of dead bodies of infants found in the Metropolitan and City Police District during the year 1895?—I have. The return which was presented before the 1871 Committee gave 276 as the number which were found by the police in the year 1870. I present returns prepared, respectively, by the Commissioners of Police for the Metropolis, and the City Commissioner of Police, which show that the dead bodies of infants found in the Metropolitan and City Police Districts during the year 1895 was 231, of which there were 118 males and 109 females, and in four cases the sex was unknown.

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3047 Do

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3047. Do you mean infants under one year?—No, merely infants; they were probably quite young infants in every case.

Viscount Llandaff.

3048. Is there anything to show whether they died a natural death or not?—No, there is nothing to show that in the returns. I think it may be taken that in all cases they were young infants, they are simply given as dead bodies of infants.

3049. Does it merely show that the people wanted to avoid the expense of burial, or that the infant came into their hands in an improper way?—The return given does not supply that information.

Lord Thring.

3050. What does "found" mean?—As far as I know, it means found either in a street, or in some place to which the police have access.

Viscount Llandaff.

3051. There is many a mother who would drop a dead child in the street, but who would not contribute to its death?—I do not think it necessarily follows that these children have been made away with.

Chairman.

3052. Your evidence was not clear upon the point of the actual number of infants under one year, received in registered houses in London. The numbers you gave were infants Mr. Babey found at the houses on successive visits, and there was a certain amount of duplication. Can you now give the Committee the actual number of infants under one year received in those houses, and also the number of deaths of infants under one year, that took place?—I find that the number of infants under one year received in registered houses in London from the 1st of January 1887, to the 31st of March 1896, was 694; that the number of deaths of infants under one year in registered houses during the same period was 137, being a death-rate equal to 197 per 1,000, or 19·7 per cent.

Viscount Llandaff.

3053. I should like you to contrast with that the deaths of infants during the same period under one year, not in registered houses?—The inspector in the course of his duties is brought into contact with unregistered houses, and he does obtain what information is available as to the deaths of infants under one year. Those deaths I have already given in evidence, so far as they have been ascertained by his inquiries, and they amount to 285 per 1,000 or 28·5 per cent.

3054. That is, infants put out for hire in unregistered houses?—Yes, infants under one year.

3055. But you cannot give me the total deaths in the same area, and for the same period, of infants under one year, everywhere?—I do not think I can answer the question; I do not believe the information is in existence.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

3056. I wanted to know the normal death-rate of infants for the same area and the same time?—I quite understand. As far as we do know it, the general death-rate of all infants under one year is about 16·3 per cent. I think that is given in my evidence before, as the death-rate of infants under one year in the County of London. That was for the year 1893, but it does not vary very much from that in the different years. I think you might take it that the average rate is something between 15 and 17. The death-rate which I have now given you at registered houses is 19·7, and the death-rate at unregistered houses, as far as it has been ascertained, amounts to 28·5; but while the figures are, I think, accurate as regards the general death-rate of infants, and also the death-rate at registered houses, they are not accurate as regards the unregistered houses. That rate is probably very much in excess of the figures I have given you, because we have only ascertained that number by inquiry, and there must have been a great number of deaths that we could not ascertain.

Lord Thring.

3057. It seems to me that the excess of deaths in unregistered houses over those in registered houses has no bearing upon our investigation, because we have been told over and over again now, that the children in the unregistered houses are the children of poorer people, and that the children in those houses are worse fed, and that whether they are worse fed or not, they do not die in a larger proportion than the foster parents' own children, and that they die, not because it is intended that they should die, but because the foster parents often have not the capacity to do well for them?—Probably the greater death-rate is due to incapacity of some kind.

3058. How can you bring up that incapacity by registration; you cannot make people competent by registration; you cannot make the pay given them higher by registration. Do you not see what I mean; the registered houses are selected houses, a higher class of houses, the people are competent; whereas in unregistered houses they may or may not be competent; and therefore the children often die from the incapacity of the foster parents because the poor mothers cannot afford to pay more for them. That is not susceptible of remedy by legislation?—I think that a certain amount of capacity both of the person and in the house ought to be a primary condition of the permission to take in infants for hire. I am not speaking now of isolated cases of single infants, but where two or more infants are taken for profit. I do think that there should be some reasonable provision made so that they should have a fair chance of being reared.

3059. You say that where they are kept for profit, two or more (those being the very conditions we have been talking about), the houses should be registered; we all agree to that?—Quite so; but the Act falls short by limiting the age of the child to one year.

Assuming

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Assuming that the principle of the Act of 1872 is right, so far as the limiting of the Act to cases where two or more infants are kept, that is to cases where, *prima facie*, there is a trade being carried on in infants, then I say there is no reason in stopping the operation of this principle at the age of 12 months, and that it is quite desirable to extend the protection that the Act gives up to five years, when the Education Acts step in, and, in a sense, take the child under their wing.

3060. The difficulty in my mind has been, all through, this: confine yourself to the case where one infant only is kept; we are told that a child is kept well or ill in proportion to the money that can be paid for it; we are further told that when sufficient money is paid, and the child is not well kept, it results from the incapacity of the foster mother. Now, supposing that we make a rule that every house shall be registered where one child is kept, that would exclude a great number of places where the foster mother is incompetent, would it not?—It would prevent the registration, you mean, of those places where the foster mother is incompetent; probably it would do so.

3061. Then, what are we to do with those children who otherwise would be with incompetent people?—These questions that you are now raising I propose to deal with at a later point in my evidence, and I should prefer to answer the questions in their proper place; because you will see that I have formed a conclusion which I think will answer your questions.

Chairman.

3062. Now, on another subject, Mr. Babey gave the Committee the number of persons registered from November 1878 to March 1894, but these numbers were those of persons actually on the register from year to year. Can you now tell the Committee the number of persons who actually registered in London since the passing of the Act of 1872, and the periods during which each person was registered?—Yes. The number of persons who have actually registered, and the periods of registration as distinct from the registrations granted from November 1872 to March 1896, are as follows. There have been a total of 255 persons registered under the Act in the metropolis. The Committee were anxious to know the periods during which they were on the register; 147 were on the register for one year; 53 were on the register for two years; 18 were on the register for three years; 18 were on the register for four years; four were on the register for five years; five were on the register for six years; two were on the register for seven years; two were on the register for eight years; two were on the register for nine years; two were on the register for 12 years; one was on the register for 13 years, and one was on the register for 16 years. And at the present time out of 41 persons that are now on the register, two have been on for one year; eight have been on for two years; five have been on for three years; two have been on for four years, and one has been on for five, six, seven, eight, 12 and 13 years respectively.

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Chairman—continued.

3063. When you say 255 persons, do you mean houses or persons?—I mean persons, not houses. The Committee particularly desired that it should be persons, because it was the number of persons who actually placed themselves under registration that you wanted to get at. The same person may have registered two or three houses, going from place to place.

3064. You do not count in there re-registration of the person?—No, not at all; my figures show how many distinct persons have been registered under the Act.

3065. You informed the Committee, in reply to Questions 10 to 15, that 24 houses had from time to time been struck off the register, and Lord Llandaff asked you if you could state how many were "for serious neglect and how many for unfitness of the house, and so on"; are you prepared to give that information now?—Yes. I find that in two cases the persons were struck off the register by order of the magistrates, under a power given by Section 9 of the Act. The remaining cases were struck off by the local authority under Section 7; three for serious neglect, six because the registered person was incapable of providing the infants with proper food and attention, and 13 because the houses became unfit for the reception of infants. I want to qualify that last number of 13. I find that of the 13 struck off because the houses became unfit, in 12 instances the registered persons gave up keeping more than one infant and reduced the accommodation in their houses. In the answer to Lord Llandaff's question I said that I thought about 25 per cent. of the whole cases were struck off because it was the desire of the person. It is really more than that; it is about 50 per cent. There are actually 12 cases out of 24 cases that were struck off at the desire of the registered persons, where they gave up keeping more than one infant and reduced the accommodation of the house. That gave us the opportunity of striking off on the ground of reduced accommodation.

3066. Then Mr. Babey's evidence was not altogether clear as to what course has been taken where cases of serious neglect came to the knowledge of the Council's officers, but where no infringement of the Infant Life Protection Act was found to exist. Can you give the Committee any further information on this point?—The invariable course taken in such cases has been either to give information to the police, or to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and in one case to the Reformatory and Refuge Union, 32, Charing Cross. I find, on searching the records, that about 12 such cases have been handed over to the police, one such case to the Reformatory and Refuge Union, and six to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and those are all that I have any actual record of; but there may have been others.

3067. Then it has been stated that the Council has made regulations compliance with which is necessary before the house can be registered under the Infant Life Protection Act; can you give the Committee any information on that point?—There are no regulations relative to registered

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15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

gistered houses, and every application is dealt with on its merits. It is considered desirable that in a registered house there should be a cubic air-space of at least 400 feet in respect of every adult, and 250 feet in respect of every infant living permanently in the house; but there is no regulation on the subject, and houses are registered with less accommodation than this where there is a fair amount of ventilation, and if in other respects the house of the applicant is suitable. The only thing in the nature of a regulation in connection with registered houses is the bye-law which the local authority is required by Section 3 of the Act to make, fixing the number of infants who may be received into each house registered.

3068. Then Mr. Babey mentioned a number of cases in which infants had been received for lump sums, and had then been immediately passed on to some other person, and he was asked whether he found out these cases in sufficient time to have stopped the trafficking taking place, or to trace the people, and prosecute them. Do you desire to add anything on this point?—I wish to make it clear to the Committee that wherever there was evidence as to cases of this sort taking place on a considerable scale the police were at once communicated with, in order that the people should be punished if sufficient evidence could be brought home to them, but that in only three of these cases was it possible for the police to get evidence sufficient to ensure conviction.

3069. What were these persons charged with?—They were charged with obtaining infants, money, and clothes under false pretences, the false pretences being that they would adopt the infants or provide for their future welfare.

3070. Were any considerable number of infants traced to any of those persons?—In one case 34 infants were received in this way by a clerk and his wife named Roadhouse, who were convicted and sentenced to periods of 18 months' and 12 months' hard labour respectively. It was shown that with the 34 infants they had received 219*l.* in money, and jewellery to the value of 32*l.*, besides clothing. In another case 30 infants were traced to a woman named Passmore, who was sentenced to nine months' hard labour, and she was known to have received 150*l.* with 14 of the infants. In a third case a woman at Wolverton was known to have received 24 infants in this way, with at least 80*l.* in respect of two of the infants, but sufficient evidence could not be obtained, and she was not proceeded against, although at the instance of a coroner's jury, at an inquest on the body of one of the infants, the case was sent to the Public Prosecutor. There are records of many other cases where a less number of infants were traced to people.

3071. Clause 5 of the Bill is included to meet cases of this description; have you considered the suggestion made by Lord Llandaff as to the desirability of adding the words "for hire or reward" after the word "person" in the third line of the clause?—I have given the matter very careful consideration, and have come to the conclusion that if that alteration is introduced

Chairman—continued.

into the clause it will not meet the whole of the cases it is intended to meet. The instances which I have just described to the Committee included cases where the trafficker did succeed in disposing of some of the infants without any agreement to pay money, and I remember that, in one case where an infant was thus passed on to some one to take charge of it for love, the infant was found abandoned in the garden of a house in the Marylebone-road, whence it was taken to the workhouse and died within a fortnight. I also point out that if the words "for hire or reward" were added, it would be a most difficult matter to prove "hire or reward" in cases of collusion between the parties. Lord Llandaff made another suggestion, that the words "or guardian" should be added after the word "relative" in the fifth line; and I think the addition of these words would probably meet the difficulty and remove the reasonable objection that was expressed to the clause in its present form. I think that would meet his Lordship's objection.

3072. Then you have heard the evidence given, and have doubtless noted the objection to some of the provisions of the Bill now before the Committee?—I have.

3073. Can you indicate briefly what those objections are, and in what way you suggest that they should be met?—I think the objections given in evidence may be summarised as follows:—(1) General objections to registration, and the consequent increased difficulty in providing homes for illegitimate infants. (2) The objection of neighbours or friends to register when they merely take charge temporarily of children while their parents are absent at work or for other purposes. (3) The objection of persons who receive an infant from an organised society or through a boarding-out committee and are therefore under some kind of supervision. (4) The objection to register of persons who receive children sent from India for purposes of health and education. I think those four heads briefly summarise the whole of the objections to registration that have been given before the Committee in evidence. I have considered very carefully in what way those objections could be met, and I have come to the conclusion that the proposal to limit the Act to illegitimate children that was included in the Bill of 1890 would not meet the case; and that in addition to that it would be almost impossible to administer the Act with a limitation of that kind on account of the great facility there would be for evasion. I have also come to the conclusion that the whole of those objections would be practically met if the Act is limited to two or more infants; that is to say, if, instead of extending the operation of the Act, as is proposed by Clause 2, to the keeping of single infants and to the keeping of infants up to five years of age, the Committee simply limited the extension of the Act to the raising of the age of the child from 12 months to five years, they would find that all the valid objections that have been urged before them would have been met. And although I am unable to-day to speak with the authority behind me

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

me of the London County Council, whom I represent, for my own part I do say that, having regard to the nature of the evidence, the experience of the witnesses, and generally to all the objections which have been so well put before the Committee, I am in agreement with the view that it will be politic in the first instance to limit the Act to the keeping of two or more infants. I do see, and see very clearly, the great hardship that would be worked by the extension of the Act to one infant, and I have formed the opinion that on the whole it would do more mischief than good. In the first place it would put the very greatest difficulties in the way of mothers who desire to do well by their offspring, and those difficulties would be almost insuperable, and there would be, therefore, a largely increased inducement to crime. That, I think, is a very potent reason; one that the Committee cannot possibly ignore. Then again, I think that where only one infant is taken it never, or rarely ever, is taken as a means of profit; as a trade. On the other hand, directly you get two infants, directly two infants are taken for hire or reward, it then does become more or less a trade; and no doubt that was the reason why the Committee of 1871 recommended that the Act should be limited to the taking of two or more infants. Another reason, and from my point of view an overwhelming reason, has presented itself to

Chairman—continued.

my mind why the Bill should not apply to single infants. You have heard in evidence what happens even within a limited area, within the experience of some of the visiting ladies. I have the evidence of Deaconess Gilmore in my mind for the moment. In a small area in Battersea she found, I think, 16 infants, each placed out singly, and placed out more or less with friends or neighbours, being kept for hire. In none of those cases were the infants placed out by any machinery of which we could possibly have cognizance; that is to say, they were placed out often through friends, sometimes through relatives, sometimes through local shopkeepers, but in no case through any agency with which a public authority could come into touch; and I confess that I feel it would be impossible for any local authority, in a place at any rate like London, or any of the other large cities, to keep in touch with the keeping of one infant. And therefore, on that ground alone, I ask the Committee to consider whether it would not be better to omit the single child. On the other hand, I think that there is a reasonable chance, a strong initial probability, I may put it, of our being able to ascertain where anything like a trade is carried on, where two or more infants are taken.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH leaves the CHAIR, and the LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER takes the CHAIR.

Witness.] One of the points that has been brought very prominently before the notice of the Committee over and over again by the witnesses representing organizations of some kind or other, is the desirability of exempting the infants boarded out by those organizations; and that proposition has my fullest sympathy. But I think that if you limit the application of the Bill to two or more infants, any special exemption of that sort will not be necessary; because I do not think that a single case has come before you where the institution was not careful only to board out one infant at a time. But should you think it necessary to provide a special exemption for such cases, then I venture to suggest that the proposal which has been thrown out by members of the Committee is a very workable one, viz., that the society itself should be registered by the Local Government Board; that, having been registered, it should issue certificates to the persons with whom it boards out infants, and that those certificates should exempt those houses from the operation of the Act. I think the Committee may find that an exemption of that kind may not be necessary; but should it be necessary, I see no objection to its taking that form.

Chairman.

3074. If the Bill were limited to the keeping of two or more infants under five years of age, what proportion of nurse infants would it bring in, and what proportion would it (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

leave out?—Taking the year 1894-95 I find that during that year a total of 497 infants were found at unregistered houses in London; that of that number 234 infants were boarded out singly, and therefore would not come under the extended Act if the single cases were exempted; but that 263 were infants that were kept at houses where two or more were taken, and which would come under the operation of the extended Act. Of course I realise quite well that the 234 single infant cases do not represent probably a tithe of the actual cases which exist, and as to which we have no means of ascertaining any particulars, but taking those cases that we are brought into contact with, that is, the cases where infants are advertised for, where there is more or less a trade, as it were, done in those infants, I say that of that total number of 497 rather more than one-half would come under the Act if you raised the age from one year to five years, without extending it to one infant. I have also thought it desirable to consult the inspectors as to their experience of the treatment of infants at unregistered houses where two or more are taken, and at unregistered houses where they have only found one, and their experience is that the treatment of the single cases is almost invariably better than where two or more are taken; and their opinion is that on the whole it may be said that the single infant receives as much care and attention as the average of the children of

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

the poor; and that view coincides with the view put before you by other witnesses. I am very glad to be able to give that amount of official confirmation to those views. The inspectors state that they have rarely found a single infant case improperly treated or neglected, but that that neglect and ill-treatment had been frequently found where there were several infants kept. I do not mean that that neglect or ill-treatment amounted to criminal neglect and ill-treatment, I refer to cases where the neglect and ill-treatment fell short of that.

3075. Have you any suggestion to make as to the enforcement of the Act specially in districts outside the metropolis?—I have carefully considered that question and I have found it probably, on the whole, the most difficult question in connection with this rather difficult subject. I have come to the conclusion that probably the only authority that could reasonably be expected to enforce an extended Act would be the authority under the present Act, the district councils. I believe that it will be found, or at any rate can be made, an effective authority. It must be remembered that the change from the police and the justices in petty sessions to district councils was made as recently as the Local Government Act of 1894, and the change has, practically, been in operation only a little over a year, and the district councils have really hardly had time yet to ascertain and put into force their full powers in all directions. District councils immediately in the neighbourhood of London, with whom we have come most into contact, are in three cases, I know, taking active steps, though I think I may say that the local authorities generally rather despair of doing any effective work under what they believe to be a very limited and defective Act. In London we have been in touch with various authorities in connection with this Act, that is to say, we have been in touch with the police, we have been in touch with the registrars of births and deaths, we have been in touch with the Poor Law organisation, and we have been in touch with the sanitary authorities; and, on the whole, we are disposed to think that the sanitary organisation is the one likely to be brought more directly in contact with cases under the Act than any other organisation, and I think it is the fact that in the rural districts and wherever district councils have authority, they have a sanitary organisation which could be utilised and could be made effective for putting an extended Act into force. I have heard with the very greatest interest the evidence of the valuable work that is being done by voluntary societies, and not only in Manchester and in London, but in other places. The evidence before your Lordships is conclusive that an immense amount of such work is being done, and it appears to me that it would be well if the fullest advantage could be taken of the voluntary organisations that exist in almost every direction; and therefore I venture to suggest that there should be some permissive power to the local authorities under the Act, to delegate some portion of

Chairman—continued.

their duties under the Act to voluntary societies, and to make payments or contributions to these societies somewhat on the system that is in vogue in Manchester. I believe that something of the sort is already done, with a certain amount of success under other Acts. I believe it to be a fact that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are to a certain extent subsidised by some local authorities.

Viscount Llandaff.

3076. You must have some special provisions for the control of expenditure out of public money?—If you are going to make any use of voluntary agencies, you must in your Bill make some provision to delegate the work of inspection, but not of registration, as that should be reserved in the hands of local authorities. Some system of delegating to voluntary associations the work of inquiry and inspection arising under the Act might be usefully adopted in some districts. The point arises whether, if you do anything of that sort, it would not be desirable to place some central supervision in the hands of the Local Government Board. I have already suggested that societies the houses of which are exempted from the operation of the Act, should be registered by the Local Government Board; and in that case the same organisation might be utilised for giving a power of supervision and sanction to any arrangement between local authorities and voluntary societies. You may think it desirable to only give assent to the payment of public money to voluntary agencies when the arrangement has received some sort of central sanction.

Chairman.

3077. Then with regard to giving notice of death to the coroner, have you any suggestions to make?—Section 8 of the present Act provides that the registered person shall give notice to the coroner of the district within 24 hours of the death of an infant "so retained or received." I think that provision is valuable and should be retained; but the Infant Life Protection Act, which is in force in Victoria, Australia, goes further than that, as it is stated to provide that an ordinary medical certificate of death shall not apply to an illegitimate child living apart from its mother, and to require that before any such infant under three years can be buried a coroner's certificate must be produced. The registered person is compelled to report the death of any of her charges within 24 hours at the nearest police station, and an inquest is held on the body in every case. I do not suggest anything so stringent as that, as I think a discretionary power should be given to the coroner, as we have found that in the great majority of cases in London the coroner has been satisfied that an inquest is unnecessary. The Committee may, however, consider it desirable that notice should be given to the coroner of the deaths of all illegitimate infants apart from their mothers, as that might afford some safeguard.

3078. And

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

3078. And has your attention also been called to the provisions in the Australian Act with regard to the registration of the births of illegitimate children?—Yes; the occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child is born is obliged to give notice in writing to the registrar of births within three days of the birth. Such a provision might prove valuable, especially with regard to lying-in houses, but it might be difficult in case of failure to prove that the occupier knew that the child was illegitimate.

Chairman—continued.

3079. How far does the Australian Act cover institutions; have you noticed that?—The Act provides that the Chief Secretary may exempt a public institution for the reception of infants or exempt any special case where he deems it advisable. In this country institutions are exempt, but it might be desirable to give power to the Local Government Board to exempt infants boarded out by an institution where satisfied that such infants receive proper supervision.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned.

(0.95.)

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Die Mercurii, 19 Junii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mrs. ABRAHAMS is called in ; and Examined, as follows :

Chairman.

3080. You have taken a very active interest, I believe, in some Roman Catholic rescue homes, known as St. Pelagia's Homes?—Yes.

3081. And are you, practically, the founder of them?—The Lord Cardinal Manning was the founder of them.

3082. And you have managed the homes, and had the general supervision?—Yes, ever since they began.

3083. Will you tell me where the homes are situated?—The first home is at Church-row, Limehouse; the second one was started at Stepney Green, and is now at Highgate; the third one, which is to correspond with that, and take off the little children, is at 68¹/₂, High-road, Tottenham; and the fourth is in the other diocese, across the water, at Rotherhithe.

3084. I believe each home is under the care of some nuns?—Yes.

3085. About how many?—There are nine at Limehouse, seven at Highgate, three at Tottenham, and four at Rotherhithe.

3086. At how many of these homes do you take children in?—At two, at Highgate and Tottenham.

3087. Do you keep the children there with the mothers?—Yes.

3088. Up till what age?—At Highgate till one or two years of age. We oblige them to stay for one year, but many of them stay for two years, and at two years old the children are drafted from Highgate down to Tottenham.

3089. And you find situations for the mothers?—Yes.

3090. For the first two years, I believe, no payment is made at all?—No, not any; it is a charity.

3091. So that it would not come under the definition of children being taken in for hire or reward?—No.

3092. But after two years, I believe, the mothers pay a certain amount?—Yes, a little out of their wages; that is just to prevent pauperism.

3093. About how much do they pay?—If they have 20*l.* a year then they pay 5*s.* a week, and if they have only 12*l.* a year they pay 12*s.* a month. Of course they cannot afford much.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

3094. Your Tottenham Home is really the only one of your homes in which children are kept apart from the parents?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3095. The mothers stay with them at Highgate?—And so they do at Tottenham, a few of them.

3096. And do they pay while in the house?—No, they do not pay anything at all while in the homes. There is no payment till the girls go out to service, and then a small charge is made from their wages.

Lord Thring.

3097. I think you told us the homes were free for two years?—Yes. The mothers sometimes do not go out till the children are two years old.

3098. Is it free to the mothers and children? Yes, completely free.

3099. You keep the mother and her child for two years?—Yes, most of them for two years; one year certain, but mostly for two years.

3100. For nothing?—For nothing.

3101. Does the mother do anything?—She does the work of the home, to support it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3102. They earn the money by washing, I see?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

3103. They work for the society?—They really work for themselves; of course the houses must be supported somehow.

3104. What I mean is, that while these mothers are in the house they work for the benefit of the house?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3105. And earn money for the house?—Yes.

Chairman.

3106. The homes at your Limehouse branch have only been going for eight years, I think?—Eleven years. The Limehouse has just completed its eleventh year now, at the end of May.

3107. I see the Limehouse branch earned in 1886, 6*l.* 17*s.*, and in 1894 it earned 1,643*l.*?—And last year 1,875*l.*

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3108. How

19 June 1896.]

Mrs. ABRAHAMS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3108. How do they earn it?—We have a large laundry.

3109. And that laundry is worked at a profit?—For their profit, yes.

3110. I am not wishing at all to derogate from the charity; I only wish to know how it works. You keep a large laundry in which the women in your house work, and thereby earn this money?—Yes.

3111. And practically they earn their living?—Yes, at Limehouse they do quite earn it. They do not at the others.

Viscount Llandaff.

3112. You have no children at Limehouse?—No, not at Limehouse.

Chairman.

3113. Tottenham is the only house in which any of the children are kept apart from their parents?—Yes.

3114. And after the age of one or two years the parents contribute a small sum towards their maintenance?—Yes, when they go into service.

3115. And therefore these children would come under the definition of children taken in for hire or reward?—Yes; but not under the late Act. At Highgate, where the children are, they do not earn anything like what they spend.

3116. The children at Tottenham are not taught in the home, are they?—No, they go to the Mission School; 23 of them are going now.

3117. Have you ever considered the question of registration?—No, because there has been no need.

3118. But have you ever considered whether it would be disagreeable to you to be registered or not; you have no desire to be registered?—I do not think it would matter one way or the other really.

3119. You do not put any children out with their parents, I believe?—No, not any.

3120. But you keep them in the Tottenham Home until they are of a certain age?—We have not made any plans yet, because they are all so young; the home itself is young; the children are only seven or eight, the oldest of them.

3121. And you have not yet made arrangements about putting them out?—No.

Lord Thring.

3122. What is the minimum age of the children in your home?—A fortnight old.

3123. You take them a fortnight old and keep them till eight or nine?—We shall keep them

Lord Thring—continued.

later than that, I think; but we have not had time to decide yet; they have not grown.

3124. Do you take them older?—Yes.

3125. What is the maximum age you take them at?—The oldest child we ever took was, I think, six when she came to us; but the children are mostly from the Highgate Home, which was started first, and this was a sort of home to help the other, to take the children when they grew older.

Viscount Llandaff.

3126. The Highgate Home, I understand, is chiefly a rescue home?—Yes.

Chairman.

3127. These homes are not managed by a committee in any sense?—No. You see the religious have charge of them, and they have their own management.

3128. Therefore each house is practically under the sole control of the reverend mother?—Yes, except for visits that we make ourselves every week.

Viscount Llandaff.

3129. Whom do you mean by ourselves?—My husband and myself. My husband is, however, too much occupied to go every week. We have managed the accounting part ever since the homes have been started; we go for that chiefly, and to watch over them and see them.

3130. You represent the bishop, I suppose?—We have been appointed managers of the homes by the late Cardinal. Anything that happens outside the work that the religious can do we do for them.

Lord Thring.

3131. Whom are you responsible to?—To the Cardinal.

3132. The Cardinal is the real head?—Yes.

Chairman.

3133. The accounts are audited and published every year?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3134. You said you would not object to registration; do you think your sisters would like inspection?—I do not think they would mind it. I do not see anything to be gained by it. They are institutions, but if there were to be any point made of it I do not think they would make any objection at all.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned.

A P P E N D I X.

LIST OF APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.	
Papers handed in by Mr. Spencer, 24 April 1896 - - - - -	PAGE 189
APPENDIX B.	
Paper handed in by Mr. Spencer, 24 April 1896 - - - - -	194
APPENDIX C.	
Paper handed in by Mr. Spencer, 24 April 1896 - - - - -	195
APPENDIX D.	
Papers handed in by Mr. Spencer, 24 April 1896 - - - - -	196
APPENDIX E.	
Paper handed in by Mr. Spencer, 15 May 1896 - - - - -	200
APPENDIX F.	
Paper handed in by Mr. Spencer, 15 May 1896 - - - - -	201
APPENDIX G.	
Papers handed in by Mr. E. De M. Rudolf, 30 April 1896 - - - - -	202
APPENDIX H.	
Paper handed in by Dr. Tatham, 5 May 1896 - - - - -	207
APPENDIX I.	
Paper handed in by Dr. Tatham, 7 May 1896 - - - - -	208
APPENDIX K.	
Paper handed in by Mrs. Hardie, 15 May 1896 - - - - -	209

A P P E N D I X.

APPENDIX A.

PAPERS handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 24 April 1896.

No. MCXCVIII.

AN ACT to make better provision for the Protection of Infant Life and for other purposes.

20th December 1890.

BE it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly of Victoria in this present Parliament assembled and by the authority of the same as follows (that is to say) :—

1. This Act may be cited as the Infant Life Protection Act 1890, and shall commence and come into operation on the thirty-first day of January One thousand eight hundred and ninety-one. Short title and commencement.
2. The Acts mentioned in the Schedule to this Act to the extent to which the said Acts are in and by the said Schedule expressed to be repealed are hereby repealed. Repeal. Schedule.
3. In this Act, unless inconsistent with the subject-matter or context—
 "Chief Commissioner" shall mean the person for the time being holding the office of Chief Commissioner of Police. Interpretation.
4. After the commencement of this Act, no person shall in consideration of any payment or reward at any time made or given or to be made or given to such person or to any other person on behalf of such person retain in or receive into his or her care or charge in any house any infant under the age of two years either—
 (a) for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infant apart from its parents for a longer period than three consecutive days; or
 (b) for the purpose of adopting such infant—
 unless such person be registered as the occupier of such house and such house be also registered under this Act. Houses where infants received or adopted to be registered.
- Any person offending against the provisions of this section shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.
5. The Chief Commissioner shall, subject to regulations to be made as hereinafter provided, cause a register or registers to be kept in which shall be entered the name of any person who being the occupier of any house applies to have the same registered for the purposes of this Act. Register of persons and houses to be kept.
 Opposite the name of any person so registered in any such register shall be entered particulars of the situation of such house, and such other particulars with respect to such person and such house, the calling or occupation of such person, and if she be a married woman the calling or occupation of her husband, as may be directed by regulations to be made as hereinafter provided.
- Every such registration shall unless cancelled under the provisions of this Act remain in force until the thirty-first day of the month of December next following the making of such registration and no longer unless the same be renewed. Registrations may be renewed during the month of December in which the same expire, and all such renewed registrations shall unless cancelled under the provisions of this Act remain in force for one year from the expiration of such month of December in which the same are made. No fee shall be charged or taken for the making of any registration or renewed registration under this section. When registration to be renewed.
 The person in whose charge such register shall be kept shall give to the person so registering a certificate under his hand of such registration or renewal which shall in all matters be *prima facie* evidence of such registration or renewal.
6. The Governor in Council may at any time and from time to time make regulations for all or any of the following purposes (that is to say) :—
 For prescribing how many registers shall be kept under this Act, and where the same shall respectively be kept :
 For prescribing the mode in which applications for registration under this Act shall be made, the mode in which registration shall be effected, and that in which entries shall be made in registers kept under this Act : Power to make regulations.

For directing what particulars as to the persons and houses registered; in addition to those hereinbefore required, shall be inserted in such registers:

For arranging houses registered under this Act into classes in such manner as to the Governor in Council seems fit, and for fixing the maximum number of infants to be retained in or received into houses of any particular class:

For regulating the inspection from time to time of such houses and infants:

Generally for giving effect to and carrying out the provisions of this Act.

Any such regulations may impose a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds for any breach of the same, and any such penalty may be recovered before any two justices on the information of any member of the police force.

All regulations made under the authority of this section shall within two weeks of the making thereof be published in the Government Gazette.

Inspection.

7. The Chief Commissioner or any member of the police force authorised in that behalf by the Chief Commissioner, and accompanied by a legally qualified medical practitioner if the Chief Commissioner or such member of the police force (as the case may be) think fit, may from time to time, subject to regulations made as aforesaid, inspect any house registered under this Act, and any infant or infants retained in or received into any such house.

Chief Commissioner may refuse to register.

8. The Chief Commissioner may refuse to register any person applying for registration under this Act or to renew any registration unless he be satisfied by the production of certificates, or if he think fit to dispense with certificates by the production of any other evidence, that the person applying to be registered or for a renewal of registration is of good character and able to properly nurse and maintain any infants retained in or received into his or her care or charge in such house; and the Chief Commissioner may refuse to register or renew the registration of any house unless he be satisfied that such house is suitable for the purpose for which it is to be registered, and situated in a suitable locality.

Registered persons to keep a roll containing certain particulars.

9. Every person registered as aforesaid shall keep a roll, in which shall be forthwith entered by such person the name sex and age of each infant under the age of two years retained in or received into the care or charge of such person for the purpose of being nursed or maintained apart from its parents for a longer period than three consecutive days or for the purpose of adoption.

Every person registered as aforesaid shall forthwith also enter in such roll opposite the name of each infant the date at which such infant was so retained or received, and the names and addresses, calling or occupation, of the parents of such child and of the person or persons by whom such infant was left or from whom it was received, and if any such last-mentioned person be a married woman, the calling or occupation of her husband.

If any such infant be at any time removed from such registered house, whether before or after attaining the age of two years, such registered person as aforesaid shall forthwith after such removal enter in such roll the time of such removal and the names and addresses calling or occupation, of the person or persons by whom such infant was so removed.

Every person registered as aforesaid shall cause the person from whom any such infant is received or by whom any such infant is removed to sign such entry, and shall forward to the Chief Commissioner a copy of each such entry within three days of the reception or removal of each infant.

Roll to be produced.

Every roll kept in pursuance of the provisions of this section shall be at all times produced when the production of the same is demanded by any member of the police force in charge of a station if of the rank of senior constable, or by any member of the police force being a sergeant or of higher rank, and may be by him examined and perused, and if he think fit by him retained.

Penalty for neglecting to produce roll or to keep it in proper form.

If any person registered as aforesaid neglect, refuse, or omit to produce any such roll kept by him or her in pursuance of this section forthwith on being so required, or if any such person neglect, refuse, or omit to keep such a roll, or to insert therein all the particulars by this section required, or to obtain such signature thereto, or to forward a copy of such entry to the Chief Commissioner within three days of the reception or removal of each infant, such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall be liable on conviction before a court of petty sessions to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.

Forgery of certificate, &c.

10. If any person make any false representation, or forge any certificate, or make use of any forged certificate knowing it to be forged, with intent to obtain the registration either of such person or of any other person under this Act, or falsify any roll kept in pursuance of the provisions of the last preceding section, or furnish false particulars of any matter which is required to be entered in such roll, such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.

Names may be removed from register.

11. If at any time it be made to appear to the Chief Commissioner that any person registered as aforesaid has been guilty of neglecting, or is incapable of providing the infants retained in or received into the care or charge of such person with proper food or attention, or that the registered house of such person has become unfit for the reception of infants,

infants, or if for any other reason it appears to the Chief Commissioner desirable in the public interest so to do, he may strike the name of such person and such house off the register, and the registration thereof shall be thereby cancelled.

Ten days' previous notice in writing of his intention so to do shall be given by the Chief Commissioner to any such person whose name is about to be struck off the register and such notice may be given by leaving the same at the registered house of such person, But the Chief Commissioner may at the time of giving such notice order the immediate removal of such infants from such registered house to the care of the Secretary of the Department for Neglected Children who shall then be charged with the care of such infants until the removal of such infants by their respective parents or guardians or the return of such infants to such first-mentioned registered house; and the said secretary may recover the cost of the removal maintenance and clothing of and medical attendance on such infants from their respective parents or guardians.

Any such person on receiving such notice may within one week give notice in writing to the Chief Commissioner of his intention to appeal, and when giving such notice shall deposit the sum of Twenty shillings with the said Chief Commissioner. The Chief Commissioner shall thereupon refrain from striking off such person's name from the register, and shall inform the Chief Secretary of such notice of appeal. The Chief Secretary shall thereupon fix a time for the hearing of such appeal, of which due notice shall be given to the Chief Commissioner and person appealing; and the Chief Secretary shall at the appointed time proceed to hear the Chief Commissioner and the person appealing or their representatives and shall determine the appeal, and if he decide that such person's name shall be struck off the register the Chief Commissioner shall strike it off accordingly and the registration thereof shall be thereby cancelled, and the sum of Twenty shillings deposited as aforesaid shall be forfeited and paid into the consolidated revenue, but otherwise the same shall be repaid to the person depositing the same.

Any infants removed by order of the Chief Commissioner under the authority of this section and not restored to the custody of their parents or guardians shall if such registration be not cancelled be returned to the care or charge of such person as aforesaid, and the decision of the Chief Secretary on such appeal shall not be subject to review in any court of law and shall be final and conclusive.

12. Every person registered as aforesaid shall within twenty-four hours after the death of an infant under the age of three years in his or her care or charge other than his or her own children give or cause to be given notice thereof to the police officer in charge of the nearest police station, and thereupon an inquest shall be held upon the body of such infant.

Notice to be given of death of infant; inquest to be held, and report made to Chief Secretary.

It shall be the duty of the coroner holding such inquest to inquire not only into the immediate cause of death, but into all such circumstances as may throw any light upon the treatment and condition of the infant during life, and into any other matters into which in his opinion it is desirable in the interests of public justice that he should inquire; and the coroner after holding such inquest shall report to the Chief Secretary the cause of death, and shall in such report make such remarks with respect to the matter as to him seems fit.

No infant dying under the age of three years whilst in the care or charge of a person registered as aforesaid shall (unless such infant be the child of such person) be buried without the production of a certificate under the hand of such coroner authorising such burial.

If any person registered as aforesaid neglect refuse or omit to give notice of the death of an infant in accordance with the provisions of this section such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.

13. The name of every person convicted of an offence against this Act shall, if such person be registered under this Act, be at once removed from the register and the registration of every such person and of the house of such person shall be thereby cancelled.

Offenders against certain provisions of this Act not to be registered.

No person convicted of—

- (a) retaining or receiving into his or her care or charge any infant under the age of two years without being registered as required by this Act; or
- (b) neglecting to give notice of the death of an infant as required by the last preceding section—

shall at any time thereafter be registered under this Act.

14. The Chief Secretary may at any time by writing under his hand order that the preceding provisions of this Act shall not apply in any particular case where he is satisfied that an infant is a near relative of the person in whose care or charge it is retained or received, or where for any other reason he is satisfied it is undesirable or unnecessary that the provisions of this Act should apply; and he may by any such writing as aforesaid

Exemptions from operation of Act.

said order generally that such provisions of this Act shall not apply to any institution of a public nature established for the reception of infants. All such orders shall before being issued be recorded in a book to be kept for the purpose in the office of the Chief Commissioner: Provided that any justice of the peace may suspend in any particular case the operation of the preceding provisions of this Act for the period of eight days to enable such order to be obtained from the Chief Secretary.

Houses in which women are received for treatment to be registered as private hospitals under Health Act.

15. Every private hospital house building or place where women or girls are habitually received or lodged for the purpose of obtaining medical or surgical treatment or care, or of being nursed, or for the purpose of being waited upon for any disease or complaint peculiar to females, shall be deemed to be a private hospital house building or place in which persons are received and lodged for medical or surgical treatment or care within the meaning of section one hundred and fifty-eight of the Health Act 1890, and shall be registered in manner required by the said Act, and shall come within the operation of any regulations made under the said section, and regulations made under the said section may provide that the Board of Public Health or any person whose duty it is under the regulations to register private hospitals may refuse to register, and the Board of Public Health may refuse to renew or may cancel the registration of any private hospital if they consider after due inquiry the premises or the situation thereof unsuitable or the management or sanitary regulation unsatisfactory.

Certificate of Chief Commissioner to be *prima facie* evidence.

16. A certificate in writing under the hand of the Chief Commissioner that any private hospital house building or place is a private hospital house building or place required by the last preceding section to be registered in manner provided by section one hundred and fifty-eight of the Health Act 1890 shall in any prosecution for not registering the same be *prima facie* evidence of the fact that such private hospital house building or place is such a private hospital house building or place as aforesaid.

Penalty for neglecting, ill-treating, or exposing children. See No. 233, s. 23. See 31 & 32 Vict. c. 122, s. 37.

17. If any person wilfully and without reasonable excuse neglect to provide adequate food nursing clothing medical aid or lodging for any child in his or her care or custody or wilfully ill-treat or expose any child, or cause or procure any child to be neglected ill-treated or exposed, then if such child being a boy be under the age of twelve years, or being a girl be under the age of fourteen years and if any such neglect ill-treatment or exposure have resulted or appear likely to result in causing bodily suffering or permanent or serious injury to the health of such child such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction thereof before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding twelve months or to a penalty not exceeding Fifty pounds.

Notice to be given of birth of illegitimate child within three days by occupier of house. In country, notice may be given not later than one week.

18. The occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child is born shall within three days of the birth of such child give notice thereof in writing to the deputy-registrar of births and deaths for the district; but if such house or place be not situate within any city town or borough then such notice may be given either to the deputy-registrar or to the officer or constable in charge of police at the nearest police station, and may be given at any time within one week of the birth of such child.

If mother occupier, notice may be given not later than three weeks.

If the occupier of such house or place is the mother of such newborn child, such notice may be given at any time within three weeks of the birth of the child.

If any notice under this section is sent by post, it shall be posted at such time as to allow it in ordinary course of post to be delivered within the time hereinbefore specified.

Nothing in this section contained shall be construed to repeal or otherwise affect the provisions of the Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act, 1890.

Notice to be given within three days of the death of an illegitimate child under the age of five years.

19. The occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child under the age of five years dies, or to which the body of an illegitimate child who has died under the age of five years is brought, shall within three days of the death of such child give notice in writing of such death to the deputy-registrar of births and deaths for the district; but if such house or place be not situate within any city town or borough then such notice may be given either to the deputy-registrar or to the officer or constable in charge of police at the nearest police station, and may be given at any time within one week of the death of such child.

In country, notice may be given not later than one week.

If any notice under this section is sent by post, it shall be posted at such time as to allow it in ordinary course of post to be delivered within the time hereinbefore specified.

Nothing in this section contained shall be construed to repeal or otherwise affect the provisions of the Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages Act 1890 nor the provisions of this Act hereinbefore contained, whereby persons registered under this Act are required to give notice of the death of an infant in their care or charge.

Penalty for omitting to give notice of death of infant or of birth as required.

20. If any person wilfully or negligently omit to comply with the provisions of the last two preceding sections, such person shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction thereof before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to a penalty not exceeding Twenty-five pounds.

21. If

21. If it be made to appear to any justice on information laid before him on oath that there is reason to believe that any person is offending against the provisions of this Act in any house or place, or that any of the provisions of this Act except those contained in section eighteen are being infringed in any house or place, such justice may issue his warrant authorising any member or members whatsoever of the police force to search any house, place, or premises therein named, at any hour of the day or at any hour of the night, not later than ten of the clock for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is or has been therein or thereon an infringement of the provisions of this Act.

When information on oath, warrant may be issued to search premises for infringement of this Act.

22. If any person adopt or take over the entire care and charge of any child under the age of three years from its parents or guardians, such person shall within fourteen days of so doing give or send notice thereof to the Chief Commissioner, and such person shall in such notice state his or her name and place of residence and occupation and the name and age of such child. If any person neglect, refuse, or omit to comply with the provisions of this section, he shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months or to a penalty not exceeding Fifteen pounds.

Registration of adopted children.

Nothing in this section shall excuse any person from making any other registration required by any other provision of this Act or from any penalty for omitting so to do.

23. Any person who causes any child under the age of fourteen years to take part in any public exhibition or performance whereby, in the opinion of any court of petty sessions, the life or limbs of such child is or are endangered, and the parent or guardian or any person having the custody of such child who aids or abets such first-mentioned person therein, shall severally be guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall on conviction before a court of petty sessions be liable for each offence to imprisonment for a period not exceeding twelve months or to a penalty not exceeding Fifty pounds.

Penalty for employment of any child in dangerous performances. 42 & 43 Vict. c. 34, s. 3.

Where in the course of a public exhibition or performance which in its nature is dangerous to the life or limb of a child under such age as aforesaid taking part therein any accident causing actual bodily harm occurs to such child, the employer of such child whether the parent of such child or not shall be liable to be proceeded against by presentment, indictment, or information for, and to be convicted of an assault, and on conviction shall be liable to be imprisoned for a period not exceeding twelve months or to a penalty not exceeding Fifty pounds, and in addition if such employer be not the parent of such child, the court before which such employer is convicted on such proceedings may award as compensation a sum not exceeding One hundred pounds to be paid by such employer to the child or to some person named by the court on behalf of the child for the bodily harm so occasioned; provided that no person shall be punished twice for the same offence.

Compensation for accident to any child.

24. Whenever any person is charged with an offence against the last preceding section in respect of a child who in the opinion of the court trying the case is apparently of the age alleged by the informant, it shall lie on the person charged to prove that the child is not of that age.

Evidence of age. 1b. s. 4.

25. Where any person has been committed for trial for the murder or manslaughter of any child under the age of five years, or for unlawfully and maliciously wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm upon any child under the age of five years, or for negligently doing or omitting to do anything whereby grievous bodily injury has been caused to any child under the age aforesaid; a law officer may, if he be satisfied that having regard to all the circumstances of the case it would be advisable in the interests of justice that such person should be tried by a special jury of twelve men, certify the same in writing to the Prothonotary of the Supreme Court, and thereupon application may be made on behalf of Her Majesty to a Judge of the Supreme Court for an order for such person to be tried by a special jury, and such Judge shall make such order accordingly and as of course.

Provision for special jury on certificate of law officer.

SCHEDULE.

Section 2.

Number and Date of Act.	Short Title of Act.	Extent of Repeal.
54 Vict. No. 1079 - -	Crimes Act, 1890 - -	In Section 23 the words "whereby the life of such child shall be endangered or the health of such child shall have been or shall be likely to be permanently injured."
54 Vict. No. 1098 - -	Health Act, 1890 - -	Part VII.

(0.95.)

B B

APPENDIX B.

PAPER handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 24 April 1896.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

RETURN showing NUMBER of HOUSES REGISTERED under the Infant Life Protection Act in the County of London; the Number of Infants under One Year received at such Houses; and the Number of Deaths of such Infants during the Years 1883 to 1895-96, inclusive; and similar Information as to Infants kept at Unregistered Houses so far as it came to the knowledge of the Local Authority.

Year ending 31 December	Registered Houses, under the Act.					Unregistered Houses, not under the Act.					
	Number of Registered Houses.		Number of Infants under 1 Year.	Number of Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.	Number of Inquests held on Bodies of Infants.	Number of Infants received for Hire.	Number of Infants under 1 Year.	Number of Infants between 1 and 2 Years.	Number of Infants above 2 but under 7 Years.	Number of ascertained Deaths of Infants under 1 Year.	Number of ascertained Deaths of Infants 1 Year and over.
	Registered during Year.	On Register at End of Year.									
1883	39	37	141	27	3	280	115	64	101	29	28
1884	47	51	160	28	2	297	91	38	78	31	26
1885	42	35	164	31	1	294	120	66	108	31	27
1886	34	25	132	30	4	314	101	63	150	43	31
1887	25	19	103	26	—	365	113	76	176	40	34
1888	33	29	101	8	2	296	118	48	130	42	37
1889 (1 January to 31 March)	7	4	20	7	1	83	37	15	31	19	1
1889-90 (1 April to 31 March)	23	21	112	16	2	393	171	69	153	45	11
1890-91	22	15	83	11	1	279	136	48	95	42	15
1891-92	15	11	59	9	—	310	146	72	92	39	10
1892-93	21	16	72	8	—	345	160	59	126	39	12
1893-94	22	21	80	11	—	260	125	63	72	33	10
1894-95	80	58	121	12	1	510	275	84	151	55	12
1895-96	54	41	154	21	2	565	262	87	116	73	22
	434	343	1,502	253	19	4,501	1,970	852	1,579	561	273

Public Control Department,
21, Whitehall-place, S.W.

Alfred Spencer,
Chief Officer.

APPENDIX C.

PAPER handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 24 April 1896.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

RETURN showing the NUMBER of INQUESTS held in London on Legitimate and Illegitimate Children in the Years 1893-94-95.

DISTRICT.	1893.								1894.								1895.							
	Infants (Legitimate).				Infants (Illegitimate or Unknown).				Infants (Legitimate).				Infants (Illegitimate or Unknown).				Infants (Legitimate).				Infants (Illegitimate or Unknown).			
	Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.		Under 1 year.		1 year and under 7 years.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Western	72	74	32	35	26	19	4	2	69	45	33	31	21	27	—	2	87	77	38	40	30	26	1	2
Central	172	151	89	80	40	32	2	3	163	129	68	53	39	36	8	2	174	144	91	66	41	38	7	1
Westminster	33	19	12	9	10	9	—	2	22	23	14	9	10	12	—	—	28	27	15	8	12	12	1	1
North-Eastern	173	155	98	61	25	11	1	1	189	121	69	53	11	16	3	2	181	168	74	60	16	19	6	2
Eastern	231	181	106	89	3	3	—	—	210	177	134	83	5	2	—	—	258	192	121	108	4	2	—	—
Liberty of Tower	2	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	2	2	2	2	—	—	—	—	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—
Southwark	29	22	13	15	2	5	1	—	21	30	15	14	1	4	2	1	21	23	29	25	2	2	1	—
Duchy of Lancaster	3	2	1	1	3	1	—	—	6	2	3	2	1	—	1	2	7	4	2	1	1	2	—	—
South-Western	72	77	50	31	20	27	3	2	64	65	55	37	23	21	1	1	78	83	42	43	24	23	6	4
Southern	64	50	21	32	14	11	1	1	71	70	27	21	12	19	1	1	82	59	36	29	20	15	2	1
South-Eastern	41	58	21	27	18	15	3	—	55	44	28	17	13	12	—	—	41	48	27	22	11	13	1	2
Penge	2	2	1	—	—	1	—	—	1	1	1	1	3	—	—	—	3	2	—	—	3	1	—	—
TOTALS	894	796	452	331	162	137	15	11	864	712	448	333	138	149	16	11	967	830	475	402	167	155	25	13
	1,690	833	299	26	1,576	778	287	27	1,797	877	322	38												

Public Control Department,
21, Whitehall-place, S.W.

Alfred Spencer,
Chief Officer.

APPENDIX D.

PAPERS handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 24 April 1896.

(1.)

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

APPLICATION for Registration under the Act, in respect of Premises within the County of London.

To the Clerk of the London County Council,
Spring Gardens, Charing Cross, S.W.

Sir,
I hereby make application for the registration, under this Act, of the house situate at _____

for the keeping of* _____ infants _____

I forward herewith a Certificate, showing that I am a person of good character, and able to maintain infants for hire or reward.

Signature _____

Date _____ 189

*Insert in the space the number of infants you desire to be registered for.

(2.)

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

PUBLIC CONTROL DEPARTMENT.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT, 1872.

CERTIFICATE in pursuance of Section 4 of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872.

We, the undersigned, do hereby certify that _____
residing at _____

in the parish of _____ within the limits of the County of London, is a person of good character, and able to maintain infants received for hire or reward, for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants, apart from their parents, in a registered house, pursuant to the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872.

NAME AND DESIGNATION.	ADDRESS.

To be signed by a Justice of the Peace, or by a duly qualified medical practitioner, or by a minister of the Established Church or of a registered place of worship, and also by two rated householders who are not relatives of applicant.

Section 6 of the Act provides that "if any person shall make false representations with a view to being registered under the Act, or shall forge any certificate for the purpose of the Act, or make use of any forged certificate, knowing it to be forged, or shall falsify any register kept in pursuance of the Act, he shall be guilty of an offence against the Act."
Section 9: "Every person guilty of an offence under the Act shall be liable to imprisonment for not more than six months, with or without hard labour, or to a penalty not exceeding five pounds, as a Court of Summary Jurisdiction may award, and shall in addition be liable to have his name and house struck off the Register."

(3.)

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

Madam,
THE London County Council have had under consideration your application for the registration of your house,

in the Parish of _____
under this Act, for the keeping of _____ infants, and I am directed to inform you that the application has been granted, and that the house in question has been registered for one year from the

The Council have made a bye-law which will permit you to receive and keep infants until the date of the expiration of the registration in

I enclose herewith an abstract of the provisions of the Act relating to registered houses, and also a book, in which you must enter the name, sex, and age of every infant under your care, the date upon which you received it, and the name and address of the person from whom you received it; and whenever an infant is removed from the registered house you must also enter the date of such removal, and the name and address of the person removing it.

I am, &c.
(signed) *H. De la Haake,*
Clerk of the Council.

To _____

(4.)

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

ABSTRACT of the Provisions of the Act relating to Houses Registered for the Keeping of Infants.

PERSONS keeping for hire more than one infant under the age of one year, are required to register their premises (if in the County of London) with the London County Council. Section 2.

The Council may refuse to register any house unless satisfied that it is suitable, and unless satisfied by the production of certificates that the person applying is of good character, and able to maintain the infants. Section 4.

If the Council register a house they may fix the number of infants who may be received into it. Section 3.

Registration is for one year only, and must be renewed annually; no fee is charged for registration. Section 3.

The person registered shall enter, in the book supplied for the purpose by the Council, the name, sex, and age of each infant kept, with the names and addresses of the persons from whom it was received, and of the persons who remove it. Section 5.

If any registered person fails to observe the provisions of this section, or to produce the register when required, such person will be liable to a penalty of 5*l*.

If any person makes false representations with a view to being registered, or forges or makes use of any forged certificate, or falsifies the register, such person will be liable to imprisonment or fine. Section 6.

The Council may cancel the registration on proof of serious neglect of the infants, or incapacity to provide them with proper food and attention, or of the unfitness of the house. Section 7.

In case of the death of an infant kept upon registered premises, notice shall be given to the Coroner of the district within 24 hours of such death. Section 8.

Every person breaking any of the above provisions will be liable to six months' imprisonment, or to a fine of 5*l*. Section 9.

Forms of application for registration or information relating to the Act can be obtained on application to me at this office.

H. De la Haake,
Spring Gardens, Charing Cross. Clerk of the Council.

(5.)

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT.

PERSONS registered under this Act are required to provide the Infants entrusted to their care with proper Food and Attention, and the following Suggestions as to the care of Infants are intended for the information and guidance of the Persons so registered in the County of London.

Suggestions as to the Care of Infants at Registered Houses.

- Clothing.** Infants require warmth ; their clothing should be warm, but not tight.
- Air.** They should have plenty of fresh air. The windows of the room in which infants are kept should be opened freely, but care should be taken to keep them out of draughts. Infants should be sent out whenever the weather is fine.
- Cleanliness.** Infants should be washed all over with warm water daily, and their bodies should be thoroughly dried afterwards.
- Food.** An infant should be fed with warm milk and water from a feeding bottle.
- A newly-born infant requires about half a pint of good milk during the day and night; this quantity must be gradually increased up to three months old, when one pint is enough.
- An infant when six months old requires a pint and a-half of milk daily; and when a year old, two pints.
- How milk is to be prepared.** At first the milk should be mixed with an equal quantity of water; but when the infant is a month old, two parts of milk should be put to one of water.
- If milk disagrees with an infant it should be boiled before using, and a tablespoonful or more of lime water should be added, instead of an equal quantity of warm water.
- Each bottleful should have a little sugar put into it—a small lump or half a small teaspoonful.
- In hot weather, when fresh milk turns sour very quickly, condensed milk may be used instead, in the proportion of a full teaspoonful to a teacup of water, or two teaspoonfuls to a large breakfast cup; the milk should be stirred until it is thoroughly dissolved in the water.
- Unsuitable food.** Give the infant no other kind of food until it is six or seven months old. Most of the deaths from hand-feeding are due to the practice of giving gruel, arrowroot, cornflour, and other kinds of food which infants cannot digest, and which, therefore, do not nourish them.
- See that the bottle draws easily, and is clean; it should be rinsed out with warm water every time it is used. The tube and cork should be kept in clean water when not in use. If the bottle is not quite clean the milk will turn sour and the infant will be made ill.
- Regularity in feeding.** During the first six weeks the infant should be fed regularly every two hours during the day; after that age about every three hours. During the night it does not require to be fed so often.
- An infant soon learns regular habits as to feeding. Never give it the bottle merely to keep it quiet. If an infant is sleepless or fretful it is ill, and medical advice should be obtained.
- Feeding when 7 months old.** When a child is seven months old it should have one or two meals a day of milk slightly thickened with scalded bread, nursery biscuits, or with one of the prepared infants' foods.
- This should be given out of a bottle, and should be made thin enough to pass through a sieve or strainer.
- The child should still have, besides this, plenty of milk.
- Sleeping.** An infant should never sleep in the same bed with its nurse; cots or bassinets should always be provided.
- Soothing draughts.** All soothing medicines, sleeping draughts, cordials, teething powders, &c., should be avoided, as they may do much harm, and should never be given to infants without medical advice.

(6.)

NOTICE TO THE CORONER.

Note.—If Notice is not sent to the Coroner within 24 hours after the death of every infant upon registered premises, the person registered will be liable to imprisonment or fine.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT, 1872.

NOTICE to the Coroner for the _____
district of the County of _____

Pursuant to Clause 8 of the above Act, I hereby give you Notice that an Infant, named _____, died at the premises in my occupation, registered under this Act for the keeping of Infants, and situate at No. _____ in the Parish of _____, at _____ o'clock,

I enclose the certificate of the medical practitioner who attended the infant, and request, in the event of your being satisfied by such certificate that there is no ground for holding an inquest, that you will be good enough to return the same to me with an intimation of your decision, in order that the body may be buried.

If no medical certificate is given, this part must be struck out.

Signature _____

The person registered.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 189 _____

APPENDIX E.

PAPER handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 15 May 1896.

RETURN showing the Number of Dead Bodies of Infants found within the Metropolitan Police District during the Year 1895.

Division.	January.		February.		March.		April.		May.		June.		July.		August.		September.		October.		November.		December.		Total.		REMARKS.		
	Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.			Total.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.		M.	F.
A.	3	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	7	4	Also two bodies, sex unknown, found in March and November.	
B.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	3		
C.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3		
D.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3		
E.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3		
F.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		
G.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2		
H.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6		
I.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6		
J.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6		
K.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6		
L.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6		
M.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4		
N.	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10	8		
O.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10		
P.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11		
Q.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11		
R.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10		
S.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8		
T.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11		
V.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11		
W.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9		
X.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10		
Y.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7		
Z.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5		
TOTAL	6	8	6	8	8	11	8	8	20	8	11	14	9	12	13	9	6	10	8	11	10	5	6	8	116	107			

SUMMARY.

Males	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	116
Females	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	107
Sex unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	227

Metropolitan Police Office, New Scotland Yard, }
28 April 1896.

W. Davis, Superintendent.

APPENDIX F.

PAPER handed in by Mr. SPENCER, 15 May 1896.

RETURN showing the Number of Dead Bodies of Infants found in the City Police District during the Year 1895.

Division.	January.		February.		March.		April.		May.		June.		July.		August.		September.		October.		November.		December.		Total.		REMARKS.
	Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Sex.		Total.		
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
TOTAL	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

APPENDIX G.

PAPERS handed in by Mr. E. DE M. RUDOLF, 30 April 1896.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND INCORPORATED SOCIETY for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays.

Office:—Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W.

- 1.—Name of Foster Parent _____
Postal Address _____
- 2.—State how far distant from the residence of the Supervisor - } _____
- 3.—Is the Foster Mother a Communicant of the Church of England? - - - - } _____
- 4.—What is the occupation of the family? - - - - } _____
- 5.—What is the income of the family, and from what sources? - } _____
- 6.—Of whom does the family consist? - - - - } _____
- 7.—Number of children in charge of, or belonging to, and living in the family? - - - - } _____
- 8.—How many rooms in the house? _____
- 9.—Are there any lodgers? - - _____
- 10.—What provisions will be made for sleeping of Child, as to bed and room? - - - - } _____
- 11.—Name and distance of proposed Day and Sunday Schools - } _____
- 12.—What payment per week will be required? 5s. a week is the maximum sum allowed; see Regulations - - - - } _____
- 13.—Whether boys or girls? - - _____
- Signature of proposed Supervisor _____
Postal Address _____
Nearest Railway Station _____
- Report on above Application by Incumbent of Parish. | Report on above Application by Lady Referee.

REGULATIONS to be observed in Boarding out Children.

1. Children shall not, save in special cases, be boarded with relations or with persons in receipt of relief out of the poor rates.
2. Children shall not, as a rule, be boarded out at a later age than seven years, and in no case at a later age than 10 years.
3. Children shall not be boarded out in any house where the father is employed in night work; and in every case the foster parents should be by preference persons engaged in out-door, not in sedentary labour.
4. Not more than two children, save only in the case of brothers and sisters, shall be boarded out in the same house at the same time; and in no case shall the number of children boarded out in the same house exceed four.
5. In no case shall a child be boarded out with foster-parents who are not members of the Church of England.
6. Before receiving any child to be boarded out with them, the foster-parent shall sign an undertaking in duplicate, which shall, in addition to any other matter which may be agreed upon, contain an engagement on the part of the foster-parents, that, in consideration of their receiving a certain sum per week, they will bring up the child as one of their own children, and provide it with proper food, lodging, and washing, and endeavour to train it in habits of truthfulness, obedience, personal cleanliness, and industry as well as in suitable domestic and out-door work; that they will take care that the child shall attend duly at church, and shall, while boarded out, between the ages of 4 and 12 years, attend a school, unless prevented by sickness or other urgent cause, during all the usual hours; for instruction thereat; that they will provide for the proper repair and renewal of the child's clothing and that, in case of the child's illness, they will report it to the lady or gentleman under whom the child is boarded out; and that they will at all times permit the child to be visited by any person acting on behalf of the Executive Committee.
7. On the delivery of the child to the foster-parents or foster parent, an acknowledgment shall be given in the form provided for the purpose.
8. In no case shall the weekly sum to be paid to the foster-parents for the maintenance of a child inclusive of lodging, clothing, school pence, and fees for medical attendance, exceed five shillings.
9. No child shall be boarded out in a home distant more than a mile and a half from a Church school.
10. In choosing the home, especial attention should be paid to decent accommodation and the proper separation of the sexes in the sleeping-rooms. Children over seven years of age should never be allowed to sleep in the same room with married couples. It is compulsory that each child should sleep in a separate bed.
11. No child shall be boarded out in a house where sleeping accommodation is afforded to an adult lodger.
12. Great care should always be given to providing the children good ordinary clothing.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND CENTRAL SOCIETY for providing Homes for Waifs and Strays.

Means adopted:—(1) Boarding out in Families; (2) Establishing Small Homes; (3) Emigration.

Offices:—32, Charing Cross, S.W.

Hon. Secretary:—E. de M. Rudolf, Esq.

Assistant Hon. Secretary:—R. de M. Rudolf, Esq.

Clerical Deputation Secretaries:—Rev. H. D. Barrett, B.A.; Rev. J. Goddard, M.A.; Rev. J. Grosvenor Monro, M.A.

FORM of Undertaking by the Foster-Parent.

"I,* _____ of _____ * Name and address.
foster parent, do hereby engage, in consideration of receiving the sum of † _____ † Sum.
per week, to bring up ‡ _____ as one of my own ‡ Name of Child.
children, and to provide _____ with proper food, lodging, and washing, and for the
proper repair and renewal of clothing, and to endeavour to train _____ in habits of
(0.95.) D D truthfulness,

§ Name of Child.

truthfulness, obedience, personal cleanliness, and industry, as well as in suitable domestic and out-door work; to take care that the said child § _____ shall attend duly at church, and shall, while boarded out between the ages of 4 and 12 years, attend Day and Sunday schools, unless prevented by sickness or other urgent cause, during all the usual hours for instruction thereat: in the case of the illness of the

|| Name and address of Supervisor.

said child to report it to || _____ and at all times to permit the said child to be visited by any person specially appointed for that purpose by the Executive Committee.

Signature _____

Address _____

Witness _____

Name _____

Address _____

Date _____

I _____

of _____

hereby acknowledge that I have this day received _____

aged _____ years from the Church of England Central Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays, on the terms and conditions contained in the annexed Rules.

Dated this _____ day of _____

Signed _____

Witness _____

Address of Witness _____

CHURCH OF ENGLAND INCORPORATED SOCIETY for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays.

(Means adopted:—(1) Boarding out in Families; (2) Establishing Small Homes; (3) Emigration.)

Patron:—Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.

Patronesses:—

H.R.H. The Princess Christian.	H.R.H. The Duchess of Albany.
H.R.H. The Duchess of Connaught.	H.R.H. The Duchess of York.

H.R.H. The Duchess of Teck.

Presidents:—

His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.
His Grace the Lord Archbishop of York.

Chairman of the Executive Committee:—The Lord Bishop of Wakefield.

Vice-Chairman:—The Lord Bishop of Bedford.

Deputy Chairman:—Lieut. General R. W. Lowry, C.B.

Secretary:—E. De M. Rudolf, Esq.

Hon. Assistant Secretary:—R. De M. Rudolf, Esq.

Secretary's Assistant:—H. M. Fowle, Esq.

Over 2,250 Children now under the Care of the Society.

Head Offices:—Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W.

Dear _____

WITH reference to your application, I beg to state that the Church of England Incorporated Society for providing Homes for Waifs and Strays is constantly asked to take the illegitimate child of a domestic servant, who will pay a certain amount out of her wages towards its support. Certainly as regards the child, and frequently as regards the mother, pity would suggest that the case should be accepted. But the voices of justice and prudence must be heard as well as that of mercy, and, therefore, the executive having thoroughly discussed the question in all its bearings, determined that such cases should only be taken on a guarantee, given by some person not the mother of the child, that 4s. a week would be paid, and that the child should be taken back if this payment ceased. The obvious danger of offering a premium to sin, by making it easy for parents to get rid of their children, must be faced and prevented, and experience shewed that when a child was taken, promises of payment were broken, and the mother not frequently disappeared when she had "got rid" of her child, and even a second illegitimate child would most probably appear when it had been found that the burden of the first had been without much difficulty transferred to others. Such failure of payment or desertion by the mother often entailed on the Society the support of a child for 12 years or more, and from an economical as well as from a moral point of view such cases must be received with great caution. The payment desired is, of course, less than that for which either the society or the mother can place it out satisfactorily, but here "mercy rejoices against judgment," and we are not unmindful of the difficulty which attends the path of one who has a character to regain and the duty of a mother to fulfil. Though it is usually almost impossible to cause a father to pay for his child, the society recommends that in every case affiliation should be attempted. Such legal proceedings may be taken before the birth of a child, and must not be delayed later than a year after its birth. No heed should be paid to the promises of the father; and the reluctance of the mother to give evidence should be overcome in the true interests of her child and herself.

Yours faithfully,

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the CHURCH OF ENGLAND CENTRAL SOCIETY
for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays.

Dr. to (Name) _____

(Address) _____

For maintenance of _____ aged _____

for 13 weeks from _____ to _____

boarded out with _____

at _____ per week - £. _____

Received the above amount,

(Name) _____

(Date) _____

Certificate to be signed by the Supervisor of the Child, or some responsible person on his or her behalf.

I certify from my personal knowledge that the above-mentioned child has been properly fed and clothed, that it attends regularly day and Sunday school and that its health is _____

(Name) _____

(Address) _____

(Date) _____

Note.—This Claim, when duly filled up, should be forwarded four times a year to E. De M. Rudolf, Esq., Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, London, S.W., two weeks previously to the date when the payment shall become due. Should payment be required in advance, it can only be for one month at a time.

No child shall be removed from a foster parent without notice being given to the secretary.

APPENDIX H.

PAPER handed in by Dr. TATHAM, 5 May 18

BIRTHS.—ENGLAND AND WALES.

1845—1894.

Y E A R.	Total Births.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Children Born out of Wedlock to every 100 Births.
1845	548,521	505,280	38,241	7.0
1846	572,625	534,096	38,529	6.7
1847	539,965	503,840	36,125	6.7
1848	563,059	526,312	36,747	6.5
1849	578,159	538,825	39,334	6.8
1850	593,422	553,116	40,306	6.8
1851	615,865	573,865	42,000	6.8
1852	624,012	581,530	42,482	6.8
1853	612,301	572,628	39,763	6.5
1854	634,405	593,664	40,741	6.4
1855	635,043	594,260	40,783	6.4
1856	657,453	614,802	42,651	6.5
1857	663,071	620,060	43,002	6.5
1858	655,481	612,176	43,305	6.6
1859	689,881	645,130	44,751	6.5
1860	684,048	640,355	43,693	6.4
1861	696,406	652,249	44,157	6.3
1862	712,684	667,462	45,222	6.3
1863	727,417	680,276	47,141	6.5
1864	740,275	692,827	47,448	6.4
1865	748,069	701,484	46,585	6.2
1866	753,870	708,369	45,501	6.0
1867	768,340	723,163	45,186	5.9
1868	786,858	740,520	46,338	5.9
1869	773,381	728,690	44,691	5.8
1870	792,787	748,050	44,737	5.6
1871	797,428	752,653	44,775	5.6
1872	825,907	781,141	44,766	5.4
1873	829,778	786,617	43,161	5.2
1874	854,956	811,853	43,103	5.0
1875	850,607	809,794	40,813	4.8
1876	887,968	846,374	41,594	4.7
1877	888,200	846,045	42,155	4.7
1878	891,906	849,806	42,100	4.7
1879	880,389	838,200	42,189	4.8
1880	881,643	839,101	42,542	4.8
1881	883,642	840,522	43,120	4.9
1882	889,014	845,859	43,155	4.9
1883	890,722	848,076	42,646	4.8
1884	906,750	864,084	42,667	4.7
1885	894,270	851,477	42,793	4.8
1886	903,760	860,922	42,838	4.7
1887	886,331	844,197	42,134	4.8
1888	879,868	839,138	40,730	4.6
1889	885,944	845,317	40,627	4.6
1890	869,937	831,525	38,412	4.4
1891	914,157	875,376	38,781	4.2
1892	897,957	860,376	37,581	4.2
1893	914,572	875,684	38,888	4.2
1894	890,289	851,946	38,343	4.3

MORTALITY of LEGITIMATE and ILLEGITIMATE INFANTS in the City of Glasgow (1873-75), and in the City of Manchester (1891-94).

CITIES.	Legitimate Infants.		Illegitimate Infants.		Deaths	
	Births.	Deaths under One Year.	Births.	Deaths under One Year.	Of Legitimate Infants to 1,000 Legitimate Births.	Of Illegitimate Infants to 1,000 Illegitimate Births.
Glasgow, 1873-75	56,698	8,613	5,288	1,509	152	286
Manchester, 1891-94	65,446	11,371	2,807	1,099	174	392

UNCERTIFIED DEATHS in LONDON in 1882-3-4.

A G E S.	Total Uncertified Deaths.	Medical Attendant refused Certificate.		Attended by			No Medical Attendance.
		Altogether.	Made Informal Statement.	Unregistered Assistant.	Unregistered Practitioner.	Midwife.	
Under 1	1,580	19	109	186	185	414	667
1-5	495	13	38	38	100	-	249
5-60	546	20	43	24	78	1	380
60 and upwards	456	14	25	10	37	-	370
All Ages	3,020	66	215	258	400	415	1,666

APPENDIX I.

PAPER handed in by Dr. TATHAM, 7 May 1896.

MORTALITY of Legitimate and Illegitimate Infants in the Borough of Salford (1877-94).

BOROUGH.	Legitimate Infants.		Illegitimate Infants.		Deaths.	
	Births.	Deaths under One Year.	Births.	Deaths under One Year.	Of Legitimate Infants to 1,000 Legitimate Births.	Of Illegitimate Infants to 1,000 Illegitimate Births.
Salford, 1877-94	121,816	21,366	5,372	1,993	175	371

APPENDIX K.

PAPER handed in by Mrs. HARDIE, 15 May 1896.

District.	No.
ANCOATS - - - - -	10

Address, 1, J— street.
 How long ill? From birth.
 Householder, Daughter of.
 Father alive. Mother dead.
 Nursed by grandmother.
 Neglected or not? Not.
 Fed on cows' milk in bottle.
 House. Through—clean.
 Rooms in building: 2 up, 2 down.
 Rooms occupied by sick family: 2 bed r., 2 living r.
 Occupants (ages): f. 66, m. 30, m. 6, f. 4, m. 1½ yrs.; m. 4 weeks.
 Others in sick room (number): 4
 Vaccination. No.
 San. con. of premises, see p. of Report Book.
 Buried by family.
 Registered by Mr. W—, Dist. Visitor.
 Was inf. feeding leaflet given? Yes.
 Did visitor leave one? Yes.

Disease.	Age.	Hospital.
Marasmus - - - - -	1 month.	—

Under 1 year of Age.

Reg. No. 185. Date of death, 6th May.
 Place of death, 1, J— street.
 Name, D. S. V—. Sex, F. Age, 1 month.
 Rank, daughter of a general labourer.
 Prev. residence, 1, J— street.
 Reg. C. of D., Debility from birth.
 Week ending 9th May 1896.

Visited Thursday, 27th February 1896. M. C—, Health Visitor for No. 3, Hulme District.

Address.	Name of Tenant.	How long Here?	First Visit or not?	Number of Rooms in House.	Number of Inmates in House.	CONDITION OF HOUSE.			Remarks as to Sickness, Overcrowding, &c.
						Dilapidated (Yes or No?).	Dirty (Yes or No?).	Improved since last Visit (Yes or No?).	
No. 57, S—street	B—	5 yrs.	Not	4	8	No	No	Yes	Mother is ill with bronchitis.
No. 30, "	H—	2 yrs.	Not	5	11	No	No	No	Two children very ill here with inflammation of the lungs.
No. 32, "	M—	5 yrs.	Not	5	7	No	No	Yes	
No. 34, "	A—	5 yrs.	Not	5	5	No	No	Yes	A little baby who lodges with its mother in this house is very much neglected.
No. 44, "	S—	16 yrs.	Not	4	3	No	No	Yes	
No. 37, A—street	R—	2 yrs.	Not	4	3	No	No	Yes	
No. 39, "	M—	2 yrs.	Not	4	11	No	Yes	No	

N.B.—The Medical Officer of Health wishes to receive this form by first post, whether it contains one entry or several.

(0.95.)

D D 4

Visited Wednesday, 18th March 1896.

M. C.—, Health Visitor for No. 3, Hulme District.

Address.	Name of Tenant.	How long Here?	First Visit or not?	Number of Rooms in House.	Number of Inmates in House.	CONDITION OF HOUSE.			Remarks as to Sickness, Overcrowding, &c.
						Dilapidated (Yes or No?).	Dirty (Yes or No?).	Improved since last Visit (Yes or No?).	
No. 15, P— bldgs.	B—	6 yrs.	Not	4	9	No -	No -	Yes -	A young man ill here; bronchitis and other complaints.
No. 13, "	F—	3 yrs.	Not	4	7	No -	No -	Yes -	Mother very ill with bronchitis.
No. 11, "	K—	2 yrs.	Not	4	8	No -	No -	No.	—
No. 16, "	B—	4 yrs.	Not	4	6	No -	No -	Yes.	—
No. 14, "	C—	1 yr.	Not	4	7	No -	No -	Yes -	A boy is ill here.
No. 12, "	T—	4 yrs.	Not	4	8	No -	No -	Yes -	A baby 3 weeks' old is suckled by its mother.
No. 10, "	A—	2 yrs.	Not	4	8	No -	No -	No.	—

N.B.—The Medical Officer of Health wishes to receive this form by first post, whether it contains one entry or several.

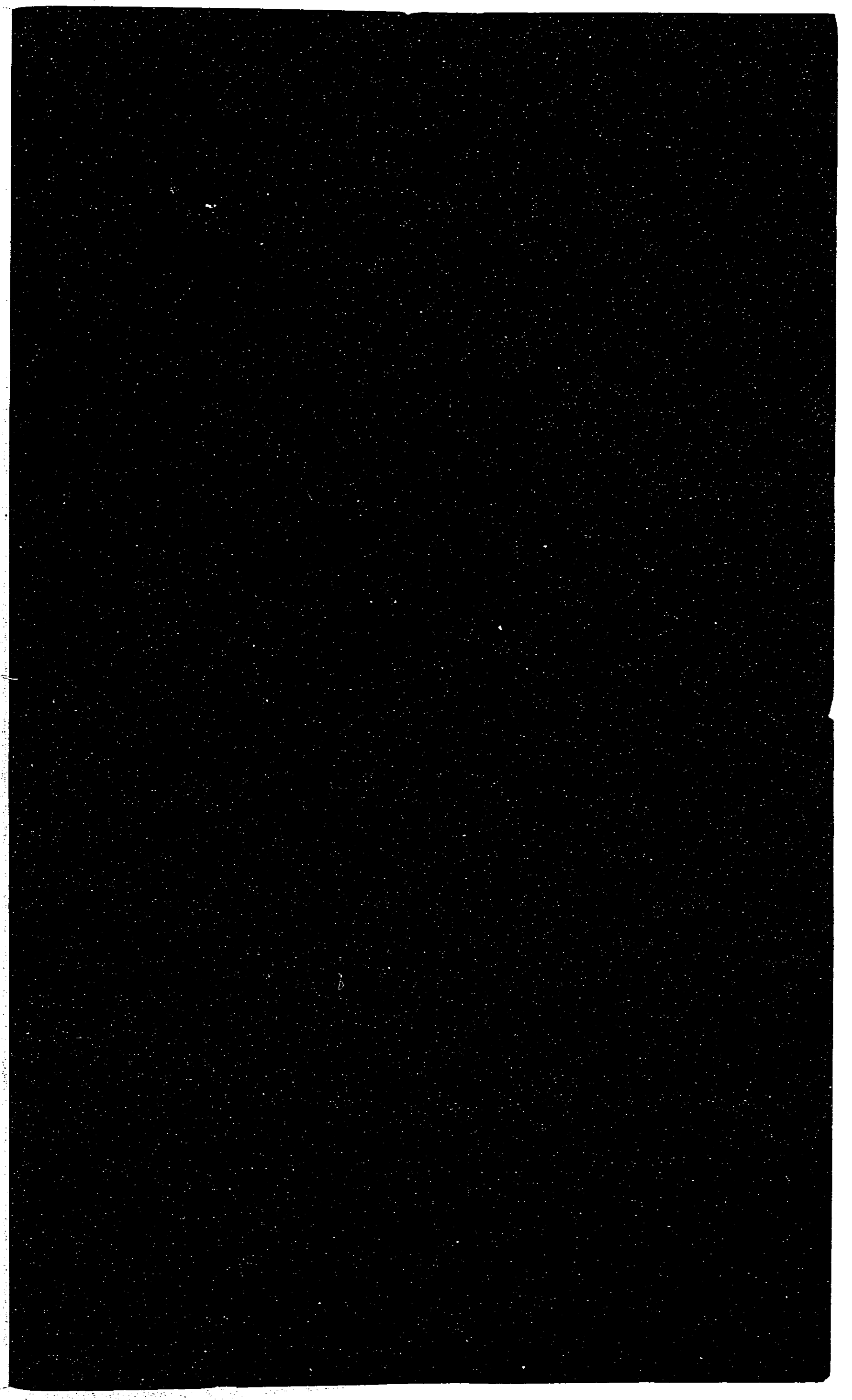
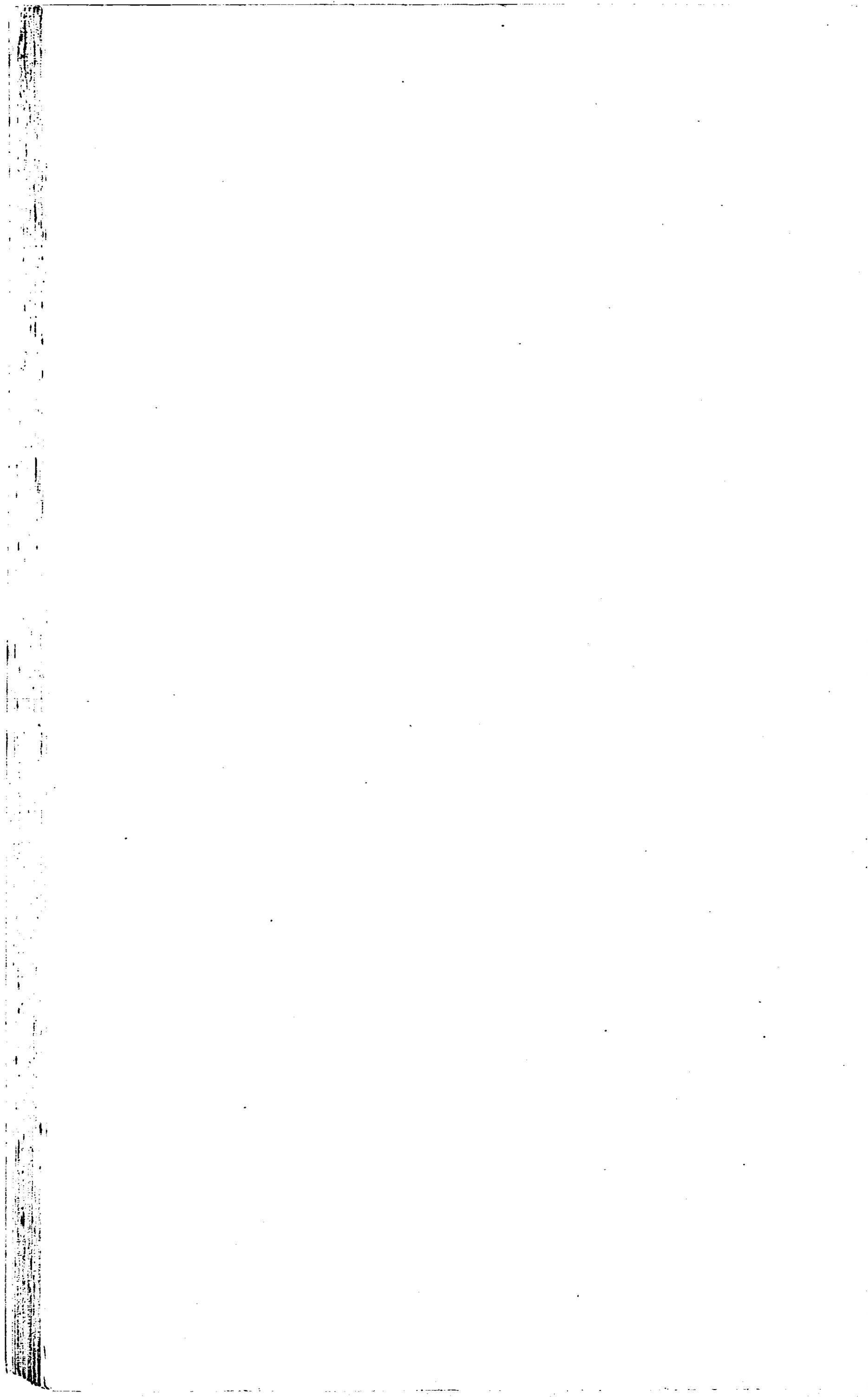
Special Reports, if any.

Reported a case to the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The mother is hardly ever sober. She has a baby eight months' old which is shamefully neglected. Her husband is a jewel-case maker, and she receives in all 27. every week, and the children nor herself has changes, and I don't think they have a blanket in the house. Visited Mrs. ——. Washed her and made her bed, allowed her a syphon of soda-water and some milk.

LADIES' HEALTH SOCIETY.

Bye-laws and Suggestions for the Guidance of the Lady Superintendents.— Passed, 7th March 1894.

- 1.—THE sale of soap in the districts shall be conducted on ready-money principles, the lady superintendents alone ordering and paying for the same. The health visitor shall render her superintendent an account weekly of soap sold, and if she has given any away shall state the names of the recipients and the weight given.
- 2.—The lady superintendent shall present an account at the monthly meeting of the soap received from the Corporation and the profits derived from the sale thereof, and the way in which they are expended.
- 3.—The Manchester lady superintendents shall return the health visitors' reports regularly every quarter to the medical officer of health.
- 4.—In order to preserve the energies of our health visitors in a state to do justice to our work, they are required, when on full time, to engage in no fatiguing employment, such as midwifery, sick-nursing, &c.
- 5.—It is strongly advised that the health visitors' hours for visiting be from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., or from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., the morning hours to be specially observed. It is also recommended that the morning hours be devoted to house-to-house visitation, so as to avoid missing any part of the district, and the afternoon hours to cases specially reported, sick visits, &c.
- 6.—For the guidance of the lady superintendents, the minimum number of house-to-house visits to be recorded for the medical officers of health is fixed at 12 per day, allowing 240 working days a year.
- 7.—The health visitors shall have as holidays a fortnight annually, as well as Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, the four Bank Holidays, and two other days at Whitsuntide.
- 8.—Children's holiday forms should be taken out by lady superintendents in their own names and signed by them, not by the health visitors.
- 9.—Any lady superintendent in doubt as to her course in exceptional circumstances should take the advice of the Committee before deciding.
- 10.—Lady superintendents not being able to attend the Committee should notify the same to the secretary.
- 11.—It is advised that a supply of ventilating boards be kept by the lady superintendents and their use urged as much as possible.
- 10.—In case of change of address of either lady superintendent or health visitor, the lady superintendent is responsible for communicating it to the secretary at once.



Brought from the Lords, 10 August 1896.

R E P O R T.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.]
AND
SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL
[H.L.]

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,

11 August 1896

LONDON:
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BY EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE,
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AND
SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL
[H.L.]

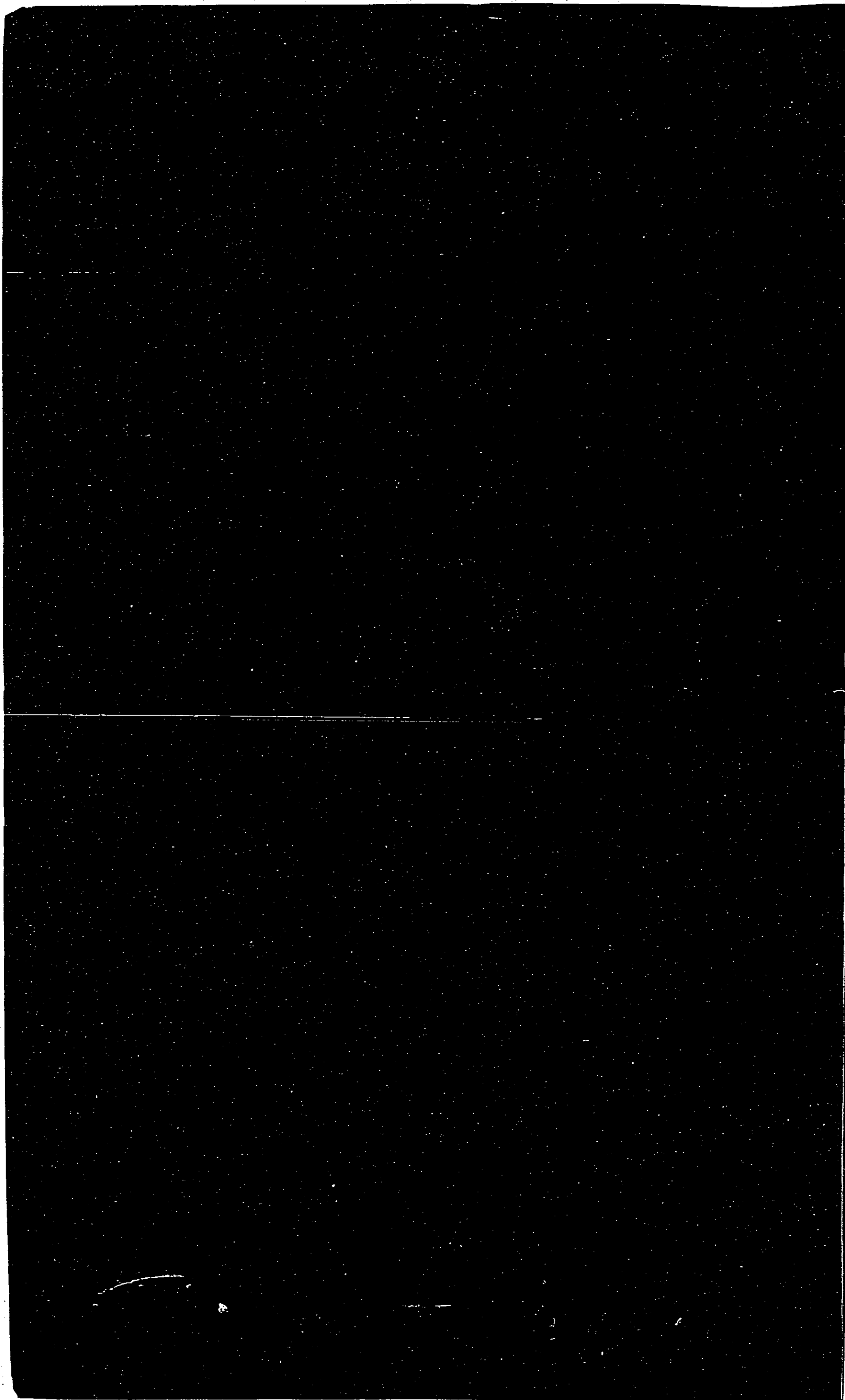
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R E P O R T

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

ON THE

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.]

AND

SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL [H.L.];

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

AND

AN APPENDIX.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
11 August 1896.*

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REPORT - - - - -	p. iii
PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE - - - - -	p. iv
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE - - - - -	p. 1
APPENDIX - - - - -	p. 187

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R E P O R T.

BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to consider the INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.], and the SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL [H.L.], and to Report to the House.

ORDERED TO REPORT,

THAT the Committee have met, and have considered the said Bills, and examined Witnesses, and have ordered the Infant Life Protection Bill [H.L.] to be reported to your Lordships, with amendments.

That they have incorporated in the said Bill certain of the provisions of the Safety of Nurse Children Bill [H.L.].

That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Safety of Nurse Children Bill [H.L.].

And the Committee have directed the Minutes of Proceedings, together with the Evidence and an Appendix, to be laid before your Lordships.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Die Lunæ, 9° Martii, 1896.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to Order), and referred to a Select Committee.

Die Jovis, 19° Martii, 1896.

The Lords following were named of the Committee :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Kinnaird.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Reay.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	Lord Thring.
Lord Belper.	

The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

Die Martis, 24° Martii, 1896.

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to Members of the Committee, and to such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order.

Die Jovis, 23° Aprilis, 1896.

The Lord Reay discharged from serving on the Select Committee, and the Earl of Buckinghamshire added to the Committee in his place.

Die Lunæ, 4° Maii, 1896.

SAFETY OF NURSE CHILDREN BILL [H.L.].

Read 2^a (according to Order), and referred to the same Select Committee to which the Infant Life Protection Bill [H.L.] stands referred.

LORDS PRESENT, AND THE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT EACH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE.

Die Martis, 24° Martii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Reay.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Belper.	

The Order of Reference is read.

It is moved, That the Earl of Denbigh do take the Chair.

The same is agreed to.

The course of Proceeding is considered.

It is moved that the Committee be an open one.

The same is agreed to.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Friday, the 24th of April, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 24° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaird.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of the 24th of March last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Mr. *Alfred Spencer* and Mr. *C. Luzmoore Drew*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Monday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Lunæ, 27° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaird.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Friday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Mr. *Alfred Spencer* (re-called), Mr. *Samuel Babey*, and Mr. *A. Braxton Hicks*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 30^o Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Bishop of Winchester.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Belper.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Monday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Mr. *Braxton Hicks* (re-called), Mr. *E. De M. Rudolf*, and Miss *Isabel G. Smith*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 5^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaid.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Thursday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Dr. *John F. W. Tatham*, M.D., Mr. *William Crooks*, Mr. *Wynne Edwin Baxter*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 7^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaid.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Tuesday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Rev. *Benjamin Waugh*, Dr. *John F. W. Tatham*, M.D. (re-called), Dr. *Thomas John Barnardo*, F.R.C.S.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 12^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Bishop of Winchester.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Belper.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Kinnaid.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Thursday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Dr. *Hugh Percy Dunn*, F.R.C.S., Deaconess *Gilmore*, Miss *Mason*, and Mrs. *Crowder*.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Friday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 15^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Bishop of Winchester.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaid.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Tuesday last are read.

The following Witnesses are called in, and examined, viz. :—Mrs. *Hardie*, Mrs. *Bostock*, Dr. *John F. W. Tatham* (re-called), Mrs. *Wethered*, Miss *Steer*, and Mr. *Alfred Spencer* (re-called).

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Friday, the 19th of June, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 19^o Junii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Bishop of Winchester.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Belper.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Friday the 15th of May are read.

The following Witness is called in, and examined, viz. : Mrs. *Abrahams*.

The course of Proceeding is considered.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 25^o Junii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.	Lord Belper.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.	Lord Kinnaid.
Viscount Llandaff.	Lord Thring.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.	

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Friday last are read.

The course of Proceeding is considered.

Ordered, That the Committee be adjourned till Tuesday, the 7th of July, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 7^o Julii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT :

Earl of Denbigh.
Earl of Buckinghamshire.
Viscount Llandaff.
Lord Bishop of Winchester.

Lord Belper.
Lord Kinnaird.
Lord Thring.

The EARL OF DENBIGH in the Chair.

The Order of Adjournment is read.

The Proceedings of Thursday the 25th of June are read.

It is moved that the Infant Life Protection Bill [H.L.] be considered.

The same is agreed to.

The Title is read and postponed.

The Preamble is read and postponed.

Clause 1 is read, and agreed to, with an Amendment.

The remaining Clauses of the Bill are read, and disagreed to.

The following new Clauses and a Schedule are read, and inserted in the Bill :—

"2—(1.) Any person retaining or receiving for hire or reward in that behalf more than one infant under the age of five years for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents for a longer period than 48 hours, shall within 48 hours give notice thereof to the local authority.

"(2.) Such notice shall truly state the name, age, and sex of such infants, the name and address of the person receiving the infants, and the name and address of the person or persons from whom the infants have been received.

"(3.) If any such infant is removed from the care of the person who has received the infant for the purpose aforesaid, such person shall forthwith give to the local authority notice of the removal, and of the name and address of the person to whose care the infant has been transferred.

"(4.) If any person who has retained or received any infant as aforesaid omits to give the said notices, or any of them, or knowingly or wilfully makes or causes or procures any other person to make any false statement in any such notice, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

"3.—(1.) It shall be the duty of every local authority to provide for the execution of this Act within its district, and for that purpose it may appoint female inspectors and may appoint or authorise in writing other suitable persons to execute the provisions of this Act, subject to such terms and conditions as may be stated in such appointment or authorisation.

"(2.) Any local authority may combine with any other local authority for the purpose of executing the provisions of this Act, and for defraying the expenses of such execution.

"(3.) Any inspector or other person duly appointed and authorised in writing by or on behalf of the local authority may inspect any infants referred to in any notice given under this Act, and the premises in which they are retained or received in order to satisfy himself as to the proper maintenance of such infants or to give any necessary advice or directions as to such maintenance.

"(4.) If any person retaining or receiving such infants refuses to allow any such inspector or other person to inspect such infants or the premises in which they are retained or received, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

"(5.) If any such inspector or other person is refused admittance to any premises in contravention of this Act, or has reason to believe that any infants under the age of five years are being kept in any house or premises in contravention of this Act, he may apply to any justice of the peace, who, on being satisfied that there is reasonable ground for believing that an offence against this Act has been committed, may grant a warrant authorising such inspector or other person to enter the house or premises for the purpose of inspection or of ascertaining whether any offence against this Act has been committed, and if the occupier of the house or premises or other person obstruct any inspector or other person acting in pursuance of such warrant, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

"4.—It shall be the duty of the local authority to give public notice of the provisions of this Act by the publication of an abstract thereof, or otherwise as a Secretary of State may direct.

"5.—(1.) Should

"5.—(1.) Should any infant, in respect of which notice is required to be given under this Act,— Removal of infant improperly kept.

"(a) be kept in any house or premises which are so unfit as to endanger its health; or

"(b) be retained or received by any person who, by reason of negligence, ignorance, or other cause, is so unfit to have its care and maintenance as to endanger its health;

any inspector or other person appointed for the purposes of this Act may apply to the local authority for an order in writing directing him to remove such infant to a workhouse or place of safety until it can be restored to its relatives or guardians or be otherwise lawfully disposed of.

"(2.) Any person refusing to comply with an order under this section upon the same being produced and read over to him, or obstructing the inspector or other authorised person in the execution thereof, shall be guilty of an offence under this Act, and the inspector may apply to any justice of the peace for an order directing the removal of the child, and such order may be enforced by any police constable.

"(3.) The master of any workhouse shall receive into the workhouse any child brought there under such order, and such child shall be maintained in the workhouse until it can be otherwise disposed of.

"6. In case of the death of any infant respecting whom notice is required under this Act, the person having the care of such infant shall, within 24 hours of such death cause notice thereof to be given to the coroner of the district within which the body of such infant lies, and the coroner shall hold an inquest thereon unless a certificate under the hand of a registered medical practitioner shall be produced to him certifying that such registered medical practitioner has personally attended or examined such infant, and specifying the cause of its death, and the coroner shall be satisfied by such certificate that there is no ground for holding such inquest. If the person having the care of such infant shall neglect to give the notice in this section mentioned he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act. Notice to coroner.

"7. Every person guilty of an offence under this Act shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.*, or to imprisonment for not more than six months, as a court of summary jurisdiction may award. Penalties.

"8. All expenses incurred by or on behalf of the local authority in and about the execution of this Act shall be defrayed out of the local rate. Expenses.

"9. Any offence under this Act may be prosecuted before a court of summary jurisdiction in manner provided by the Summary Jurisdiction Acts. Prosecution of offences.

"10. Any monies arising from penalties under this Act shall, notwithstanding any provision in any other Act, be paid to the local authority, and be applied to the purposes to which the local rate is applicable. Application of fines.

"11. Every notice by this Act required to be given to the local authority, shall be in writing, and shall be sent by post as a registered letter to the clerk of the local authority, or to such other person as the local authority may appoint, or be delivered at the office of the local authority. Notices.

"12. The provisions of this Act shall not extend to the relatives or guardians of any infant by them retained or received as aforesaid; or to any person receiving any infant for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infant under the provisions of any Act for the relief of the poor or of any order of the Local Government Board made under such Act; or to hospitals, convalescent homes or institutions established for the protection and care of infants and conducted in good faith for religious or charitable purposes. Exemptions.

"13. The terms "local rate," "local jurisdiction," and "local authority," mean in reference to the districts mentioned in the first column of the Schedule to this Act, the rate, jurisdiction, and authority mentioned in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th columns of the said Schedule, and such Schedule shall be deemed to be part of this Act. The term "place of safety" shall mean any suitable place, the occupier of which is willing temporarily to receive such infant. The term "relatives" shall mean and include the parents, grandparents, and uncles, and aunts by consanguinity or affinity of the infant retained or received as aforesaid, and in the case of illegitimate infants the persons who would be so related if the infant were legitimate. Definition.

"14. This Act in its application to Scotland shall be subject to the following provision, the sheriff shall be substituted for a justice of the peace, the procurator fiscal shall be substituted for the coroner, and an inquiry by him into the cause of death for an inquest, and poorhouse shall be substituted for workhouse. Application to Scotland.

"15. The Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, shall be repealed from the date of the commencement of this Act. Repeal.

"16. This Act shall commence on the first day of January One thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven. Commencement of Act.

THE SCHEDULE referred to in the foregoing ACT.

ENGLAND and WALES.

DISTRICT.	Local Rate.	Local Jurisdiction.	Local Authority.
County of London -	Rate or fund applicable to the payment of the general expenses of the Council.	Area of the County of London (except the City of London).	London County Council.
City of London - -	Consolidated Sewers Rate -	Area of the City of London and the liberties thereof.	Common Council.
Boroughs - - -	The borough fund or borough rate.	Area of borough.	Council.
Other Places - -	The district rate - - -	District of the District Council.	The District Council.

SCOTLAND.

DISTRICT.	Local Rate.	Local Jurisdiction.	Local Authority.
Counties - - - -	The county general assessment.	Area subject to the county general assessment.	Justice of Peace.
Burghs, Royal or Parliamentary, not subject to the separate jurisdiction of police commissioners or trustees.	The revenue or common good of the burgh or any rate leviable by the town council.	Area of the burgh -	Town Council.
Burghs and places where police commissioners or trustees exercise the functions of police commissioners or trustees under any general or local Act.	Any rate leviable by the commissioners or trustees, or any fund belonging to them.	Area within the boundaries of the burgh or place as defined under the general or local Act.	The commissioners or trustees.

IRELAND.

DISTRICT.	Local Rate.	Local Jurisdiction.	Local Authority.
Towns corporate - - - -	The borough rate or borough fund.	Area of borough -	Town Council.
Towns having commissioners appointed by virtue of an Act made in the ninth year of the reign of George the Fourth, intituled, "An Act to make provision for the lighting, cleansing, and watching of cities and towns corporate and market towns in Ireland in certain cases" - - - -	Any rate leviable by the commissioners - - - -	Area of town - - -	The commissioners.
Towns having town commissioners under the Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854 (17 & 18 Vict. c. 103), or under any other local Act - - - -		Area of town - - -	The commissioners.
Townships having commissioners under local Acts - - - -	- - - -	Area of township -	The commissioners.
Places in Ireland not included in the foregoing descriptions.	The grand jury cess -	Area of petty sessional district in which the place is situate.	The petty sessions for the district in which the place is situate.

The Preamble is again read, and agreed to.

The Title is again read, and agreed to, with an Amendment.

Ordered, That the Lord in the Chair do report the Infant Life Protection Bill [H.L.], with the Amendments, to the House.

It is moved to resolve "That it is not expedient to proceed with the Safety of Nurse Children Bill [H.L.]."

The same is agreed to.

Ordered, That the Lord in the Chair do report accordingly to the House.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

LIST OF WITNESSES.

<i>Die Veneris, 24° Aprilis, 1896.</i>		PAGE
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -		3
Mr. Clifford Luxmoore Drew - - - - -		21
<i>Die Lunæ, 27° Aprilis, 1896.</i>		
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -		29
Mr. Samuel Babey - - - - -		31
Mr. Athelstan Braxton Hicks - - - - -		43
<i>Die Jovis, 30° Aprilis, 1896.</i>		
Mr. Athelstan Braxton Hicks - - - - -		57
Mr. E. De M. Rudolf - - - - -		59
Miss Isabel G. Smith - - - - -		67
<i>Die Martis, 5° Maii, 1896.</i>		
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -		75
Mr. William Crooks - - - - -		83
Mr. Wynne Edwin Baxter - - - - -		89
<i>Die Martis, 7° Maii, 1896.</i>		
The Rev. Benjamin Waugh - - - - -		95
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -		115
Mr. Thomas John Barnardo, F.R.C.S. - - - - -		117
<i>Die Martis, 12° Maii, 1896.</i>		
Mr. Hugh Percy Dunn, F.R.C.S. - - - - -		125
Deaconess Gilmore - - - - -		132
Miss Marian H. Mason - - - - -		138
Mrs. Crowder - - - - -		150
<i>Die Veneris, 15° Maii, 1896.</i>		
Mrs. Hardie - - - - -		155
Mrs. Bostock - - - - -		164
Mr. John F. W. Tatham, M.D. - - - - -		166
Mrs. Wethered - - - - -		167
Miss Steer - - - - -		173
Mr. Alfred Spencer - - - - -		177

Die Veneris, 24° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl DENBIGH.	Lord BELPER.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.	Lord KINNAIRD.
Viscount LLANDAFF.	Lord THRING.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.	

THE EARL DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

MR. ALFRED SPENCER is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

Chairman—continued.

1. WILL you tell us, please, your official position?—I am the chief officer of the Public Control Department of the London County Council.

2. And how is the London County Council concerned in the subject of infant life protection?—The London County Council is the local authority under the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872 for the county of London.

3. And has the administration of the present Act been carried out under your direction since then?—Yes; the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act has been carried out in London in my department and under my direction for the past 18 years, since the year 1878.

4. Will you describe briefly the provisions of the existing Act?—The first section of the existing Act deals, amongst other things, with the local authorities, and the local authorities named in the Act are set out in the First Schedule to the Act. For England the local authorities in counties, except the metropolis and City of London, were the justices in petty sessions; but this jurisdiction has been transferred from the justices to district councils by the Local Government Act of 1894, Section 27, and, therefore, in counties, except London, the local authorities are the district councils. In the metropolis the local authority is defined to be the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that jurisdiction was transferred to the London County Council by the Local Government Act for England and Wales of 1888, Section 40, Sub-section 8. In the City of London the local authority is the Common Council, and in the boroughs the council of the borough is the local authority. In Scotland the local authorities are defined by the Act to be, in the counties, the justices of the peace; in the burghs the town council; and in places where police commissioners or trustees exercise the functions of police commissioners, the local authority are the commissioners or trustees; and in Ireland,

in towns corporate, the town council; in towns having commissioners, the commissioners; and in places not included in the foregoing descriptions, the petty sessions for the district in which the place is situate. Section 2 of the Act provides that "It shall not be lawful for any person to retain or receive for hire or reward in that behalf more than one infant, and in case of twins more than two infants, under the age of one year, for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents for a longer period than twenty-four hours, except in a house which has been registered as herein provided." Section 3 provides that the local authority shall keep a register of all houses registered under the Act, and "shall from time to time make bye-laws for fixing the number of infants who may be received into each house so registered." So that on the registration of a house the local authority has to make in each case a bye-law fixing the number of infants that may be received lawfully into that house.

5. A special bye-law has to be made for each house?—For each registration. "The registration shall remain in force for one year; no fee shall be charged for registration;" that is to say, it remains in force for one year from the date of registration and not for any specified period, as, for instance, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.

6. Has the registration to be renewed at the end of that year?—The registration has to be renewed; it is only operative for one year, and it has to be renewed at the end of that year.

7. And is a separate application required by the person who owns the house for registration; the registration lapses of itself unless an application is made?—The registration, I apprehend, would lapse of itself if an application for its renewal were not made. Probably the local authority would take care that an application was made if the registered person so desired,

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that is to say, before the expiration of the registration, notice of the expiration would be given, and forms of application would be supplied, in order that the registered person might make application for renewal of registration. This course is pursued in London. Then the same section further provides that any person who receives or retains any infant in contravention of the Act shall be guilty of an offence against the Act. Section 4 enables the local authority to refuse to register a house "unless they are satisfied that such house is suitable for the purposes for which it is to be registered, and unless they are satisfied by the production of certificates that the person applying to be registered is of good character, and able to maintain such infants." The Council requires that the applicant shall produce a certificate which states that the applicant is a person "of good character, and able to maintain infants" received for hire or reward, "for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents;" and the certificate is to be signed by a justice of the peace, or by a duly qualified medical practitioner, or by a minister of the Established Church, or of a registered place of worship, and also by two rated householders not relatives of the applicant, and each applicant for registration, in addition to a form of application, is furnished with a form of certificate upon which she can obtain the necessary signatures.

8. Also by two householders, you say?—Also by two rated householders who are not relatives of the applicant. Section 5 provides that "The person registered as aforesaid shall immediately enter in a register to be kept by him the name, sex, and age of each infant under his care, and the date at which, and the names and addresses of the persons from whom, they were received, and shall also enter in the said register the time when, and the names and addresses of the person by whom, every such infant received and retained as aforesaid shall be removed, immediately after the removal of such infant, and shall produce the said register when required to do so by the local authority; and in the event of his refusing so to produce the said register, or neglecting to enter in the register the name, sex, and age of each of the said infants, and the date at which, and the names and addresses of the persons from whom, they were received, and by whom they were removed, respectively, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds. The person registered shall be entitled to receive gratuitously from the local authority a book of forms for the registration of infants; such register may be in the form contained in the Second Schedule to this Act." I produce a copy of the register that is supplied to every person that is registered, in which she has to make the entries of the infants received and taken away, as provided in the Second Schedule of the Act. The form prescribed in that Schedule may be departed from, but in the copy submitted it is adhered to, except as to one column. The schedule requires merely the age to be put in; but we found that that was not sufficiently exact, so that we substituted the date of the birth of the infant. Section 6 provides that "If any

person shall make false representations with a view to being registered under this Act, or shall forge any certificate for the purpose of this Act, or make use of any forged certificate, knowing it to be forged, or shall falsify any register kept in pursuance of this Act, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act." But I do not know of any offence against that section having taken place in London.

9. That of forgery of the certificate, you mean?—Yes, or any offence against the section.

Lord Belper.

10. When you say no offence, you mean there is no case where they have been prosecuted under that section?—Yes, that is what I mean. It may be convenient at this point to state that when a person is registered, in addition to the register, the inspector also provides the person registered with a short and simple abstract of the law relating to houses registered for the keeping of infants, and also with suggestions as to the care of infants at registered houses. These suggestions comprise suggestions as to clothing, air and ventilation, cleanliness and food, and then as to the preparation of food and the regularity of feeding, and the ages at which food of different kinds is suitable for the infant; and it also gives a caution against using soothing medicines and sleeping draughts, and that sort of thing. It really comprises those practical suggestions which our experience in the treatment of infants in registered houses makes us believe to be essential for the welfare of the infants. Section 7 of the Act enables the local authority to strike off the register any person registered, for one of three things. First of all, for "serious neglect;" secondly, for incapacity to provide the infants entrusted to his care with proper food and attention; or, thirdly, if "the house specified in the register has become unfit for the reception of infants." The number so struck off has been 24 in the period I refer to.

Lord Thring.

11. What is the period you refer to?—Eighteen years.

Chairman.

12. You have only in the 18 years struck off 24 for the causes mentioned?—We have struck off 24, not wholly for the causes mentioned. In some cases it has been desirable to strike off the register persons who voluntarily desired to give up the keeping of infants, and who did not desire their names to continue to appear on the register. While they were registered they were liable to inspection, and were anxious in such a case to remove that liability; and we think it is a desirable thing that some power should be inserted in the Bill for dealing with cases of that kind.

Viscount Llandaff.

13. How many have come under that head?—I should think, speaking from memory, perhaps 25 per cent. of them; the remaining number have been struck off for one or other of the causes specified in the section.

14. I think

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

14. I think I gathered from you the other day in private conversation with regard to that matter, that a certain amount of inconvenience has arisen on your not being able to strike people off the register except from default?—That is the case.

Viscount Llandaff.

15. Could you divide the 75 per cent. into the different classes, saying how many were struck off for serious neglect, how many for the unfitness of the house, and so on?—I think that could be done, but I am not prepared at this moment to do it. Then Section 8 provides for the giving notice to the coroner of all deaths that occur in a registered house; the deaths, that is to say, of the infants affected by the registration; and for that purpose we supply all registered persons with forms of notice, which they simply have to fill up, and directions are given what they are to do with them. I put in a copy of that form. Then Section 9 provides for the penalty: It provides that "Every person guilty of an offence under this Act shall be liable to imprisonment for not more than six months, with or without hard labour, or to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.*, as a court of summary jurisdiction may award, and shall, in addition, be liable to have his name and house struck off the register." Sections 10, 11 and 12 deal with matters of administration; and Section 13 deals with the exemptions under the Act. Section 13 provides that "the provisions of this Act shall not extend to the relatives or guardians of any infant retained or received as aforesaid, nor to institutions established for the protection or care of infants, nor to any person receiving any infant for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infant under the provisions of any Act for the relief of the poor." The Act does not include any definition of relatives or guardians or institutions; and some amount of difficulty has been experienced from the absence of those definitions. Those, I think, are all the provisions of the Act to which it may be necessary to direct the attention of the Committee.

Chairman.

16. You have stated that inconvenience has arisen on account of the want of definition of "relatives" and "guardians" in Section 13; you mean by that, I suppose, that cases have arisen where keepers of children have raised difficulties and claimed to be exempted under that clause, and that you have been unable to prove that they were really guardians or really relatives?—There has been some difficulty with regard to those two words on account of not knowing where to draw the line; but the chief difficulty has been experienced with reference to "institutions"—what did or did not constitute an institution; whether, in point of fact, a lady establishing a home for infants and receiving at the same time payment for those infants, but obviously doing it for philanthropic purposes, was or was not within the scope of the Act. The practical rule that has been acted upon in London is, that an "institution" has been regarded as an organised society established for some social or philanthropic object and managed

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

by a committee of at least six persons. That is the practical rule which we have endeavoured to apply in all these cases; and I may say that it has acted fairly well. Wherever there was no committee we have required registration; but where there was a committee we have assumed that it was an "institution" within the meaning of the Act, and therefore exempt.

17. But you have never brought anybody actually before a court of law and had it interpreted by a court?—That has not been necessary; no sufficiently acute case has arisen to make that absolutely necessary.

18. Will you briefly describe the circumstances which led up to the Act of 1872. I do not want you to traverse the whole of the ground, but if you could tell their Lordships briefly the principal points I should like you to do so?—Prior to 1871 a state of things arose which is somewhat paralleled by the existing state of things, that is to say, there occurred cases in London where infants were found dead in the streets by the police in considerable numbers; and in the end a large proportion of them were traced to a particular woman, Margaret Waters, who was tried for their murder and hanged. Considerable public attention was drawn to the matter and a strong feeling arose that led up to the appointment of the Commons Committee which sat in 1871, and which took a large amount of evidence. That Committee embodied the result of their deliberations in a very good Report, which was submitted to the House, and which I may have to refer to from time to time in the course of my evidence.

19. That led up to the Committee of 1871, which took the evidence?—The Committee of 1871.

20. When the Act came into force how many houses were registered in London?—In the year 1872 there were five only; in the following year that number increased to 10; in the year 1874 it decreased to two; in the year 1875 the number was five; in the year 1876 it was six; and in the year 1877 the number registered was five. For all practical purposes I think the Act during those years was hardly operative, or, at any rate, to so slight an extent as to be of no real value to the community.

21. And what steps were at first taken for enforcing the Act in London?—At first the only steps taken were that complaints on matters brought to the attention of the local authority were inquired into, and any applications for registration that were received were dealt with; but at that time no special inspector was appointed, because the Metropolitan Board of Works felt very strongly that the provisions of the Act were too limited to be effective in dealing with the evils aimed at.

22. They appointed no inspector because they did not think the Act was strong enough; they thought it was no use; do you mean that?—They thought it was useless. Their reasons, I think, will come out in a later answer.

23. Did the Metropolitan Board of Works make any representation to the Government upon the subject?—Yes; in the year 1873 they addressed a letter to the Secretary of State, which I will read to the Committee. The letter is dated the 28th of May 1873. "Sir,—

A 3

The

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

The Board is desirous of calling your attention to the operation of the Act passed in 1872, to provide for the better protection of infant life. The circumstances which led to the passing of the Act are probably within your knowledge. It came into operation on the 1st of November 1872, and its purport shortly stated is, to require every person receiving for hire, for the purpose of nursing apart from its parents, more than one child, or in the case of twins more than two children, under the age of one year, to be registered by the local authority. The Board being constituted the local authority to carry out the provisions of the Act within the metropolis (except the City of London) at once took the measures which seemed best calculated to make the requirements of the law known to the persons affected by it. Advertisements were inserted in the newspapers, and printed notices sent to be put up at all the police stations and all the workhouses in the metropolis. It was evident, however, from the very small number of applications made to be registered, either that the provisions of the law remained unknown to the great bulk of the persons to whom it related, or that there was a general indisposition to comply with its requirements. The Board then addressed letters to all the vestries and district boards, and to the boards of guardians, in the metropolis asking them to instruct their various officers, who, in the course of their duties of sanitary or medical inspection or poor relief, might be brought into contact with persons who received children to nurse, to report to the Board any case in which they might find children so kept without the sanction given by the Board's registration, in order that proceedings might be taken to enforce the law. A similar request was made to the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. These measures, however, have produced very inadequate results. The total number of cases brought before the Board since the 1st of November last, the date when the Act came into operation, has been 25. Of these, nine were registered according to the statute, in four cases registration was refused, in seven the parties were found to be exempt from the operation of the Act, in that only one child was being kept apart from its parents; two were institutions, and as such exempted; and the remaining three cases are still under consideration. Looking to the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on this subject in 1871, the Board cannot avoid the conclusion that the number above mentioned bear but a very small proportion to the total number of persons in the metropolis who receive children for hire apart from their parents. At the same time the Board is of opinion that it has done all that it can do in the matter. Feeling, therefore, the responsibility under which it has been placed by the Legislature in being constituted the local authority under the Act, the Board desires to call your attention to the subject, and to express the opinion, based upon the experience above detailed, that some amendment of the law is required to enable this object to be effectually accomplished." That is signed by the Clerk of the Board.

Chairman—continued.

24. What was the result of that letter?—A letter from the Secretary of State, dated the 30th of May 1873, in which the writer says: "Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Bruce to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th instant, calling attention to the operation of the Act passed in 1872 to provide for the better protection of infant life, and stating that in the opinion of the Board some amendment of the law is required to enable its object to be effectually accomplished, and I am to say that Mr. Bruce will be happy to receive any suggestions for the improvement of the Act which the experience of the Board may enable them to offer." The Board thereupon sent a series of practical suggestions for the amendment of the Act, in a letter dated the 25th of June 1873. The suggestions are: "(1.) That the term 'infant,' for the purposes of the Infant Life Protection Act, shall mean and include persons up to seven years of age. (2.) That any child kept for hire or reward beyond the period of 24 hours, as provided in the Act, shall be so kept only in a registered house, as provided in the same Act;" that is to say, that it applies the Act to one child. "(3.) That any police constable finding that any infant kept in a registered house is not provided with proper food and attention shall forthwith apply to any justice of the peace, or police magistrate, for a summons against any person keeping a child and neglecting it, and the justices on hearing the case may make an order that proper food and attention shall be given to any child kept pursuant to the Act. (4.) That the police authorities shall, on all occasions when they can procure any information relative to the keeping of any child for hire in any house not registered, give that information to the local authority. (5.) It is suggested that as persons who act as nurses without registration might claim exemption as relatives or guardians under Section 13, the clause should be considered, and probably the existing exemption repealed, leaving the distinction as to nurses to depend simply on 'hire or reward.' (6.) That clearer authority and facility should be given for obtaining admission by the police or anyone authorised by a local authority to any premises where children are supposed to be kept." The Secretary of State replied to that letter on the 10th of October 1873. I may first add that a further letter was sent on the 8th of October to the Secretary of State, calling attention to a special case, and directing attention to the letter that I have just read. To that this reply was received: "Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Lowe to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, and to acquaint you, in reply, for the information of the Board, that their suggestions which accompanied their letter of the 25th of June last, for the amendment of the Act passed in 1872 for the better protection of infant life, were carefully considered by the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the subject, of which Committee the Under Secretary for the Home Department was a Member. The measure itself is tentative. There is a great risk lest, in order to

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

to prevent occasional crime, regulations should be introduced interfering intolerably with the non-criminal habits of a large class of the community, and especially subjecting the houses of the poor to no small intrusion; any such result would be fatal to the permanence of any legislation on the subject. Accordingly, taking the six suggestions of the Board, Mr. Lowe is not prepared (1) to raise the standard of infancy from one year to seven years; (2) to apply the Act to the nursing of one child; or (3) to transfer the oversight of the registered houses from the local authority to the police; though, doubtless, (4) the police should inform the local authority if they have reason to suspect violations in the law by non-registration. (5) The exemption of relatives was approved by the Select Committee, and Mr. Lowe concurs in their conclusion. (6) The Select Committee thought the present police powers ample, and that any extension of them would provoke opposition. Under these circumstances Mr. Lowe does not propose any alterations in the law on the subject, which has not been yet a year in force."

25. And then, what was the next step taken?—The Board addressed a further communication to the Secretary of State on the 7th February 1877. A great part of that goes over the ground already traversed, and I will not trouble the Committee with it, but the letter concludes, "I am now directed to state that the experience which the Board has since obtained as to the inadequate operation of the Act, which may be instanced by the fact that during the past year the total number of houses registered by the Board has been only six, leads the Board to adhere to the opinion which it formerly expressed, as to the advisability of the amendment of the Act, and in support of that opinion I am directed to point out, with regard to the case of the institution to which reference has already been made, that this is one of the places exempted from the operation of the Act, and over which the Board has consequently no control. Under all the circumstances it appears to the Board that the subject is one which is worthy of serious consideration, and it has therefore felt it to be its duty again to draw attention to the matter." And to that letter the Secretary of State replied in the following November, under date 2nd November 1877: "Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 7th February last, urging for an amendment of the Act for the better protection of infant life, passed in the year 1872, with a view to enabling the object to be more effectually accomplished, I am now directed by Mr. Secretary Cross to inform you that he has fully considered this question, and he is of opinion that ample powers exist for inspection under this Act, and that, before any fresh legislation is thought of, further steps ought to be taken for making the present law known; and Mr. Cross would suggest that such steps be taken by the Metropolitan Board of Works."

26. What was the result of that?—The result of that was, that the Board transferred the administration of the Act to my Department, and under my advice an inspector was appointed solely for carrying out the Act, and instructions were issued to the inspector for his guidance.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

If the Committee will permit me I will read the instructions which were then given, which will show the course that, in the main, has been followed since in carrying out the Act in London.

27. It was in the year 1878, I think?—It was in the year 1878. These instructions are dated the 12th February 1878. "The inspector will, in the first instance, in addition to fully ascertaining the powers of the Board under the Act, make himself acquainted with the state of things the Act is partially intended to remedy, by a careful study of the Report of, and the evidence given before, the Select Committee on the Protection of Infant Life, and the Appendix thereto. That gives, better than anything else, an insight into the causes of the excessive mortality of infants; and it contains information as to the proper treatment of infants, which ought to be of great value to the inspector. It will be desirable that the inspector should note, in a convenient form for reference, any facts, either as to the detection of crime, or as to the treatment of infants, that it is necessary he should be cognisant of. He will also at first carefully examine the advertising columns of certain newspapers, a list of which will be supplied to him, in order to ascertain (1) any private lying-in establishments in the metropolis; and (2) any places where children are taken care of for hire. With the same object he will also obtain lists of all relieving officers, officers of charitable societies, sanitary officers, registrars of births, &c., and all workhouses and police stations in the metropolis. He will then arrange these in groups geographically in such a way that he can call at the places named in each group on the same day, and as frequently as possible. He must use his utmost endeavours to interest the officers in the working of the Act, so that they may give him any information bearing upon the subject coming to their knowledge. To facilitate this, he will leave them addressed envelopes, as well as his official card. On hearing of any lying-in place, he will make quiet inquiries as to what is known in the neighbourhood as to the number of the births, and as to the disposal of the infants. He will ascertain what births have been registered and endeavour to trace the children, if alive, and if dead, to satisfy himself as to the cause of death, either by reference to the registrar of the sub-district, or to the doctor who attended the child. In cases where he succeeds in tracing infants to the keeping by persons for hire, he will ascertain full particulars as to the terms on which they have been received, their present condition and treatment, and of the houses and persons who keep them. The inspector will fully report each day in writing to the Clerk to the Board what he has been engaged in during the day, and report separately as to each case, when such case is ripe enough to be reported on, or when he requires instructions or assistance from the office. As regards the inspection of the premises of persons applying for registration, the inspector will examine and report as to the (1) situation and surroundings of the premises; (2) if the applicant occupies the whole or part of such premises; (3) the number of rooms occupied and the cubical size

A 4

of

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

of each; (4.) the number of persons occupying each room; (5.) as to the fitness of the person applying; (6.) as to the methods of maintenance proposed, and the means of carrying them out. The inspector will frequently visit the premises already registered and satisfy himself that the number of infants is within the number allowed, and also that their condition and the condition of the premises is satisfactory."

28. And what was the result of the active enforcement of the Act?—This result is embodied in a further letter to the Secretary of State, who must have been moved from some other quarter in the direction of an amendment of the Act, as he applied, in a letter dated the 10th of March 1880, for the Board's suggestions "as to the proposed amendment of the Act." I may perhaps be allowed to read the letter of the Metropolitan Board of Works in reply, because it does embody the experience of the Board after the appointment of an inspector up to the year 1880, an experience covering a period of about two years. After recapitulating what had gone before the letter goes on: "Acting on that suggestion" (that is the suggestion of Mr. Secretary Cross to more actively enforce the Act) "the Board has since taken all available means not only for making the law known, but for enforcing it. Notices have been published in most of the daily, weekly, and local metropolitan journals, pointing out the necessity of registration, and information has been sought from the police, the Poor Law relief officers, registrars of deaths, &c., and from other sources. In addition to this, a special inspector has been appointed, and all the advertisements inserted in the public prints by persons taking infants for hire have been answered and the cases investigated, 669 investigations having been made in the two years ended 31st January last. The number of cases in which information was obtained from other sources during the same period was 427, making together 1,096, the total number of investigations made during the two years. As a result of the additional experience gained, the Board is strengthened in the opinion that in its present form the Act does not touch the great majority of cases in which infants are kept for hire in the Metropolis, all of which should, in the Board's opinion, be provided for; that some of the exceptions now made by the Act are undesirable; and that in some minor particulars also the Act requires amendment. Of the 1,096 cases investigated in two years, only 67 cases came within the operation of the Act, that is to say, only in that number of cases were two or more infants under the age of one year kept for hire or reward."

Lord Thring.

29. Will you explain that term "investigations"?—The advertisements which appeared in the public papers asking for children for adoption, or for hire or reward, were replied to by the inspector, and 669 investigations followed; that is to say 669 different inquiries were made.

30. On the advertisements?—On the advertisements. Then, in addition to that, the Board received from other sources information of 427 cases; and all these were investigated. Out

Lord Thring—continued.

of the 1,096 cases dealt with only 67 cases came within the operation of the Act; that is to say, only in that number of cases were two or more infants under the age of one year kept for hire or reward. The letter continues: "Of the persons concerned in these cases, 38 were registered under the Act and the remainder were either prosecuted or compelled to give up nursing some of the infants in their charge. In the remaining cases inquired into (in some of which infants were not kept, but only sought for), 622 infants under five years of age were found to be kept for hire."

31. Those were outside the Act?—They were outside the Act; 622 infants outside the Act were found to be kept for hire, "and there is every reason to believe that the number was much larger."

32. They were not within the Act?—No; the Board was seeking to bring them within the Act. There were 622 infants under five years of age.

33. But under five years of age would include the infants within the Act; you understand that I want the line drawn between the one-year infants and those outside the Act?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

34. Were they outside the Act for various reasons or for any particular reason?—They were outside the Act because, although in some cases under one year of age, only one infant under that age was kept with others over that age, and in other cases because none of the infants were under one year of age, although they were all under five years of age. "These infants were often kept under conditions which, if the cases had been within the operation of the Act, could not have been sanctioned. Either the persons in charge of the infants were old and unfit, the accommodation bad, or the food insufficient and unsuitable. In 89 cases it was found that, in order probably to escape the operation of the Act, only one infant under one year was kept, but that there were others above that age." That, I think, gives the information his Lordship wants as to the proportion not under the Act that were under one year. "From the experience thus gained the Board is satisfied that, if it is desirable to extend the special protection of the law to infants placed out at hire, as provided in the Act, there is little reason why that protection should not be extended to all such infants under five years of age, and whether the number received for hire be one or more. Numerous instances have occurred in which infants entrusted to persons who only receive one at a time have died in quick succession, and there are strong reasons why the taking of one infant for hire should only be permitted under the same supervision as two or more are taken. The Board also consider that some provision should be included making it unlawful to transfer infants for lump sums. At present it frequently occurs that a parent gets rid of all responsibility for an infant by the payment of a few pounds to a person whose interest certainly is antagonistic to the child's welfare. In one of these cases a woman, who had previously been imprisoned for six months at the instance

instance

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

instance of the Board, for improperly keeping infants, 'adopted' an infant 14 days old for the sum of 6*l.*, the parents of the child being entire strangers to her. In such cases it would appear desirable to make the parties to the transaction liable to punishment. The Board also remains of opinion that institutions should not be exempt from the operation of the Act. In three cases during the past year, including the notorious Deptford case, much good would probably have resulted from supervision. The managers of properly regulated public institutions can have little or no objection to registration, and there are other establishments claiming exemption from the Act where official supervision would probably have a wholesome effect. In some minor matters also the Act needs amendment." Then follow the suggestions for the amendment of the Act which, being set out formally, I perhaps need not trouble the Committee with unless they desire it.

Chairman.

35. Then was the Bill of 1890 introduced?—There was further correspondence, which is more or less of the nature of recapitulation. The Board addressed a further letter on the 14th of November 1888, eight years after the other, again urging the amendment of the Act; and on the 8th of December 1888 a letter was received from the Secretary of State which I will read to the Committee; it is dated "Whitehall, 8th December 1888. Sir,—The attention of the Secretary of State having from time to time been drawn to instances of evasions of the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, and various amendments of the law having been proposed by coroners and others interested in the subject, Mr. Matthews is desirous of obtaining any further observations or suggestions with a view to the amendment of the law which the experience of your board among those of other large towns might be able to afford. As an instance of evasion of the law a case has come to his notice where a woman, by means of advertisements under several names, was in the habit of obtaining possession of children under pretext of adopting them herself. On receipt of the premiums she would as soon as possible put the child out to nurse with some person who was willing to take the charge of a single child under the age of 12 months, or she would place it with some person whose house was registered under the Infant Life Protection Act for a weekly payment, or she would answer the advertisement of people who wished to adopt a child, and place it with them at a reduced premium (leaving a margin for profit for herself). Fictitious names and imaginary particulars as to parentage would be given to the various parties receiving the children. The Act would thus be evaded as follows:—1. The main provisions of the Act in Sections 2 and 3 are entirely evaded by the process of distributing the children who are received 'for hire or reward.' 2. The provisions of Section 5 as to the entries to be made in the register when the child is received are evaded by giving false particulars, and in the same way the provisions as to entering (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

the name and address of the person removing the child are evaded either by giving a false name and address, or by giving no name or no address. Section 6 does not apply in these cases, because the particulars are entered by the person receiving the child, and are therefore not false to the knowledge of the person making the entries. To meet these defects in the law the following suggestions for legislation have been made to the Secretary of State, and will be considered by him when he is in possession of further information:—1. The operation of the Act should be extended to infants up to five years of age, and to the keeping for hire of any number of infants. 2. Where two or more adults live together and take infants for hire they should be severally liable. 3. Registered persons should be required to give notice of removal, and upon the discontinuance of their registration to surrender the register kept in compliance with Section 5. 4. I am to request that in laying this letter before the Town Council of . . . you will be so good as to move the council to favour Mr. Matthews with their observations thereon, and with any information as to the working of the Act at . . . that may be likely to be of assistance in the consideration of this question." The letter is signed by "C. Stuart Wortley." In reply to that letter the board did on the following 18th of January make suggestions for the amendment of the Act, which in point of fact are very similar to those I have already put before you.

36. Then with reference to the Bill of 1890, was a Bill introduced into the House of Commons by the Home Secretary?—Probably, as the result of the information that Mr. Secretary Matthews obtained in response to that circular letter, which was sent to the various local authorities in the kingdom, a Bill was prepared by the Home Office, and introduced by Mr. Matthews and Mr. Stuart Wortley in 1890; and the Bill that is now before your Lordships is practically a reprint of Mr. Matthews' Bill of 1890. I may say that there is one addition which deals with the transference of infants, but in the main it is the Bill that was introduced by Mr. Matthews.

Lord Belper.

37. The printed Bill, as introduced?—Yes, as introduced; we shall come to the amendments afterwards.

Chairman.

38. What were the main provisions of the Bill?—The answer to that question is, that the main provisions of the Bill were similar to those of the Bill now before your Lordships.

39. And what became of that Bill?—The Bill was referred to a Select Committee of the House of Commons, of which Mr. Stuart Wortley was the Chairman. Evidence was taken, and the Bill as amended was reported to the House, but for some reason it was not further proceeded with; possibly because it was late in the Session. The Report was presented on the 2nd of August 1890, and it may have been too late in the Session to go on with the Bill; but, as a matter of

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fact,

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

fact, it was not re-introduced at a subsequent date.

40. However, you do not know the reason of that of your own knowledge, of course?—I only know as a matter of fact the date of the presentation of the Report, and that the Bill was not re-introduced. I am unable to give the reasons for it.

41. Will you give the Committee some information as to the defects of the present law?—I hand in a return giving particulars of the number of infants in registered houses in London from 1883 to the present time, and their death rate. The return also indicates the number of infants up to the age of seven years that the inspector found being kept for hire at unregistered premises visited in the course of his investigations; and also the number of deaths, so far as they could be ascertained by inquiry from the persons keeping the infants. The return is divided into two parts, which are quite distinct; one relates to registered houses, and therefore within the scope of the present Act; the other relates to unregistered houses not under the Act.

42. Are you quoting from the return published in your report?—I am quoting from a return which I have specially prepared for this Committee.

43. It is not the same thing?—It is not precisely the same. The return first of all gives the number, in each of the years from 1883 to 31st March of the present year, of registered houses that were actually under registration in each year, and the number which were on the register at the end of each year. I do not know whether the Committee would desire me to go through the numbers, but they vary from about 20 up to about 50 in the various years.

Viscount Llandaff.

44. In what year were the 50?—Perhaps the Committee would like me to take the recent years; shall I take the last five years?

Lord Thring.

45. This is the number of registered houses?—I am now dealing with the number of registered houses. In the year 1891–92 (the official year is from the 1st April to the 31st March) the number registered during the year was only 15, and the number on the register at the end of the year was only 11. In the year 1892–93 the number registered during that year was 21, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 16. In the year 1893–94 the number registered during the year was 22, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 21. In the year 1894–95 the number registered during the year was 50, and the number on the register at the end of the year was 38. And in the year 1895–96, which has just expired, the number registered during the year was 54, and on the register at the end of the year, 41.

Viscount Llandaff.

46. This was under a system under which you could not get off the register. Under the Act as it stands you cannot get off the register?—Not

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

until the expiration of the registration year, unless you are struck off under Section 7. I should explain it in this way. The official year is from a fixed date to a fixed date; but the registration year is not from a fixed date to a fixed date, and in order to give full information to the Committee, I am obliged to give the fact that during a year so many houses were actually registered, although at the end of that year that precise number was not on the register. A few cases are accounted for by being struck off the register for one or other of the reasons provided for in the section, but only a few.

47. Do you mean that a certain number, not quite 13, but a certain number of registered houses had their registration expire before the end of the official year 1895–96?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

48. When you say "registered" you do not mean newly registered; you mean newly registered and renewed?—Some of them would be renewals. At the end of twelve months the registration ceases, and in a legal sense they are new registrations; but in point of fact, they are what your Lordship would understand as renewals; that is to say, houses that had been registered before were re-registered.

49. Like public-houses?—Like public-houses.

Lord Belper.

50. Then, when you give us the figures of 50 or 54, it does not mean all new houses?—No.

Lord Thring.

51. You mean the actual number on the register whether renewed or new?—That is the meaning. Of course, changes are always going on; new houses come on the register and old ones not being renewed, go off; they are continually changing. The registration is only for one year.

Lord Kinnaird.

52. And all go off?—And all go off; and only those are replaced on the register for the ensuing year as to which applications are received. Then, dealing with the number of infants under one year that were found in the registered houses during the 13 years which the return deals with, we found that the number of 1,502 infants had been received during that period; that the number of deaths that took place in the registered houses during the period was 253.

Viscount Llandaff.

53. Under one year of age?—Yes, under one year; and the number of inquests held was 23.

Chairman.

54. Twenty-three inquests, you say?—Yes.

55. And how many deaths?—Two hundred and fifty-three; that is to say, in 230 cases out of the 253 cases the coroners on the information received did not think it necessary to hold inquests.

Lord Thring.

56. But the deaths were of infants under one year?—The deaths were of infants under one year.

57. Not

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

57. Not of infants received under one year, but infants who, at the time of their death, were under one year old?—They were the deaths of infants under one year old. Then, passing to unregistered houses, that is, houses not in any way affected by the Act, the number of infants being kept for hire that the inspector found in the course of his inquiries at these unregistered houses during the period named was 4,501, almost precisely 3,000 more than those which came under the Act; and of that number 1,970 were found to be under one year; 852 were found to be between one year and two years; and the remaining number, 1,579, were found to be between two years and seven years. At that time we took cognisance of children up to seven years old.

Chairman.

58. The 4,501 means the children under seven years of age?—The total number of children kept for hire at unregistered houses under seven years of age.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

59. That is not merely the total of the different children for each separate year, it might include the same child twice over?—That has occurred to me; and any deductions that may be made from the death rate must be made with that allowance. It is impossible to tell, either with the infants at registered houses or the infants at unregistered houses, to what extent the numbers are duplicated. Of course, the inspector is able to know and visit a comparatively small number of the unregistered houses; he only comes across them in the course of his ordinary duties of inquiry; and there may be and probably are, a great number of other houses at which infants are kept for hire, of which he has no cognisance; but these are the number of infants he found at unregistered houses; and the number of deaths given are compiled from information that the persons receiving the infants supplied to him. In the case of the deaths at registered houses, the figures are exact, that is to say, we are cognisant of those deaths; but in the case of the deaths at unregistered houses, we can only know of them from the information given by the persons who received the infants; and the deaths of which we received information amounted during the period to 561; those were the deaths of infants of under one year.

60. Then the percentage would really be higher?—Probably very much higher.

61. If you duplicate the particular cases, of course that makes the death percentage higher?—It does. In the case of the registered houses dealing with the children under one year, it would probably not have been much higher; there would be very little duplication there, because, of course, the children soon reach the age of one year.

Lord Thring.

62. Does not the Bishop's question lead to this: that the comparison between the deaths in unregistered houses and registered houses is necessarily fallacious?—To a certain extent that is so; and I pointed out that any deductions (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

made from the death-rate must be made with some allowance for duplication.

Lord Kinnaird.

63. If the 4,500 included duplicated children, the percentage would be lower, would it not?—No, the actual number of children would be less, so that the death-rate would be higher. Then the deaths of infants under one year found at unregistered houses during the same period was 273.

Chairman.

64. You have some figures, I understand, with reference to the proportion of deaths of infants under one year at registered and unregistered houses?—Going on with the figures shown in the return, and subject to the allowance I have indicated to your Lordship, the death-rate was only 16.8 per cent. at the registered houses, of infants under one year, which is only slightly above the general death-rate in London of infants under one year, which averaged 15.4 over a period of 10 years (see the Registrar General's Annual Summary for 1894, page 6). All the deaths in registered houses are known to us, and although only a proportion of those at unregistered houses, the ascertained deaths at unregistered houses give a rate of mortality of 28.5 per cent. In other words, for every 1,000 births 168 infants under one year that died in registered houses, at least 285 died in unregistered houses. I think I may put it in this way: that so far as the figures apply to the children under one year there is very little duplication, and the figures are to a certain extent a guide.

65. Can you give the Committee any further information as to the mortality of infants?—I have gone through the evidence attached to the Report of the House of Commons Committee of 1871, which gives the following rates of mortality of infants. The ordinary mortality of infants under one year in England and Wales is between 15 and 16 per cent.; the ordinary mortality of infants nursed by their mothers in workhouses is also between 15 and 16 per cent.; that of infants put out by the Foundling Hospital to wet nurse is also between 15 and 16 per cent.; while the average mortality of hand-nursed infants is stated to be about 40 per cent.

Viscount Llandaff.

66. Even in well-conducted homes?—I am coming to that. In inferior houses and in rural districts it reaches from 40 to 60 per cent.; in large towns where the sanitary conditions are unfavourable it reaches to 70, 80, and even 90 per cent. The children of wet nurses taken from their mothers' breasts to make room for other infants are stated in the report to scarcely ever live; and even the infants of wet nurses left in well-conducted establishments like the Magdalen Home, are subject to a death-rate stated to be 54 per cent.

Chairman.

67. Those figures that you have quoted just now with reference to the infants of the wet nurses taken away, came out in the evidence

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

given about the Foundling Hospital, I think?—That is so.

68. That the Foundling Hospital put out children to nurse in the villages with wet nurses, and then the children of these wet nurses are put out to be hand-nursed and they generally die?—That was the evidence.

69. Can you tell us what are the proportions of legitimate and illegitimate children born in London?—From information supplied by the Registrar General's office and published by the council in London statistics, I find that in 1893 there were 128,149 legitimate infants and 4,913 illegitimate infants born in London. Then going to the death-rate I find that the deaths of children under one year in the County of London in the year 1893 were 21,802, or at the rate of 163 per 1,000.

Lord Thring.

70. One year children?—One year; I am dealing with the deaths of children under one year.

Viscount Llandaff.

71. What percentage does it give?—16·3 per cent. There were only 1,576 inquests in respect of those 21,802 deaths. Turning to the illegitimate children, I find that out of 4,913 illegitimate children born in London in 1893 only 80 came into registered houses; we found 125 in unregistered houses, and some probably were taken by institutions, but how many it is impossible to say. The average death-rate would account for about 840, and probably a small proportion were brought up by their mothers; but I think I may put it that many are not accounted for.

Lord Thring.

72. Do you mean that they are not known?—What becomes of them is not known.

Chairman.

73. Did you state that 80 illegitimate children you found in registered houses?—In that year.

74. Out of a total of how many children in the registered houses; I want to know what proportion of the legitimate to the illegitimate children you found in the registered houses; have you got that?—I find that in 1893-94 there was a total of 80 infants under one year in registered houses. These were nearly all illegitimate children.

Lord Thring.

75-8. As against how many legitimate?—I would rather that the inspector under the Act answered that question; but I think it will be found that few, if any, of the infants at registered houses are legitimate children.

79. Do I correctly understand you to say that all the children in the registered houses are illegitimate; when I say all, I mean nearly all?—Yes, I believe that to be so.

80. And that you know?—Well, the inspector would answer that question more positively.

81. I want to know this very much: as far as you know, when you talk of these registered houses, the children in them are, as a rule, illegitimate?—I have been myself pressing the

Lord Thring—continued.

inspector on the point several times, and he estimates that from 1 to 2 per cent. of the infants at registered houses are legitimate, the remainder being illegitimate.

82-3. And, as far as you know, you agree with that?—I have no knowledge apart.

Chairman.

84. You said just now, that out of a total of 4,826 illegitimate infants a certain number are at institutions and with their mothers; you cannot give anything more precise as to what became of them later?—We have no means of ascertaining how those infants were disposed of; and of course I am putting these figures forward as an argument indicating the desirability of some further powers being given in order that there may be some means of dealing with a larger proportion.

Lord Thring.

85. I understand you to say that the mortality of the children under one year old is 15 or 16 per cent.; but then that is only a very little higher than the mortality of adults, is it not?—I refer to the annual summary of the Registrar General, of the births, deaths, and causes of deaths in London and other large towns for the year 1894, and I find under the head of London, at page 6 of the Summary, and under the heading of Infantile Mortality—

86. Under one year old, or what?—The deaths of persons at all ages include those of 18,732 infants who had not completed their first year of life. These deaths are equal to a rate of 143 per 1,000 children born, as compared with 154, the average rate in the preceding 10 years. Infantile mortality was highest, 158 per 1,000 in the east group of sanitary areas, and lowest, 131 per 1,000 in the north.

Viscount Llandaff.

87-9. It does not say what "infantile" means; infants of what age?—Infants who have not completed their first year of life.

Chairman.

90. Can you give the Committee any information as to the number of inquests on legitimate and illegitimate infants in London. I may take it that when you speak of infants it is always infants under one year old, unless specified to the contrary?—I submit a return showing the number of inquests held in London on legitimate and illegitimate children in the years 1893, 1894, and 1895. Dealing first with legitimate children, the return shows that for the year 1893 there were inquests held on 894 male infants, and 796 female infants under one year; that there were 452 inquests on male infants of over one year and under seven years, and 381 inquests on female children between those ages; which gives a total of both sexes of 1,690 legitimate infants of under one year, and 833 legitimate infants of between one year and seven years during the year 1893. Dealing now with illegitimate or unknown infants, there were inquests on 162 male infants under one year, and 137 female infants under one year; and on illegitimate infants between the ages of one year and seven years

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

years there were 15 inquests on male infants, and 11 on female infants. In the year 1894 the number of inquests on legitimate infants, both male and female, under one year was 1,576, and 778 on legitimate infants between one year and seven years. On illegitimate infants under one year there were 287 inquests held, and 27 on illegitimate infants between one year and seven years. And for the past year, the year 1895, the numbers were slightly increased. There were 1,797 inquests on legitimate children under one year, and 877 upon legitimate infants between one year and seven years. There were 322 inquests on illegitimate infants under one year, and 38 inquests on illegitimate infants between one year and seven years.

Viscount Llandaff.

91. How many of those inquests resulted in any criminal verdict, do you know?—The information supplied to me by the coroners, from which this return is made up, does not include that; but I think you will be able to get it from the coroners themselves, some of whom it is proposed to call.

Chairman.

92. Then dealing with the Bill, and with Clause 2, why do you think that the Act should be extended to children under five years of age?—The view that our experience leads us to take is, that registration and the consequential supervision would benefit infants over one year kept for hire almost as much as it would benefit those under one year. The experience of the inspectors is to the effect that the conditions under which infants are found to be kept at unregistered houses are not nearly so good as those at registered houses, and we feel very strongly that supervision of some kind would be very beneficial to nurse infants up to, at any rate, the age when they would come within the operation of the Elementary Education Acts; and for that reason we suggest that the age should be raised from one year to five years, when the Elementary Education Acts apply; so that to a certain extent law and authority will be in touch with nurse infants, not merely for the first year and after the fifth year, but continuously from their birth forwards.

93. And then by the same clause, persons keeping only one infant for hire will come under the Act?—Some of the worst cases that we have come across are cases where only one infant under the age of a year is kept. The inspector will give you more detailed information than I can give as to trafficking in infants where only one is dealt with at one time. It may be within the knowledge of the Committee that in a case that is now under investigation, the Reading case, only one infant was taken and kept at a time, and yet clearly that is a case where some amount of supervision was desirable.

94. And how will this clause affect the boarding out of infants by societies and institutions?—Of course the keeping by societies and institutions is covered by the exemption, but the boarding out by societies and institutions is not covered by the exemption. The method that the Select Committee of 1890 proposed to apply (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

to that was the insertion in the exemption clause of sub-clause (b.) There they proposed that "in the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants," but I believe that exemption would only apply to one institution, the Foundling Hospital. The Committee may consider it a desirable thing to somewhat extend that exemption.

Lord Thring.

95. It is a matter of difficulty?—It is a matter of extreme difficulty; but where no other infants are kept, except infants that are boarded out by a properly organised society, the registration and supervision by a public authority may not be so necessary, because a properly organised society would take some private means of supervision, which might be equally effectual, or more effectual than public supervision.

Chairman.

96. The difficulty, I suppose, was where to draw the line between what you describe as a properly organised society, and these so-called philanthropic institutions which perhaps are not so well managed?—They are not so well managed. We have experience of a considerable number of societies where the management has been anything but good.

Lord Thring.

97. Could you name them?—Any evidence of that nature that the Committee desires will be forthcoming. I prefer that the inspector who was in touch with the cases should give you that evidence.

Chairman.

98. On that point you suggest the question of a possible extension of the exemptions. It might be possible, perhaps, to meet it in the way that was indicated by Miss Hill in her evidence before the Committee of 1890, in which she suggested the registration of committees in different places; I mean to say that possibly institutions might be exempted which are duly authorised by the local authorities in places where infants are boarded out, that have the leave, as it were, of the local authorities to board out infants in that locality, so that the local authority might know of the infants being boarded out there?—Some provision of that sort would probably meet the case. I may say that I have no experience of that sort, because I think boarding out in that way would be largely carried on outside London rather than inside London. I ought to have said "little" experience; we have some experience of infants being put out at registered houses by institutions, but, of course, no difficulty has arisen with them because they have been placed in registered houses under supervision.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

99. Are these institutions you refer to as not so well managed, managed by a committee or by single persons?—By single persons as a rule.
100. You

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

100. You know, of course, that the objections raised by several of these institutions mainly consist in the contention that the respectable people with whom they board out these children in the villages would be rather loth to come forward and offer to take the children if they had to register them; that is the objection urged by the Foundling Hospital and various other institutions?—That is the case.

101. How would this clause affect the case of a working man or woman who desires to put an infant with a friend?—If in such a case objection to registration is felt by the friend, it would doubtless be a difficulty. It is a difficulty that the 1890 Committee attempted to meet by suggesting the limitation of the proposed Amending Act to illegitimate children. That doubtless might meet the case, but at the same time I point out to the Committee that any limitation of that kind would be extremely difficult to deal with in actual administration. I apprehend that it would not be a difficult thing for almost any woman to produce to a person receiving infants for hire sufficient evidence to justify that person in receiving the infants. She might, for instance, borrow a certificate as evidence that she was a married woman. I do not think there would be very much difficulty in that being done. So that I apprehend that if so wide an exemption as that were inserted in the Bill there would be considerable scope for evasion. I ought to mention also that one of the proposed exemptions that the Committee of 1890 inserted in the Bill was under exemption "E," which reads: "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause." But I feel even more strongly that that exemption might be so wide as to cover nearly every case that might arise; and for that reason it requires to be considered with very great care. At the same time I also point out that the whole of this Clause 6, dealing with exceptions, is intended to apply only to cases where lump sums are paid for the infants. The proviso is: "Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of five years, in consideration of an immediate payment, shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section." It is a little difficult to see how that would work.

102. It would be rather difficult to prove that they had received some lump sum, would it not?—It would be exceedingly difficult to prove it; and I think possibly it would be a very easy thing to evade, because when the transaction took place it would be necessarily a private transaction; the person receiving the infant might protect herself by preparing what purported to be an agreement that the payment should be periodical, and it would be very difficult indeed to obtain evidence to show that an offence against the Act had been committed.

Chairman—continued.

103. She might have a series of receipts for several weeks ahead and yet a lump sum might be paid down?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

104. I suppose the most desirable thing of all is that the lump sum cases should be prevented?—Yes; I think that those cases in which a parent practically parts entirely with an infant to another person on payment of a simple sum of money lead to more crime than any other class of cases.

Viscount Llandaff.

105. In the case of a lump sum payment, it is to the interest of the receiver that the child should die; in the case of a weekly payment it is her interest that the child should live?—That is the case.

Chairman.

106. But all the evidence given in the past by people interested in these boarding-house institution shows one of their cardinal rules is that payment should always be weekly or monthly on behalf of the children; both in the case of Poor Law rules and voluntary institutions?—That is the case.

107. How would this clause affect the case of parents in India and elsewhere who may have to send children to England?—It would undoubtedly affect those cases; and I have no doubt that cases of that sort should be exempted, and probably the Committee will be able to see some means of providing an exemption for them. I think it might not be difficult to prepare an exemption which would cover cases of that kind. They do not appear to be altogether covered by the amendments inserted in the Bill of 1890, unless the proviso as to limiting the operation of the Bill to illegitimate children is adopted. That would, of course, entirely cover them.

108. It would be covered, of course, if the children were sent to relatives or guardians?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

109. But, practically, the introduction of the word "illegitimate" would solve the difficulty in all these cases?—Practically it would.

Chairman.

110. But at the same time, with regard to the question of the Bishop, you are of opinion strongly that if the Act was confined to illegitimate children it would open the door to a very large amount of practical evasion of the Act?—I fear that that might be so.

111. That in the case of these people who are the worst class, and necessarily very unscrupulous, it would not be in any way difficult for them, and would not require any very great ingenuity on their part, if the inspector came round and made inquiries as to the infants in the house, to prove that they were legitimate?—I think that it would not; that the receiver of the infants would probably be able to satisfy the inspector that she had taken the necessary means for ascertaining that the children were legitimate before she received them.

112. The

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

112. The inspector would be entirely at the mercy of the person's statement?—Very largely so.

113. In fact, he would have no means of checking it?—I see very little means at his disposal; he could only do so by subsequent inquiry, which would be a matter of great difficulty.

114. Then, with reference to Clause 3 of the Bill, will you tell the Committee the object of requiring written statements as to the parentage of infants placed out to nurse?—The object of making the statement a written one is that we believe that a person would frequently hesitate to make a false statement in writing while possibly ready to do so orally. The present law, as you are aware, prohibits a false statement, but provides no penalty for making the false statement. This clause is practically as it left the Select Committee of 1890, except the period of residence; that Committee altered it to three months, both in Sub-Clauses 1 and 2.

Viscount Llandaff.

115. But the Bill of 1890 does not require writing. Clause 2 only says, "Shall state truly the name, sex and age of the infant"?—"Shall state truly"; that is the case; and I have given the reasons for desiring that the statement should be in writing, because we believe there would be less probability of evasion being attempted.

Chairman.

116. Do you say that there is no penalty for a false statement now under Section 5 of the present Act; it does not state so in the section, but it says in the section, that the person "shall immediately enter the name, sex, and age"; is it not the assumption that if they state it wrongly there is a penalty?—The penalty in the Act is directed solely against the registered person, and not against a person who may give false information.

117. We have dealt with Clause 3 with regard to the question of statements in writing respecting infants received, but not with Sub-section 2, about the preventing of the handing on of children; I do not think we have had any remarks from you on that subject?—That, I think, does not arise under this clause, but under another clause; Clause 5, I think it is.

118. Yes, it comes under this: "Where an infant is removed from the care of a person registered under the principal Act the person removing the infant shall state truly in writing"?—That is in order to enable the registered person to make the entry in the register which is required under the existing Act.

119. That is for the purpose of enabling the inspector to trace the people if he finds that they have gone?—That I apprehend is the purpose, that there may be some means of tracing what becomes of the infants.

120. They are not able to do it under the present Act, then?—Yes, the present Act makes a provision for the registration by the registered person, of the infants, both as to their reception

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

and disposal, but it makes no provision as to misleading statements made to the registered person; and I apprehend that sub-clause (2) of Clause 3 of the Bill is intended for the protection of the registered person with a view to ensuring that correct information is given for the entries on the register.

121. Then Clause 4, which requires the delivery up of the register, what is the object of that?—That is a small point; but it has been found in practice that persons remove and do not give up the register, so that we lose trace not only of the persons but of the infants; and the object of the clause is to enable us to follow the person, and in order to regain possession of the register. All the person is now required to do is to produce the register while under registration, and the object of the proposed clause is to require him, on leaving the house or giving up registration, to give up the register.

122. Clause 5, have you anything to say about that?—Clause 5 is an attempt to deal with the transfer of infants, and is, I apprehend, one of the most important clauses in the Bill. At present any person can receive an infant and then get rid of it to another person without committing an offence; that is, supposing they take care to avoid keeping two or more infants for more than 24 hours; and this appears to be conducive to the practice of taking in infants for lump sums and disposing of them. The Bill proposes that a person may not receive infants without being registered, and may not dispose of them to another person without consent.

Viscount Llandaff.

123. The consent of the local authority?—The consent of the local authority; that is to say, that a registered person having received for hire an infant, that person should not be allowed to traffic in it (that is, to dispose of it for a profit) without the transaction being in some way registered.

124. The Bill goes much beyond that: you must not transfer it in any way; not merely for hire?—I think the intention is that it shall apply to transfer for hire.

125. Transferring to the Poor Law authorities would be within the clause?—It is obvious that that is not meant; it is, I think I may say, entirely directed against such a transference as is very common, and which you will probably hear of over and over again in the evidence, where persons do take infants for lump sums, and place them out with other persons at a profit.

Chairman.

126. That is to be guarded against by putting in the words "For hire or reward," again after the word "person" in the third line, "It shall not be lawful for any person who receives any infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person for hire or reward"?—It would require a little consideration, but that might probably meet the case.

127. That would make it absolutely clear: You say that is what you mean?—I think it requires consideration before any modification is made.

B 4

128. "Transfer

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

128. "Transfer or give for consideration"?—Yes; I think possibly after the word "relative" in the proviso, in Clause 5, the words "or guardian" might properly be added. It would be a re-disposal, practically, on the part of the person from whom the infant was received. I may say that it is a matter which comes frequently within our experience that a person has been paid a lump sum to take charge of an infant, that that person has transferred the infant on a promise to pay a periodical sum, say, 5s. a week, for its maintenance, that the payment has been made for two or three weeks, and that the payment has then ceased, and no trace at all of the intermediary has been obtained; and that child has been then taken to the workhouse and its maintenance fallen upon the rates.

129. Under this clause it could not be taken to the workhouse without the consent of the local authority?—That is not what is intended.

Lord Thring.

130. How can the local authority know anything about it; how can they know even of its existence?—Assuming that the law has been complied with as to registration, the local authority would, of course, know of its existence; but at present this transference of infants can be done perfectly legally, and the object of the Bill is to make it an offence to put obstructions in the way of doing it, and to make it somebody's duty to see that it is not done.

Viscount Llandaff.

131. Supposing that a woman has got a child to take care of for a neighbour, and the woman gets scarlet fever, and in a hurry wants to transfer the child to some safe house, she must, under this clause, get the consent of the local authority before she can do it?—Of course, every Act must be carried out with discretion.

132. But the words are, that she is not to transfer the child to anybody without the consent of the local authority?—It is rather difficult I apprehend to draw an Act to cover every possible case, and my experience is that a large discretion is necessary in the administration of all Acts.

133. A dispensing power, in fact, in the local authority to administer the Act or not as they think fit?—A dispensing power not to enforce penalties where the local authority considered it undesirable.

Chairman.

134. But before we leave this very important question are you going to bring evidence afterwards, or can you bring now any evidence, to show the extent to which children are passed on in this way which you desire to put a stop to?—The inspector will be able to produce evidence on that point.

135. We want to know to what extent it exists now?—Yes; evidence will be given.

Viscount Llandaff.

136. The transfer in itself would not be a bad thing; it is maltreatment of the transferee that you want to guard against?—I think the system of traffic which leads to possible maltreatment is what we want to guard against.

Lord Thring.

137. The most dangerous thing of all is to give a lump sum to a woman, and two hours afterwards she gets rid of the child to another person?—I apprehend that Clause 5 of the Bill would affect that. There is no limitation to 24 hours in that clause. It provides, "It shall not be lawful for any person who receives any infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person without the consent in writing of the local authority"; that is to say, what now goes entirely untouched by the law and is believed to be a common practice, would be created an offence, and this would enable the local authorities to some extent to touch it.

Lord Belper.

138. Do you intend that this clause should necessarily hang by the clause which compels all people having children under five years of age for hire or reward to be registered, because if it does it is better to say in the clause that any person registered under the Act, under these circumstances, shall not be allowed to transfer the child without the consent of the local authority; but if you mean it to be effective, whether you get the other power passed or not, then it is another thing?—I think the clause should stand on its own merits quite apart from any question of registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

139. That a non-registered person having received a child ought to get the consent of the local authority to its transfer?—Having received it for "hire or reward."

140. That person being already liable to the penalty you mention for not having registered?—Yes.

141. You think that such a person would try to get the consent of the local authority?—It would enable the local authority to keep in touch with the case.

142. The non-registered person being already liable to the penalty of imprisonment for having taken a child without registration, you suggest that that person should go to the local authority for consent to transfer it. They would not do it?—They very likely would not do it; but the clause makes something illegal which is legal now, and which in the common interest of the community ought to be stopped. We may or may not be able to enforce the clause, but it will give us some power to stop the practice.

Lord Thring.

143. Take the case of a child at a school sent from India to a friend in this country; cannot they transfer the child to another school without the consent of the local authority?—I have already said that in my opinion the Committee will have to devise some means of exempting cases of that sort.

Chairman.

144. What you want is to hit the person that comes to the house and takes the child away?—I want to hit the intermediary.

145. You

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

145. You want to find out where the child has gone to. The inspector asks, Where is such a child that I saw last week; he finds it is gone, and wants to know where it is gone to?—I do not think the case is one such as you have in your mind, but it can be illustrated in this way: a woman who does not really keep infants herself at all, or only for quite a short period, advertises for infants or answers advertisements in which infants are proposed to be given out for adoption; the ordinary practice is that that person enters into negotiation with the parent or guardian of the child; finally, a sum of money, varying possibly from a few pounds, say 10l., up to a very considerable sum of money, is paid to this person to take the child off the parent or guardian's hands. The person who receives the child and the sum of money then gets rid of the child by placing it out in the care of somebody else who receives it for hire or reward, sometimes in a registered house. Our experience is that the money may be paid for a week or two, but that then the payment is dropped, and the person who receives the infant very likely puts it on the parish; it is the intermediary, the person who makes the profit out of the transaction, that we want to hit.

146. But you have already hit that person by two clauses; you hit him by the clause that requires him to be registered?—I am afraid not, because in a large number of cases they do not keep the child for a period of 24 hours, so I do not think they are hit by that clause, but they would be hit by the clause you now have before you.

Chairman.

147. They might take the child and receive the payment, go straight away to the other place and put it out?—That is the ordinary practice: they receive the child at a railway station, and put it out at once.

Lord Thring.

148. It is involved in the registration clause: you mean to say you want to make it a statutable offence for a woman to take a child, getting a large sum of money with it, and then get rid of the child immediately?—Yes.

149. But she does not maintain the child at all?—No. An ordinary case would be where she would receive 10l., and put that child out at 5s. a week, and pay for two or three weeks, and then drop the payments.

Earl of Buckingham.

150. Then the child would go to the workhouse?—Yes, it ordinarily does, so that the profit made would be upwards of 9l.

Chairman.

151. I should like to know whether this clause would hit the lying-in-house keeper in the sense of handing over children; would it make it illegal for the lying-in-house keeper to take a child and pass it on?—I think it would where the lying-in-house keeper undertakes the charge of the child for the mother. When she simply acts as an agent of the mother in placing the child out, I doubt whether it would touch her.
(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

152. What proof could there be of that?—Everything arising out of this Act is difficult of proof, I admit. I think that the very fact of the thing being made illegal would go a great way towards stopping it.

Lord Kinnaird.

153. Do you know whether many of those struck off the register or who wish to get off the register, afterwards take in infants for hire or reward; do you follow them up?—They sometimes come back for re-registration. The inspector does more or less keep in touch in them. I think that the effect of having once registered is to render it improbable that the registered person would seek to avoid registration afterwards.

Chairman.

154. Now we will go on to Clause 6; do you think that the power of entry that is given there is necessary?—Some difficulty has been experienced by the inspectors, and it is suggested that their powers should be enlarged. I observe that the Committee of 1890 proposed to limit the power of compulsory inspection to those cases where the warrant of a Justice is granted; and as that is the ordinary practice and custom of this country, I apprehend that this Committee will desire to embody a proviso of that sort in the clause. I do not suggest that any departure should be made from the safeguards that are ordinarily attached to the right of entry. I am not now speaking of registered houses, I am speaking of the right of inspection in a case of suspicion; and the section as drawn gives the right of entry in such a case as that, but the Committee of 1890 modified that right by requiring a warrant of a Justice in the ordinary way; and I suggest that that may be a desirable safeguard.

Viscount Llandaff.

155. There is no power of entry in the existing Act?—There is none.

Chairman.

156. And the consequence was that, when the officer went to make inquiries, where he had reason to suspect that children were kept, they sometimes refused to admit him, and he had no power of entry?—That is so.

157. Will you tell us what you think of Clause 7?—That enlarges the power of the local authority to strike the house off the register, not only for serious neglect or incapacity to properly provide food and attention, or because the house has become unfit, as provided by the present Act, but also for other reasons; for instance, when the registered persons themselves desire to be struck off the register. No such power of cancelling the registration appears to exist except for the reasons specified in the section, and it would be desirable in the interest of the registered persons that some enlargement of the section should be provided for.

Lord Belper.

158. Would it not be proper to put in that Clause 7 in the principal Act should be repealed; they

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

they appear to follow exactly the same lines with the addition you have mentioned?—Yes, or simply to provide an amendment of the clause.

159. You embody the whole of Clause 7 of the principal Act with an addition, and in that case it ought to be repealed?—Yes, in that case it ought to be repealed.

Viscount Llandaff.

160. What is to be done with the children? Here is a house with several children which suddenly gets struck off the register, and therefore keeping these children would be an offence?—It would be so under the existing law. It would not arise under any cases that the enlarged section is proposed to meet; but, as a matter of fact, the practice is that the inspector always takes care as to the disposal of those infants before the house is struck off the register, or immediately afterwards. We take the greatest care that no unnecessary inconvenience is put upon the registered person, and that the infants are properly cared for. May I put the case of a woman who commits a breach of the law and is committed to prison; the inspector invariably in those cases has to look after the infants by taking them to the workhouse, or providing proper care for them; otherwise they would be quite without care.

Chairman.

161. Have you got any other suggestions to give to the Committee?—I have no further suggestion to make in my examination-in-chief; possibly certain points will arise in the further examination as to any exemptions that the Committee may question me upon; and I may be in a position to make some suggestions then.

162. I should like to ask you before we conclude the examination-in-chief about Clause 8, the interpretation of the expression "institutions established for the protection or care of infants"?—There an attempt has been made to define the meaning of the word "institutions" as meaning "societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons."

Lord Belper.

163. It is rather broad?—It is very broad, necessarily broad I think.

Lord Thring.

164. Does it add anything to the former clause?—It does this: it endorses a practice that has been practically acted upon for many years past. There is no definition as you are aware in the present Act; we have acted upon that definition and find it answers in practice.

Viscount Llandaff.

165. I do not quite see what you get by the words "societies organised for some public or social object." The point is a committee of six?—Yes, that is the principal point.

166. I suppose taking the words in the original Act "for the care and protection of infants," those words indicate a public and social object?—I think they do. Then the words "relatives" and "guardians" are not defined, and I think it may be found very possible to

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

give a definition of those words. I venture to suggest to the Committee this definition: that the word "relatives" shall mean persons related to the infant either by blood or marriage within the degree of first cousinship; the word "guardian" shall mean, the person or persons, who is or are by law, liable to maintain the infants.

Lord Thring.

167. The persons liable to maintain the infant would be the parents?—But the parents might be dead or absent.

168. I should have thought it desirable to leave them both alone?—It is quite possible that it might be desirable to leave them alone, but it may tend to make the thing a little more workable if you define what relationship is, and therefore I suggest within the degree of first cousinship by either blood or marriage.

Chairman.

169. Do you see any objection to qualify this definition of a society "controlled by a committee of not less than six persons," and putting in a proviso that it shall be approved by the local authority of the district in which they shall board out children, because it seems to me that one of these women might be able to get six other persons worse than herself to form such a committee, and then you would have no control over them?—I see that difficulty.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

170. What would you believe to be the reason why there are so few registered houses in London for the taking in of children, when any registered house can be legitimately a source of profit; there are only some 20 or 30 houses in the whole of London; why are there not more?—I am afraid I can give no explanation. The Council has endeavoured by every means in its power and by vigilance to increase the number. They have appointed in recent years two additional inspectors, and there are now three inspectors for London, one male inspector for the north of the Thames, one for the south of the Thames, and a lady inspector who visits the registered houses; and we have taken every means in our power to make the necessity for registration known, and have endeavoured to find out all about the disposal of infants put out for hire; and the practical fruit of our endeavour is that those houses are on the register, and under supervision. Why there are not more it is very difficult to say, except that we find in practice that, I should think, 90 per cent. of the infants that are now put out for hire do not come within the purview of the Act; that is to say, either only one infant under one year is kept, or if there are more infants than that one infant, the remainder are over one year old, so that the Act is not transgressed, as registration is not necessary in the present state of the law in such cases.

171. But if it be, as one would think it may be, a most profitable thing to have a house properly conducted for three or four infants, is it not possible that the very inquiries you refer to have been discouraging respectable people who might desire to have a registered house rather than encouraging them. I mean this: That

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

That at present the *primâ facie* view that anyone would take of a place where infants are received is, that it is a disreputable place, and that though it may just escape condemnation, or may even succeed in being registered and fairly well conducted, it is not such a thing as respectable people would desire to engage in. Why not? It puzzles me; I am asking simply for information?—I think the objection to registration must be mainly a sentimental objection. Our experience shows us that many people have a prejudice against their houses being considered as baby farms, and that directly you register them, their neighbours, and anyone cognisant of the fact, begin to regard them suspiciously, and although the reverse of that is really the fact, that is to say, they remove by registration any real reproach against the practice of taking infants for hire, that is not the way it is regarded by the general public.

172. You are not of opinion that anything could be done by the authorities just now rather to encourage the registration of a larger number of houses than merely to inquire whether existing houses are registered or not?—Everything that can be done in London is already done in the direction of encouragement of registration of houses.

173. The registration of houses which at present takes place?—Yes.

174. But I mean multiplying registered houses?—As far as it is possible for us to increase the number, we do so; we offer every facility by information and advice, and in every way we desire that persons who do take infants for hire should come on the register, and we point out to them that it brings with it no disabilities except the sentimental disability of being regarded as keeping a baby farm.

175. And you find it difficult to understand why, considering how many hard-up people are in pursuit of a fair source of profit, there should not be more of these registered houses?—I am inclined to think that at the prices usually paid for infants taken for hire there would not be much profit.

176. That is what I wanted to get at; there are two reasons that might prevent it; one that there might be no demand for such places, and the other that they would not be profitable, and you rather think that they are not profitable?—I do not think there are many inducements to enter into it. It is not a lucrative business.

Viscount Llandaff.

177. Why do so many people take one child; you have given us a large number of cases of people who take one child only where they might register and take two or three?—I think it is very difficult to say why.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

178. You mentioned in connection with that, that in existing houses that are registered changes are continually going on, that people are going off the register and on to it; what does that mean; what induces this constant change; do the majority of the places that are registered remain on the register for a term of years, 10 years say; would you find people registered to

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Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

day who were registered 10 years ago?—I would rather that you would take that from the inspector, who would be able to give you more precise information. I can only say in general terms that as a rule registration is not of any considerable permanence.

179. Then taking your evidence as a whole, I gather that you regard the operation of this Bill as practically intended for the case of illegitimate children almost exclusively; it may be going too far to say that, but in overwhelming preponderance?—In great preponderance as far as our experience goes, that is to say as far as the cases of which we have any record, the proportion of legitimate children which have been found kept for hire would probably not reach 5 per cent. of the whole.

180. The children who would come under the purview of this Bill may practically be said to be 95 per cent. of them illegitimate?—I think that may be said to be the case.

Lord Belper.

181. Then practically it would not affect your object much if this second clause was confined to illegitimate children?—Except as to the practical difficulty, which I have already pointed out, on the question of the evidence of legitimacy. I fear that that would be exceedingly easy to obtain, and that although the children might be illegitimate, evidence of legitimacy might be brought forward to induce persons to take them for hire, and in that way the law might be evaded. I point out, for the information of the Committee, that the House of Commons Select Committee of 1890, while proposing to limit the operation of the Bill to illegitimate children, did not propose to repeal Section 2 of the Act of 1872; so that it was intended that two or more infants under one year, either legitimate or illegitimate, should require registration under the existing Act, but that the extension of the law should be limited to illegitimate infants.

182. Of course, in that case this would go in a different form; not to repeal the former clause?—That would be so.

183. I did not intend in my former question to suggest that you should alter the clause in the original Act, but that this clause as far as it is new should be confined to illegitimate children?—Yes, that I understood.

Viscount Llandaff.

184. I did not quite appreciate your objection to the exemption clause, Clause 6, Sub-section (e) of the Bill of 1890, which exempts from the provisions of that Bill the case of working people leaving home in search of work, and leaving their children with a friend; is not that a constant case in the North of England especially, where men leave home for a week or a fortnight, or more, in search of work?—I think that that may be the case, and to a certain extent, to a less extent, in London also.

185. Wherever it occurs, whether in London or in the North, surely that is not a case in which you would insist upon registration?—I think if any means can be devised to avoid the necessity of registration in such a case it ought

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to

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

to be devised; but the difficulty I see is this: the Bill, as I have just pointed out, was proposed to be applied only to illegitimate children.

186. The Bill of 1890?—Yes, the Bill of 1890. Of course we are now dealing with a clause suggested by the Committee of 1890, and incorporated in the Bill of 1890, just as they incorporated the provision as to illegitimate children. They, first of all, only applied the Bill to illegitimate children, which appears to me to cover all such cases as these; and they then in addition, put in a proviso which, as far as I am able to judge, would have left little for the Bill to deal with. It would be a matter of the most extreme difficulty to deal with a question of legitimacy or illegitimacy, but when to that is added the exceptions contained in (e), it seems to me that the Bill became almost inoperative.

187. But, forgive me, Clause 6 has nothing whatever to do with legitimacy or illegitimacy, except where it is expressly mentioned. Clause 6, Sub-section (e) applies to the principal Act, the Act of 1872, as well as the Bill of 1890, and it exempts those cases of working men leaving home and putting their children in the care of a friend?—Yes.

188. And you admit that that is a proper exemption if you could ear-mark it?—Yes, I do think that; but the provision is to this effect: "In the case of any infant left by the desire, or with the knowledge, of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person, not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian, from home, on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause," I apprehend that it would not be difficult in the case of any infants we might find in charge of persons for hire, for one or other of these exemptions to be brought forward. They are so exceedingly wide; that is my difficulty.

189. It is wide; it covers the case put by Lord Thring, the case of a parent in India, with reasonable and necessary cause for putting his child in somebody else's care?—I fear it is too wide to make the Act beneficial.

190. But if it is a true cause for the transfer of a child to the care of another person, you admit that it is a legitimate cause?—I admit that that might be so, though at the same time I do not admit that there are any reasonable objections to registration, and I am disposed to think that there would be an advantage all round if registration were effected, because the parent or guardian who had been called away in search of work would have some guarantee that his child was being properly looked after meanwhile, and I see no reason at all except a sentimental one against registration in such a case.

191. What is the cost of your system of registration and inspection in London?—The cost to the registered person or to the ratepayers, do you mean?

192. To the ratepayers?—I should think that at the present moment it is about 600*l.* or 700*l.* a year, with three inspectors, and practically no other expenses beyond the inspectors.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

193. Printing and stationery?—That is small, certainly not more than about 25*l.* a year. I find the present cost of enforcing the 1872 Act in London is just over 500*l.* a-year.

Lord Belper.

194. The registration of these particular houses, do you mean?—The whole administration of the Act in London.

195. But you have only about 40 registered houses in London?—Yes, but we are dealing with the whole subject; we are dealing, or attempting to deal with the whole question of the putting out of infants to hire in London. Every case that we can possibly find out is thoroughly inquired into, so that I do not anticipate that any very great addition to the staff would be necessary in case there was an extension of the Act. Of course that would be a matter of experience.

196. Do you mean that the 500*l.* is spent in the administration of the Act, or that it is spent with reference to the registration of these particular houses?—In the administration of the Act I should say that the registration and supervision of the registered houses would be covered by a cost of 100*l.*

Lord Thring.

197. I should like to ask you one or two more questions. Whether we like it or no, must we not admit that, as the Bishop has suggested, registration is detested under this Act; as a matter of fact, sentiment has immense power in these matters, and there is the strongest sentimental objection, if you like to call it so, to registration?—I do say, as a fact, that the feeling does exist, and exists very strongly.

198. And is it an unnatural feeling; registration means, in the apprehension of the people in general, baby-farming, does it not?—It does, but I think that the view is a false one to this extent, that it is much more serious to take infants without registration than with registration.

199. Yes, I only want you to admit this, that registration under the Act is detested on the ground that it is supposed to imply baby-farming, and that baby-farming means a system of taking illegitimate children for the purpose of carrying out the views of those who wish to get rid of them?—I think that the objection to registration is in connection with that sentiment.

200. A true sentiment; the majority of these children are really farmed out, committed to the care of these people with a view of getting rid of them, so that the parents may never hear anything more of them, but may go their way without having anything to do with them again?—I do not think that that is so with legitimate cases.

201. Are there any legitimate cases?—I am not speaking of legitimacy in the ordinary sense. I do not think that that is so in ordinary cases where the mothers put out their infants to be taken care of, and pay periodically for their maintenance; I do not think that in all those cases it can be said that the object is to get rid of those infants.

202. Then really and truly the whole object of

24 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

of this Bill so far as you can make out, practically the direct object, is to extend it to places where one child is kept and to the five years' old children?—That is the main object.

203. I want to point out to you that all these clauses with respect to written statements are really of very little value, because you have no possible means of checking them?—I venture to think that if you make a thing unlawful there is less probability of its being done than if it can be done quite lawfully.

204. Then we have got to balance the advantages that may accrue in certain cases by extending the Act, for all the reasons which have been suggested by you, against the disadvantage that it would include people who legitimately take children and yet would detest to have their houses registered?—No doubt that is the case.

Viscount Llandaff.

205. Registration itself does no good, but notice to a local authority that some person has got a child, not her own, to take care of, would not that answer the purpose; if the law were this, that if you take in somebody else's child you must give notice to some local authority?—The whole object of registration is with a view to that.

206. Would there be the same objection to giving notice, do you think, that there is now to being registered?—I think very likely there might not be the same objection to giving notice as to registration.

207. Then supposing notice were coupled with a provision for the medical officer of the district yearly to visit the child, would not that answer every purpose you want?—I think not.

208. Why not?—It is only for the health of the child that you are concerned. If the child is improperly fed or the ventilation not sufficient, or from want of cleanliness the house is not healthy, the medical man is the best person to see it, is he not?—I think in London some special officers are absolutely essential; it would never be carried out by medical officers with their multifarious duties, I feel very strongly upon that point. For instance, we have a Public Health Department as well as a Public Control Department, and with us it is found

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. CLIFFORD LUXMOORE DREW is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

217. You are, I think, Her Majesty's Coroner for the Western Division of London?—I am.

218. Would you mind telling the Committee some of your experience of the Infant Life Protection Act?—Well, as a preliminary, I might say that I have had a large experience in the western district during the last four or five years, and that during that time several cases of note have come under my investigation. Although during that time the number of cases of baby farming and allied cases to that

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

more convenient that this Act should be administered in my department by special officers, because there would be a serious practical difficulty in carrying out the Act in connection with ordinary public health matters; there is nothing in common between it and the ordinary duties of the medical officers of health.

209. I should have thought that the whole point was whether the children were in a satisfactory state of health?—But the ordinary duties of the medical officers of health are connected with the sanitary condition of the premises rather than the condition of the individuals; and here it is the condition of the individuals, and an ordinary medical man would be a better parallel.

210. I suppose there would not be so much objection to the visit of the medical officer, as to that of an inspector; it would not excite the same feeling as if the public control inspector calls?—The public control inspector who visits these houses is a lady. I do not think there can be any real objection to her visits.

Chairman.

211. We shall have her evidence, I presume?—You will have her evidence.

Lord Kinnaird.

212. Should you say that many children are taken out of London and boarded out in the country?—I believe that is largely done.

213. Then if many of them went into the country and they died in the country they would be out of your statistics?—Yes.

214. Then that would make your statistics unreliable with regard to percentages?—To a certain extent; of course, although that is a considerable number it is relatively small to the large number born; but it would be relatively large possibly to the number of illegitimate children born.

215. In the case of most of the societies that have boarding out, it would be almost entirely in the country, would it not?—I think almost entirely.

216. You have not any figures to show how far that is the case?—I am afraid I have not. I do not know whether they exist.

Chairman—continued.

have decreased in the district, I do not suppose that it is an actual decrease, because I should think it very likely that the cases have gone to other places where investigation is less strict.

219. Is your jurisdiction wholly within the administrative County of London then?—It is, entirely.

220. Have you got any figures to give as regards the number of cases which have come under your notice?—No, I cannot give the figures.

c 3

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

figures. I might have given them if there had been time; but I do not know whether the inspector of the County Council would give that.

221. We have the figures that come before the County Council?—Whether he could differentiate between the different districts I cannot say; but I cannot off-hand tell you the number. I could give you, if you like, the outlines of a few of the more important cases.

222. Could you give the Committee one or two samples of the class of cases that come under your notice?—Yes, certainly. I have noted one or two cases. The first case was that of a child named Weston, that was received from a woman living in the south of London, by a man and woman residing near Kensal-road. This man was a street artist—a man who drew pictures on the pavement—and they were in very poor circumstances. It appeared from the evidence before my court that at the time that this child was received there was another child. The other child was taken for a weekly sum; but the child in question, Weston, was received, I think, for a sum of 2*l.* to be taken right out and adopted, in fact. Now, I may say that the child that was taken for a weekly sum was handed over to the parents in a very healthy condition; the other child died. The investigation showed that these persons were extremely poor, and that the milk obtained for the two children could not have been sufficient to support two children; the natural inference being that the child that had the weekly allowance made for it, and was returned in a healthy condition, had more sustenance than the other. Of course, that is only an inference, but the fact of one child dying from starvation, and the other being returned in a healthy condition, justifies that inference, I think.

223. What was the verdict?—"Death from starvation;" and the woman was sent for trial for manslaughter, and convicted for neglecting the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

224. As to the children; were the two children together in the house?—Yes, the two were there together. Another case of rather a different nature was this: There were two people, married people; the man was a man who was shifting about from occupation to occupation; and during the evidence in my court the wife said that at the time they took the child he was out of work; but he himself denied that, and said that he was not. Whether that was so or not I cannot say; but I do know this, that shortly after taking this child he started a business, presumably with the 25*l.* received for this child, as a greengrocer, and the child died, and eventually the business collapsed. I was told by the officer that within three months the business had gone altogether. The inference is that he bought the business with the 25*l.*; but had the child lived and the business failed, we do not know what would have become of the child. That seems to be a class of case where the people obtain a living distinctly out of the child.

Chairman.

225. Was it a child under 12 months old?—Yes, I think it was two months old. The child died, and I held an inquiry on it.

Lord Belper.

226. What was the verdict?—"Natural causes." This verdict, on reference, was found to be from "Improper feeding."

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

227. Can you tell us whether these children were illegitimate or legitimate?—In the case of Weston it was illegitimate; but whether the other child, returned in a healthy condition, was illegitimate, I cannot say. The second instance was the child of a servant living in the North of England. A third example is the case of a woman named Boucher. It is rather a celebrated case; the real name is Butcher, but she assumed the French for it, and called herself Boucher. This woman keeps a lying-in house, and in the particular case in point a servant-girl went to this house and was there confined. The mother of the child made arrangements previously for the child to be taken away and taken care of; and it appears that this child was removed at the age of about two hours and afterwards died, and a *post-mortem* was held, and it showed that the cause of death was congestion of the lungs, owing to exposure from removal at that early age. At the inquiry certain statistics were given by the inspector under the Act, and a few of these I will give you now. The first evidence he gave was as to four children whom he traced. The first had been removed from this woman at the age of 10 hours; this child was dead. The second child had been removed at the age of half an hour; this child was also dead. The third child had been removed at the age of one hour; that one also was dead. The fourth, which had been removed at the age of 14 days, was also dead. There were five other cases traced to this person, four of which were found to be dead.

Lord Thring.

228. You said that the child was removed; where?—Removed from the house where this person lived to the care of an outside person.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

229. Is the point in these instances that the death was due to exposure?—In the case where I held the inquiry the child was taken out at the age of two hours, death resulting from congestion of the lungs.

Lord Thring.

230. Supposing a child is removed, and nothing done to it, would not that kill it?—From the want of feeding, you mean? The evidence that I get in my court is that midwives, and many doctors also, do not recommend any feeding for 24 hours, or so, afterwards.

231. These children did not die of starvation, you think?—I cannot tell you, except as to the case in my own court, what the children died from; but these four children certainly have died, and four out of the other five have died; eight out of nine cases traced to her.

Another

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Another case is that of a woman named Blackburn. In the case of the child on whom I held an inquest, this woman was proved to be in pecuniary difficulties, and in that case evidence was given that she had received 19 children; how many of those died I cannot say, but the deaths of five children were traced to this woman's house.

Chairman.

232. Nineteen children in what length of time?—That I cannot tell you. That was the evidence given in my court by one of the daughters, who said that she remembered 19 children being under the care of her mother. I have no doubt that the inspector under the Act, who investigated all these cases can give particulars; they were not in my own district.

233. I am afraid we cannot take from you as evidence any cases except cases within your own knowledge?—The evidence in this case about the 19 children was given before me on oath by the daughter of the woman herself; but I think you will find that the inspector under the Act will be very likely able to give you details of the five children that were traced. Now the other case, and the last which I propose mentioning, was one that came under my own investigation. This is a case where a friend takes a child from a person for profit. This was a case where a single woman had two children, both of whom a friend took with her other children. The subject of the inquiry was 10 weeks of age. This woman was apparently in the habit of frequenting public-houses and getting intoxicated, and on the day of the child's death she appears to have left home about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, and returned at 10 o'clock the worse for drink, and the child was then dead. It appears that these children, the woman's own children together with the two little children belonging to the single woman, were left in the care of a little child of seven years of age. When the inquiry was held evidence was given by the doctor and others that the room was in a very dirty condition, and also the child. On a chair was one child with three kittens, a child was on the floor, and another child was climbing over the sofa where the dead one lay. The doctor said in his evidence that the room was in a filthy condition, and that the smell was simply abominable. There was found a dirty milk-bottle and a tin of sour condensed milk. In that case a verdict of manslaughter was returned against the woman, and she was eventually sent for trial. Those are typical examples of the different classes of cases; first, where a person takes a strange child for profit; secondly, where it is possible they may take it with the intention of starting a business, and where a lump sum is paid down; and, thirdly, a case where a person takes the child of a friend for profit.

Chairman.

234. But none of those cases would be touched by the present Act, I take it?—No, except the first.

235. Because in none of those cases was there more than one child of less than 12 months of age?—In the first case there was; in the last case certainly not.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

236. What were the ages of the two children in the last case?—The inspector will tell you that, but the one which came under our consideration was 10 weeks old.

237. What was the age of the other one?—I cannot tell you; that was over the age of one year, as far as I remember; so that she would not require to be registered. The last case was the case of a woman with an invalid husband, and she told us that she had a great struggle to keep a roof over her head. She admitted that she had that child, the subject of the inquiry, for which she received 5*s.* a week, and had taken it at the age of 14 days. During the inquiry she told us that she had had three children, and in this case a verdict of death from improper feeding was returned. It was clearly proved at the police court that she had three children at the time, and she was convicted under the present Act for keeping more than one child under the age of 12 months.

Chairman.

238. Have you got any particular views or recommendations as regards the present law and alterations of it?—I think that the present Act, being an Infant Life Protection Act, should extend much further than baby-farming. It should commence at a much earlier age than that. For instance, under the present law, in order to constitute murder, the child must be wholly born; that is, it must be completely born.

239. That is rather beyond the question that we are inquiring into; but what I want to know is, have you any recommendations to make, for instance, with regard to extending the age of children to be registered; have any of your juries made a strong recommendation with reference to that; some coroner's juries have?—They have frequently, and I have forwarded some recommendations as regards extending the Act to the registration of one child.

240. Registration in all cases, you say?—Yes.

241. And extending the age?—Yes.

242. To any particular time?—No. As far as I can remember, we have had no riders to that effect.

243. Can you tell us anything of your own knowledge which points to the way in which these children are disposed of by the mothers to other people and then passed on from them to others again?—The way would be first by the midwife herself arranging it, and in that case in particular, which I referred to just now, the midwife admitted that she sometimes made the arrangement, and that she had got women to take the children, and she charged them a fee of about 10*s.* for it. A second way is for a friend to take a child from another person, and the other means most common is to get it done by advertisement.

244. Have you got any particular remedies to suggest with reference to that, beyond the extensions of the Act which you mentioned just now?—The remedy would be extending the Act to all children taken for profit or reward, and also having very strict registration and inspection.

c 4

Those

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Those are the remedies that, as far as I see, are the ones likely to deal with the case in point.

245. Have you got any particular remarks so make with reference to the system of baby-farming as it comes under your notice as a coroner, I do not mean with reference to the general question of baby-farming; that we shall be able to get from the inspector who looks after the Act?—Well, the system is this: that a person in some cases receives a large amount for taking the child, sometimes 100*l.* or 200*l.*, and then she passes the child on to some one else for a lower sum, and it is very likely to reach another person for, perhaps, 3*l.* or 4*l.*, so that there is extensive profit made in that way.

246. You mentioned the case of lying-in houses just now; do you know of your own knowledge of many cases where children are habitually passed on from these lying-in houses to professional baby farmers?—Yes. In the case of this woman Boucher, she keeps a lying-in house, and has a certificate as a midwife, and she passes them on, and that woman gets a fee of 10*s.* from the woman who takes the child.

Lord Belper.

247. From what class do those people generally come?—It is very hard to trace the people, but as regards my own cases they have principally been from the servant class.

Lord Thring.

248. And the children illegitimate?—Yes. In one or two cases they received children from somebody at the railway station, and these people gave a fictitious name, and they never saw them again; we could get no information.

Lord Belper.

249. But I was speaking with reference to the lying-in houses; did it come out at all what class of women used them?—No. I know from my own experience in another case where a child had been overlaid at this very house, the woman was the wife of an artisan.

Viscount Llandaff.

250. That was a legitimate child?—That was a legitimate child.

Chairman.

251. What means may be used to destroy children?—Well, of course, there are some rapid, and some less rapid but still quite as effectual. For instance, the first classification would be that of actual violence, such as cases that have recently occurred in the Reading baby-farming case, where there has been actual violence. Not very long ago, about three weeks, I held an inquest on a child that was found in a parcel, and the medical evidence showed that the child had died from suffocation. There were marks about the face and mouth, and it was also proved that the child had been put into the parcel, and the parcel had been tied up before death, because *rigor mortis* had set in; the child was found with *rigor mortis*. That was a very clear case of actual violence, and it was a case of murder. There are other cases of slow starvation which are very difficult to bring home to

Chairman—continued.

any person; and under this heading may be classified, perhaps, improper feeding, which is starvation only of a slower nature. One knows this: that it is not necessary for starvation that the person starved should be deprived wholly of food. If you give a child improper food, or if you give any person food that person cannot assimilate, the effect is the same, though slowly brought about; so that if a child is given improper food, and food that is not nourishing, and that cannot be assimilated, death sooner or later must occur, but it is longer delayed than if it had been wholly deprived of food.

252. You find as a rule, do you not, amongst people of the poorer class great ignorance as to the proper method of feeding infants?—Yes, great ignorance, and also amongst the midwives themselves.

253. Amongst certificated midwives?—No; but a very large number of the people who are attending cases are not certificated.

254. Is it the case that the people who keep these lying-in houses are not generally certificated?—Some may not be. I think it is necessary that all lying-in houses should be under some supervision.

255. Do you know whether medical men are generally called in, or do these midwives, as a rule, practise without them?—A great many do, and I get a great number of children dying without any medical man seeing them at all, and a great number of so-called still births.

256. Do you get many cases of deaths of the mothers in lying-in houses from improper treatment?—No. There was one case where a child was suffocated, in which it was proved that this Mrs. Boucher had left the mother a few hours after the confinement, and had returned to her the next morning, and that she had been left all night alone. It was a peculiar bed, which sank down in the centre, and the child had rolled from the side on which it was placed, and the mother had overlaid it. In that case there was no attention at all.

257. With reference to the question of medical men and medical certificates, is it your experience, as has been stated before the former Committee by coroners, that sometimes a considerable amount of difficulty is experienced on the part of these people who take in children in obtaining proper medical certificates from doctors as to the cause of death?—I am afraid I do not quite understand the question.

258. I will put it in this way: Is it your opinion that it is very difficult, from some of the certificates of death that are given by medical men, to trace the exact cause of death, in order to find out whether a death was due to improper feeding or resulted from negligence, or whether the death was caused by criminal intent?—That may be so. I have myself refused certificates that have simply had the cause of death assigned that was merely a symptom of something else. For instance, I have had certificates of marasmus and of syncope and of convulsions. Now, a child may die from convulsions, from natural or from unnatural causes, and, therefore, "convulsions" itself is not a cause of death; there must be a cause behind that.

259. In

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

259. In fact, it is very difficult, in the majority of the cases of these children, to tell whether it is a case of natural death or of criminality?—It is absolutely impossible in many cases, because it may arise from what I may describe as a small amount of ignorance. For instance, in many cases where children are fed on condensed milk, which does not satisfy them, and where they are slowly starving, they become ravenous; then the people knowing this, and thinking that the food itself is not sufficient, instead of going to the proper treatment, namely, cow's milk, give the child pieces of bacon, or, as they say, anything they are eating themselves; and when they give a child of two months old a piece of bacon this may cause its death. That is a case in which it arises from ignorance, but not gross neglect amounting to any criminal charge.

260. So that in that respect the instructions which are given out by inspectors in registered houses as to the feeding of infants are very valuable?—Quite so. In many towns cards of instructions are issued; for instance, in the town of Bristol; I remember that the General Hospital there used to issue cards to all their patients with reference to the feeding of children. I think it very essential that it should be made known to people how to feed these children; many people have not an idea.

Viscount Llandaff.

261. Of your five cases three are within the present Act, are they not?—Three; that is to say, in the first case of Weston there was no prosecution by the inspector; probably if there had been supervision there would have been, if the other child had come under the age of 12 months. In the second case, that is the case of the 25*l.*, it was certainly not within the Act.

262. But that is a case in which the verdict was "Death from natural causes," and you have no suggestion to make to the contrary?—No, but it is very hard, as was said just now, in cases of mal-nutrition and improper feeding, to return anything else but a verdict of "Death from natural causes."

263. Was there any evidence of mal-nutrition?—I forget now what was the cause of death in that case, but I know it was the case of a child who had been received for the sum of 25*l.*

264. Then the third case, the case of this woman Boucher, would not be touched by the present Bill. The Bill does not oblige you to get registered if you do not keep a child for more than 24 hours, so that Madame Boucher, who despatches the new born infant, at the age of half-an-hour or 10 hours, and so on, would not be touched by the present Bill?—In one case the child was 14 days old when it was removed.

265. In all the cases but that one the child was less than 24 hours in the house?—Yes.

266. In the two remaining cases the child was taken by a friend who got drunk and left the child; that would come under the Act?—But the other child was over the age of 12 months; there is no inspection there.

267. Then the woman with the invalid husband was within the Act?—That was a case in which she was prosecuted and convicted under the Act for keeping more than one child.

(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

268. You spoke of sour milk; you are aware that sour milk is slow poison?—It would very likely cause irritation and intestinal inflammation in a young child.

269. I do not follow you as to what you want to do; supposing we extend the Act to everybody who keeps one child, how would you do with regard to parents living in India who sent home a child to be kept in England instead of in India?—But is that a case simply of profit; would they be making a profit out of that?

270. The child might be sent to a school?—You would not send a child to school at that tender age. Probably, if the Act were limited to five years of age, very few under five years would go to school.

271. I really want to know how you would do it. Children are constantly sent home from India under five years of age to be kept by friends who are paid for their maintenance, and in such a case a man technically may make a profit out of it?—I do not think there should be any limitation myself, but that where any child is taken for profit or reward there should be registration. I have never myself had any difficulty about it, never had a question raised, never heard people say that they objected to it. As regards the inspection, that perhaps might be left to the discretion of the people carrying out the Act; but the fact of registration, I think, should occur in all cases.

272. Do you say that in the case of a school of the highest possible class you would recommend that that school should be required to be registered, because they took young children who came back from India?—But would they take children of that tender age, under the age of five.

273. Children are constantly left in England of the most tender age. If an officer goes out to India and cannot take out a child, he gives it to a friend and he pays for maintenance; how would you avoid including a case of that kind?—But is that taking a case for profit? Are they actually giving a person a sum so that they might make profit out of it?

274. You cannot in law examine whether a person makes a profit; it is "hire or reward," that is the condition. I want to know what you would suggest in such a case; would you require registration and inspection?—I am afraid that in case there were any exceptions made to registration that might be fatal to the efficiency of the Act altogether. Who is going to decide in which cases registration shall occur and in which it shall not? Cases of ill-treatment of children are not restricted to the poorer classes, and "hire or reward" should guide registration.

275. You cannot suggest any remedy. You must be aware that you could not expect people in such cases to submit to registration?—I do not see myself that the people would object to registration. If a person takes a lunatic into a private house that is under the Lunacy Commissioners it is liable to inspection; there is never any question raised or any objection as to that.

276. You do not think that there would be any objection to this?—I do not think so. Of course the inspection in this, as in other matters, would be a confidential matter between the persons

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administering

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued]

Lord Thring—continued.

administering the Act and the persons employed to take charge of the children, and it would be carried out with great discretion.

277. You surely would not give a discretion to the persons employed, with reference to people who kept houses which came under the Act?—I should, perhaps, use the expression "tact." They come down, but they do not come down in a public way; they come at odd times.

278. However, you think it would not be objected to?—I should think not; I have never heard anything to make me think that it would.

Viscount Llandaff.

279. Registration is no use without inspection, is it?—Not a bit, I think.

Lord Belper.

280. You have not read the evidence before the House of Commons Select Committee in 1890 on Infant Life Protection?—No.

281. There are cases there mentioned where strong objection would be taken to inspection?—Of course, I was only speaking to my personal knowledge. I have never heard of any person objecting to it.

Lord Thring.

282. I asked what you thought would be the effect if the law were extended in the way you suggested, and whether it would not involve inspection in all cases?—I do not see myself personally any objection. Knowing the law, I should not myself object to it. You see that inspection and registration are so essential, in order to know the class of people who are taking children, to know that they are fitted mentally, physically, and morally, and in other ways, to undertake the care of children. I have had cases of children sent out during the day to people who have had some impediment in their speech, or something of that sort, and were not able to make other people understand; and such persons are totally unfit for the care of children.

283. You are aware, I suppose, that in all the great factory towns the infants are sent out from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening?—Yes.

284. Do you wish them to be brought within the law, because they are not within the law now?—They would not be under the proposed new law, I take it.

285. I say do you wish that they should be within the proposed new law?—I think the inspection of these houses would be beneficial to the children; I have had many cases of children who have been taken in at these places, and only the other day my jury censured a woman for her want of care. I think she had two children, and this child died the last day she had it; the child had inflammation of the lungs. One of the witnesses living in the house said: "The day before the death I noticed that the child was extremely ill, and had it been mine I should have called in medical advice." The woman who kept the *crèche* said that she had noticed nothing the matter with the child.

286. If you make the law include these cases, you would do away with the 24-hours limit?—Where a person had perhaps 20 or 30 children

Lord Thring—continued.

under her care, I think she should be competent to undertake the care of children.

Viscount Llandaff.

287. Had that woman any children of her own?—She had been a nurse, she told me.

288. If it had been a child of her own, do you think she would have called in medical advice?—I cannot say.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

289. Speaking generally, would you say that you have been able to draw a marked difference in your experience between the treatment of legitimate and illegitimate children; that is to say that a very large proportion of the cases of this kind in which you hold inquests would be illegitimate?—I could not say that, because I hold inquests on a very large number of legitimate children who die from improper feeding.

290. Let me put it in another way: not those in whose cases inquests are held, but those cases in which the results of the inquest seem to betoken wilful, deliberate neglect?—Well, of course wilful or deliberate neglect come under the criminal law at once, and it would constitute either murder or manslaughter. I have had only five or six cases in which people have been sent for trial for neglecting children. It is very hard to say whether that improper feeding to which reference has been made is wilful or not. It is a very easy thing to feed a child so as to cause its death wilfully, but at the same time it is very hard to prove it.

Chairman.

291. Do you get many cases of death from improper feeding from registered houses under the Act?—No, I do not.

Viscount Llandaff.

292. Do you get many cases of mothers with their own children at home who feed them improperly?—A great many cases, especially among very young mothers. The sanitary condition of many houses is so imperfect that it is absolutely necessary that some inspection should occur.

Lord Thring.

293. What houses?—The houses where one child is taken in under the age of 12 months, and where there are several children over that age.

Viscount Llandaff.

294. Is there not sanitary inspection by the sanitary authority in every district?—There is no house-to-house inspection; no compulsory inspection, I mean. Unless the attention of the sanitary authorities, I take it, were drawn to a particular house, there could be no inspection.

295. How would it be under this Bill?—In all cases where the child was taken for profit or reward there would be registration, and the licence would not be issued unless there was proof that the house was in a good sanitary condition, and also that the people applying for the licence were fit. In the case I mentioned just now, where a little child was found dead

on

24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

on a sofa, the overcrowding and the filthy and abominable condition of the house, and the sour milk there, rendered the chance of a young child living very remote.

Lord Belper.

296. But would not that overcrowding apply in many cases to children living with their own parents; but the Act here is to apply to children taken for hire or reward?—That is so.

Viscount Llandaff.

297. Is there any reason for dealing differently with those children?—In many cases there may be a motive for neglecting them which does not exist in the case of children living in their own homes.

Chairman.

298. These children are given out often for a lump sum?—Yes.

299. And, naturally, there is a motive then for neglecting them?—Yes; and whether there may be such a motive in cases where a child is sent out for a weekly sum is a matter for consideration; one only hears one side of it; that is the mother's; it is very often to the mother's interest to keep a child alive that she may have a hold on the man; but, on the other hand, there may be other people who are interested in the death of the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

300. Not the keeper of the child, you mean?—No; but other people might be interested in the death of the child and might use influence on the person keeping that child.

Chairman.

301. I should like to ask you one question with regard to the lying-in houses; do you regard them as being the main source from which the profession of baby farmer is fed?—Very often I think they are; and in regard to the large number of cases of children found dead, I, myself, have no doubt, though, of course, one has no proof, that many of those children do come from lying-in houses.

302. Are you a medical man?—I am, and a barrister too, so I speak from both sides.

303. And do you strongly recommend the registration of all lying-in houses?—Certainly I do, and inspection.

304. That would include the private hospitals kept by many in the profession; a good many doctors have private hospitals of their own?—I would not go so far as that, because I do not see very well how you can class them together.

305. There is a distinction between a private hospital and a hospital that is a public one?—I do not see why a difference should be drawn for the purposes of the Act.

Lord Belper.

306. Where would you draw your line?—In the case put, the doctor in charge of a house of that sort would be conversant with sanitary (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

and other matters, and for his own sake he would not have his house in an unsatisfactory condition.

307. Where would you draw the line in a law compelling the registration of lying-in houses?—I should have inspection, certainly, of all houses kept by midwives who systematically receive persons about to be confined, and who are to be attended by the midwife herself.

Lord Thring.

308. Is it not a fact that in almost innumerable cases men in the country bring up their wives to London for their first confinement?—Some may, but they are under the care of a doctor.

309. They are in a lying-in house?—But what one understands by a lying-in house is not a house where a person comes and takes rooms under the supervision of a doctor, who previously sees that matters are correct.

Chairman.

310. But where would you draw the line so as to distinguish between the bad class of lying-in houses, which cause the evils which now exist, and the perfectly legitimate and well-conducted lying-in houses managed by some well-known doctors?—I should say that all houses kept by midwives for the delivery of women should be under inspection.

Lord Thring.

311. An ordinary lodging-house keeper might have them. You must know what goes on in London. A man's wife is going to be confined; he takes a lodging in the best part of London for the purpose of his wife being confined in London; do you mean to tell me that you are going to have that house registered?—That is not a lying-in house as I understand it. I mean a house that lays itself out, and advertises to receive women during their confinement.

312. Do you mean that where people do do that, and do not advertise, then the houses are not lying-in houses?—No, but I should not classify a lodging taken by a doctor as in the same class.

313. It is not taken by a doctor; the commonest thing in the world is, as everybody knows, that a man living in the country with a delicate wife, or for some other reason, wishes her to be confined in London, and comes up and takes an ordinary lodging in a house where they take in people who are going to be under the care of a doctor; are they all to be registered?—But those are only rooms engaged for one occasion. If these landladies kept houses and advertised to take in women, and attended them themselves, I should say that that is a lying-in house; that is what I mean. I mean the doctor himself is perfectly competent, or should be, to say what the surroundings are, and to see that the person undertaking it is a fit person.

314-16. Are you to register every house which is accustomed to receive ladies who are going

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24 April 1896.]

Mr. DREW.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

going to be confined. I ask you how are you going to distinguish between those cases and the other cases, or are you going to register them all?—I can only say what I just now said, that in all cases where women lay themselves out for it and have a lying-in house, and

Lord Thring—continued.

where they advertise to receive women during their confinement, and where they attend the patient themselves, as midwives, in all those cases there should be inspection. It is only a suggestion that I make.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Lunæ, 27^o Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. ALFRED SPENCER, having been called in, is further Examined, as follows:

Lord Thring.

317. I THINK we got a little puzzled about the comparative mortality of adults and infants; I understand with regard to the County of London you can give the comparative mortality of infants and adults in the County of London?—I can.

318. Infants under one year of age I mean?—I can.

319. Will you give it?—I find that the corrected general death-rate for London was, in the year 1894, 18·93 per 1,000, which is equal to 1·893 per cent.; that the average death-rate of infants under one year for the 10 years 1883 to 1892 in London was at the rate of 154 per 1,000, or 15·4 per cent., which, I think, is nearly eight times as great as the average death-rate for all ages.

320. And then I understand there are a certain number of other large towns, I forget how many you told me?—The corrected death-rate in 33 great towns is given in the Registrar General's Annual Summary for 1894 as 19·59 per 1,000, or 1·959 per cent.

321. Of all?—The general death-rate. Then the average death-rate of infants under one year in 33 great towns.

322. In the same 33 great towns?—In the same 33 great towns. For the 10 years, 1883 to 1892, it was 166 per 1,000, or 16·6 per cent.

323. Then can you give the differences, I mean the percentage of deaths of infants as compared with the percentage of adults in London; what is the difference?—In the one case it is 18·93 per 1,000, and, in the case of infants, 154 per 1,000, or a difference of 135·07 per 1,000.

324. Then I understand that in respect of the whole of the country there are no materials for comparing them?—I am unable to find in the (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

Registrar General's Summary any materials as to the general death-rate of infants under one year, but I can give the corrected general death-rate for England and Wales, and that is 16·59 per 1,000. I understand that the Registrar General is to be called, and he will probably be able to carry these figures further than I can.

Chairman.

325-6. A Member of the Committee has asked me to inquire what particular effect the registration of houses has upon children; can you speak to that of your own knowledge, or shall we be able to get at it from your inspector?—I can only speak in general terms. The inspector would probably be able to describe to the Committee the difference that his experience has shown him to exist between the treatment of infants at unregistered houses and the treatment of infants at registered houses.

327. But I may take it from you that the general effect of the reports which you have received since you have been administering this Act shows that in registered houses the mortality is less, and the children are better looked after, and better fed, and more kindly treated, in registered houses?—That is exactly the case.

Lord Thring.

328. With your great experience, I should like to know why you think that strengthening the law in the way that is suggested by the Bill would enable you to get more houses registered; because I apprehend that wherever anybody wants to treat children badly they would evade registration?—Where there is a deliberate intention of treating infants badly I apprehend that that might be the case; but there is a very large proportion of cases where there may be

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27 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

no deliberate intention to neglect or ill-treat infants, but where a certain amount of neglect undoubtedly takes place, which would, in my opinion, be to a large extent met by bringing the houses in which these infants are kept under registration and supervision.

329. But what clause in this Bill, or what law, do you think, would enable you to get at the houses, because the people will not come in voluntarily?—Clause 2 of the Bill, which extends the operation of the Act to all infants under five years of age, would bring in an enormously greater number than are brought in by the present Act.

330. A greater number of children, I admit: but what do you say as to a greater number of houses where the children are under one year of age?—Already we are brought into contact, in the course of our inquiries, with a large number of houses at which infants under five years of age are kept for hire. That alone would, in my opinion, increase the operation of the Act by 90 per cent.; but I also think that if you widen the law we shall be able, by the means we shall be able to take, to find out and to get into touch with a very much greater number of cases than we are able to do now.

Lord Belper.

331. I understand that at present you say there are only 20 houses registered under the present law?—Forty-one under the present law.

332. Certainly in some form we have had the number 20 given us?—At the end of last year there were 41 on the register.

333. Do you know how many children there are in those 41 houses, or were at that time?—That the lady inspector who has the houses under inspection will be able to give you.

Chairman.

334. I think the lady inspector would be able to answer a great many of the questions of Lord Thring as to the willingness or unwillingness to come on the register?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

335. Can you form any opinion what proportion of the houses which ought to be registered under the present Act, or what proportion of the children who should be registered under the present Act, are registered?—That, of course, is a question partly of opinion and partly of experience. I believe that at the present time there are few, if any, of the houses in London not under registration which should be under registration.

336. Therefore, practically, you mean that as far as the law permits you, it is your opinion that you get hold of nearly the whole of the houses that ought to be registered, and, therefore, nearly all the children that under the present law ought to be registered?—That is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

337. You mean that in the whole of London at this moment you do not think there are more

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

than 41 houses in which there are two infants under one year of age kept for hire?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

338. Then the effect of any increased stringency of the Act in London would be to bring in an additional class of children, not more houses?—A very much greater number of houses and a still greater number of children.

339. True; but at the present moment, with regard to the one year infants, I understand you to say that you are of opinion that the one year infants are all, or nearly all, brought in that ought to be?—As far as the present law goes.

340. Therefore, the effect of the increased stringency of the proposed Bill will be to bring in not more of the one year infants, but to bring in a very large number of cases between one and five years old?—It would bring in the infants over 12 months old; but in addition to that, it would bring in a very large number of cases where only one infant under one year is now kept either alone or with other infants of over one year.

Lord Belper.

341. I understand that you say that you practically get hold of the cases of the whole of the children that come under the present law, or nearly all?—I believe that to be the case as regards London.

342. Then if that be the case, as far as that class of cases go, that is, those which come under the present law, there are really no malpractices going on, or ill-treatment of children, because they are all under registration and under inspection?—That is my belief.

343. Then do you believe that the fact that the present law only goes a certain way and does not include those children to whom it is now proposed to extend it, the fact of its being so limited, drives the people who wish to indulge in these malpractices and in the ill-treatment of children, into keeping them in houses with children over the age that is now the limit. If there are any malpractices, they must have gone on somewhere; with regard to the children of one year, if they do not go on in the houses which are now registered, which, you say, include nearly the whole of the cases, they must go on in some others?—That is probably the case.

344. You say that the fact that the law only goes a certain way drives them into keeping one of these younger children in a house with several other older children?—That in our experience has been found to be the case.

Chairman.

345. Is not your contention rather that, instead of keeping the children all together, the children become more widely distributed, whereas people who would, if there had been no existing law, have kept perhaps more than one child under one year, now only keep one child under one year?—And frequently others over one year with that child; yes, that is so.

346. So that although the present law may not be, and you think it is not evaded at all as regards

27 April 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

regards the existing administration, still it is practically evaded as regards the children by means of the limitation of age?—That is the case.

Lord Belper.

347. I suppose the law, if you extend it to a certain number of houses where there is only one child kept, will be much more difficult to carry out than the present law is?—There would be a very much larger amount of work to be done, but I do not apprehend that there would be any greater initial difficulties in carrying it out than in carrying out the present law.

348. But surely there must be much more difficulty in finding out where the houses are where such children are kept; if there are a number of children kept together your attention is easily called to it: if there is only one, clearly it is more difficult to find it out?—But we have already had our attention called to a large number of cases where only one infant has been kept.

349. But that does not show that your attention has been directed to the whole of the cases where only one infant has been kept?—But adopting, as we do, the system of answering, practically, every advertisement that appears in the public press for nurse children, that does bring us very closely into touch with the practice of putting out children to nurse, and we think that by that means, and by communication with the registrars of births and deaths, and by using the other machinery that we employ in carrying out the present Act, we should be brought into contact with the greater part of the extended work that would be given by the enlarged Act.

350. I understand your answer, but I think it is not actually an answer to my question. I thought that you at once admitted that where you have got a large number of houses to deal with of a similar character it would be very difficult to deal with the same proportion as you can of a smaller number of houses of a larger character?—I do not apprehend greater initial difficulty.

Chairman.

351. It is a mere question of administration?—It is a mere question of the enlargement of the area of our work.

Mr. SAMUEL BABEY, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

358. You are an Inspector under the Infant Life Protection Act for the London County Council?—I am.

359. When were you first appointed to carry out these duties?—In February 1878.

360. That, I think, was the time when Mr. Spencer told us the Act first began to be really efficiently administered, really taken in hand?—Just so.

361. Will you describe your duties to us?—

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

352. In other words, an increased staff of inspectors?—That is my opinion.

353. It is the fact, is it not, that these people whom we desire to catch in the net of the law, who ill-treat and neglect children, do so habitually; I mean to say, a person who takes in a child casually, and for a short time, and does not take another one, as a rule is not necessarily found to be unkind to that child; the people we want to catch are those who take in children habitually, and, as soon as the first child is dead, take in another one, and, as soon as that child is dead, take in a third one?—That would be the case.

354. And therefore, when you have once located them you know them, you have got your finger on them, to a certain extent?—To a certain extent that is the case; and, as a matter of fact, we are in touch with a large number of persons who make a practice of taking in infants for hire.

355. It is a regular mode with them of getting a living, in other words?—It is.

Lord Belper.

356. I quite understand that there is a demand for such houses, and I understand that that creates a supply; the demand, I mean, of people who have got infants to dispose of whom they do not care about seeing again. If that is the case surely the supply will be found somehow, in future, to a certain extent?—Does your Lordship mean that we shall to a certain extent be able to get into touch with the supply in order to get cognizance of the disposal of the infants?

357. I mean, it becomes more difficult to get hold of every case, and therefore it will not be so easy to get hold of the cases to which you are now going to extend the Act as it has been with reference to the earlier cases?—May I answer the question in this way; that I do not anticipate that any enlargement of the Act would reach all cases where infants are put out at hire and ill-treated or disposed of, but that it would bring the law and the administration into closer touch with the whole system, and would give a greater initial probability of knowledge on the subject.

Chairman—continued.

My duties are to examine the advertising columns of certain newspapers for advertisements for the care or adoption of infants, and to investigate each one. Also to keep observation on private lying-in establishments with a view to ascertain the number of births of infants at these places, and endeavour to trace what becomes of the infants. Also to keep touch with the police, relieving officers, registrars of births and deaths, and other officials, with a view to obtain information

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27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

mation of places where infants are kept, and generally to avail myself of all sources of information of the keeping of infants for hire. I report in writing each day to the chief officer of the Public Control Department the result of my inquiries. Previous to April 1894 the registered houses were also inspected by me, but the Council from that date appointed a female inspector, to whom this duty was deputed.

362. Have you got anything more to say on that?—No.

363. Those are your official duties now?—Yes.

364. Practically your duties are confined now to following up advertisements, and enquiring about children in unregistered houses?—That is so.

365. And then when once the house is registered, you hand it over to the lady inspector?—Exactly.

366. Since your appointment in 1878, how many investigations have you made?—Apart from the visits which I have made to the houses registered for the keeping of infants, I had made, up to March 1895, 9,575 investigations at houses where I had reason to believe nurse-infants were being kept for hire. From April 1894 to March 1895 I was assisted in this work by another inspector whom the Council had appointed to assist in carrying out the Act. I have not included any figures as to my visits to the houses properly registered for the keeping of infants, but these houses were under constant inspection by me to see that the infants were properly cared for.

367. Do you mean to say that you called at 9,575 houses, or that you investigated the cases of 9,575 children?—That number of houses.

368. In these investigations how many cases did you find which came within the terms of the Act of 1872?—Two hundred and five cases only came within the Act, and these were cases where I found persons infringing the Act by keeping two or more nurse-infants under the age of one year without registration.

369. And what course did you take with regard to these 205 cases in which the Act had been disobeyed?—In 89 cases the persons keeping the infants were summoned; 85 convictions were obtained; one case was dismissed; three persons failed to answer the summons and could not afterwards be traced; in the remaining 116 cases the offenders were cautioned in writing, and all of them subsequently complied with the Act, either by having their houses registered, or by giving up the care of the infants kept in contravention of the law.

370. Why did you summon some and simply allow the others to register themselves?—Because the cases were of such a character that it was considered unnecessary to take them to the police court.

371. You did not then necessarily summon them because you found them keeping children unregistered that ought to have been registered, but you only summoned in the cases where you

Chairman—continued.

found children badly kept; is that so?—Chiefly so.

372. Where did you draw the line?—In some cases, where the accommodation was fairly good, and the children kept in a fair way, and where the persons subsequently complied with the law by having their houses registered; those cases were not prosecuted.

373. One question I should like to ask about those you cautioned; did you find, when you cautioned these people, that there was any disinclination to register themselves, or did they prefer to give up keeping more than one child, in order to still remain outside the provisions of the Act?—In many cases no doubt that was so.

Lord Thring.

374. Do you mean that they gave up the child?—They gave up keeping more than one child.

Chairman.

375. But then they went on keeping one child?—Yes, very often.

376. In how many of the investigations made by you did the Act of 1872 not apply?—In 9,370 cases.

377. And in how many of these 9,370 investigations did you find infants kept for hire?—In 3,991; and, taking account only of infants under seven years of age, I found altogether 5,955 infants kept for hire or reward.

Lord Belper.

378. I thought you said that the whole of the cases where children were kept for hire was 3,991?—That is so.

379. Then how can you make out the 5,955 infants under seven years of age?—

Chairman.

380. Were the 3,991 under one year old?—No, they were not.

Lord Belper.

381. As far as I understand it, the number of cases where any children were kept for hire was 3,991 only?—I will give them in detail.

Chairman.

382. I do not see how you make up your 5,955?—Because some are keeping probably three infants, or four, one being under the age of a year, and the others over that age.

383. Then does the 3,991 apply to houses?—Houses.

384. And the other number is children?—Yes.

385. When you say that they were kept for hire, did the people admit that they were being kept for hire?—Yes, or in many cases they were adopted for a lump sum.

386. I suppose there were a good many that were not kept for hire. Had you any reason to suppose

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

suppose that they deceived in that respect; that they gave you false answers?—Many times I got false answers, especially where I found the law being broken.

387. They told you that they had taken the children in for nothing, and then you found out afterwards that that was not the fact?—That is so. In one year alone, that of 1892 to March 1893, I found 215 unregistered houses with, in all, 345 infants under the age of seven years kept for hire.

Lord Thring.

388. When you say unregistered houses, do you mean houses that ought to be registered?—No, they needed no registration under the law, because they were not breaking the law. In the same year there were only 21 houses registered by the council with 72 infants kept in them. The infants in the registered houses were benefited by the protective provisions of the Act of 1872. The infants in the unregistered houses were not.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

389. Seventy-two infants under seven years of age, do you mean?—No, 72 under one year old.

Chairman.

390. In how many houses did you say?—In 21.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

391. In the first instance, the 345 in the unregistered houses were children under seven years of age?—Yes.

392. The two cases are not exactly parallel?—That is so.

Lord Belper.

393. Can you say whether you intentionally visited any houses where you knew there was only one child kept?—In answering an advertisement I would call at the house and find the child received and kept.

394. What I mean is this: that I conclude you were making these visits in trying to enforce the present law?—Just so.

395. Therefore you probably would not visit houses where there was only one child kept, or unless you had reason to suppose, or thought beforehand, that there was more than one child kept?—I might not, but I could only learn that by visiting the houses.

Chairman.

396. Can you give any information as to how the infants were distributed amongst the unregistered houses?—Yes. In 205 cases two or more infants under one year were kept unlawfully. In 1,598 cases only one infant under the age of a year was kept. In 683 cases one infant under the age of a year, with others over one year, was kept; and in 1,505 cases only infants over one year old were kept.

397. Can you give any figure as to the mortality of the infants at unregistered houses?—Yes; 807 deaths came to my notice; in 658 of these the infants were under the age of a year, and in 149 the infants were over one year but under seven years.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

398. Can you give any idea of the number of children that were kept in the houses in which the 807 deaths occurred: can you form any sort of idea of the per-centage?—In some cases one only would be kept; in others, two or three.

399. I asked you if you could form any idea as to the number of children that were kept in the houses in which these 807 died; I wanted to get at the per-centage of deaths in the unregistered houses?—I do not think I can give that. In many cases there was only one infant kept, and in others there were two or three, or, in some cases, four kept, one of them being under 12 months old.

400. Do you know how many inquests were held in respect of these 807 deaths?—Inquests were frequently held, but I cannot give the correct number previous to April 1889.

401. I forgot to ask you over what period do the 807 deaths extend?—From the commencement of my work in 1878.

402. From 1878 to now, or to the time you gave up inspecting the registered houses, do you mean?—These deaths were at the unregistered houses.

403. Up to the present date then?—Up to 1895.

404. Do you know how many inquests were held in respect of these deaths?—Inquests were frequently held, but I cannot give the number previous to April 1889. From the 1st of April in that year 1889 to the 31st of March 1895 there were 323 deaths.

Lord Kinnaird.

405. Of infants?—Of infants.

406. Under one year?—No, not all under one year; and 135 inquests were held in respect of these 323 deaths; 101 verdicts of deaths from natural causes being returned. There were 30 verdicts of deaths from improper feeding and surroundings, when the nurses were cautioned or censured; and four verdicts of manslaughter or wilful neglect. This shows that in 41 per cent. of the deaths of infants at unregistered houses coming under my notice the circumstances were such as to demand inquiry by the coroner.

Chairman.

407. What have you got to say as to the condition and the treatment of the infants you found kept for hire at unregistered houses during your investigations?—In many cases the infants were kept under very unsatisfactory conditions as regards cleanliness, food, clothing, want of proper accommodation, air space, and the unsuitability of the persons who had charge of them.

408. May I ask whether you came across many cases of actual cruelty?—Not actual cruelty.

409. I mean cases that would come under the present Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—No; in many cases the children were neglected, but not criminally neglected: they suffered from want of suitable food and clothing, and were kept under conditions not at all satisfactory, but the neglect was not criminal.

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410. As

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

410. As compared with this, what was the condition of the infants kept at registered houses?—While the supervision of the registered houses was entrusted to me, I found the infants clean and fairly well kept and clothed, suitable food provided, and medical attendance when needed, and the accommodation so far as regards air space and surroundings satisfactory. Before granting registration in these cases in London, the local authority always satisfied itself that the provision for the care of the infants was satisfactory. The houses were afterwards frequently inspected, so that the conditions under which the infants were kept should be satisfactorily maintained.

411. I should like just to ask you there, when you visited the registered houses did you find much annoyance on the part of the people?—No, none whatever.

412. They did not dislike your coming?—No.

413. Can you give the total number of persons and houses which have been registered since 1878?—From 1878 to the 31st of March 1894 there were 550 registrations granted.

Lord Belper.

414. That means 550 different houses, does it not?—Not different houses.

415. Is the same house when registered another year counted again?—Yes.

416. Then they are not different houses?—Sometimes they are.

417. But I ask you if the whole of the 550 are different houses?—No, they are not different houses; sometimes the registration is renewed, and, in that case, they are not different.

Chairman.

418. Do not you distinguish between fresh houses and houses which simply had the registration renewed?—I do not think I can distinguish them.

419. Perhaps you can tell us at a later period; you can find out, or perhaps Mr. Spencer can let us know?—Yes.

420. In counting the number of cases you have investigated you did not put down as a separate investigation each visit you made to an unregistered house, did you?—Yes, they are all separate investigations.

421. Each time you visited an unregistered house?—Yes.

Lord Kimaird.

422. If you went 10 times to one house would you count that as 10 visits?—I have never been 10 times to one house, but if I did I should so count the visits.

423. If you went five times to one house should you count that five investigations?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

424. You mean investigations; should you count the same child over again?—No, I should not count the same child over again, but cases where I could identify children kept at unregistered houses would be very few.

Lord Thring.

425. Then how do you possibly identify the children; you say you never count them over again?—I should not if I knew it. I may see the same child at another house, but if I did, and recognised it, I should not count it again. Children are frequently moved to other houses.

Chairman.

426. Can you give the total number of infants received into these houses during the period named?—I cannot give the correct number previous to 1883, but from the commencement of that year to 31st March 1894, 1,227 infants had been received.

427. How many deaths of infants have occurred at these houses during the period you have stated?—Two hundred and twenty deaths have occurred from 1883 to March 1894.

428. And what number of inquests were held in respect of these deaths?—Fourteen inquests were held, which resulted in satisfactory verdicts, except in two cases where the persons were admonished and cautioned.

429. Can you say where these people who take these children, generally, get the children from?—They get them in various ways; some from homes, some from lying-in houses, by advertising, and in various ways.

430. Can you tell the Committee anything about the number of births of infants at private lying-in establishments, and what becomes of the infants?—It is very difficult to trace the infants born at these places, the keepers of houses of this description seldom caring to give any information, either as to the infants born or what becomes of them. In 1893 I traced four infants, who, soon after their birth, were taken to Waterloo and Victoria railway stations by the keeper of one of these houses, and were handed over by her to persons to whom she paid 2*l.* each for their adoption. Three of these infants died soon afterwards, and inquests were held in two cases, and a verdict of manslaughter was returned in one case. The judge who tried this case, and the jury, expressed a strong opinion that houses of this description should be under strict supervision, and that the authorities whose duty it is to administer the Infant Life Protection Act should endeavour to obtain a speedy alteration in the law for the better protection of infants. Other abuses in connection with such houses have also come under my notice, and I am satisfied that the practice of disposing of infants for adoption is carried on to a considerable extent by persons who keep lying-in houses.

431. Can you tell the Committee who that judge was?—Mr. Justice Hawkins.

432. And what was the date of the case you refer to?—In 1893.

433. Then I gather from your explanation that you are of opinion that lying-in houses should be under some supervision?—I am strongly of that opinion. Infants are frequently put out to nurse, or for adoption, from these lying-in houses, and if we had any control over them we could get to learn where the infants go.

434. Clause 3 of this Bill requires statements to be made in writing respecting infants received

or

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

or removed from registered houses. Can you give us reasons in support of this clause?—False names of infants, and false names and addresses of persons who have placed infants at registered houses, have been given; and persons on removing the infants from these houses have refused to give their address, or to state where the infant will be taken to, so that in such cases it would be almost impossible to trace the person or the infant, or to take any steps to prevent the infant being improperly dealt with if any harm had been intended.

435. Have you often gone to registered houses and found children taken away which had been there before, and been unable to trace them?—I have very often.

436. And the people have refused to give you information?—Not the registered person. The person who placed the child there has refused to give any account of where it has been taken.

437. The person who places the child there you say?—Yes.

438. Then Clause 4 requires delivery up of the register after the lapse or expiration of the registration; can you state anything in support of this clause?—In several cases registered persons have removed, and neither they nor the infants in their charge could be traced, and there is reason to fear that in some such cases the persons have used the registers to falsely represent themselves as being still registered.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

439. They represent themselves to whom?—They may represent themselves to anyone as being still registered.

Chairman.

440. To anyone who comes with a child, you mean?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

441. Do you mean that persons coming with a child ask is this house registered or not?—No.

442. Then who are the people to whom a person would misuse an old register by saying, "I am registered"?—That may be done, and I know of two cases where persons have removed from outside districts into London, and have still taken infants to be nursed, and have represented themselves to be registered.

443. But whom did they make that representation to?—To the person who takes the child there. In fact, two told me so themselves.

444. In that case the person bringing the child did ask the question?—No, that representation was made to me personally, and it may be made to others.

445. It was made to you on the strength of the old register, you mean?—Yes.

446. They produced to you a register for somewhere else?—From an outside district, and outside London.

447. Then it was not made to the person who brought the child?—No, not to the person who brought the child.

Chairman.

448. You knew all the registered houses, because they were under your supervision?—This (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

was outside London; those have never come under my supervision. When they left a district outside London they came into London, and brought their register with them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

449. A person comes from Manchester, we will say, where he has been registered; he comes to London, bringing a Manchester register; what use is that in London?—No use at all.

450. But to whom is it offered or supposed to be of use?—It may operate upon the person who brings the child there.

Chairman.

451. Clause 5 of the Bill requires that it shall be unlawful for any person who receives an infant under the age of five years for hire or reward to transfer such infant to any other person without the consent in writing of the local authority, unless it be to a relative: can you explain the benefit that would result from that provision?—I may explain that a system of barter or trafficking in infants has come under my notice where infants have been received, under pretence of adopting them, for sums of money from 2*l.* to 50*l.* These infants were seldom kept by the trafficker, who, through advertising in the newspapers or answering advertisements, has succeeded in immediately transferring the infants to other persons for adoption, in some cases without any premium, and in others for less sums of money than originally received, or has placed them out to nurse for weekly payments which have not been kept up; the trafficker has given a false name and address and has not been traced. If the Committee will allow me I can give particulars of nine cases of this kind which have come under my notice since the year 1886, in which 144 infants were received. The sums paid with these infants could only be ascertained in 66 cases, for which in all a sum of 632*l.* was received by the traffickers. Some of these infants were afterwards abandoned in a most heartless manner and died, and others were sent to the workhouse and became a charge upon the rates.

Lord Belper.

452. Were these cases found out afterwards?—They were traced afterwards.

453. Was your information in time to have stopped any of these cases taking place, supposing the law had permitted you to do so?—I should say so.

454. I thought you said you only found it out afterwards?—The offence must take place before we can interfere.

455. But sufficiently soon after to enable you to trace the people and prosecute them?—In some cases.

Chairman.

456. Then Clause 6 of the Bill requires that additional powers shall be given to officers in carrying out their duties; will you explain any difficulties you have experienced in working the Act of 1872?—I have been refused admission to houses where I have had reason to believe that

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that infants were being kept for hire. Information as regards infants kept for hire has been refused me; and false information has also been given me in respect of infants kept for hire for the purpose of evading the Act, and much difficulty has, in consequence, been experienced in proving offences against the Act.

457. And has there been any other difficulty in administering; it is mainly a question of people refusing to answer questions, and refusing to admit you to their house, I understand?—Yes.

458. Will you describe the manner in which you now carry out your investigations, and the way in which you gain admission to unregistered houses, and learn whether infants are kept there to nurse?—On seeing an advertisement in a newspaper for the care or adoption of an infant, I call at the address given.

459. Have you got any samples of those advertisements?—I have (*handing in a paper of samples of advertisements*). On seeing an advertisement in a newspaper for the care or adoption of an infant, I call at the address given and inquire for the person by name or initials as given by her, obtain an interview, and satisfy myself, before disclosing who I am, as to whether infants are being kept or the Act infringed. I then explain the object of my visit and the requirements of the Act, and hand a notice form, No. 47, which gives instructions as to where application should be made for registration if it should at any time be needed. Should the advertiser give her address at a newsagent's shop where letters are received, I write a letter asking an interview, and for terms for the adoption and care of the infant.

460. Do you write the letters yourself, or get them written?—Very often I get them written; I write sometimes myself. On getting a reply to my letter I interview the person and satisfy myself that the Act has not been infringed, and explain its requirements. Should I obtain information of any person suspected of keeping infants, I visit the house and act as the circumstances of the case may justify me in doing.

461. Have you had much difficulty, as a rule, in getting into these places?—Very often.

462. They suspect you?—I think they do.

463. You generally represent that you have a child to put out, I suppose?—I lead them to believe so; I have to do so.

464. Then, as regards Clause 7, as to the power of the local authority to strike the name off the register, do you find that necessary?—I think so. Under the present Act there is no power to strike off the register the name of a person who has discontinued the keeping of infants. Such person must remain on the register until the expiration of the registration, and some inconvenience has been caused thereby. The suggested alteration is to meet that difficulty.

465. Now I want to ask you a few questions arising out of some of these points. I want to know, first of all, would the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, if properly administered, cover the deficiencies in the present Act?—I think not.

Chairman—continued.

466. It simply deals with cases of criminal cruelty, you mean?—With cases of criminal cruelty.

467. And starvation, I presume, is included in cruelty. It also dealt with those cases?—Yes.

468. Then is it your experience that there is much dislike on the part of respectable working people to register their houses?—I have not found a great difficulty in that matter. It seems there are some who do not particularly wish to register, but, generally speaking, I have found no objection.

469. I mean, when you have gone round to these unregistered houses and explained the Act, possibly in cases of infringement as well as in cases where it is not infringed, are the more respectable of these people generally quite willing to come and register themselves?—Many of them would be if they required it.

470. But I mean to say, if the Act were extended to include all children?—I do not think there would be a very great deal of objection; there would in some cases, no doubt.

471. You know that objection has been raised on the part of a great many philanthropic societies that board children out, on the ground that if the present Act were extended it would be very difficult to find respectable people who would take these children in. From your experience amongst people do you find that that would be the case?—There may be an objection felt by some people, but I do not think that, generally speaking, it would be so.

472. You do not think that there is any general objection to registration?—No; and particularly I may say that when a person has been registered they have no objection whatever to the visit of the inspector.

473. And do you find that they have less objection to a lady inspector than to a man?—I really cannot answer that.

474. You do not know?—No.

475. But do you think there might be objection to the visits of a man in uniform; there was a great deal of evidence given before one of the previous Committees as to the objections that would be entertained to a man in uniform visiting the house; that is rather a different question?—Possibly there may be objection to a man in uniform; I should think there would be.

476. But I do not know that there is any proposal with reference to that. Would you tell us what do you think is the best way of defining "relatives" and "guardians"?—There is some difficulty about that, but I think it has been thought that first cousin by blood or marriage should be the extent.

477. Have you found cases where children have been taken away in what you think ought to be regarded as an improper manner, and in which you have been simply told that they have been taken away by a relative; I mean to say cases where you think that it would have been advantageous if the term "relative" had been defined?—Cases of that kind have come under my notice, where it would have been satisfactory if the child could have been traced.

478. I want

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper.

478. I want to ask you one or two questions with regard to the evidence that you have given. I understand you made 9,575 visits of enquiry; I think you said you could not state how many different houses those visits included?—I cannot say exactly the number of different houses.

479. But you have included in that 9,575 all the visits you have made, whether they were second or third visits to the same house or not?—Yes.

480. Of those there were 205 cases in which you found there was an infringement of the present Act?—That is so.

481. In that number of 205 cases, have you also included houses which might have infringed the Act twice?—I have only two cases of that kind where I found the same person breaking the law a second time.

482. Therefore, practically, except those two cases, they would be all different houses?—Yes, they were different houses; when I found the second offence the persons had removed to other houses.

483. Different houses, but the same people?—The same people.

484. Of those cases I see that 116 were not prosecuted, but were cautioned, and with regard to several of them (I think you said several) you consented not to prosecute on their giving up keeping more than one child; is that the case?—Yes, they complied with the Act by giving up one child.

485. How often have you visited those houses since?—Very frequently; I cannot tell you how often.

486. You have assured yourself that they have not gone back and taken another child afterwards?—Some I have not been able to trace; others I have, and have frequently seen them since.

487. Should you agree with the evidence that Mr. Spencer gave us, that nearly the whole of the cases that ought to be registered under the present law are registered?—Well, we know of none that are breaking the law.

488. Have you any assistance in your work, or are you the only official?—I have another inspector to assist me; I take the district north of the Thames and he takes the district south of the Thames.

489. Then are these visits that have been made by you two or by you alone?—By me alone up to March 1894.

490. I think out of these, in round numbers, 10,000 visits you find that only about 200 were infringements of the Act; I suppose if the Act applied to all cases of children up to five years old and to all the cases where only one child was kept it would be a most enormous increase of your duties?—There would be a great increase.

491. It is almost impossible to say what the limit of the houses you might have to visit would be?—I do not think that a very great increase would take place, simply because I have discovered these myself from time to time, and I should bring them under the law that would extend it to one child.

492. I understand that you have discovered

(0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

these where you had reason to think that there was a *prima facie* case, for supposing that the present law might be infringed?—Yes.

493. Therefore, you did not take the trouble to visit a great number of the cases where only one child was kept, or where there was no reason to suppose that the present law was being infringed?—But still in any case where I had suspicion, I would always take steps to visit again.

494. However, the number of visits that you have made is something like 48 times as many as the cases where there has actually been an infringement?—Yes, that is so.

Chairman.

495. On that point can you state from your experience what the capacity of an inspector in looking after registered houses is; how many houses do you think an inspector could properly look after; 100, 200, 300, or what?—I should think an inspector could look after 200 or 300 houses very well.

496. Two hundred or 300 registered houses I mean?—By arranging the visits to the houses it could be done.

497. How often do you generally go?—I went never less than once a month; and I went very frequently if I had suspicion of anyone, and thought it required it.

Lord Belper.

498. In the case of your visits for the limited purposes of this Act, you discovered 3,991 cases where children were kept for hire?—I did.

499. Do you think that the greater part of those houses would register if the Act were extended?—Well yes, they would have to, or give up keeping infants.

500. They would either have to give up keeping children, or have to register, or have to infringe the Act; there are those three courses open to them; but my question is whether you think that the greater part of them would register?—I cannot say that.

501. At all events, that 3,991 is only a very small proportion of the houses where children are kept for hire?—That is so; no doubt there are many more.

502. I think you did not divide your visits or your cases into different years at all, you cannot tell us what the effect of the working of this Act under the county council has been by showing what number of cases you have had to visit, or what number of cases of infringement of the Act have been in the different years?—No, I have given them all together, but I think it must be in the return that Mr. Spencer has handed in.

503. From your personal recollection should you say your work was very much diminished since you first undertook the administration of the Act?—There is a slight improvement in the way infants are treated; the work has not diminished because it has increased rather; a greater number of persons advertise for the care of infants.

504. Therefore the fact of the attention of the county council having been turned to it has not had the effect of greatly diminishing the practice of keeping children?—No, it has not.

E 3

505. In

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

505. In fact you do not think that if the Act were extended there would be any fewer children kept, but you think that the children would have a very much better chance of being properly kept?—I certainly do.

506. I want to clear up some of these points about these lying-in houses. There are a great many advertisements in the papers now with regard to these houses?—There are.

507. Have those advertisements increased of late more than they used to do?—No, recently they have rather decreased.

508. The advertisements of the lying-in houses; I do not mean the children?—Advertisements as to lying-in houses have decreased.

509. But I ask you if they have increased?—I do not think they have increased.

510. Because I believe it is a fact that the number of advertisements regarding children to adopt have decreased, have they not?—Yes, within a few months they have.

511. Do you know any particular reason for that?—No. I may state that some of the newspapers that had inserted these advertisements very freely discontinued it. Year after year they do that. Some three years ago the "Weekly Times and Echo" advertised very freely; they have entirely discontinued it.

512. You do your best to prevent the more respectable papers from putting in these advertisements, you and Mr. Spencer, I suppose?—I have spoken to some. I have occasionally called at a paper office about an advertisement, and sometime afterwards they have discontinued them. The papers are very good; they will do all they can to prevent anything going wrong.

513. But what I want to know is this: do you think that people who put out children are finding that advertisement renders them open to too much interference from the authorities, and that they are adopting other means of getting rid of the children?—Yes, I think it probable they apply to lying-in houses without making their wants known publicly, that is to say, without advertising in the paper. They adopt the course of writing to a lying-in housekeeper, and arrangements are made in that way, and children are distributed all over London and other places by that means, and we know nothing of it.

514. Have you ever called at any of these lying-in houses?—Yes.

515. How have you generally been met; with a rebuff?—No, I cannot say that, but I get no information as a rule as regards an infant; they very seldom tell what becomes of them, they pretend not to know; I am told the "mother made the arrangements; I know nothing about it."

516. But it is your belief that it is the lying-in houses that are the great means of supplying children to what I may call the professional baby farmer?—Yes, I believe that to be the case.

517. I mean like the people in this Reading case?—Yes; I have no doubt a great many are distributed through those houses.

518. Do you know of many of your own personal knowledge?—I cannot say that I know many cases, but I know some where the children

Chairman—continued.

have come to grief through being distributed from these houses.

519. But you do know as a fact that the children from these houses vanish in a mysterious way and cannot be traced?—They do.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

520. I am anxious to return to a point on which you have already answered Lord Belper; do we clearly understand from you that you think we are practically getting hold now under the existing law of all houses in which more than one infant under 12 months is being kept?—As far as we know, we are.

521. That is exactly my point, as far as you know; but you have told us that over London there are at this moment 41 houses registered; do you believe that there are not much more than 41 houses in London now in which two children under 12 months of age are being kept for hire?—It is possible there may be.

522. What is possible?—That there may be more than one kept.

523. But practically you have no reason to suppose that there are a very large number more who ought to be registered, and who are not?—No, I have not.

524. Then you would say that all the mischief that occurs now which the Act would touch, occurs in houses unregistered in which only one infant is now kept?—That is so.

525. That is to say that is the main amendment that the law wants, to cover houses in which only one infant is kept?—Yes.

526. Then have you, with your experience of the working classes, thought at all as to the mode of doing it, if the law were made to cover every house in which only one infant was kept for hire; have you considered the question of the difficulties that would arise in working men's houses as to the temporary lodgment of a child with a neighbour for payment?—I do not think there would be much difficulty in that.

527. I see, on looking at your evidence that you gave in 1890, that you were asked, "You do not wish to interfere with people who take a neighbour's child out of kindness, but may receive 1s. or 2s. a week for supporting it?" and your answer is, "There are very few cases of that kind that comes to my notice?"—There are very few.

528. Do you mean that you have not an opportunity of seeing it, or that you think it is a rare thing to happen?—I do not think it is a very frequent occurrence; but it may be that such cases have not come under my notice.

529. Do you think it is a rare thing for a mother who goes into a hospital, or for a widower who is working elsewhere, or for 100 other such cases, to get a neighbour to take a child for a month, say, for a few shillings a week?—There are such cases, no doubt.

530. But you think it is rare?—To me it is; it has not come under my notice.

531. But I mean, have you had such means of observing as to make your view that it is rare, a view based upon the real knowledge of the facts; your evidence would be very important if you can assure us that you have had the means of observing,

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

observing, and think that it would be a rare thing to happen?—It may be that such cases would not come within my experience.

532. Then you told us that it was part of your duty to keep watch over private lying-in establishments, and find out what becomes of the infants; under what authority at all do you profess to go to make such enquiries at a lying-in house?—Well, I do it in the ordinary course of my duties; of course the lying-in house-keeper could shut the door in my face if she liked, and not admit me.

533. She may reply "what business is it of yours," and you have nothing more to say?—That is so.

534. Are any of the cases of the advertisements that you follow up found by you to be really genuine cases of people who honestly wish to adopt the child in order to bring it up themselves?—There are some cases of that kind; the majority are the other way.

535. You think that in the case of advertisements the majority are the other way?—I do.

536. In the houses where children are taken in for hire, can you give us roughly any idea of what proportion are illegitimate children and what proportion are legitimate?—I should say that not 5 per cent. of the children who have come under my notice have been legitimate.

537. That is to say that 95 per cent. are illegitimate children?—Yes, as far as my experience goes.

538. That corresponds with what Mr. Spencer told us. Now why do you think it is that there are not more people in London who register themselves as ready to take children, if it is so profitable a thing to do as it seems to be?—Well, it is not very profitable. In some cases it is profitable because the people are well paid. The payment for the maintenance of children varies very much; some get 4s., some 5s., some 6s., others 10s.; I have known as much as 15s. and 17. a week paid for a child. Of course in those cases where it is well paid for it is profitable; but there cannot be much profit in taking a child at 5s. a week.

539. Do you know what is the sum paid by guardians to persons for taking an infant who is boarded out?—I have not much experience of that, but I have been told that they pay 5s. a week.

540. And do you know what the Foundling Hospital give in such cases?—I believe they pay 6s. a week.

541. If that is so, and if it is the case that there are a large number of people, who, as it would appear, are prepared to pay more than that, does it not seem to you that, if there were more registered houses known to be respectable, and in every way commendable places, not registered as baby farms, but registered as wholesome places, that would offer a legitimate mode of making money properly; and I want to know why you think that is not more adopted. You have answered that in many cases it is not profitable; but in many cases it will be profitable?—In many. It is quite clear that the law does not apply to so many; it applies to persons keeping more than one infant; and therefore very few (0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

are registered. They prefer keeping only one infant under a year old, and the others over that age, and so to avoid registration.

542. But now you told us a few minutes ago that you did not think there was much objection on people's part to being registered?—Not those I know.

543. But you still say that people would rather keep one infant than two even if they could make more profit out of the two, because of their objection to being registered?—Yes, I do think so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

544. Have you ever known a registered person advertise for a child?—Yes.

545. Would you expect a genuine advertisement for a child for adoption to appear in any of those papers you have referred to?—There may be some.

546. Would you expect it, or would they go to other papers?—I should not expect to find any of the advertisements genuine, although some might be genuine.

547. The majority of children, I think you said, now that are included in baby farms you think come from lying-in houses?—A great many do.

548. A majority?—I do not think the majority.

549. When you refer to lying-in houses do you include houses kept by a qualified practitioner?—By midwives.

550. But by a qualified male practitioner; a doctor?—I do not refer to them.

551. You do not refer to those kept by a doctor?—I have not referred to them.

Lord Kinnaird.

552. Do you register the house or the person?—The house is registered and the person as well; the registration is granted to a person for a certain house.

553. May that person move with that form of registration to another house, or must they inform you?—They must inform us, and have the new house registered.

554. So that if they change in the 12 months would that house count as two; I understood that the figures you have given us are merely the total number of registrations?—Yes, the total number.

555. So that if they change that would be two houses?—Yes, two houses.

556. You told us you had no power of getting into a lying-in house if they chose to keep you out?—None whatever.

557. If you think there is anything going on wrong, have you any power then?—I have not.

558. You cannot put the police on them?—The police may go by a warrant.

559. Do they work with you?—Frequently.

560. Do you put them on the scent of a great many?—They assist me.

561. I was surprised to hear what you said a short time ago; do you say deliberately that you do not think people object to registration, though we hear that in practice not one in 50 of the houses are registered; why do they not register if they do not object to registration?—Because the law does not require them to register unless they keep two infants.

E 4

562. And

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

562. And you do not think there are many who keep two infants under one year not registered?—I do not.

563. How often do you visit these registered houses?—I used to visit them when they were under my control about once in three weeks or a month, sometimes oftener.

564. Do they change their names much in order to avoid registration or being found out?—I do not think so.

565. Are many sent out of your area into suburbs beyond, do you think, in the case of those that you suspect?—There are a great many sent out into the suburbs outside our district.

566. Then when they leave you do you report to the authorities having the administration of the law there, if you can follow them?—I have done so when a case has come under my notice.

567. Do you do that regularly, I mean?—Only when I knew of such cases.

568. There is no general list kept in which you exchange names and so on with those who are working the law in other parts?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

569. Have you a copy of the form that a person fills up to apply for registration?—Yes, I have.

570. Would you put it in?—I think it has been already put in by Mr. Spencer. (Mr. Alfred Spencer.) I have one here. *That (pointing to a form) is the form of application. This is the certificate of character. This is the register of infants. This is a letter to the person instructing him about being registered. This is an abstract of the law for the guidance of the person. These are the suggestions as to the care of infants. This is the form of notice to the coroner. The only one that I have really put in hitherto is that one "Suggestions as to the Care of Infants." I will hand them all in. (The same are handed in, vide Appendix.)*

Lord Thring.

571. (To Mr. Babey.) On the subject of lying-in houses on which you have been pressed, take a case you are very familiar with; a great many ladies come up to be confined in London, and take lodgings for that purpose; would that be a lying-in house or not?—I should not like to include a solitary case like that.

572. It is not a solitary case, for houses are constantly let in London for that very purpose?—Lying-in housekeepers who advertise weekly in the papers, I look upon as professional lying-in housekeepers.

573. But supposing they do not advertise them, I want to ask what demarcation you intend to draw between lying-in houses and places where ladies are confined?—My impression of a lying-in house is where month after month several women are taken in to be confined and the people keeping the house make a profession of it.

574. How do you know? I will put the case of a lodging-house keeper in London; she receives during the year 10 ladies, is that a lying-in house or not?—I should call it so.

575. You would call it so?—I should.

576. Then the frequency of it makes it so?—Yes.

Lord Thring—continued.

577. Then you would define a lying-in-house to be a lodging-house where a person is sent to be confined, and pays for her lodging?—That would be a lying-in-house.

578. Then with respect to the children, you are aware that this is intended to include children up to five years old?—I am.

579. I want to draw your attention to a class of children quite different from those to which the Bill refers; you are well aware that Indian children are constantly, almost always left behind, and sometimes two or three of the same family are brought up in a family for hire or reward; would you bring them within the Act?—If the Bill became law it would bring them in, of course.

580. Then you think that a school that takes in young children should be brought within the Act?—There may be some exemptions in a case of that kind.

581. But you think that on the whole they ought to be brought within the Act, both those and the cases of friends taking Indian children (as a good many people who are not in good circumstances do), for hire or reward; you think they ought to be within the Act if they have more than two children under five years old?—Well, as regards school children they are not often taken at school under that age.

582. But there are cases. The other case is also most frequent; I only want to know whether you think the Act ought to apply to them or not?—There is a difficulty in that matter I quite admit.

583. And do you see any means of drawing any line between the two?—No, I really do not.

584. Then I want to draw your attention to this particular clause, Clause 6, the clause about entry, that "any officer so appointed may visit any house registered under the principal Act, or any house in which he has reason to believe that any infant under the age of five years is being kept for hire or reward." I want to draw your attention to the meaning of that clause, "any officer," that would include a common constable, or anybody not a constable "may enter any house in which he," the officer "has reason to believe that an infant under the age of five years is being kept for hire or reward." Now, do you really mean that you think that is a proper clause, to empower any constable to enter into my house if he chooses to think that I have a child there; he has only got to say that he "has reason to think," and he can enter my house because he has reason to think that I have a child there; any officer of the local authority it means, I suppose?—Any officer of the local authority, I suppose.

585. Do you really think that the County Council ought to be able to come into my house, because any officer thinks he has reason to believe that I have a child kept for hire or reward, under the age of five years?—If that power was invested in an officer, I should presume that he would not exercise it unless it were in a very serious case.

586. Did you ever hear of any Act of Parliament under the sun investing any officer with power to go into any house in London because he

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

he chooses to think that a child under five years old is kept there for hire or reward?—It is usually done by warrant; I quite admit that.

587. And also when there is a warrant there is usually a reason assigned in the warrant?—Yes.

588. I only want to know whether you seriously consider that that is a proper clause?—I have met with cases where I should have been very pleased to have had the power.

589. Then with reference to these visits you have told us of, you have, in fact, acted as a detective, very properly, no doubt?—Yes.

590. When you went to these places, if the people had known that you were coming, they would not have let you in?—No.

591. You have no right in law to ask these questions?—I have no right; they can refuse, of course.

592. And if they refuse, they do no wrong?—They do not offend against the law, I admit; then the law is evaded in consequence, very often.

593. Therefore all the information given you was entirely willingly given, and under no obligation whatever?—Yes, but the information is frequently false.

594. But why is it more wrong to give false information if you are asked a question that you are not bound to answer, than it is to ask the question; however, that is a question of morals?—Yes.

Chairman.

595. You stated that you corroborated what Mr. Spencer said, and that you thought there were no houses which ought to be brought under inspection which are not under inspection?—There may be a few.

596. And you give as your reason for that, the fact that you practically follow up all the advertisements that appear?—That is so.

597. And you think it is done mainly through advertisements?—It is, no doubt, except that as I have stated, it is done through the lying-in houses.

598. I can understand your following up the case of a person who wants to adopt a child, but there are cases here of people who advertise and want to put out children. There is one here for example: "Wanted, a good motherly home for two children, boy eight years, baby girl nine months." You cannot possibly trace the circumstances of the people putting out the children?—There is very great difficulty in doing so.

599. And no doubt also the children are given out secretly by the lying-in houses?—Yes.

600. You have two sources of secret supply of children, and I should have thought there must be many cases in which people who take children secretly like that are keeping them illegally, without any possibility of your finding them out?—Of course there may be some; it is impossible to say, but we have not found them out yet.

601. Then, can you tell me how many lying-in houses you yourself have traced in London through the advertisements?—Sixty seven, I think.

(U.95.)

Chairman—continued.

602. Altogether in London?—Altogether in London.

603. You mean, then, to say that there are only 67 that advertised?—That advertised, just so; 67 houses known through advertising.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

604. Are you speaking of London or of your district?—Of London.

Lord Kinnaird.

605. Do you think that is approximately the total number?—That is the total number that I see advertised; there may be more.

Chairman.

606. There are a lot of advertisements here of lying-in houses; are all these houses known to you that are advertised here?—I have not studied that; that is a list which has just come out; there are a good many there that are known to me, no doubt.

607. They advertise generally?—Generally week by week.

608. Well, then, it has been suggested that if the Act was extended to include all children under five years of age it would embrace the lying-in houses; would it do so, or do the lying-in houses invariably get rid of the children as soon as they possibly can?—They are very seldom kept there.

609. So that the lying-in houses are therefore sort of feeders to the baby farmers, but you could not by any means bring them under the Act as baby farmers themselves?—Just so.

610. And then, with regard to the question of institutions, have you any experience of what I might call shady institutions for the care of children, which are run ostensibly on philanthropic grounds, but really as matters of private gain, which it would be highly desirable to have under proper supervision?—At the present time I know none that are shady, but I have known them previously.

611. I do not want you to mention names, but do you know of any?—Not at present.

612. Have you come across any?—I have in the course of my inquiries.

613. What sort of places; I do not want you to specify names, but what class of cases; do you mean persons who keep a sort of boarding house or home for children, or what?—It would be in the shape of a home for little children, and the mothers pay, as a rule, something for their maintenance, and subscriptions are received, or were received, rather to supplement the keeping of the children.

614. Do people go round and ask for subscriptions for them?—I think it is done through advertising.

615. And were these institutions ever managed by a committee that you knew of?—None of those that I have been speaking of.

616. Did they publish accounts?—No, I think not.

617. I was rather trying to get at the point of the exemption of those that have a committee and are managed by a committee of six; I wanted to know whether the proposed exemption of an institution managed by a committee of six would be likely to exempt many places which it

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appears

27 April 1896.]

Mr. BABEY.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

appears desirable to include; but then you say these classes of places are not very frequent now?—No, I know none but what appear to be genuine at present; but in these places there is an enormous death-rate of children.

618. You do not mean what are known as crèches, places where they take in children by the day only?—No, I do not refer to them at all.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

619. The Act exempts institutions?—Yes.

620. How would you decide whether a place was an institution or not?—That has never been defined, but it has always been considered an institution where it is an organised society.

621. You say you knew some that advertised for subscriptions, so that they would be institutions?—Yes. Persons keeping a place of that kind seldom kept the infants apart from their mothers, the mothers used to lodge in the house as a general rule.

622. Why would you call that an institution?—It is a home more than an institution.

Lord Thring.

623. You said, and quite rightly I thought, that its being an organised society was to constitute it an institution. A person keeping a house like that which you have been talking of does not constitute an organised society?—I want to convey in that case that the infants were kept in a home, and their mothers as a rule with them.

624. My Lord asked you why they were institutions?—They used to claim to be institutions.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

625. And on their claim you allowed it?—Because there was no offence against the Act.

Chairman.

626. You know it was proposed in the amended Bill which went through the House of Commons in 1890 to limit the application of the proposed Act to illegitimate children only?—Yes, it was.

627. Is it your opinion that if the Act was extended, but was restricted to illegitimate children only, that would lead to great evasion through illegitimate children being laid out as legitimate?—I quite believe that; there would be great difficulty.

628. You think it would not be a very difficult thing for a person bringing a child to a baby-farm to produce what are known as "marriage lines" belonging to somebody else, which she had either borrowed or got hold of in some way?—I think it very probable that would happen.

629. And that then when you went round to make inquiries at the house, and you found this child put down as being legitimate and therefore as being outside your inspection, you would find yourself practically powerless in the matter, and it would be very difficult for you to check the statement as to whether the child was legitimate or not?—That would be so.

630. Can you suggest any means, supposing it were restricted to illegitimate children, of preventing that suggested evasion; for instance, in the Bill of 1890 it was put that "the burden

Chairman—continued.

of proving, for the purposes of this Act, the legitimacy of any infant under the age of five years, retained or received for hire or reward, shall rest with the person retaining or receiving the same, unless he proves that he took all reasonable means to satisfy himself of such legitimacy;" now that last sentence opens the door to unlimited evasion, does it not?—It does, no doubt.

631. I suppose they would all say that they have taken "all reasonable means"?—They would, no doubt.

632. It might be very difficult to prove that they had not taken reasonable means to satisfy themselves; can you suggest any other means of putting a stop to evasion; any better words, or any better way than simply throwing the onus of proof on to the person who takes the infant in?—If some written statement was given with it it would perhaps prevent that being done.

633. You would have to get a written statement from the person who gave it in?—Yes.

634. And you would probably want that statement endorsed by two responsible householders, persons who knew them, to show that it was, at all events, a married woman who brought the infant?—I should think it necessary to have it verified in some way.

635. But from your experience of the class of people who take in these sort of children, it is your firm conviction that it would be very easy to evade the Act if it was restricted to illegitimate children only?—I do think so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

636. Do you work with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or do you find that they like to work entirely independently of you?—I do not work with them.

637. Do you refer cases to them which come under your notice indirectly?—I should do so.

638. You are looking for a child under one year, and find a child under five years being cruelly treated; would you refer that to the society?—I should, or to the police.

639. But you do occasionally do it?—I have not found a case for some time that it was necessary to send on to them.

640. But you would do so; you would work with them in that way?—Yes, certainly.

641. I want to be quite clear on this point; you think there are only 67 lying-in houses in London now, or, roughly speaking, that number, and you judge of it by the advertisements?—Yes, there are only 67 who advertise.

642. I find that there are 13 in one newspaper that you have put in?—Yes.

643. That is to say, one-fifth of the whole body in London advertising in this particular paper?—They advertise in various papers.

Lord Kinnaird.

644. How do you define a lying-in house?—Where persons are taken in to be confined.

645. One or more?—I should not call it a lying-in house unless they took in several cases.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

27 April 1896.

Mr. ATHELSTAN BRAXTON HICKS, having been called in; is Examined as follows:

Chairman.

646. You are the coroner for the Kingston district of Surrey and the South Western district of the county of London?—Yes.

647. You have, I believe, taken considerable interest in this question of Infant Life Protection?—I have always, from the commencement of my holding office.

648. How long have you been coroner?—Coroner since 1885, and deputy-coroner before that, since 1883.

649. Are you a medical man?—I am a barrister-at-law.

650. We had a coroner last time we met, who was both a medical man and a barrister, and I know many coroners are medical men?—I have been at the hospitals and been bred in the medical profession all my life.

651. You have considerable knowledge of medical subjects therefore?—Yes, and I have been deputy-coroner in 11 London districts in and around the metropolis, so that my knowledge is not confined to one district but applies to many.

652. You gave evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1890?—I did.

653. You may take it that the Committee does not want to go over the whole ground which you covered to a certain extent as to the general necessity of an Act for the Prevention of the Destruction of Infant Life; and what we more or less want to confine ourselves to is the necessity, if any, for the extension of the Act; and the reasons which you have for desiring such extension, and I may say the extent to which you would extend it, and the effect that that extension would have?—Quite so.

654. Have you anything further to say on the general question of the necessity of extension than what you gave before the Committee of 1890, because I think the Members of this Committee have seen that evidence, and we do not want unnecessarily to go all through it again?—Then I think I may put it in this general way: that I have carefully read the evidence which I gave then, and that my experience of the last six years has made me more strongly convinced that the opinions I expressed then, with regard to some of which I was then doubtful, have been confirmed by that six years' experience, and that there is an absolute necessity for a strong amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872.

655. Will you read a letter, please, which you received lately from the Home Secretary?—Yes; it is dated 12th of March 1896. "Sir,—I am directed by the Secretary of State to forward herewith for your consideration a copy of a Bill to amend the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, which has been introduced into the House of Lords. A Bill for a similar purpose was introduced into the House of Commons in the year 1890, and a copy of the form in which it passed a Select Committee of that House is also enclosed herewith for comparison with the present Bill. Sir Matthew Ridley will be much obliged if you

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

will be so good as to furnish him with any observations that you can make on the provisions of the present Bill, and as it is probable that amendments may be proposed with the object of assimilating the Bill to the form passed in 1890 by the Select Committee, he will be glad if in your observations you can institute some comparison between the respective values in your opinion of the two Bills. The Bill has been read a second time, and it is intended to proceed with it with as little delay as possible. I am to beg, therefore, that your reply may be sent at your earliest convenience.—I am, Sir, your obedient Servant, Charles S. Murdock."

656. Then, I think, you had better read your reply, which expresses your opinions on the subject?—So far as I was able to deal with it in that mode, to that extent as a comparison. "17th March 1896.—To Her Majesty's Secretary of State, Home Department. Sir,—I am in receipt of yours of the 12th instant, and in answer thereto, I beg to say that the subject-matter of the Bills for the amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1872, has been under the consideration of the Coroners' Society since 1890; and previous to that the society had often discussed the inadequacy of the Act of 1872, and last year I was requested as the honorary secretary of that society to draft certain observations for its consideration. These observations have been approved by the council of the society, and are to be discussed at the annual general meeting to be held in June next, and I have no doubt that the meeting will endorse the recommendations of the council, which is composed of prominent coroners from all parts of England and Wales. However, without waiting for the annual meeting, I have the honour to forward you a copy of these observations. In accordance with the request contained in your letter, I beg to submit some further observations in my personal capacity as a coroner. I have carefully considered the two Bills forwarded to me, and where the clauses of the House of Lords' Bill, 1896, are similar to that of the Amended Bill of 1890, I offer no criticism as I entirely agree with them. Where they differ, I would state that I prefer the provisions of the Bill of 1896, for the following reasons:—It is to be noted in Section 2 of the 1896 Bill, that the provisions of the Bill of 1890 are extended to any infant, without regard to legitimacy or otherwise. This is a distinct improvement, as the 1st Section of the Bill of 1890, with regard to proving legitimacy, would, in practice, have been difficult and unnecessarily inquisitorial. The extension of the age to five years is another improvement, as it would be greatly to the benefit of the child itself. The old limit of 12 months was much too low, for it is about that time that the change from milk food to stronger diet commences, and so it is found in practice that at 12 months children often fall away and die in a manner which gives rise to suspicion. The change of food in a child is one of the most common sources of wasting, and my experience forces me to think

F 2

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

think that it is often done intentionally. Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, which is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, is one of the most useful, as tending to minimise the evil called baby sweating, where a child is handed over by some unknown person to be nursed, or for so-called adoption, and a lump sum is paid down. It would also check the practice of handing a baby from one person to another without any check, and where each such person gives it a different food. I have known a case in which a child was in the care of five different people in less than 12 months. To keep a register in the terms proposed would be very little trouble to the individual, and for the sake of coroners who would have to be informed of each death, it would materially assist them in their inquiries. The next section which calls for comment is Section 8 of the Bill of 1896, as to the interpretation of institutions established for the protection and care of infants. Personally, I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill, and though it does not appear to be so wide as the exceptions in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, yet it may open a means of evading the Act. The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of the Bill of 1890. It may be possible that the promoters of the Bill will find themselves compelled to accept some amendments on this point, but I think it would be a great advantage to the children themselves that a register should be kept of the facts required in Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, and that the local authority may have access to such register when required. Regarding exceptions A, E, and F of Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, I have carefully considered them, and I cannot conceive any exceptions which could be more useful for the purposes of evading the provisions of the Act. The Bill itself does not attempt to define what or who is a relative or guardian, or a reputed parent, nor in exception E is any check placed upon the excuses where given; and if this exception, or anything like it, was to hold good, every alleged evasion of this Act would be pleaded under this exception. It should be noted that most of the exceptions, if *bona fide*, are really covered by the words of Section 2, in the Bill of 1896, because there it says that the Act shall only apply to persons retaining or receiving an infant for hire or reward. The word reward brings me to the consideration of those cases which are called adoption; that is, where a person receives a sum down to adopt a child. The newspapers teem with advertisements offering this mode of the disposal of infants; and it is a notorious fact, as exemplified in many cases which were brought before the Select Committee of 1890, and others which have been inquired into since, that the majority of such advertisers are of the most wicked kind, and carry on their business as an absolute trade." (I may mention that this letter was written before the Reading scandal came out.) "Therefore, I think that the word reward should be interpreted in the new Bill in the terms of the proviso to Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, viz., 'Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of

five years in consideration of an immediate payment shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section.'" (That would be that they would have to register the original arrangement by which they entered into an arrangement to take care of the child, and that a certain amount of inspection might occur, not necessarily.) "It is the experience of most coroners that where children are taken in to nurse singly, and the house is therefore unregistered, some of the worst cases of neglect occur. I think the effect of the present Bill will be most salutary, and would cause a class of respectable and careful persons to undertake the care of a child or children. The fact that they are registered and inspected will, in my opinion, have an effect quite different to that which some of the opponents of the Bill allege it will have. That is, instead of such people being looked upon with suspicion, the registration will be equivalent to a certificate of good character. As a proof of this, I have always asked witnesses at inquests, who had from the evidence undoubtedly taken every care of the infants under their charge, if they had any objection to registration and inspection. The answer has always been in the negative, and some have gone further and stated that they would prefer this course. Where children have been more or less neglected, I have always found that the nurses are fully aware that registration and inspection is not required by law where one child is kept, and therefore advantage is taken of this, I cannot think that the effect of this Bill will be to arrest philanthropic efforts, or the adoption of children by the well-disposed, and I sincerely trust it will pass into law. Coroners, of all persons, are in a better position to judge of the weakness of the present Act, and though it may entail an extra amount of work, I do not think that any would be willing to oppose the present Bill. Should there be any other point on which you would wish me to make observations, I am quite at your service.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant. (signed) A. Braxton Hicks, Coroner." Might I be allowed to read the copy of a memorandum that is enclosed with that letter to the Home Office?

657. What is it?—Observations which I was requested to draw up for the consideration of the Coroners' Society at their meeting in June next. We have a large council who pass all the matters to be placed in the report, and this matter among others was approved by them; it was under the heading of "Suggested Amendments in the Law." "Infant Life Protection Act. This Act was passed to regulate the system which had sprung up and become known as 'baby farming,' as it was found that children were taken charge of by persons for a fixed sum or periodical payment, and were either ruthlessly murdered or allowed to die by general neglect; there was no check upon this system, and it became at last such a scandal that the Legislature passed a law called 'The Infant Life Protection Act,' to afford some protection to such children. It provided that no person shall receive into a house for hire or reward more than one infant under the age of 12 months for the purpose of nursing unless they are registered, and

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

and that the local authority shall cause a register to be kept of such houses, and generally have supervision over the same; that every death of an infant occurring in a registered house shall be notified to the coroner, in order that he may hold an inquest, if necessary; and further, that these provisions shall extend to Scotland, except that the procurator fiscal is to be informed instead of the coroner. There are also penalties attaching to infringements of this Act to be enforced by the local authority, in London by the county council, in counties by justices in petty sessions, in the City of London by the common council, and in boroughs the borough council. Although useful as it was at the time, it is now found that except in the Metropolis and other large towns, it is nearly a dead letter. Experience has shown that advantage is taken of the provisions of the Act by persons, to evade being registered, by only taking one child under 12 months of age at a time, and a great amount of neglect has been found to occur in these cases, especially when a cash premium has been paid in one sum. These children die from neglect, starvation, &c., and others are taken in their place, and probably as many die in 12 months as in six under the old jurisdiction, or no supervision. This subject was again brought before Parliament in 1890, and a Bill was introduced to extend the provisions of the Act to persons who received any illegitimate infant under the age of five years, and that they should be registered, and a proper record kept of age, sex, &c. A Committee was appointed to consider the Bill, but it was found that so many classes of persons would be exempted from its provisions on sentimental, philanthropic, and other grounds, that little or no improvement would be effected upon the Act of 1872, and that it would be, therefore, practically valueless. It was further pointed out to the Select Committee that persons taking upon themselves the custody of a child and assuming the duties and responsibilities of parents which did not otherwise belong to them, should be placed under some supervision, so that the authority could ascertain if they did their duty. Such supervision would be no hardship on the well-disposed, and it would be a great check upon evil-doers. Another point to be considered with regard to these children is, that they are the subject of what may be called 'baby-sweating.' A person advertises to adopt a child for a lump sum. She makes arrangements to meet the parents of the child at some public place, and the child—frequently without its real identity being known—is there and then handed over with the money; and the motives which actuated the parents are suppressed and all knowledge of them is lost. These facts have been brought to light over and over again, but with the law, as it is at present, nothing can be done to check the evil. The Coroners' Society would recommend to the Home Office an amendment of the Act of 1872, embodying the Bill of 1890 as originally drafted, with such addition as recent inquiries have shown to be advisable for the due protection of infant life. It is considered that in this way all requirements would be met."

658. Then there is another paper in which

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Chairman—continued.

you made some statements about lying-in houses; we will keep that till we come to the question presently. I think now we can best get what we want by going through this letter. The first thing is the inadequacy of the present Act; I should like to know what you have to say about that?—The great thing there in the opinion of the coroners and myself, is that the age limit is too low. We deal practically with these questions; we see the bodies of those children, we hear the medical evidence, and we hear, as far as we can ascertain it with regard to the class of people we deal with, what we hope is the truth, and we find that the age limit is too low having regard to the nursing out of children. One reason, as I have stated, is that the food is changed at about 12 months. The child at that time if it has been out to nurse and has fed on the bottle, is very often in somewhat of a delicate condition, because it is very awkward to rear a child in good health at times even with the best of care by the bottle, but with the class of people with whom we find as a fact these children are put out, it is almost impossible to have any check upon them by merely putting it at the 12 months. It certainly is to be said that a lot of these children put out to nurse die at an age under 12 months; but then those are the children who are put out to nurse singly where there is no registration or inspection. I do not think that in my experience since I gave my evidence in 1890 I have had one case in which I could seriously complain of want of due care or proper feeding by the people who were registered. The inference I draw from that is that registration is of advantage because inspection follows and the people know that they will be looked after and so they take more care than otherwise they would.

Viscount Llandaff.

659. But there is no inspection under the law as it stands?—Not with one child, as it stands.

660. But of a registered house I mean?—Yes, there is constant inspection of a registered house.

661. Not by law; there is no power to inspect in the Act. Where do you find that; if they chose to say "You cannot come in," the inspector has no power to enter?—It has always been the practice that an inspection does occur with these places.

662. If you do it without law why do you want the law altered?—I understood that the Act included that. I do not have power to carry out the Act.

663. There is no power of entry on inspection on giving directions as to food, in the Act?—I think it is included in Section 4; surely that would cover it; it says, "The local authority may refuse to register any house unless they are satisfied that such house was suitable."

664. That covers the power of entry and inspection, you think?—How can they satisfy themselves without that?

665. That is a mode of making the people consent to have the house examined before the registration is granted, but that in no way assists you in entering the house afterwards?—It seems

F 3

to

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

to me that if the local authority are satisfied that the house is not properly sufficient, they may not only refuse to register, but strike the name off the register under Section 7. I am not an authority in interpreting an Act of Parliament, but if I were the inspector I should say that if I have the power to strike a house off the register I have the power to see that I can do it.

666. The inspector has never found any objection, you think, made to that?—No; I think Mr. Babey has found no trouble where they were doing well; but he has found some where they had something to hide.

Chairman.

667. With regard to extending the Act, do you think it ought to include children over the age of one year?—Yes.

668. Because a child up to five years old requires almost as much care in looking after as a child of more tender age?—I would not fix the limit up to five years, personally, myself.

669. The first few years of its life, I will say?—Yes; I will tell you what would happen. As a child got older the inspector would know it was going on all right, and there would not be the same need for constant looking after it, so that when he found the foster parents were keeping it well and healthy, up to say two or three years old, he probably would not want to go there much more than once in six months; merely to see whether the same condition of things was going on.

670. In other words the people you practically want to get at are the two classes; first of all those who take the children either from places where women are confined, or from individuals who bring the children to them with the deliberate and set purpose of either killing the children or letting them die as soon as possible; and the other class who have no criminal intent, but still allow the children to die through ignorance and neglect?—That is so; those are the people.

671. And are there a great number of cases where children die through ignorance and neglect and through no criminal intent?—No doubt. I think that is the case with the majority who die; that is to say, the neglect is, at all events, so difficult to absolutely prove.

672. And the people who have no criminal intent would not necessarily object to some sort of supervision, I should think, would they?—No; in fact I found that where they were *bonâ fide* trying to do their best, and it only seemed a little stupidity, or something of that sort, they have told me, "We should be very pleased to show how we are treating the child." I had a very respectable woman before me from Sydenham the other day, and I said to her, "Would you have any objection to inspection and registration?" "No, certainly not, Mr. Coroner; I should only be too pleased to show how much care I do take of the children;" and she was not registered, as it happened, because she had only one child. At one time, I believe, she had been; I am not certain about that; but here was a woman of a superior class, who evidently had belonged to the well-to-do middle-class, who had probably come down a bit.

Chairman—continued.

673. Therefore, I may take it that as regards the general question of the inadequacy of the Act, you are of opinion that if the age was extended it would not result in driving these children away to other places where they would be hidden, but that it would result in their being better looked after?—I certainly think so; and there is another thing which is connected with that question: You ask me if I think it would drive them to other districts? I say, if the law was universally acted upon as well as it is in the county of London, of which I have knowledge, I think we should not have this drafting from one place to another; and in regard to that, I might state the case which I stated before the Committee of 1890, the case of Mrs. Arnold, into which I inquired, and which developed a lot of cases in which children had been entrusted to this woman; and after I had finished the inquiry, the jury then made a very strong recommendation. I spoke a month afterwards to Mr. Babey, the inspector under the Act, and I said, "Will you kindly give me a list of the people who are registered in my district?" He said, "Since that case there is not one left, sir." That shows that they knew where to go, where the Act was not strictly enforced. I am bound to call attention to this because I think the Act has been a dead letter in many cases.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

674. You speak of people who had been registered?—The people who had been on the register all cleared out of my district entirely, so that I had no one left who was registered. They thought that a strict inquiry would affect their interests in some way.

Chairman.

675. Did they clear out, or simply give up keeping children?—I think they moved into Mitcham, which is just out of my district and not in the metropolitan area; Mr. Babey told me so, but I had no cause of complaint with the particular woman who had the charge of the child at the time of its death. Whether she was frightened and thought there were more penalties behind in the Act than she was aware of, I do not know.

676. Now then I will take you to what I have marked as paragraph 4: "I have carefully considered the two Bills forwarded to me, and where the clauses of the House of Lords Bill (1896) are similar to that of the Amended Bill of 1890 I offer no criticism, as I entirely agree with them. Where they differ I would state that I prefer the provisions of the Bill of 1896 for the following reasons." Now I want to go through part of the Bill and just find out your views. You say here, "It is to be noted in Section 2 of the 1896 Bill that the provisions of the Bill of 1890 are extended to any infant without regard to legitimacy or otherwise." Now that is a very important point, on which I should like to have your opinion?—That is so.

677. The Bill of 1890 made it refer to illegitimate children only, and the present one makes it refer to both?—Yes, whether legitimate or not. The reason was this: The provision in the Bill of 1890 stated in Sub-section (2) of Section

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Section 1 that the burden of proving whether a child is legitimate or not "shall rest with the person retaining or receiving the same, unless he proves that he took all reasonable means to satisfy himself of such legitimacy."

678. Now is it your opinion that that last proviso opens the door to a very great deal of evasion?—In the Bill of 1890.

679. Yes, unless he shall have proved "that he took all reasonable means" of doing so; would it not be very difficult for the inspector when he came round and found a child mis-stated as legitimate, whereas it was illegitimate, to prove that the person had not taken every reasonable means of finding out, if they stated that they had done so?—He could not possibly do it with the class of people I am speaking of.

680. And therefore that if a person took in an illegitimate child, and the mother, or the person who brought it, produced borrowed or forged "marriage lines," as they are called—?—Yes, or a certificate of registration falsely given.

681. Or a certificate of registration, it would be very difficult for the inspector to in any way check those statements?—I do not see how he can do it with the present state of the Registration Law in force. I do not know whether your Committee are aware that the registration of births is about as slipshod a way of doing the work as one can conceive if you want to get at the truth.

682. That question of registration of births is rather outside our reference?—I am showing how impossible it would be for an inspector to know. A woman who was confined in the Lying-in Hospital in York-road; she was a married woman; she registered the child as the child of her husband, and his occupation. I had reason to consider otherwise, and I asked her to come up before me, and she made a statement to the registrar which put him on his guard when the death was registered, and she said her husband had been away 14 months. This child was not a legitimate child, and the husband could not be the father of the child; but to Mr. Babey she would say, "This is a legitimate child; here is the certificate of the birth."

683. Do you consider it would be more inquisitorial or less inquisitorial to confine it to illegitimate children only?—I say, make no question about the matter; simply if a child is put out to nurse for hire or reward, legitimate or illegitimate, let it be the same rule.

684. You think that to inquire into the question of whether it was legitimate or illegitimate, in other words, to confine the Act to illegitimate children only would be very inquisitorial?—Yes, it would be a great check on the carrying out of the Act first of all, and next it would be excessively inquisitorial.

685. And would lead to a good many false statements?—Yes, certainly.

686. You say in this letter that you consider that "this is a distinct improvement as the first section of the Bill of 1890, with regard to proving legitimacy, would in practice have been difficult and unnecessarily inquisitorial." Then you go on with the extension of the age to five years, about which I think we have heard your opinion?—I might first of all state with regard to that

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

last part that I do not find that legitimate children put out to nurse are any better or worse treated than illegitimate children. As coroner holding inquests on children apparently neglected, I do not find any more neglect with illegitimate than with legitimate children; and that is one reason why I think there is no reason to make a distinction.

687. Do you, when you hold an inquest on the body of a child, always try to find out whether it is legitimate or illegitimate?—Yes, by law I am bound to find out the requirements necessary for registration purposes.

688. And in distinguishing between the inquests held on the bodies of children that are put out for hire or reward and others, do you find that there are amongst them many legitimate children, children that are put out to hire or reward?—Yes, many legitimate children.

Viscount Llandaff.

689. Generally, is it not the case that there is a greater inducement to get rid of an illegitimate child than of a legitimate one?—May I be allowed to consider that question for a moment? Where children are *bonâ fide* put out with the hope that they will survive I do not think there is any difference really in the treatment; but there is this to be considered in a physical point of view: that illegitimate children are born very often under such circumstances that they are handicapped as to living, whereas the legitimate children very often are only put to nurse when the mother becomes ill, or she is dead, or the husband has to go away, or they generally have some chance of starting life fairly well with mother's milk; but illegitimate children are always bottle children. I have never had experience yet of an illegitimate child dying which was brought up by a wet nurse.

Lord Thring.

690. Do we understand you to say, that in your opinion a law for illegitimate children is no more needed than for legitimate?—No, I am speaking of the question of death generally; as to the necessity of general protection for infants now independently of crime or not.

691. I thought you said to Lord Llandaff that in your opinion there was no greater motive to put an illegitimate child out of the way than a legitimate one?—I was not dealing with the motive for the moment, only with the fact of death. The motive would necessarily be greater with an illegitimate child if there was any motive at all.

Viscount Llandaff.

692. Surely the obvious motive is to get rid of it somehow, so as to put it out of sight; is it not more likely, therefore, to get into bad treatment and bad surroundings?—If it is to be killed I agree.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

693. Both Mr. Spencer and Mr. Babey have stated to us, that at least 95 per cent. of the children whom we have to protect are in their opinion illegitimate?—The majority put out for hire or reward would no doubt be illegitimate; but in the cases that come before me I

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cannot

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

cannot say that I have found lately any great distinction between those legitimate and those illegitimate.

Chairman.

694. Perhaps you misunderstood me. I meant this: Do you when you have inquests on bodies of children take special notice of those who have died under the care of baby farmers, whether registered or unregistered?—Yes, certainly.

695. Do you keep private memoranda of your own in connection with this subject?—Yes, I used to, because since 1890 I have had much fewer cases where I could have any suspicion. Before 1890 I certainly did find that there was a large majority of illegitimate children allowed to die, and I could not get an adequate cause.

696. But the legitimate children that die and upon which you have inquests and which may to a certain extent be said to have been put out for hire or reward are mostly, are they not, children of working people who put them out for the day or for a time while they go to work?—No, not many; my experience of late has been so different from what it was before 1890. Taking the class of cases which I was dealing with before 1890, at any rate so far as I can find out they are not now nearly so bad as they were then. I have not had a case in which I have had to make any severe comments about children put out to nurse since that; I have not found very much except stupidity since then; but in those cases before that Bill of 1890 when I gave my evidence I had grave causes to think that the cases that came before me were more the result of a bad motive.

697. But I thought you said you were more strongly of opinion than in 1890 of the necessity for the Act?—Yes, my experience has been varied since then; since then I have been Deputy Coroner in Middlesex for Dr. Diplock.

Lord Thring.

698. I understand you to say that since 1890 you have not met with many cases of children either legitimate or illegitimate?—In my district.

699. I am asking you what you know in your own district?—In my district; but I have held other appointments.

700. Is it the case that since 1890 you have not found children either legitimate or illegitimate ill-treated?—I have found them neglected, but ill-treated is a different term.

701. Neglected through ignorance?—Yes, and dirt and filth, that is if they live out with people who are utterly incapable or ought to be considered incapable of keeping them.

702. Did they treat the children worse than poor mothers would have treated their own children?—Yes; we see the difference in the people who have to take care of them. The poor respectable person is generally a great deal cleaner, but the ones put out to nurse are put out with people who ought to be the last to have charge of young children. There are two classes of cases that I am dealing with; the cases which are now registered, the class of people and houses, are the ones who take in for hire or

Lord Thring—continued.

reward more than one child over 12 months. Those I say I have very little to say about, because they are registered and inspected. The classes I want your Lordships to suggest in your recommendation are the single children who are put out one at a time, over whom there is no inspection, no supervision, and who are put out as I tell you with people that I have seen myself to be utterly incompetent, from all sorts of causes, physical cleanliness, and other causes, to have the care of one child; old women who are drunken, and those I have come across, and I always come across them, but I do not come across them very much in that class of cases that I did before; but I want to get the Act extended to the case of the single child who is put out for hire or reward. I think your Lordship did not quite understand why I was drawing the distinction.

Viscount Llandaff.

703. I have understood that since 1890 in your district there are not so many bad cases of any children at all?—I do not know. It was in the registered houses I was being asked about for the moment.

Chairman.

704. No. Were you referring to registered houses alone?—Yes, the registered houses; but then I am wanting to point out that it is the unregistered houses which take one child in that I am addressing myself to.

Viscount Llandaff.

705. But even taking those into the account, I understand there are not so many bad cases?—Not so many gross cases which have been found actually to be criminal.

706. You said that since 1890 you had not noticed so many bad cases?—I have not, not so many bad cases, but I have noticed bad cases.

707. Then things have got better?—So far as my knowledge goes.

Lord Thring.

708. Were any of the bad cases criminal?—No, they were not found criminal.

709. You mean to say that these poor women treated them as they would their own children, and that that treatment was not wise treatment; does it amount to more than that?—Yes, it does.

710. Did they treat their foster children worse than they would have treated their own?—Yes, certainly I think.

711. Why do you think so?—From the evidence before me.

712. Then why did not the jury find accordingly in their verdict?—Because there was not evidence to show it.

Chairman.

713. Have you sample cases to quote?—If you were coroner you would see the difficulty. I mean to say first of all the jury had to find the verdict. We are not committing magistrates; we are not in that position. At least the jury acquit, and it is not for me to say if the cases are criminal.

714. You

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

714. You mean to say that in some cases you thought it was criminal but the jury did not?—Yes, the jury did not find the verdict of manslaughter.

715. We are asking you whether or not, in the cases of children, you have met with any cases that were criminal?—I am not entitled to say that, but I have had my suspicions that the case ought to have been sent for trial.

Viscount Llandaff.

716. Did you point out your suspicions to the jury?—Yes; I pointed out to them that it was a question for them.

717. The jury disagreed with you?—They said that they thought it was an error of judgment; if you sent the case to the Old Bailey you find that the juries there come to the same opinion. I cannot answer more than what the juries find.

Lord Kinnaird.

718. What is the cause why you think they are not quite so bad; is it that the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act has helped to frighten bad parents?—I think it has had a great influence.

Chairman.

719. Do you find that there is much difference between districts?—Yes, an enormous amount.

720. When you say not in your district, were you in a different district before 1890?—No; but I was holding inquests in Dr. Diplock's district in 1892, for instance, and before that I was in a different district. I have been in 11 different districts.

721. Therefore you are not comparing the same district since 1890 with the same district before 1890?—No; I was speaking about my own district. With regard to Dr. Diplock's district in 1892 I found an enormous amount of baby farming absolutely and neglect too, in Willesden, Kilburn, Notting Hill, and those parts just there.

Viscount Llandaff.

722. How did you find that out?—By holding inquests.

723. As a deputy coroner?—Dr. Diplock was seriously ill, and I held the whole of his inquests.

724. I understand now. You meant to say that the improvement was in your district, and not in the other district?—Yes.

725. Then may we take it that in your district there has been an improvement since 1890?—Yes, there has been; but when I was in Dr. Diplock's district Mr. Babey had to come constantly to my court to investigate the matter there.

Lord Thring.

726. You cleared out the bad ones from your district and drove them into another?—You go to another district and find the same people there.

Chairman.

727. When you told us at the beginning of your evidence that you saw even greater necessity for the extension of the law than (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

existed then, you were speaking of your general experience?—General experience.

728. And not necessarily confined to your own district?—It was a general statement; and not only that, but as Secretary of the Coroners' Society such facts are constantly communicated to me, and I am more of that opinion for that reason. We have 207 members of the Coroners' Society, and they are constantly communicating the facts to me.

729. Now, about this section which you have dealt with in what I have marked as paragraph 7; "Section 3 of the 1896 Bill, which is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, is one of the most useful, as tending to minimise the evil called 'baby sweating,' where a child is handed over by some unknown person to be nursed, or for so-called adoption, and a lump sum is paid down. It would also check the practice of handing a baby from one person to another without any check; and where each such person gives it a different food?"—Section 3 of the Bill of 1896 is similar to that of the Bill of 1890, "where an infant is received by a person registered under the principal Act the person from whom the infant is received shall state truly, in writing signed by him, the name, sex, and age of the infant, and the place and time of its birth, and his own name and the place or places at which he has resided during the period of six months immediately preceding the statement." Sub-section (2) goes on to say that if an infant is removed from the care of a person registered the person removing the infant shall state truly in writing his own name, and so on.

Viscount Llandaff.

730. How do you propose to enforce that. A woman comes and gives her name as Mary Smith; how are you going to find out whether that is truly stated?—I had that objection raised. If a person is registered they would take some means for doing it.

731. What steps can they take?—Who is the person to whom you are alluding; the person who receives the infant or the person who brings it?

732. You say that the person who brings the child "shall state truly, in writing signed by him, the name, sex, and age of the infant, and the place and time of its birth, and his own name"?—You would be no worse off then than you are now.

733. What is the power to enforce it?—The person registered; they would take some means to ascertain.

734. The question is whether the person who delivered the infant has told a lie; how can you enforce it in suspicious cases, where a person hands over a 10l. note and disappears?—I did not draft this Bill. I would make a suggestion that the person who receives the child for hire or reward should make the best effort he can to ascertain where the child comes from.

735. What are the best methods?—Certainly it would not be receiving it at a railway platform; that is where most of these children are handed over with 10l., 20l., 30l. paid down, and the child is found in the River Thames.

736. The Bill does not forbid receiving it on a railway

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27 April 1866.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

railway platform?—Is not that a matter for your Lordships to assist the public in?

737. How do you suggest that the registered person receiving the child is to ascertain that the person from whom he receives that child is telling the truth?—How are you to say whether the person giving information as to the registration of birth is telling the truth; if you can find out who the person is you can punish him.

Chairman.] We are acting rather on a misunderstanding. Clause 3 that we were talking about says, "Where an infant is removed from the care of a person registered;" that has nothing to do with the person who brings the child.

Viscount Llandaff.

738. "The person from whom the infant is received shall state truly in writing"?—That is in Sub-section (1).

739. Suppose they cannot write?—The same thing applies to any Registration Act that is passed, unless you have got some means for punishing the person for making a false statement. You must have some sanction to the section, I grant you. There is a sanction in the Bill, but it is no more operative than the sanction in the Registration Act.

Chairman.

740. It comes to this, therefore, that it is desirable to check false statements; and if this clause is passed into law, and the person is found making a false statement, you would be able to punish him for so doing, whereas you now cannot?—That is so; there would be sanction for the making of that false statement.

741. What I want now to find out from you is with reference to this question of paying lump sums down for children. We are familiar, I think, with the evidence we have heard as to the practice of doing so, so you need not go into that now; but what I want to know is, have you any proposals for preventing lump sums being paid down? I think you make some remark about it in this letter; I want very much to know whether there is any feasible mode of preventing that?—I think at the end of the letter I mentioned that; that the proviso in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890 should be re-enacted so far as where any child is taken for hire or reward, that is, the reward to be a lump sum down, they must still be registered under the Act and with such particulars as they themselves know of.

742. Perhaps I had better leave that till we come on to that clause; I will ask you a question about that presently. Then the next paragraph of your letter is this: "The next section which calls for comment is Section 8 of the Bill of 1896, as to the interpretation of institutions established for the protection or care of infants. Personally, I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill, and though it does not appear to be so wide as the exceptions in Section 6 of the Bill of 1890, yet it may open a means of evading the Act. The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs *b*, *c*, and *d* of the Bill of 1890." Would you mind

Chairman—continued.

telling us now what are your views as to the interpretation of "institutions"?—That is so difficult, I really do not know what to do; I can only state that my knowledge is the knowledge of most people.

743. You do not want to have any exceptions?—I would say broadly that if it were possible to have no exceptions, where people who form themselves into institutions or anything in the nature of a public body have the care of infants, even only whilst the mother is lying-in, they should come under inspection.

744. You are talking of lying-in hospitals as distinct from lying-in houses?—First of all, a *bonâ fide* institution; we are talking for the moment of what is *bonâ fide*, that they should keep a register, and that that should be open to inspection if wanted. I believe that most of the institutions do have such a register, so that it would be nothing more to ask them to keep it than they do voluntarily, but there are a great many institutions which we may call lying-in houses.

745. We will talk about lying-in houses presently?—The only definition that has been suggested was this, that the institution should be that which is composed of a certain number of registered persons.

746. May I ask whether you have come across what might be called boarding homes kept by people who obtained subscriptions, and then ran the concern as a means of profit?—I know as a matter of common knowledge that they have done so. One sees in the papers that they have been prosecuted for trying to do so.

747. You think there are some of these cases which call themselves institutions which would be very much better to be looked after, and under registration and supervision?—Certainly.

748. Have you come across any cases of that sort, when evidence has been given before you?—I have had my suspicions of one or two places.

749. You think there are such places?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

750. What is it you suspect?—That they are not *bonâ fide* carried on as institutions, but carried on for hire or profit; that they are not *bonâ fide* charitable institutions; that there is virtually no committee of management; that there is no one of the outside public knowing what goes on.

Lord Thring.

751. Are you saying that institutions which profess to be public are in fact private speculations?—Yes, and that there are other institutions which are professedly public or philanthropic, of which I have my suspicions, from circumstances that happen, that they are simply houses for the cloaking of crime and immorality.

752. What I mean is this, and it is quite a different thing. In the first place, a private institution for profit claims to be a public institution; that is of course wrong, that is false pretence; then what do you say then, that there are other private institutions that are immoral places?—I will not say they are private; they profess to be public by giving some grand name to them, but they are carried on merely for the profit of one or

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

or two people, and that they are first of all immoral institutions, or for the sake of getting people relieved of their immorality, and if necessary under the cloak or by means of crime.

Viscount Llandaff.

753. I hope that these institutions for immorality and crime, murder, in fact, are not numerous: could you put your finger on them?—I think I could. I am in communication with the inspector when I find any evidence of this sort of thing.

Chairman.

754. In the Bill of 1890, the only institution practically exempted was the Foundling Hospital, because it says here, "In the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants." I think that was the case of the Foundling Hospital only?—It would include the Royal Lying-in Hospital in York-road, and others.

755. "In the case of any infant received in an institution, established or maintained for the protection or care of infants, or for the care and treatment of persons suffering from disease or injury." Now do you consider that that exemption is too wide; do you think that any institution established or maintained for the protection or care of infants would include some of these undesirable places which ought to be looked after?—I think it is so, because it is only on their statement that it rests. There is no means of testing their *bona fides* that I can see.

756. Do you think it would meet the case if we defined an "institution" as being a public institution under the charge of a committee of six persons, six householders?—I should think all institutions might, at all events if public institutions are started, give notice to the local authority and establish their *bona fides*; if the local authority are satisfied of their *bona fides* there need be no other trouble at all unless complaints are made; there might then be given in the names of the requisite persons who might themselves vouch that it was an institution to be carried on for a legitimate purpose.

757. We know that there are many perfectly legitimate philanthropic societies and institutions which look after children and either board them out or take care of them in various ways which are well managed and which the promoters of this Bill do not wish you to interfere with?—I think that by that means you would prevent anything like an interference by simply saying, "Give notice to the local authority that this is going to be established for the care of infants"; and the local authority being satisfied that it is *bonâ fide* there would be nothing more than that probably. They might keep a register of the infants they took under their charge.

758. In other words, the people who start an institution ought to get a license from the local authority?—Not to be paid for, but as an authority showing that they were in a *bonâ fide*

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Chairman—continued.

condition to carry out the object. For instance, there are several medical men in a high class position who carry on lying-in houses and who take charge of the children; there would be no hardship in their having to say, "I am going to open a house for some of my patients who come up and wish me to attend them." The local authority would make a note of it, and be satisfied with the *bona fides* of the person.

759. Then with regard to the exceptions in (*b*) (*c*) and (*d*). "In the case of any infant received by any person employed by an institution which, by or in pursuance of any Act or Royal Charter, is established or maintained for the protection or care of infants; nor (*b*) in the case of any infant received in an institution, established or maintained for the protection or care of infants, or for the care and treatment of persons suffering from disease or injury. (*c*) In the case of any infant received by any person under the provisions of any Act for the relief of the poor, or of any order of the Local Government Board made under such Act; nor (*d*) In the case of any infant received by any persons who have obtained the requisite authority of the Local Government Board to act as a boarding-out committee?"—That is what they say; they are already inspected, and under thorough supervision.

760. You do not want the Act to interfere with them?—No, I think I may say about that that it is only a question of interpretation of the meaning of the word "institutions" as regards these houses. I can see no objection to this.

761. You say here, "Personally I consider that any exception would be greatly subversive of the objects of the Bill;" and then go on, "The exceptions in this interpretation would include those mentioned in paragraphs (*b*) (*c*) and (*d*)"?—It would.

762. Therefore you do not want to exclude those children?—This is not written for your Committee. It is my opinion, so far as the Home Office asked me for it, of the two Bills; but anticipating opposition, and knowing what the feeling of a good many people would be, I merely would say that I personally should like to have no exception; but I can see no reason why these places where there is systematic inspection need be included. Now the children boarded out by the Poor Law are wonderfully well looked after, and the children do very well; one cannot ask for registration and inspection where it virtually exists under the Poor Law registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

763. Would you except that?—I would except that from the provisions of this Act if it were passed. I am trying to get some better Act passed, and I should not like by my suggestions unnecessarily to harass people.

764. You mean you would suggest by a perfect Bill to include children boarded out by a Poor Law committee?—As to those bodies of that description, I only say that there should be notice given, and a register kept of the children; no inspection after it; that is virtually done.

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765. Then

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

765. Then (a), (c), and (f); (a) deals with a child "received by its relatives or guardians, or in the case of an illegitimate infant by the persons who would be its relatives or guardians if the infant were legitimate"; you class those three together, and you say that you have carefully considered them, and you say "I cannot conceive any exceptions which could be more useful for the purpose of evading the provisions of the Act"?—That is my opinion, because it all depends upon what the people call themselves. What does a "guardian" mean there? It does not state what a "guardian" is.

766. Will you give the Committee some idea as to how you would define a guardian?—No; I do not know what a guardian means.

Lord Thring.

767. Guardian is as clear a term as father?—In my experience it is not among these people, and they would simply say, "I was a guardian of this child."

768. That is a question of evidence?—Then when you come to prosecute them the magistrates would have to say whether they acted reasonably.

Chairman.

769. Then with regard to the question of relatives, would you define the word relative?—I think it ought to be defined; I do not know what it means. I am dealing as a coroner with these terms.

770. I suppose, before a coroner, blood relationship is recognised?—But supposing it is by marriage?

Lord Kinnaird.

771. You are talking of the poorer classes?—I am talking of the class which come before me. If it is a dictionary term I can define it as an educated man; but when it comes before a magistrate, the magistrate may say, "this person did not intend to evade the Act." I think it is no use putting these terms in, therefore.

Chairman.

772. Have you then known, of your personal knowledge, cases of children taken away like that by people who called themselves simply relatives?—They will come and say, "Oh, yes, I am a relative; I am a friend of the mother."

Viscount Llandaff.

773. When you know they are not?—They do not tell me that till I come to make an inquiry, but the person they take the children to gets that answer.

Chairman.

774. You have come to the conclusion, in your experience as a coroner, that the word relative among these people is a very elastic term?—Yes, and if there is to be any punishment for this it is utterly useless not to define relative in some way or other.

Viscount Llandaff.

775. Have you ever known a case within the existing Act which talks about relatives, of a

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

person having two children, calling herself their relative and not being their relative?—Yes, a child put out to nurse about four months old.

776. That would not be a case within the Act; I am asking whether you have ever known a case of any person escaping from the existing Act by having two children, not from a relative, but from a person who called herself a relative?—There is a reported case in the Courts, and it occurred, I believe, under Mr. Drew's jurisdiction; Mr. Babey can tell you; but I may mention, by the bye, in Kilburn before he took that district, I have had such a case in which a woman had charge of a couple of children; one child was under the Act and the other was not, and she stated that that child was an adopted child. First she said she was the mother, and then I said, "Are you the real 'mother' or is it an adopted child," she said "it is an adopted child; I had a lump sum down."

777. I want to know whether anybody has been prosecuted under the existing Act for falsely calling herself a relative of children?—I cannot tell you. There is a case where one woman was prosecuted under the existing Act; I cannot tell you where it was.

778. The whole difficulty arises with the word relative in the existing Act; it is put in without definition, and I want to know whether that has created a difficulty?—Yes, that has created a difficulty. I read these cases in the different law reports, and that is how I become cognisant of them, by common repute. Mr. Babey, I believe, has the whole facts of that case.

Chairman.

779. With regard to (c) "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home on a contract of service, or in search of work, or on account of illness, disablement, lunacy, or any other reasonable and temporary cause." Now it is held by those who are responsible for this Bill that that Clause would open the door to such an immense amount of evasion as to render the Bill practically nugatory?—Certainly, I cannot conceive, if they were called upon to say why they have done this or that, any other result than that is a method by which they could evade the Act in every possible way.

780. Do you find that these people who take in children when they are tackled are pretty ingenious in making excuses?—They know probably more about the Act than I do myself, as to the way to evade it at any rate. If you look at the wording of that subsection, I cannot see how it does not leave the door open to all excuses as a legitimate answer to any charge brought under this Act.

781. Then (f) With regard to "an infant placed by a parent, reputed parent, or guardian," I think you have practically anticipated that already?—I do not know what a reputed parent means; I have never been able to understand what a reputed parent was.

782. It

27 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

782. It is in the Poor Law Acts?—But unfortunately the people who have to read this Act do not know the Poor Law Acts; a person would say "I was the reputed parent," the magistrate would say, "I cannot convict."

Chairman.

783. Then I come to this question of adoption on payment of a lump sum; you say here after stating your objection to these people who receive a lump sum down with a child, "Therefore I think that the word 'reward' should be interpreted in the new Bill in the terms of the proviso 2, Section 6 of the Bill of 1890 (viz.): 'Provided that any person who receives or retains an infant under the age of five years in consideration of an immediate payment shall not be entitled to the benefit of the exemptions contained in this section,' " what do you mean by "immediate payment;" do you mean that supposing I take a child to one of these people and I arrange with them to pay them either weekly or fortnightly or monthly, and supposing I want to evade the Act there is nothing to prevent my paying them 10*l.* there and then, and saying "I will make you a weekly payment of 5*s.* or 1*s.* hereafter," would that come under your head of an immediate payment?—Yes, I should call that an immediate payment, and then they would come under the exemption I presume either of reputed parent or they would stand in *loco parentis*.

784. If I went to the same person and said "I want you to take this child at a payment of 5*s.*" and I paid the first 5*s.* down, then would that be an immediate payment?—No, I mean where there is no further demand upon the person who pays the sum.

785. But it seems to me that your proposal would lead to as much evasion?—They would be bound to register then; they were able to evade it before.

786. I am perfectly well aware of the evils of this lump system; I want to get hold of some practical method of stopping it and insisting on weekly payments; it seems to me to be very difficult?—"Immediate payment" is not my wording, again, but it means, as I understand, that if a person wants to make an excuse to adopt that child, or have a lump sum paid for it, they are bound to be registered; I think that is what that proviso meant, that they shall not be allowed to plead any of the exemptions in the Act if they have received any payment for the child, whether one payment or a dozen.

787. Is there any means of proving what a person has received for a child?—They take a child, an inquiry is probably made; you have some means of finding out probably by whom that child is taken charge of.

Lord Thring.

788. How is it to be proved?—Is it a matter of questioning.

789. It is a matter of answering, it seems to me?—That applies to every other fact to be proved by evidence.

790. The question is whether there is any use in passing clauses about things for which you (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

cannot produce the evidence?—I think in most of the clauses that I am suggesting I could find out most of the evidence; I will not say in every case. I think if you were to pass these sections I should have a very good deal more power to be able to find out how some of these misdemeanours and crimes are carried out. It is because we have no power as coroners that we feel ourselves helpless, that we ask the legislature as a body to help the coroners who are trying to check what they know is in existence; and since the Committee met, a very awful object lesson has occurred, which I cannot help alluding to, at Reading; whoever is guilty of that: it is an object lesson. This is not only my feeling of course; it is the feeling of a good many juries that some endeavour should be made to meet it. I quite agree with your Lordship that there is a difficulty in the case in having a clause of a Bill or an Act that will have the desired effect.

791. I ask you as a man who has sat in a judicial position, you have got to find out whether a witness has been paid 50*l.*; if he has he has committed an offence; if he has not been paid 50*l.* he has committed no offence; do you believe that a witness would tell the truth and say he had received 50*l.*?—No, I do not; if I relied upon him alone I should not hold an inquest at all; I have sometimes 30 witnesses.

Viscount Llandaff.

792. But can any of the 30 know?—It is not a question even of one witness, you will find a lot of evidence in another way.

Chairman.

793. You make this statement here: "Where children have been more or less neglected I have always found that the nurses are fully aware that registration and inspection is not required by law where one child is kept, and therefore advantage is taken of this;" cases of that have come under your personal knowledge?—Constantly. Wherever the nurse child is a single child I say, "You were not registered," and they say, "Oh, no, I was not obliged to be."

794. And they keep only one child?—Only one child at the time, and it is mostly those that seem neglected; the single cases.

795. Those are the worst class of cases?—Yes, those are the worst class of cases.

796. Do you think, if they were forbidden to keep single children, they would move to some district where the Act was not administered or give up keeping children, or would they register?—They might do either of the three; but I think if they are fairly careful they would register. If they did not care one way or the other they would either give it up or move; but I think the advantage would be if it were known that persons were registered, it would be a sort of character to them; that they were decent people and known as such to the local authorities, and it would be an inducement to respectable people to take children. Now it is not an inducement to respectable people because they are afraid of being called baby farmers.

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797. An

27 April 1896.]

Mr. Hicks.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

797. An immense number of those with whom children are boarded out never came for any certificate of respectability, and they do not want it?—It is not what they want; it is what the public want. I do not think myself that registration would have any bad effect upon the boarding out of these children.

Chairman.

798. With regard to the question of lying-in houses you write a letter here for the Coroners' Society, in which you go rather into a more extensive question, the question of registration of births?—Yes, that includes a very wide subject.

799. I do not think we can quite take it up in the Bill; and also the question of still-births; and you make certain recommendations, but what we want to know is this (I do not think there is any doubt about it); is it the fact that these lying-in houses furnish a considerable number of children for the professional baby farmer, and that these children are not accounted for afterwards; and may I take it that it is your carefully formed opinion that there exists a considerable number of the worst class of lying-in houses which do this?—Yes.

800. And which you strongly recommend should be placed under supervision?—Yes, certainly.

801. How would you distinguish that class of lying-in houses from the private hospitals which are kept by some of the leading doctors of London, and from what I may call lodging houses where people come up from the country, and which are kept in a perfectly legitimate way?—I say then on the same principle as I said before, give notice to the authority and a proof of *bona fides*, and that would be the end of it.

802. How would you define it though, as a legal man?—I should distinguish between *bona fide* houses, first of all—

803. Would you distinguish between a house which was guaranteed by a qualified medical practitioner; do you think that would be sufficient?—It ought to be sufficient.

804. I suppose doctors are sometimes called into these, what I may call "shady" houses?—I should not say it was sufficient, if you ask me. It depends upon the class of medical practitioner.

805. Therefore the guarantee by a qualified medical practitioner would be practically no guarantee at all?—Not at all.

806. Can you suggest any other?—That they should submit the names of the people who are going to keep the house, and that a proper register should be kept.

807. Ought these houses to be inspected?—I think so.

808. And a register kept of every child born in them?—Yes.

809. Apart from the general registration outside by the registrar of births and deaths?—Yes; they do keep them themselves in the *bona fide* establishments, but I still think that there should be a registration all round for people who undertake the care of sick children and children of tender years.

Chairman—continued.

810. Do you think there would be great objection on the part of the medical profession?—Very likely; and you would find it among the class just now referred to.

811. I am not talking of them; I mean the better ones?—No; I think a doctor would sooner have a patient up to a house that was looked after properly than he would have a person to a house he had no means of knowing to be fit.

812. A doctor having any respect for himself would hardly recommend a person to a house not respectable and fit?—That is so; but in cases of emergency he would have nowhere to send a person to. A person goes to a house advertised, and says, "Would you see me there," and he finds that the sanitary arrangements are wrong.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

813. Do you agree, speaking generally, that 95 per cent. of the children whom we have got to protect are illegitimate; I do not mean that those are the exact figures?—I should say the large majority are. I should not say as much as 95 per cent.; from my experience I should say it was about 60 per cent.

814. Then do I understand that you suggest that there might be some mode of registration rather less irritating, less detailed I will say, than the present mode. You spoke just now of intimating it to the local authority; you suggested that there might be something less onerous than the present rather elaborate system of registration?—I think at first that the same preliminaries ought to start; that there should be an inspection to see that the matter is so far *bona fide*, but then, after that, if the local authority was satisfied, they need not insist on inspection so often; I think there should be some preliminary inquiry as to whether the place was fit to be carried on at all under those conditions.

815. Why do you think it is that there are so few registered houses in London now for the care of children; why are there so few, if, as we have been told, it is so profitable a trade?—I think now that they do not get registered; they still have more children out than before, but they take only one child at a time, and so they do not have to register; they have found that out. Now you can take a single child; that is the reason that they only take one at the time.

816. But your opinion is that, in the event of such a Bill being passed as we have here, making it necessary to register for one child only, a very large number of persons would immediately apply to be registered?—I think the majority of them would if they had to do it, but if they have not got to do it they would not come and tell you they want to be registered.

817. Have you any means of forming a general opinion, not in detail, as to how numerous these lying-in houses are in London; we were told this morning, that in the opinion of some of those before us, there are only 67 in London who advertise?—I cannot give an answer to that.

818. But you would think that 67 was not all?—I should think there are a lot more; I think you alluded to only those who advertise; I believe every midwife, who calls herself a mid-

wife.

27 April 1896.]

Mr. Hicks.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

wife, has two or three rooms for lying-in women, independently of any advertisement at all; in fact I know a great many of them have.

Lord Kinnaird.

819. Are midwives registered?—No, they are not registered yet.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

820. Do you consider that it is an unusual thing for a respectable parent to desire temporarily to put a child out for a week or two for payment?—No, not at all unusual.

821. Then do you consider that there would be an additional difficulty caused to such parents if they could not send out their child except to a registered house?—There might be some difficulty at first.

822. The kind of thing that suggests itself is this: a mother has to go into hospital for a few weeks; a neighbour takes the child for half-a-crown a week; would you say that that neighbour having to be registered would not cause serious difficulties to the working classes?—I do not think so, if they knew that all they would have to do is to let the police know of it.

823. Do you not think that that process of going to the police station would be a great difficulty in their minds?—No, I do not think so. Whenever a baby is ill, and they cannot find a doctor, they always go to the police, and do not hesitate to go there.

824. Then your opinion is that it would not be felt a hardship by the working class that a baby put out for a week or two would have to be

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

registered?—They would have to give notice, but the registration need not be so elaborate if it was sufficient that the person temporarily taking charge of the child was to give notice to the police, who might inform the local authority that such a child was there. They could easily find out that it was only a temporary arrangement.

825. Then would you consider that notice was necessary if a woman was going away for two nights; the Bill says 24 hours; the woman is going away to see her mother or sister, we will say, only for two nights, and a neighbour takes the child; or would you say that is an offence under the Act?—I should not like to say that; but I think something should be put in the Act which should make the definitions different; that is the difficulty I mean. There are cases in which things should be defined better.

Viscount Llandaff.

826. You have objections to the exemption that covers the very case his Lordship has put to you?—It is so wide.

827. "In the case of any infant left by the desire or with the knowledge of its parent, reputed parent, or guardian, in charge of a person not a relative, during the necessary absence of the parent, reputed parent, or guardian from home"?—But "necessary absence" would be so wide, you might put something to show what a "necessary absence" would be; it is all a matter of definition.

828. Do you think it is necessary to define "necessary"?—That is for the magistrate; I certainly think that that exemption is a bad one.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Thursday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Jovis, 30° Aprilis, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. ATHELSTAN BRAXTON HICKS, having been called in; is further Examined,
as follows:

Chairman.

829. I THINK we ascertained your opinions pretty fully the other day; is there anything further that you wish to add that has occurred to you since, that you can put shortly?—Yes, there is. I was not prepared to discuss so much the detail of the Bill on the last occasion, not having had to do with the drafting of it; but with regard to some questions asked me which showed that there was some difficulty in the minds of the Committee as to how the notice made to the local authority of the receipt of a child could be quickly and easily given, I may say that it struck me that the local authority in the country might be a long way off, and there would be some difficulty in giving the proper notice, or in knowing to whom to give it. I have therefore suggested certain amendments to the Bill, a copy of which I have given to your Lordship. They are as follows: "(1.) Any person who shall receive any child under the age of five years for hire or reward shall be registered in accordance with the provisions of this Act; that is to say: (a.) On receipt of such child by any person, notice of such receipt shall immediately be sent to the police, who shall at once send notice thereof to the local authority under this Act. (b.) That on receipt of such notice the local authority shall order the inspector to make inspection of the premises, and ascertain the particulars necessary for registration. (c.) The local authority shall then decide if the circumstances are sufficient to justify the house being registered. (2.) No person shall be held to contravene the provisions of this Act if he or she shall have given notice to the police of the district within 12 hours after receiving any child, that he or she has taken charge of such child for the purpose of nursing for hire or reward. (3.) Any person not a parent who shall have taken charge of any child or children under the age of five years for hire or reward shall not allow any such child to be removed from his or her care to be taken charge of by another person not a parent for hire or reward unless he or she has given notice to the local authority of such (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

intended removal, of the name and address of such child, and the person and place where it is purposed to be removed; and such local authority shall enter such particulars in the register. And where a child is removed from the jurisdiction of one local authority to that of another, notice of such removal shall be sent by the authority from whose district the child was removed, to the local authority into whose district the said child has been removed, and that such latter authority shall then make the necessary inquiries and inspection, which are required under this Act for the purposes of registration of the premises."

830. Those are suggestions?—Those are merely suggestions. I am not a draughtsman myself. There is a great difficulty, when children are removed, in knowing where they are removed to, and the local authority would have no knowledge that the child had been removed into their district unless the person chose voluntarily to give notice to them. The local authority who had registered the child would, if this suggestion were adopted, have to give notice to the other local authority, and so put them on their guard, so to say, and it seems to me that the giving of notice to the police would save all the trouble and a good deal of the inconvenience that might be felt in having to register where one child is taken care of.

831. You do not mean that necessarily the police of the district should have the administration of the Act?—Not necessarily, unless the local authority give it to them. If the police had to act they would be able to give the local authorities the particulars necessary; but if a local authority had certain inspectors as in the county of London, and I believe in some other districts, then on receiving notice from the police that the child has been brought into their district for nursing, they would be able to send their inspector and ascertain all that was necessary for registration purposes, and the advantage of that, of course, would be that the people would be able easily to get at the police;

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whereas

30 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

whereas there would be a great deal of difficulty, perhaps, in getting at the county authority.

832. I want to ask you one question on another subject: many people contend that these cases of what are known as baby-farming are police cases, and that if the police did their duty properly there ought to be no need for any extension of the Act. Do you agree with that?—I do not agree with that; I agree with the view that the Act absolutely wants extending to the case of one child only.

833. Other people again say that they are not really police cases, and that the Act is necessary, because it is very difficult to prove actual murder and actual crime, in a large number of these cases, after the child is dead; is that your experience as a coroner?—To what age do you wish to limit it, may I ask?

834. I am not speaking necessarily to the question of age; but is it your experience as a coroner that in the inquiries that take place into the death of some of these children, which may have taken place under suspicious circumstances, it is extremely hard to prove actual crime?—Yes.

835. Intent to kill?—Almost impossible.

836. Therefore, you think the best way of preventing that is to go to the root of the matter and try and obtain a proper supervision of the children while they are alive?—That is what I do think; that seems to me the only chance of detecting them. You cannot discover crime, though you may suspect it, and people somewhat reckon upon that.

837. Then another thing: inasmuch as it is generally the worst class of baby-farmers that treat children in the way you wish to put a stop to, some people raise the argument that if registration were extended these people would simply not register?—The bad ones, do you mean; then you can punish them, because, as a rule, you can find them.

838. You think you can find them out?—I think, with the proper carrying out of the present Bill thoroughly, you would very soon find out who were the bad ones and who were the good, and if they were registered or if they were not. I may mention with regard to the removal of children, which is an important point also, that on referring to my letter-book I find that in October 1888 I held an inquest on a child, and Mrs. Arnold turned up in connection with that case, and I wrote then to the Home Secretary, for the time being, a long letter on the subject explaining the whole facts of the case. Of course, the Bill of 1890 was introduced afterwards. Whether the case I allude to, and others besides, had any bearing upon that Bill of 1890 I cannot say, but it showed that it was hardly possible to find a trace of these children without an inquiry such as the coroners hold.

Viscount Llandaff.

839. You say that if the Act was extended, as proposed by the Bill, you could find out the bad baby-farmers who did not register?—Yes.

840. How?—I should not be able to; but the police would from neighbours; they would very soon find out.

841. Then what prevents them now from

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

finding out cases?—Because the one child now is not looked after by anybody. They know they need not look after the single child who is taken for hire or reward, and therefore it is only where there is an aggregation of children in one place that they need register, and they may more easily be found out than the one single child.

Lord Thring.

842. I do not quite follow you there; why should it be more easy for the police, if the Act is extended, to find out that a child is kept in an unregistered house, than to find out at the present moment that a child is murdered or likely to be murdered?—At present there is no law to put in motion, therefore the police do not trouble themselves probably to carry out duties that are not forced upon them by statute.

843. Surely it is the duty of the police to find out every case in which they think a child is likely to be murdered?—If they think it is likely to be, but how can they tell that; they cannot go and inquire at every house and ask if they have a child. But you can very soon ascertain from surrounding neighbours that a child has been taken in, and make inquiry. The police would have the power under the present Bill to make that inquiry and report to the authorities.

844. Here is one general question: can you give us any idea, taking London, what number of children would come under the Act, first if you did not increase the age, but simply took the case of single children?—I could not tell you anything as to the number.

845. You could not state it approximately even?—No, I should not like to profess to do so.

846. Nor could you say what would be the effect of extending the age with regard to the number?—That would mean increased work, of course.

847. But you do not know the magnitude of it at all?—No, I think not.

848. You cannot tell us, nor can anybody tell us the number of children that would probably be affected, or as to what is the percentage of children that would come within the Act, as compared with the whole number of children that are born?—I should think that Mr. Babey would be able to give you an approximation to that better than I could.

849. I suppose it is admitted that hand-fed children run a much greater risk of dying than children fed in the natural way at the breast?—That is so; and wherever I find that a single child has been fed by the bottle, as it, of course, has to be (they call them bottle babies), I always, if it is under twelvemonths, begin from the birth of that child, and from all the witnesses who had care of that child from the birth ascertain how that child has been fed. The result of that has been to show that in one case five people had charge of a child under twelvemonths, and they had each fed it differently. It would be impossible for me to say if there was any intent in that case.

850. But I may take it from you that the bottle-fed babies are much more liable, however carefully tended, to die than those fed naturally?—Tha

30 April 1896.]

Mr. HICKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

—That is so; and, therefore, the bottle-fed baby requires more supervision from some one in authority.

851. And these foster children are almost all bottle-fed?—Yes; I have never known a wet-nurse to nurse the child.

852. The people who take them never nurse them themselves?—No, never.

Chairman.

853. In your practice, as a coroner, I presume in the course of your inquiries how infants have died, you have come across cases of these single

Chairman—continued.

children that are being kept for hire or reward?—Constantly.

854. Where the people who have kept them have openly flouted the inspector and defied him to a certain extent?—Yes, they have laughed at me when I have said, "Are you registered under the Act?" (That is what I generally have asked.) "Oh no, sir, we are not obliged to be," they have answered, and have laughed at me as much as to say, "I have got the better of the Act anyway."

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. E. DE M. RUDOLF, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

855. You are the Secretary of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, I believe?—I am.

856. How long have you occupied that position?—From the formation of the society; in fact I am described as the founder in the articles of association.

857. How many years ago is that?—Fifteen years.

858. What is the object of that society?—To provide homes in several ways for destitute children of all ages and both sexes, from infancy upwards.

Lord Thring.

859. Under one year included?—Yes, from six weeks old we have taken children.

Chairman.

860. How many children are under its care now?—At present about 2,300.

861. What are the society's methods for providing homes for the children?—In the case of the very young children we board them out with foster parents.

862. What do you call "very young"?—Up to the age of about seven; from seven years of age till 13 we put them into small homes; and over that age into larger homes where they can learn industrial occupations. Then we emigrate a certain proportion of the children whom it is desired to remove from their old surroundings, send them to Canada to our homes there.

863. And what are your methods in providing the foster parents; the homes for the younger children; that is what we are more concerned with?—In the first place we have a form of recommendation which has to be signed by the clergyman of the parish, and examined or reported upon by a lady referee. I hand in a copy of the form which contains a series of questions, for instance: The name of the foster parent and address? How far distant from the residence of the proposed supervisor? Is the foster mother a member of the Church of England? What is the occupation of the foster parent's family? What is the income of the family, and from what sources? Of whom does the family consist? Number of children in (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

charge of, or belonging to and living in the family? How many rooms in the house? Are there any lodgers? What provisions will be made for sleeping of child, as to bed and room? Name and distance of proposed day and Sunday schools? What payment per week will be required. (*The form is handed in.*) That is the initial stage. Anybody wishing a child to be placed out with a foster parent has to fill up a form of recommendation on the part of the foster parent in the first instance. If that is favourably considered, and it is decided to send a child to a foster parent, she is supplied with a copy of the regulations to be observed (which I hand in), and a child is sent down, when she is required to fill in a "Form of undertaking by the foster parent" (which I also hand in); that is to say, to bring up the child as one of her own children, to provide it with proper food, lodging, and washing, and provide for the proper repair and renewal of clothing, and so on; and, in fact, to comply with this paper of regulations which I have handed in. Then another form is signed by the foster parent acknowledging that she has received such and such a child. The child having been placed with the foster parent, is reported upon periodically by the supervisor, who is resident in the district, either a lady or a clergyman; and besides that we have a lady inspectress who works from headquarters and visits the children without giving previous notice of her visits. She is a lady doctor, and she reports to headquarters direct; so that we have two inspections; one a continual inspection on the spot by the supervisor, and an occasional inspection by an expert. We have something like 700 children boarded out under those conditions at the present time; and we never have found a single instance of wilful neglect on the part of any foster parent who has complied with our conditions.

Lord Belper.

864. Are the children all placed out singly or two or three together?—Not more than two are allowed to be placed in any one home, excepting in the case of brothers and sisters. Then the number, if there is accommodation, can be increased to four.

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865. What

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

865. What number did you say you have?—About 700 altogether boarded-out.

866. Are you acquainted with the provisions of the Infant Life Protection Bill of 1896?—I have read them through.

867. What is your opinion of the Bill?—Without going into details of the working of the measure, I think it is very desirable, in order to place further restrictions on the practice of baby-farming by irresponsible persons; of course, assuming that such a society as the Waifs and Strays Society does not come within the operation of the Bill.

868. I think I may say on behalf of the Committee that there is no desire on their part to interfere with the good work carried on by a society such as yours?—I understood that.

869. Have you got any special reason for further approving of the proposed extension of the Act? The two principal points are extending the Act to one child and raising the age to five years?—I think both provisions are most desirable. One argument which appeals to me very much in favour of the Bill is the indirect result it will have in checking immorality. For instance, in the course of my work we have frequent applications from persons who have undertaken the charge of an illegitimate child of, we will say, a servant girl. The servant girl having succeeded in disposing of her child in that way has disappeared; having promised to keep up a payment she pays for a few weeks, and then leaves the neighbourhood altogether. If the Bill would result in making it more difficult to dispose of such illegitimate children, I think the indirect result will be good upon the community generally.

Lord Thring.

870. What do you mean by "dispose of"; I do not follow?—A servant girl has an illegitimate child; she persuades some woman to take charge of this child under a promise of paying so much out of her wages; it is very easy for her, after paying it for a month or two, to leave her situation and seek a situation in some other part of the country, thus leaving the child in the hands of the foster parent.

871. I want to know how this Act, whether extended or not, prevents that. I suppose the child goes to the workhouse, as a matter of fact, in such a case as that?—The child might or might not; in some cases boards of guardians have refused to receive children from foster-parents who have accepted them under a promise of payment.

872. They must receive them, must they not?—It is a question for the guardians; they differ in their practice.

873. I want to know how the existing Act, or any extension of the Act, would prevent or assist in preventing cases of that sort; I do not follow?—If it were known, as I suppose it would be known, that it is necessary for a person to be registered and inspected even if she were to take one child, it would deter a great many women from taking these children in who take them in at present. The child would be placed by the servant at once in the workhouse; she would go there at once.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

874. And take the child with her?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

875. And be ruined for life, perhaps?—Hardly ruined for life. It would be a lesson for the girl.

Lord Thring.

876. You know that a good many servants have children of which the masters and mistresses know nothing, and it is not discovered till years afterwards; the servant had one child, she put that child out; that child was kept alive, and nothing wrong was done with it. Would it not be a very strong inducement to put away a child if a servant, in such a case, could not get rid of it quietly?—My own society provides for taking illegitimate children from servants where there is a reasonable prospect of amendment. In a first case they would always take an illegitimate child on the promise of the payment of part of the girl's salary, under the guarantee of some responsible person.

877. Without disclosing the name?—Without making it public. We should know it ourselves, of course.

Chairman.

878. That is the general practice of your society in providing homes for illegitimate children?—Yes, to require a promise of amendment on the part of the mother, and a promise of payment out of her earnings so that she may recognise her responsibility.

879. Do you act on the principle of the Foundling Hospital and only take what I may call first cases?—We only take first cases.

880. And what class are the parents mostly?—Illegitimate children are chiefly children of servant girls who have either been betrayed under promise of marriage or something of that sort.

881. You have told us how the society selects the foster parents; did you tell us the conditions under which it boarded-out children?—I have handed in a paper of conditions.

Lord Thring.

882. Did I rightly understand in your conditions that when a child is sent somebody recommends it; you do not send it out till somebody recommends the child?—Our cases generally come through the clergy of the National Church throughout the country. They act as rescue officers really.

883. Is it then confined to the Church of England?—In so far as this, that we only appeal to members of the church, and bring up all the children in the doctrines of the Church of England; but we take all children, except Jews and Roman Catholics.

884. But does the clergyman who recommends them pay anything?—If he can; but we take many free cases. I suppose half the number of the children we have in our charge are absolutely free; children for whom we have no payment whatever.

Chairman.

885. Are you satisfied from your experience that the society's methods in boarding out secure

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

secure proper care of the children?—Quite; we have had no instance of any case of wilful neglect. Sometimes there has been an overlooking of our regulations as regards sleeping two children in one bed, and so on, but nothing wilfully wrong.

886. Are you of opinion that registration as such would put a stop to some of the evils which we wish to attack under this Bill?—I see one difficulty, and that is how to discover the existence of the single children who are boarded out. If, as I suppose, the Bill is to apply to children up to five years of age, the census would probably help in the matter; you could get information through the census, I suppose, that a child is merely being boarded with a certain person and does not belong to that person. The difficulty in carrying out the working of this would be to discover the houses where the children are placed.

887. But if a person had a single child belonging to somebody else, and was deliberately keeping it secret for the purpose of not registering it, they would hardly be likely to put it down in the census, would they; they would be more likely to put it down as their own?—Then they would make a misstatement, and be under a penalty; there is a penalty for making a wrong statement in the census paper. Then the School Board, for instance, would be able to help. Supposing a child is attending a school under another name than that of the person with whom she is residing, I think it should be reported at once.

888. Is it not the case when these children are given out that one of the points that the parents make is that all identity should be lost, and all the names absolutely sunk?—That is not so in our case; not in the case of my society; I presume that it would be so in some cases.

889. You have no experience of the machinations of the ordinary baby farmer?—No, none whatever.

890. You have not come across them in your inquiries in finding homes?—We have always had the name of the mother given to us; the name of the child is represented to us as the name of its mother always.

891. Then, as a rule, you have found great advantage accruing to the children from the fact of the careful supervision?—Yes.

892. Are you, therefore, of opinion that these children, who are now put out singly, and who are not looked after because they do not come under the Act, would benefit by the supervision which would be provided by registration?—No doubt; I feel sure they would.

Lord Belper.

893. Is the operation of your society confined to London, or to any particular district?—It extends to the whole of England and Wales.

894. Are there a large number of those 700 children, you spoke of, in London?—No, out of London; we board them out entirely in the country.

895. And you are very careful, of course, as to getting information as to the respectability of the houses into which you put them?—We are.

(0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

896. That is much easier to do in the country than it would in London?—Yes.

897. Do you suppose that there would be any objection raised by the people with whom you board out these children to having their houses registered as places for taking in children?—I think there would be a strong objection, both on the part of the foster parents and the supervisors.

898. The foster parents, you mean, with whom you place them?—Yes; and also the supervisors.

899. I understand you think there would be a strong objection?—A strong objection on the part of the foster parent and the supervisor.

900. Whom do you call the supervisor?—The supervisor would either be the clergyman of the parish or some responsible lady in the district near enough to the house to pay frequent visits.

901. And speaking generally, from your knowledge, you think that persons in respectable houses of that character where you place them would object to their being registered as houses where children were taken in?—I have reason to think so.

902. Do you imagine that under this Bill these houses would not be obliged to register?—Yes; I have read the Bill to consider its application to the operations of a society such as the Waifs and Strays Society, and I should imagine that, under Clause 8, the Waifs and Strays Society would be exempt entirely.

903. Clause 8 is the interpretation clause, where the expression "Institutions" is interpreted?—Yes.

904. And then, with regard to that, you would have to refer to the principal Act?—Yes; but reading the clause with the principal Act, I think the Waifs and Strays Society would be exempt.

905. I do not express an opinion about that myself, but I point out to you that the question is whether an institution being excepted from the effect of the Act would mean any child put out in a house by that institution. I should have thought that it would mean children kept within the institution itself, and that it would not mean the houses to which these 700 children were put out by the institution; what is your opinion on that?—But the interpretation reads: "shall mean societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons." I claim that "the Waifs and Strays Society is organised for some public or social object," and that we have "a committee of not less than six persons."

906. But you must read it with the 13th section of the principal Act: "The provisions of this Act shall not extend to the relatives or guardians of any infant retained or received as aforesaid, nor to institutions established for the protection or care of infants." Now, is not an institution established "for the protection or care of infants," an institution where the infants are protected and cared for within the walls of the institution itself?—But the interpretation says that it means "societies organised for some

H 3

public

[30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

public or social object," and I say that we are a society within the definition.

Lord Thring.

907. The foster parent is not?—The foster parent receives the child, and we are ourselves responsible for the child.

Lord Belper.

908. At all events, in giving the evidence you have given, you believe that you are excepted from the Bill?—I do.

909. And if you were not excepted from the Bill you would not like it to remain in its present form?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

910. You approve of the Bill, speaking generally, I understand, provided that sufficient care were taken to exempt such societies as yours?—I do; speaking generally, I approve of the Bill entirely.

911. Have you considered the question of whether the provisions of the Bill, if it became law, would press hardly upon respectable people who desire to take in a child for a neighbour; has that come under your notice?—It might in some cases. I am thinking now of women who go out to work, we will say by the week; they want somebody to mind their children. It would be rather hard upon respectable widows, perhaps; but those cases would be comparatively few compared with the large number of children who are placed out with irresponsible persons, by servant girls and others.

912. Do you think that the provisions of the Bill make that possible hardship unimportant as compared with the general good?—Yes, I think so.

913. You mention those cases, but what about the very numerous cases, one would have thought, of a mother who goes away three or four days and asks a neighbour to take a child for a shilling or two in the interval. Such cases are occurring almost every day of the week in London?—I should have thought it would be easy for a woman who goes away to make an arrangement with a relative. Of course it is difficult to arrive at the number of such cases.

914. Of course it is; but what we want is, as I understand, that those gentlemen who have a large experience in dealing with the arrangements for keeping children away from their parents, should tell us whether or not they would think the hardship sufficient to prevent us from passing such an Act?—Well, in my opinion, the hardship would not be sufficient to prevent passing this Bill.

915. Have you ever boarded children in houses that were registered?—Never.

916. That is to say, you have never sent two children under one year of age to one house?—No.

917. Not even a brother and sister; they would be twins, of course?—No.

918. In short, you have no experience of registered houses at all?—Well, we had a registered home at one time. It was established

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

by the present Lady Derby, and was handed over to the society when her husband became Governor General of Canada. It had been registered before it was transferred to the society; but we came to the conclusion that it was not the best way in which to care for infants, massing them together in one institution; so we dispersed the home and boarded the children out singly. We soon altered the way of dealing with the children. The rate of mortality was rather high, and we thought we would lower it by dispersing the children and boarding them out; and I think we did.

919. There is no question that the rate of mortality is higher when many children of tender age are together?—Yes, very young children.

920. How much do you pay to foster parents for care of children?—We pay 5s. per week.

921. Do you find that adequate in all cases?—Yes, in all ordinary cases. Feeble-minded children, those requiring special care, we have to pay more for.

922. Do you know what the payment made by the Foundling Hospital is?—I do not.

923. It used to be 6s. a week; I do not know what it is now, but you find 5s. adequate?—Five shillings; and I think that is the rate sanctioned practically by the Local Government Board for boards of guardians.

924. Then do you consider that the foster parent makes some profit by taking them for 5s. a week?—Yes, the foster parents would make in the country districts nearly 1s. a week, in town districts or suburbs of town they would make something less, perhaps 6d. a week.

925. There is a large demand, I suppose, for your children; I mean you would have no difficulty in boarding out twice as many?—No difficulty whatever. We have a large number of properly-recommended foster parents on our books, waiting for children.

926. Do you consider that the mother of an illegitimate child ought to find any difficulty in discovering, supposing she wishes to do all that is right, a place where she can respectably board her child under present circumstances?—I do not think that she ought to have any difficulty if she were to come to a society such as ours. The Waifs and Strays Society would always listen to an application from the mother of an illegitimate child.

927. And would endeavour to find for her a proper home?—A proper home for her child under the conditions I have mentioned. They are contained in a printed letter, which I will hand in. The conditions are that it must be the first child, and that 4s. a week should be paid, guaranteed by some proper person, mistress or somebody else; and that there is good promise of amendment on the part of the mother. The society would then pay the extra shilling.

928. Then in the case of any mother who desires, under proper circumstance, to have a child taken care of, and is prepared to guarantee the 4s. a week, you are prepared to find the home for the child?—Yes, find the home for the child, and pay 5s.

Lord Thring.

929. I want to draw your attention to this: You

[30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

You tell us, and no doubt rightly, that your foster parents are almost invariably kind?—They are.

930. And you also tell us that they would almost invariably object to be registered?—I assume that they would from the fact that they would object to two inspections.

931. But you tell us that the foster parents who are of the best class, would object to be registered, and also that the ladies who superintend it would also object to the registration as supervisors?—That is so.

932. You admit, and I fancy it is generally admitted, that the accumulation of these poor little things in any one house, whether they are well-kept or less properly kept, increases the mortality?—I believe so.

933. Has not registration a double aspect; if there were great difficulty in distributing the children in separate houses owing to the requirement of registration, the effect would be to accumulate in the registered houses a greater number of children?—I do not know that this Bill contemplates the aggregation of children; that is to say, more than we will say just a reasonable number, say two or three at the outside in any one cottage.

934. I do not see that either in the Act or in the Bill there is any limit on the number of children that may be aggregated in a particular establishment if the establishment is found to be large enough for them?—There is no limit in the Act.

935. Is not that rather an unfortunate feature, because it seems to stand to reason that it would be very unadvisable to pass any legislation which would tend to the accumulation of children in one establishment, however well kept?—I think it would. The difficulty in having a large number of infants in one establishment is this: that the children would not get that individual care and attention that they would get if they were placed out singly with respectable women. For instance, in the small house that I was alluding to recently, there was a staff I think of four matrons to deal with 20 children; therefore supposing that four of those children were in trouble with fits or something during the night, those four matrons would be fully employed, and the 16 other children would have to get on as best they could.

936. I want to get your opinion; as you know, on other occasions we have had evidence that accumulating children together in large masses at any age was a very unfortunate way of bringing them up?—I quite agree with that.

937. It seems to me that in proportion as you discourage the distribution of children in separate houses, in the same degree you tend to accumulate them in houses where considerable numbers would be maintained; that seems to me a misfortune?—It is a misfortune. It would rather have this effect, to send the applicants to a responsible society such as the Waifs and Strays Society, where the children would be placed out under proper supervision and conditions. It would have that effect as well as the aggregation of children in large homes.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

938. You say that both the foster parents and the supervisors would object to registration; would they still more strongly object to any interference by the police?—They would.

939. And if notice to the police were required of them it would be highly objectionable to them?—Yes.

940. Any respectable foster parent would resent it?—Yes.

941. You said that you had one registered home handed over to you by Lady Derby?—Yes.

942. Where was that Home?—In the north of London.

943. How many children were there in it?—I think 16 to 20.

944. Was it registered under the Act?—It was registered.

945. And inspected, I suppose, by Mr. Babey?—I do not know; it is some years ago. It was before Lord Stanley of Preston was Governor of Canada.

946. Lord Stanley of Preston went to Canada in 1887?—Yes; it must be nine or ten years ago.

947. Do you remember about how many children there were then?—I think some 16 or 20 infants.

948. And you found that the mortality was high?—The mortality was very high.

949. And when that happened you broke the Home up?—Yes.

950. Do you remember whether the inspector visited it?—Not to my knowledge; he may have done; I should not know, perhaps.

951. I gather from you that you never have registered any of your foster parents, even though they had more than one child?—No; we have never placed out more than one under the age of 12 months with any single foster parent; that is to say, we have taken care not to bring ourselves under the Act.

952. What particular reason have you for avoiding the Act?—Simply because we find that a young child under the age of 12 months is as much as any one person can properly care for.

953. I thought you said you had taken care not to bring yourselves within the Act?—We have not troubled ourselves with the Act, but we have done that out of regard to the children, that is to say, we are so careful to see that our children are properly cared for, that we have never placed out more than one child under 12 months with one foster parent; and so we have never brought ourselves under the Act.

954. You want to encourage single boarding-out of children?—Yes, of very young children.

955. And if you hampered the boarding-out by registration you would rather move in the direction of more than one child being taken; you would make anybody who takes the trouble to register at all take the trouble to do more than that?—I am not sure that the society would do that.

956. I do not say your society?—As a matter of convenience it would be best, of course, for more than one child to be taken in.

957. For the convenience of the foster parent, you mean?—And the convenience of inspection and registration.

H 4

958. Not

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

958. Not for the convenience of the child?—
Not for the convenience of the child.

Lord Belper.

959. I understand that you think it very desirable that there should be only one child in these houses at a very young age, and you also think that the respectable people would object to being registered?—Yes.

960. The natural effect of those two opinions is, that single children would have to go and be kept by people who are not respectable?—I am referring not to respectable people; I am referring to the society's foster parents. The original question, I think, was whether the foster parents under the society would object to be registered.

961. I am merely taking the opinions stated in your evidence. There were two opinions. One is: That it is very desirable that children at a very young age should only be boarded out singly; the other is, that respectable people taking in these children would strongly object to being registered themselves; is not the result that between the two you have to send the children to people who are not respectable, or to accumulate them?—The term "respectable," perhaps, ought not to have been used. A person, may be so much in want of a little addition to her income, although perfectly respectable, that she would be willing to undergo the formality of registration. I should like to withdraw that word if I used it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

962. You told us, to begin with, that you did, speaking generally, approve of this Bill?—I quite approve.

963. Do you realise that the effect, if this Bill became law to-morrow, would be that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people in England to-day would immediately be registered or cease to keep the children they have got?—Yes, I think so.

964. You have also told us that as regards the foster parents you have to do with, they would object to registration, and you would protect them by the covering shield of the society?—Yes, quite so.

965. But there are many thousands of foster parents outside your society who all take in one child, and you think that you would not object to a law which compelled them to be registered?—No, I should not object.

966. Can you give us the ground?—On the ground that there should be some adequate supervision. There is no supervision in the case of these thousands of irresponsible foster parents at present.

967. And the advantage of having that general supervision would, in your opinion, outweigh the disadvantage to the foster parent or the deterrent effect upon respectable people, which would make them, perhaps, decline to take them?—I think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

968. But would you be prepared to sanction considerable exemptions from this rule of registration?—I should be prepared. I think that societies should be exempted.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

969. And those whom the societies employed?—Yes. I think that societies should be exempt. The societies might, perhaps, be required to have their system or method registered; that is to say, that the various papers which I have handed in should be submitted to the responsible officer for carrying out the provisions of the Act, and should be approved by him.

970. As I understand, you have no infants under your own immediate care at headquarters?—Oh, no.

971. You board them all out?—Board them all out.

972. You would exempt at any rate the foster parents whom you employ from registration under the Act?—I would exempt the foster parents; but, as I say, I do not think there would be any objection to registering the society.

973. Take the cases of the labouring man or woman obliged to leave their children for some weeks in order to get work, and putting those children with neighbours; do you think that they should be obliged to be registered; possibly for a week or a fortnight?—It has struck me that the 24 hours specified in the Bill might be with advantage extended. That is merely my own view.

974. To what extent would you extend it?—I should say limit it to a week; I think that might be considered; 24 hours is rather a short time.

975. You are aware that the Act as it stands, and the Bill as it stands, requires immediate registration of any child that has been received for more than 24 hours, from whatever cause?—Yes.

976. Now take the case of a child put with its mother's sister or some near relation; is there any need to register it?—Not when placed with relations, certainly.

977. Take the numerous cases of people who send their children to the seaside under the care of a servant; do you think that any public advantage would be gained by registering them. I send my children, we will suppose, to the seaside for three weeks under the care of a nurse?—I should say not; I should say that the parents would see that they sent their children to a fit and proper place.

978. This is one of the exceptions strongly objected to by some. In the case of an "infant placed by a parent, reputed parent, or guardian in charge of a person in the domestic service of that parent, reputed parent, or guardian;" do you see any objection to that exemption?—I see no objection to it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

979. The main object that you would have in view in advocating this Bill would be to secure supervision of the individual child?—Yes, it is.

980. Have you ever thought whether that could be arrived at by the multiplication of some supervising authorities?—I think the existence of the supervising authority would not be sufficient; in order to exercise that power of supervision registration would be needed in the first instance; otherwise the supervising authority would not know of the existence of the boarded-out child; it involves registration, not only supervision.

981. I mean

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

981. I mean that there should be a larger number of people than now exists other than Poor Law authorities to whom a mother might go to ask for advice as to where to put her child; and that the home to which the child is sent should be, not itself individually registered, but under the supervision of somebody who was registered like your own society?—I think so. I think that would to some extent meet the necessity.

982. You have nothing of that kind to suggest?—The only thing that I can suggest is, the extension of my society, the boarding-out part of the work.

983. And you are prepared to extend it to any degree?—We are prepared to extend it to any degree.

Lord Belper.

984. Might I ask, with reference to these exemptions, have you considered whether the Bill would answer your purpose, at all events, as an interpretation of the "institutions" to be exempted. We have got it in the Bill as it stands (I do not think it is generally agreed to). "The expression 'institution established for the protection or care of infants' shall mean societies organised for some public or social object, and which are controlled by a committee of not less than six persons?"—I think after the words "shall mean societies organised for some public or social object," there might be inserted such words as "having the supervision of homes in which children are boarded out," or, "exercising proper supervision"; and then to show that such proper supervision is exercised, the system should come under the notice or the approval of the officer who is to put the Act in force.

985. That means that the society must be registered?—The society as a society, but not its homes, not its houses. I think that that would be one way of meeting the difficulty.

986. You suggest that the society should be registered, not exempted from registration, but that they should be registered, and that that registration should include all the homes to which they put out their children?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

987. Except the homes from supervision?—Yes, except the homes from supervision; but the system of the society would have to be approved.

Lord Thring.

988. Do I understand that you would not object to requiring the approval of the local authority to the institution before it registered it. In other words, to give a discretion to the local authority to register the society or not?—Approval by the local authority was not in my mind; it was rather approval by the central authority. I mean it would be impossible to apply to every local authority throughout the country, because we have our children singly boarded-out in a large number of parishes.

989. By a central authority you mean a Government department?—The Local Government Board or whatever authority had the control.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

990. If there was a waifs and strays society at Leeds you would not object to that having to get the approval of the local authority?—If it were independent of ours; but we have our own branch there.

991. Do you mean that your branch in Leeds should apply to the London County Council for leave to continue their operations?—But is there no higher authority, no public department, to which we could apply? I mean such as the Home Office, or the Local Government Board.

Lord Belper.

992. That, of course, would be a new proposal; but your suggestion lies in the direction of its being made the duty of some public department to inquire into the management and status of these societies, and to give them their approval; and that, as a society, it should be exempt from the operation of the Act; that is what you say?—That is what I suggest.

993. And that, getting that certificate of exemption from this public authority, they would be free from any inspection themselves, and that all the houses they sent the children to would be exempt from inspection?—Yes.

Viscount Landaff.

994. What sort of supervision would you have of the children?—The supervision which I would recommend would be a local supervision, in the first instance, and then an occasional supervision by someone not interested in the foster parent or the child.

995. Some private responsible person?—Yes.

996. The London County Council employ inspectors?—I should not advocate that, but a voluntary inspector.

Chairman.

997. With regard to that proposal of yours that societies like yours should be sanctioned by a central authority, I suppose the practical way you would work that would be that they should give you a certificate, and then when your local committee has approved a certain house of a foster parent, you would give her a card or certificate from your society, and then when the inspector came round and inquired if she had got children there, this card or certificate could be produced showing that she need not be registered under the Act?—I think that could be easily given; something could be given to the foster parents by which they could show their authority to take in children as conveyed to them by the society.

998. And you would have no objection when you boarded out a child in a certain place to write to the local authority and say, under the certificate of exemption which we have from the Poor Law Board, or whatever it was, we have placed a child in such and such a house within your district. You would have no objection to that?—I do not know. I do not think we could undertake to do that.

999. Why not?—Simply because of the detail. Our object is not to increase detail in our work when it is not absolutely necessary for our own convenience. A charitable society is not like

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30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

Government Department; we must do our work at the lowest possible cost.

1000. It would be only one communication?—It might be done; but we should have a large number of forms and papers to send in to the Government Department, and they are very laborious. We should not mind furnishing a list, or allowing our forms and registers to be inspected by any Government official; but to be bound to give a notice to a public official every time we board out a child or change its residence would involve a considerable amount of work.

1001. I understood you to say just now that the objection to registration on the part of your foster parents is more or less an objection to the double supervision to which they would be subjected?—Yes, the double supervision.

1002. So that if there were only one supervision there would not be necessarily an objection to registration as such?—That is another question. Registration would involve, I suppose, a certain amount of publicity; that is to say, that the visits of the inspectors would become known in the district, and in many cases of respectable people, foster parents who are really above the artizan class, they do not like it known that they are in the habit of receiving payment for these children.

1003. Do they object to having it known that they receive payment from your society?—Publicly known amongst their neighbours.

1004. You have your lady visitor, who knows?—The lady visitor knows and the lady doctor knows.

1005. You think it would get known in the district that they were keeping children, because of somebody coming to inspect?—If there were a regularly appointed public inspector.

1006. You have local committees, and the members of those pay visits?—We have one supervisor, a lady who is in the habit of visiting at all the houses along the street.

1007. She is known as such?—As a district visitor. She visits all houses, irrespective of the boarding out of children.

1008. Now, Lord Thring, some time ago, rather pressed you on the question as to whether what I might call a more extended system of registration, would not tend to accumulate children in certain registered houses, instead of leaving them to be boarded out singly as they are now; are you conversant with the rules whereby the local authorities, who administer this Act, register houses; I mean, have you any knowledge of the rules that they go on?—Some little knowledge; not very much.

1009. Do you think they would allow a house to be registered if it was proposed to keep a large number of children in it; do they not before they register a house for a certain number of children examine the amount of cubic space?—Yes.

1010. Therefore they would not allow undue accumulation of children?—Overcrowding, you are now referring to, I understand; but that is not the point.

Lord Thring.

1011. I asked you whether it is not known to be the fact that a great accumulation of children,

Lord Thring—continued.

especially young children, however much cubic space is allowed them, is detrimental to the children; is not that the case?—It is the case.

1012. My question is this: whether, supposing you make distribution, as I call it, of children in separate boarding-out houses difficult, you do not incidentally make it probable that they will be accumulated in particular establishments; to which you replied, yes. Then my inference is this, that if you discourage by any means whatever the distribution of children you encourage their accumulation in houses; a good object, I admit, but still would not it be injurious on the whole; and I illustrate it (because I wish to show what I mean) by saying that nothing is more detrimental than the enormous schools in the neighbourhood of London which have plenty of cubic space, but it is known that the aggregation of such numbers injures the health of the children. Do you follow me?—I quite follow you.

Chairman.

1013. I should like to ask you something about that Derby Home; can you tell me where it was; "the north of London" is a large term?—I cannot remember.

1014. You cannot locate it now?—I cannot locate it now.

1015. You can find out for us, perhaps?—Yes.

1016. I should like to know whether that house was registered under the Act?—I believe it was; I am only speaking from memory.

Lord Belper.

1017. Was it within the Metropolitan Board of Works area?—I believe so, but I will obtain that information.

Chairman.

1018. With regard to these foster parents of very small children, are they generally wet nurses with whom you put them out?—No; we cannot get them.

1019. You do not go on the lines of the Foundling Hospital?—No.

Lord Thring.

1020. It is too expensive?—And the difficulty is to get them.

Chairman.

1021. The evidence that was given before the former Committee showed that the Foundling Hospital had rather a peculiar system of sending the children to single women who had children of their own, and these women's children were put out to be hand-nursed and generally died?—The mortality of our young children is not high, I think.

1022. I wanted to know whether your system was the same as that of the Foundling Hospital?—Not the same.

Viscount Llandaff.

1023. Have you, in the course of your experience, come across any institutions nominally for the protection and care of infants that are really speculative undertakings for illicit profit?—I have come across none.

1024. We

30 April 1896.]

Mr. RUDOLF.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1024. We were labouring on a definition the other day in order to exclude certain improper institutions, nominally for the protection of infants?—My experience is bound up with this one society of my own; I am not in a position to

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

speak as to that. The Charity Organisation Society might, perhaps, give information on that point.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss ISABEL G. SMITH is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1025. You have been, I think, for the last two years, an inspector for the London County Council under the Infant Life Protection Act?—I have.

1026. What is your special branch of the work?—The inspection of the houses registered under the Act, and of those of applicants for registration.

1027. Will you tell the Committee how you proceed on receiving an application for registration under the Act?—On receiving notice of application I visit the house of the applicant, and I examine into its fitness as regards situation, cleanliness, sanitary condition, amount of air-space, and the number of occupants. I ascertain the age of the applicant, and whether or not she is entirely dependent on the fees to be received for the maintenance of the infants whom she purposes keeping. I see and note the condition of any children she may already have in her charge, and endeavour to learn her ideas and practice as regards feeding and general treatment of infants; and, as a result of my interview with her, I form an opinion as to her fitness to have the care of nurse infants.

1028. Do you make any inquiries outside as to the character of the applicant?—Yes. On my first visit to her house I supply her with the form for certificate of character which is provided by the Council, and of which I think a copy has been handed in. This she is required to get signed by either a justice of the peace or a doctor, or a clergyman, and also by two rated householders who are not her own relatives. On receipt of this certificate, duly signed, I call upon those who have signed it and ascertain the extent of their knowledge of the applicant's character. I may add that if I am not satisfied with the information that I receive I endeavour to obtain it in other ways.

1029. When you have completed those inquiries, how do you then proceed?—I submit the application to the chief officer of the Public Control Department with a full report on the result of my inquiries, and generally state what opinion I myself have formed as to the suitability of the applicant for registration.

1030. What is the amount of air-space required in registered houses by the Council?—The minimum amount in the sleeping apartments is 400 cubic feet for each adult, and 250 cubic feet for each infant or child of under 10 years of age.

1031. And after houses have been registered, do they come periodically under your inspection?—They do.

1032. And do the persons registered know when to expect you?—No, I never give any notice of my intention to visit.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

1033. How frequently do you visit each house?—On an average, about once in three weeks; but more frequently in cases of serious illness, or where I am not quite satisfied with the result of my last visit, or under any other special conditions.

1034. Do you, as a rule, find the people unwilling to be under registration?—No, not when they understand what it involves. An applicant will sometimes inquire whether, if registered, she will be under police supervision, but she is generally, I may say always, satisfied when I assure her that that is not so.

1035. Do women sometimes voluntarily apply for registration, that is to say, without any intention of keeping more than one infant of statutory age?—Yes; I have had cases in which women who did not intend to keep two infants of statutory age sought and obtained registration.

1036. Though they intended only to keep one?—Although they intended only to keep one. In a few of these cases they have registered in order that they might take a second infant if asked to do so temporarily.

1037. What is their motive for doing so?—They find registration a protection for various reasons. It is to some extent a safeguard against the malicious insinuations of neighbours. Some look upon it as a certificate of their fitness to have the care of infants; and they know that in cases of inquiry into their treatment of their charges I shall be prepared to testify as to what I have found it to be.

1038. Is it a habit of registered persons to seek your advice on matters connected with the care of infants?—Yes; I constantly get letters from them asking me to call soon, as they wish to consult me on some matter.

1039. Do you mean that they consult you instead of a doctor?—No, certainly not. I particularly urge upon them all the necessity of obtaining medical aid for a sick nurse infant, even more readily than they would for their own children; and, although there is frequently a difficulty as to who shall pay the doctor, the parent or the nurse mother, I find the latter generally very ready to call him in in order to relieve herself of responsibility.

1040. Then you find that when women fully understand what is involved by registration they have, as a rule, no objection to it?—I do.

1041. Is any record kept of your visits?—Yes. Every evening I send in to the chief officer a separate report on each visit made that day, stating the number, names, and ages of all the children kept in the houses visited, their condition as to health and cleanliness; if in bad health, whether or not they are under medical treatment; and whether or not I found the

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premises

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

premises clean. I name any changes that have occurred since my last visit, stating whether these have been correctly entered in the register kept by the registered person, and mention any special circumstances which have come under my notice. I also, for my own use, keep a register of all children kept in each registered house, with notes on my visits.

1042. How many registered houses are there at present in the county of London?—There are 41.

Lord Thring.

1043. Are they all under you?—All.

Chairman.

1044. What is the number of infants and older children who are kept there?—At present there are 46 infants of under one year of age; 27 children of between one and two years; and 31 children of over two years.

Lord Belper.

1045. Is that the whole of the children in these 41 houses?—That is the whole of the children.

1046. Are there allowed to be other children in the houses along with them?—Yes, a few of these women have children of their own, but as a rule they are women whose families are grown up and out in service.

Chairman.

1047. What is the average death-rate of infants in registered houses?—Speaking from my own experience merely, that is for the last two years, the average rate is 12 per cent.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1048. Under one year?—Under one year. The deaths of children above one year are very few. In 1894-5 I had five deaths above one year; and in 1895-6 only one death.

Chairman.

1049. And can you tell us the general death-rate for London as regards infants under the age of one year for the same period?—The return for 1895 I believe is not yet issued; that for 1894 was 14.3 per cent. as compared with the death-rate in registered houses, which is 12 per cent.

1050. And what is the death-rate of nurse-infants in unregistered houses?—Of the infants found in unregistered houses during the same period, 23.6 per cent. have been known to die; but the actual number of deaths amongst them may be much greater.

1051. The unregistered houses do not come under you?—No. As to them, I am speaking from figures supplied me.

Lord Belper.

1052. What do you call unregistered houses?—Those in which one nurse-child of statutory age is received, and where they have children over the age.

1053. If they are not registered, how can you possibly tell what age the children are?—I am only speaking now of those cases in which nurse-

Lord Belper—continued.

infants are kept which have come under the inspection of the male inspector.

1054. You mean the houses that in the course of his investigation in regard to these registered houses he happens to have found out?—That is so.

1055. Of course it cannot cover the whole number?—No.

1056. Having discovered those houses, how is the percentage arrived at?—I must refer you for that to Mr. Babey; I have merely used the figures obtained from his information.

Chairman.

1057. I think Mr. Babey has already given the figures?—Yes, I think he has.

1058. But they do not really come under your department?—They do not come under my department. I merely put them in as a comparison with the death-rate in registered houses.

1059. Do you find that the Act of 1872 reaches the class of people whom it is most desirable to keep under supervision?—No, because at present the woman who knows that her house and methods will not bear investigation evades registration by keeping not more than one infant of statutory age, knowing that she may keep any number of children over the age of one year.

1060. Perhaps you can give us some illustrations from your own experience on this point?—I can. A case which has recently come under my notice is that of a woman of notoriously drunken habits who keeps one infant of under one year, and at least one older child. She has at the present moment, at least she had on Tuesday last, an infant of six months, and a child of about five years. Another case is that of a child of about two years of age, who was recently admitted into a registered house, having been previously, through an advertisement, placed with an unregistered person, who was afterwards found by the mother to be training it as an acrobat, unknown to the mother, and without her consent. This person admitted that she had taken charge of the child with that intention. Infants suffering from effects of improper or insufficient food, or uncleanness and other neglect, are frequently brought to registered houses after having been in the charge, for hire, of unregistered persons.

1061. These are cases which you have come across yourself?—Yes.

1062. Have you any special reason for thinking that the age-limit ought to be raised?—Yes. I think it inadequate for even healthy children; but as very few indeed of those who are commonly placed out to nurse are of normal health and development, there appears to me to be particular reason why the age-limit of the infants who come under this Act should be raised.

1063. Then, Section 3 of this Bill provides that the required particulars as to name, sex, age, &c., of the infant shall be given in writing. Have you found any difficulties from the want of this regulation?—I have. One is the frequent desire of parents from whom infants are received to avoid publicity or identification, and the consequent inducement to give false names or addresses, the latter being sometimes those merely of shops to which letters may be addressed.

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

dressed. Another is that the particulars are very frequently given verbally to the person registered, and she, being in many cases an illiterate woman, without any intention to deceive, enters them falsely in her register from having misunderstood them.

1064. You are referring to the statements made by the person who hands in the child?—The clause in question requires that the person from whom a child is received shall give these particulars in writing.

1065. Is the registered person at present required to deliver up her register on the expiry of her registration?—No, she is not legally required to do so.

1066. Have you in consequence ever experienced difficulty in obtaining it?—Yes, difficulty is often incurred through persons who have been registered not informing the local authority of their removal and subsequent address. I am now, in order to obtain her register, in search of a woman who conceals her present address on account of her being in debt to several persons in the neighbourhood in which she lived when registered.

1067. What particular necessity do you see for the insertion of Clause 4 into the Bill; the clause which compels a person to deliver up the register within seven days after the registration has ceased to be in force?—That arising from these persons being liable to show the register, in order to make it appear that they are still under registration. I find that they make use of the fact that they are registered as a sort of certificate of respectability.

Viscount Llandaff.

1068. How can an old register serve in a new house?—It would not serve; but these persons sometimes remove without our being able to trace them, and by carrying the old register with them they may falsely make use of that to give the impression they are still under registration.

1069. A woman is registered for a house in London; how could she avail herself of a London register when she goes elsewhere?—I am alluding more to removal to another part of London. There is at present nothing on the face of the register to show that it is for that house. A woman is not supplied with a new register for every house to which she removes.

Lord Belper.

1070. Is not the date there?—The date of the reception of the infant is there.

1071. Are we to understand that registration only lasts one year, and that the person each time is re-registered at the beginning of the year?—No, it has not been the practice to supply a new register every year; she receives a letter of registration which is dated.

Chairman.

1072. Then Section 5 suggests that it shall be made illegal for any person who receives an infant to transfer it to another person who is not a relative without the consent of the local authority. At what practice is this provision meant to aim?—This provision strikes at the practice (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

of trafficking in infants by receiving them with a lump sum, and disposing of them again, either with a smaller sum, or by promising weekly payments, which very often are not continued.

1073. Have you come across many cases of that sort, of children being handed on like that?—Not in my actual experience in the registered houses. The law at present allows persons who desire to carry on such transactions to evade registration, and thus accomplish their object.

1074. To evade the registration, I suppose, by not keeping the child for 24 hours?—No; by not taking more than one of statutory age.

1075. But there are some of these people who receive infants who do not take them to their houses?—Yes, many such cases have been found in which they have been handed over to some one else immediately.

1076. You anticipate a particular necessity for it, if registration is made compulsory, for all who take charge of any one nurse-infant?—Yes, because we may then expect to have many less scrupulous persons on the register; persons who will rather apply for registration than be debarred from taking nurse-infants at home.

1077. The law at present gives the inspector no power to enter registered houses; do you find any difficulty in obtaining admission?—No, not at present. I always explain, on my first visit to an applicant, that if she is registered I have to visit her house whenever I think fit to do so; and if she objected to this arrangement she could elude registration by taking only one infant of under 12 months of age.

Viscount Llandaff.

1078. You tell her that, do you?—I tell her that it is my practice to visit all registered houses.

1079. Do you also tell her that if she only takes one child she need not be registered?—She knows that.

1080. Do you tell her so?—I hand her an abstract of the Act.

Chairman.

1081. When, however, a person has no alternative but to register if she wishes to keep a nurse-child, there may, you think sometimes, be an objection made to your entering her house?—I do; though undoubtedly the provision will be even more useful to those inspectors who are concerned in the detection of infringements.

1082. But what sort of cases do you refer to there?—I refer to those people who would certainly rather not be registered, because their houses are not always in the most satisfactory condition; but who will rather apply for registration than be debarred from keeping nurse-infants. I am not referring to cases of houses which are so unsatisfactory and so unfit that the local authority would never think of registering them; but there are very many women who are not absolutely dirty, but who, at the same time, do not keep their houses as clean as I should like to see them.

1083. It is proposed to extend Section 7 of the Act of 1872 by the insertion of the Clause: "If it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the local

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

authority that any person whose house has been so registered . . . has from any cause become unfit to be entrusted with the protection and care of infants, it shall be lawful for the local authority to strike his name and house off the register." Do you see any particular necessity for such a provision?—Yes; a person may lapse into, or, after registration has been granted her, turn out to be of intemperate or otherwise irregular habits, without it being possible to prove actual "serious neglect or incapacity to provide proper food and attention," the contingencies provided against by the old Act.

1084. Has the local authority at present power to strike the name and house of a registered person off the register at the request of the latter?—No, registration cannot expire before the end of the year for which it has been granted, except by removal from the registered house, or it has been proved that the registered person has been guilty of serious neglect, or is incapable of providing proper food and attention, or that the house itself has become unfit for the reception of infants.

1085. Do you consider that some such provision will be beneficial?—I do, because it frequently occurs that, before the year is expired for which registration has been granted, the registered person determines to give up the care of nurse infants and generally takes to some other occupation, such as going out to work by the day. I have not found that any purpose is served by the inspection of the houses of trustworthy persons after they have given up the keeping of nurse infants.

1086. With regard to a question that arose earlier in your evidence as to the number of registered houses in London, can you give any reason why there are so few registered houses; is the keeping of the children a lucrative business?—I do not consider it so as a general rule. The common fee obtained is 5s. per week, sometimes it is less. I have, in fact, made a list of the prices received. I have knowledge of the fees received for 236 of the 318 children who have come under my care, and I find that out of these, 151 were received at 5s. a week, 11 were received for smaller sums; the remainder for sums ranging from 5s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. I find only one child for whom 10s., and one more for whom 10s. 6d. was received. I have here, too, a statement made to me by one of the registered persons who really conducts her house as a means of livelihood, and who goes very systematically to work. She stated to me that an infant of one month costs her 3s. 8½d. per week, and that an infant of 10 months costs 5s. 5½d. I have the items here if they are desired.

1087. Will you please mention them?—An ordinary infant of one month requires half-a-pint of milk per day; the cost of milk for a week would therefore be 7d.; the barley also as food 3½d. This woman includes a sixth share of her rent as a part of the cost of the infant as she keeps the house for the purpose, that is 1s. 8d. per week; firing, 5d.; soap, starch, sugar, and the sundries, 9d. She has made no charge for furniture or incidental expenses. In the case

Chairman—continued.

of an infant of 10 months, the milk would cost 2s. 4d., the other items being about the same; so that that child is actually costing her 5½d. more than she receives for it; and she considers that she makes whatever little profit she can get out of the older children whose food will be less expensive, because they feed as the family do.

Viscount Llandaff.

1088. Do you know how many she is allowed?—She is allowed three infants under the age of one year, and five older children; but in point of fact she has seldom more than six.

Chairman.

1089. Where is this house?—At Tooting.

1090. What sized house is it?—It is a six-roomed house, for which she pays 10s. rent per week.

1091. How long has she been under your charge?—Since I began the work, and she was under Mr. Babey's supervision a year previously.

1092. There are generally half-a-dozen children you say there?—Yes.

1093. Has there been any death amongst them?—Yes, last summer, when there was an epidemic of infantile diarrhoea, she lost two infants.

1094. As a rule the children there are pretty healthy, are they?—She is very unfortunate in getting unhealthy children, for this reason; she is known to be a good nurse, and the matron of the rescue home from which she is generally supplied sends her all the delicate babies. She is a woman who is most particular to keep them under good medical supervision, and I find that she does her very utmost for the welfare of the children.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1095. She looks after the whole six or eight alone, does she?—She is assisted by her daughter, and has other assistance for housework when necessary.

Chairman.

1096. Have you any other houses where as many children as that are kept?—That is the largest.

1097. What is your average; it works out about two and a-half, I think?—I have several houses where six are allowed, no other where eight are allowed. In several of my houses there is only one child kept.

Viscount Llandaff.

1098. And yet it is registered?—And yet it is registered. The woman is registered for the keeping of two and is at liberty to take another. Many of them do not care to have a second, and others, again, do not push the matter, but they will take the child if it is brought to them.

Chairman.

1099. What do you find is the proportion of illegitimate and legitimate children amongst these that are given out to nurse?—Of the 318 children who have come under my supervision during the two years, 233 were either acknow-

ledged

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

ledged to be illegitimate or, judging from the circumstances which attend their being placed there, were undoubtedly so. Of 47 others, I have no knowledge in this respect; the presumption is that the 47 others were also illegitimate. With regard to the remaining 38 (or nearly 12 per cent.) it was claimed that the parents were married, and with regard to 12 of these 38, there is reasonable cause to believe that the claim is true.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1100. That means that out of 318 children there are only 12 whom you have substantial reason to believe to be legitimate?—That is so. I must state that at present I have very great difficulty in ascertaining. The registered persons know that they are not obliged to find that out, and they find it a matter of policy not to inquire.

Chairman.

1101. Have you considered the question whether in the event of this Bill being confined to illegitimate children only, it would be possible to evade it very largely by representing illegitimate children as being legitimate?—I decidedly think so; at present it is a very common custom to represent a child to be legitimate when it is not.

1102. And it is very difficult to prove it, I suppose?—I think it would be very difficult; it would entail a visit, certainly, to many registrars in London, and the writing to country registrars, and even then I do not see that we could actually prove the matter. The certificate might be borrowed or forged in some way. In the case of borrowed certificates, there would be the additional difficulty that the child would be entered under a false name.

1103. I suppose, in the event of a woman coming with a child and producing a marriage certificate, inquiries could be made at the address which was stated on the certificate as to whether there was any person there; but then the woman might vanish, and it would be very difficult to find her again. That would be a difficulty, I suppose. I mean, although you could take the address on the marriage certificate, and send somebody to go and make inquiries, you would absolutely have no hold over the person who originally brought the certificate and child, and she might vanish?—In point of fact, the addresses are constantly changing of the parents of these children.

1104. You think that what I suggested just now, limiting it to illegitimate children only, would open the door to much evasion?—I do.

1105. You are now looking after 41 houses; does that occupy your time very fully?—I work for the county council under another Act, the Shop Hours Act; so that my time is not fully devoted to the inspection of the registered houses under this Act. The work entailed is very much more than one would suppose from the mere visiting of 41 houses; we have very frequently applications for registration which are not granted for some reason or other.

1106. And can you form any opinion now, from your experience, how many houses and

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

how many children you could look after, or what would you say is the capacity of one inspector like yourself?—A great deal would depend upon what the distribution of the houses is. If the law were extended there would be likely to be a great many more houses in a given area than at present, and not so much time spent in travelling.

1107. And probably if there were three or four inspectors you would have London mapped out into districts?—Undoubtedly so; and I should think that then one inspector might look after 150 to 250, possibly 300 houses; it is a matter of experience.

1108. Three hundred houses, or 300 children?—Houses; 250 or 300, perhaps; everything would depend upon the distribution of them.

1109. How many visits do you generally make; you say about once in three weeks?—About once in three weeks.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1110. Who are these people generally who apply for registration; are they widows or women with husbands and families, or in any case single women; what, speaking generally, are they?—Perhaps the majority are widows. I have a few single women at the present moment; I think three; and several others are the wives of working men.

1111. Out of the 41 houses you do now speak of, are the larger proportion in suburbs like Tooting, or are there some in the central parts of London?—Not actually in the central parts. I have houses in Brixton, in Camberwell, and in St. John's Wood; nothing nearer the centre at present. They are more distributed throughout the suburbs, from Woolwich on to Wandsworth at present, and to Shepherd's Bush on the other side.

1112. You said that eight was the largest number for which any existing house was registered; have you no institutions registered?—None at present; there have been none during the two years I have had my present work. May I please state that that house is not registered for the keeping of eight infants; the person is registered for the keeping of three infants under the age of 12 months, and I have never had any house registered for the keeping of more than three infants; but when the accommodation and assistance are sufficient the registered person is allowed a few children over the statutory age.

1113. Is there any payment at all connected with this?—On the part of the applicant do you mean?

1114. Yes?—None whatever.

1115. You have 41 houses in all through the whole of London; of course that is a very small proportion of the houses in which children are being kept for hire; we can only conjecture what the number is, but it must be very much larger than that. Have you reason to think that there are many of those houses which ought to come under the Act, and do not?—No, I do not think that there can be many houses kept by persons who are infringing the law at present.

1116. Why do you think there cannot be?—

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Because

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

Because I know that there are two inspectors working on all information that comes within their knowledge, and whose business is to prevent it.

1117. Do you think that they can get sufficient information to keep them abreast of the fact, whether in the whole of London there are not many houses with two infants under 12 months?—That I cannot form an opinion upon; I have no experience in the matter.

1118. It would not be in your department to find that out?—Not at all. If information comes in my way, of course I hand it on.

1119. May I ask you to state once more, for I did not quite follow it before, what, in general terms, you would say is the reason why there are not a great many more registered houses, considering how possibly profitable it may be to keep such a house?—Well, in the first place, I cannot admit that it is profitable unless the fee received is absolutely certain, which it is not, I may say in the majority of cases, the payments so often fall short. The infants are, generally speaking, not of normal health and development; they entail a very great amount of supervision; and many women find that they can take charge of one infant when they could not possibly with their other duties look after two; and they know that with one they are not bound to be registered. And one objection which I have experienced pretty frequently against registration is that there is a very general misunderstanding as to what registration involves. People so often believe that they will be subjected to police supervision, I am repeatedly asked by an applicant for registration whether the police will come to the house at all; whether any one in uniform will come. That I take to be a very great objection to it.

1120. And if this Bill became law, and everyone keeping one child was registered, do you believe that there would be, on the part of people generally, any great objection to registration?—Speaking from my own experience I should say no, if inspection is carried out as it is at present in London, say, by a woman going to these registered houses, a woman who probably is quite unknown to the neighbours, at least whose business is unknown to the neighbourhood. But I find that the more respectable the person really is the less objection is there to registration. The objections I have met with have been from very ignorant people, from people whom I did not consider altogether desirable nurses.

1121. Then, in your opinion, if the Bill passed to-morrow a large number of respectable people would immediately apply for registration?—I daresay they would find it a hardship at first until they understood what the whole system involved; but I have not found objection after it was understood.

1122. You attach importance to the inspector being a lady and not a man?—Well, I think for that particular branch of the work a woman is best adapted. Undoubtedly, only women would be chosen who had some knowledge of nursing and the care of infants. A woman can be consulted more readily than a man on these matters.

Chairman.

1123. Had you had any previous experience of this class of work before you were appointed to your present post?—No, not exactly of this class of work. I was trained by the National Health Society as a lecturer on nursing and hygiene. It was on the strength of that training that I received this appointment.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1124. Do you get from neighbours a large amount of information as to what goes on in houses where infants are?—Not a large amount; I have occasionally been told by neighbours of a very undesirable person, or a person who is presumably an undesirable nurse, having charge of a nurse infant. I have noticed a case in Woolwich where a woman, who is intoxicated three or four times a week as a rule, has charge of a nurse infant, and she, I consider, is an unsuitable person.

1125. It would be through neighbours you would expect the information to be given which obviously would be required in so much larger quantity, if this Bill became law?—To a certain extent. Undoubtedly, the police would give information: such cases may be known to the police, who have now no power to interfere. I know, in the case I refer to, a neighbour went to the police one night, and he told him he could not enter that house. If that person were obliged to register that house she would be more under supervision.

1126. It would be the duty of the police, then, to keep their eye on every house in London on which one child was being nursed for payment?—I do not say that; I take it that if the law laid it down that persons who kept one nurse infant were obliged to register, the respectable ones—those who intended to do well by the child—would apply for registration; the others would I hope become known to the police.

Viscount Llandaff.

1127. The others would not register?—They would, undoubtedly, seek to evade it, but if the law gave the authority power either to enforce registration, or to require the giving up of the nurse infant, the difficulty would be met I think.

1128. But I understand you take very great precautions before you do register a house?—Yes.

1129. You have two rated householders and a clergyman to certify to the character of the person?—Yes, a clergyman, or a doctor, or a magistrate.

1130. And further inspection of the house on inquiry into the antecedents of the person?—Yes.

1131. You register highly respectable persons only, I take it?—Persons who satisfy the Council on these points.

1132. What percentage of persons do you reject; are there many people who apply whose applications you reject?—The applications received during the years 1894-95 were 53; of these, 31 were granted, five were refused by the Council, and the remaining 17 were withdrawn by

by

30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

by the persons applying before registration was granted.

1133. Now among your registered houses, is there any child for whom a lump sum has been paid?—I have two cases of adoption, each for 20l.

Chairman.

1134. Are they well looked after?—They are very well looked after. I find no difference whatever between them and the children for whom weekly sums are paid; but of course they come equally under my supervision.

1135. Then why do you think if the proposed Bill were passed you would get a less respectable class of people registering?—Simply because I think that many, rather than entirely give up keeping one nurse infant, will apply for registration. In the case of applications for registration I have frequently to tell myself that I must consider not what I think exactly right under the circumstances, but what may be reasonably expected.

1136. Why should you become more lax if this Bill is passed for single nursing infants to be registered?—I did not mean to admit that we should become more lax.

1137. I understood you to say that you might expect to get less respectable people on the register if the Bill passed and single infant houses were registered?—Well, I think that there are degrees of respectability; perhaps the word itself is not very fortunate.

Lord Belper.

1138. You would lower your standard?—No, I cannot say that.

1139. With regard to the figures you gave us, I think you said there were in 41 houses only 104 children?—Yes, that is so.

1140. Is that in the course of a year?—No; on the 31st of March 1896.

1141. On a particular date of the year there were 104 children; have you got a return showing how many there were in those houses during the year?—During any portion of the year?

1142. No, during the year; I see we had a return put in before in reference to these houses showing the number of infants there were in a registered house during the year; have you got that same return?—The total number of infants and children kept during the year (that is not necessarily during the whole of the year, because some of them might be removed) is, under the age of one year, 154; between one and two years, 34; over two years of age, 39.

1143. Can you account for the fact that the figures are so very much larger; is it that they are only at these houses for a certain time; two or three months?—Very frequently children are removed.

1144. Supposing they were removed from one registered house to another, they would appear in the total just the same, and therefore they must be removed from a registered house to somewhere that is not a registered house?—This 154, I must explain, contains a few duplicates. I do occasionally get a child removed from one registered house to another, and in this (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

return that child would be counted as two. That would account for very few.

1145. But taking children under one year on a particular date of the year, there were 46; in the whole year there were 154, which is very nearly four times the first figure; that practically is giving only an average of about three months for each child to be under the care of a person in charge of one of these registered houses; can you account for that short period?—Some would be accounted for in this way: that of these 154, 38 were infants on the 1st of April 1895, and they were no longer infants on the 31st of March; they were children and put into the other class.

1146. They grow into the next classification of between one and two years of age?—Yes. Then we have 21 deaths of infants under the age of 12 months to take into account, and the others would be removals.

1147. It is really in the infants under one year that the very great variations take place, and that is accounted for in the way you have explained?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1148. Have you formed any opinion (it can only be an opinion or conjecture, perhaps) as to the number of houses which would at once, if this Bill became law, have either to apply for registration or to break the law; I mean would you think it to be thousands in London, or hundreds?—I have no experience that would lead me to form such a conjecture. I have not come into contact at all with more than a very few of these houses where nurse infants are kept which are not under registration.

1149. From your general knowledge of the circumstances and life of the working classes of London, which your work at present brings you in contact with, would you roughly think it was a case of thousands of houses having to be registered at once?—I could only form any opinion from the figures already supplied by Mr. Babey.

Lord Belper.

1150. May I ask whether, in many of these registered houses, any of the children taken in are the children of people like sailors, where the child's mother is dead and the father is going on a voyage, and they have to dispose of their children in some way when they leave the country?—I have not had a single case of that sort.

1151. Therefore the whole of those cases must be in single houses, in houses where there is only a single child kept?—That is probably so; and I have had the children of widowers.

1152. In these registered houses, from your experience, there are hardly any cases of children of working men, or of people who have had to leave their own homes, and therefore to put their children out?—Very few indeed. I have come across three or four children of widowers.

Lord Thring.

1153. Suppose you carry it up to five years, can you give us any idea whatever what increase it would make. The Bill proposes two things:

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30 April 1896.]

Miss SMITH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

first of all, to include the children where only one is kept; and secondly, to include them up to the age of five years?—I only know that it would bring in a very large number of nurse children under the age of five years, but as for giving any actual figures, I am afraid I could not do that.

1154. Do you think it would be very large?—I believe that it would be.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1155. All I want to get at is a general idea, which perhaps other people could form as well as you; but we value your experience. It seems to some of us that the change proposed, however beneficial, would be on a gigantic scale; that every street in London would be concerned in it largely; and that one must not think of it as being something trifling; and I am anxious to know whether we could get from

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

you any opinion of the scale on which we should be legislating?—If it was a question of machinery, I do not think that the central part of London would be very much affected; but nurse children are more frequently placed in the suburbs; and if every street is affected the inspection which one inspector will be able to carry on will be very much larger. My time is chiefly taken up really in travelling at present. Sometimes pressing business takes me from one extreme to the other in one day; I have gone from Putney to Poplar in one day, and I went the other day from Fulham to Woolwich.

1156. But you can say nothing to diminish our apprehensions of the gigantic scale on which we should be moving?—I do not think I can add anything to what I have already said.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Tuesday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 5^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.
Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1157. I BELIEVE you are the head of the Statistical Department of the General Register Office at Somerset House?—Yes.

1158. How long have you held your present appointment?—Something under three years.

1159. And you were medical officer of health for Manchester and Salford, I believe, for some years?—That is so.

1160. And in that latter capacity have you devoted much attention to the question of infant mortality?—I have.

1161. And have you read the evidence given to the Select Committee on the Protection of Infant Life in 1871 by your predecessor, Dr. Farr?—I have.

1162. Dr. Farr then handed in a table showing the legitimate and illegitimate births in England and Wales in each of the years from 1845 to 1869?—That is so.

1163. And also the proportion in each year born out of wedlock to 100 births?—That is so.

1164. Can you give us any figures to bring the table up to date?—Yes. That is the table brought down to the year 1894 (*handing in the same*).

1165. This is a Return of the Births in England and Wales from 1845 to 1894, which shows the total births, the legitimate and the illegitimate births, and the children born out of wedlock to every 100 births?—Yes. Might I explain the table?

1166. Certainly?—The important column is the last, which deals with the proportion of children born out of wedlock, that is to say, the illegitimate births to the total births. The table shows, with respect to the year 1894 (the whole table relates to 50 years), that there were 890,289 births in that year—

Lord Belper.

1167. Is this dealing with the whole country?—The whole of England and Wales. Of these 851,946 were legitimate, and 38,343 were illegitimate (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

imate, or 4.33 per cent. of the total births. The teaching of the table is that whereas in the year 1845 the proportion of illegitimate births to total births was 7.0 per cent., in the year 1894 it was 4.3 per cent.; and the reduction has been steady through the whole of that 50 years, or almost steady.

Chairman.

1168. That shows a steady decrease in the proportion of illegitimate children?—In the proportion of illegitimate children.

1169. Born since the year 1845?—That is so.

1170. Can you give us any figures on the comparative mortality between illegitimate and legitimate children?—Not for England and Wales as a whole, because, so far as I know, no statistics on the point exist; but I have found statistics which were submitted to the Committee, I think, in 1871 by Dr. Farr, and which had been received from the medical officer of health of Glasgow, and these I beg to submit to your Lordships. May I read them?

1171. If you please?—The figures relate to the years 1873 to 1875. In those three years, there were 56,698 births of legitimate infants in Glasgow and 8,613 deaths of legitimate infants under one year. In those three years there were also 5,288 births of illegitimate children and 1,509 deaths of illegitimate infants under one year. Coming now to the proportion, the deaths of legitimate infants to 1,000 legitimate births were equal to 152; the proportion of deaths of illegitimate infants to 1,000 illegitimate births was 286.

Lord Thring.

1172. Have you any means of telling us the number of births that do not appear in the Registrar's books at all; in other words, that are concealed?—It is impossible to give that information.

1173. Of course it is impossible to give it accurately; but can you give us any idea; any opinion

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

opinion whatever?—I can say this, that in the course of the last 20 years the proportion of children whose deaths escape registration has unquestionably been decreasing, and very fast; I think there is no doubt about that.

1174. Can you give us any idea what it is; are there a third or are there a half?—Nothing like that.

1175. What would you think?—It would be quite impossible to form a judgment.

1176. It would be very small, would it?—Very small now.

1177. Would you say it was under 5 per cent.?—Yes, I should think so certainly. I am speaking of the present time. I think I can explain my reasons for holding that opinion.

Chairman.

1178. Have you got any other figures to give us?—With respect to Manchester, of which city I was medical officer of health for between four and five years, I have some similar particulars. I could not bring down the figures relating to Glasgow from the year 1875 to the present time, because, as your Lordship knows, I only received intimation on Friday last that I should be wanted here to-day, and the time would not allow of my writing to Glasgow and getting the particulars; but I have particulars which I myself procured from Manchester for the years 1891 to 1894, a much more recent date. In those years there were 65,446 legitimate births registered, and 11,371 deaths of legitimate infants under one year of age. In the same time there were 2,807 illegitimate births, and of these 1,099 died under the age of one year. As regards the proportion, of the legitimate infants 174 per 1,000 died before they became one year of age, and of the illegitimate children no fewer than 392 per 1,000 died under the age of one year. With your Lordship's permission, I should like to explain, and I think I can, the reason for this excessive, or for part of this excessive mortality amongst illegitimate infants. It is a matter of fact that frequently the mothers of illegitimate children desire to register their children as legitimate, for obvious reasons, but our experience in the General Register Office in London is that constantly we are receiving from registrars all over the country information that mothers have desired to correct their statement before the Registrar, and to own that their children were illegitimate. The consequence is that if that is true (and I can answer for it that it is true), then the rate of illegitimate deaths appears by these tables to be higher than it ought to be, and I have no doubt whatever that that fact accounts for the very excessive mortality, or of some of it, amongst illegitimate infants.

1179. In other words, you mean that whereas illegitimate deaths are generally registered as such, illegitimate births are often registered as being legitimate?—That is so, and this greatly increases the apparent mortality.

Lord Belper.

1180. If a child has been registered as a legitimate child, why is its death registered as that of an illegitimate child?—The conditions

Lord Belper—continued.

of registration are somewhat different in the two cases. Frequently, in the case of a birth being registered, it is the mother who registers it; the mother is frequently one of several mothers in a registrar's office, and your Lordship can easily see that a girl would probably shrink from exposing her shame before other women. I think that explains it.

1181. I quite understand that; but having once been registered as a legitimate child, why when the death is registered is not that so far accepted as a proof that the child was legitimate?—We have evidence to show that the deaths of illegitimate children are more correctly registered than are the births of illegitimate children; that is a matter of experience.

1182. Then do you mean to say that, if a mother produces a certificate that the child is registered as a legitimate child, you go behind that and say that the child is illegitimate, and go into further evidence?—We have nothing to do with the birth when the death comes to be registered; they are entirely separate registrations.

1183. I should have thought that in the case of a child's death, from considerations of respectability, the parents would at all events wish it to be registered as the death of a legitimate child rather than as the death of an illegitimate child; if it had been registered as a legitimate child at its birth, I should have thought that *prima facie* evidence that it was legitimate?—As a matter of fact, I may tell you that we find legitimate births are much less accurately registered than illegitimate deaths.

1184. Does not the mother or the father who comes to register the death take the trouble to refer to the fact that the child has already been registered as a legitimate child?—I cannot answer that question. I submit to the Committee this table that I have just read (*handing in the same*).

Viscount Llandaff.

1185. Could you tell us the proportion of the illegitimate births which you think are registered as legitimate births?—I cannot tell that.

Chairman.

1186. Have you anything further?—I have nothing further to put in. I have some figures here that I thought your Lordships might want to question me about.

1187. I do not know quite what it is that you have got?—It is with regard to the question of uncertified deaths in London.

Lord Thring.

1188. Will you tell us how in effect they register a death?—

Chairman.

1189. The death has to be registered within five days, I think, has it not?—Under the Act of 1874 it has to be registered within five days.

Lord Thring.

1190. What happens when a child dies?—Under

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Under the Act of 1874, it is compulsory on the parent, or on what are called the qualified informants, to give notice to the registrar within five days of the death of the child, and if he fails to do so he is subject to a penalty.

1191. In what form does he give it, simply that a particular child has died or that it is a legitimate child?—He must be present at the registrar's office, and there furnish him with particulars.

1192. True; but what does he say; what particulars must he furnish him with?—I am sorry I have not a copy of the register here. There are forms prescribed by the Registrar General to be filled up.

1193. He has to state the name of the child of course?—Yes, and the age.

1194. And would the register state the legitimacy or the illegitimacy of the child?—That is a matter of inference. In the case of an illegitimate child the name of the father does not appear in the certificate, only the name of the mother, and from that we infer that the child is illegitimate.

1195. And you ask no questions beyond the form?—The registrar is instructed in all cases to be as accurate as he can in getting at the truth.

1196. The doctor's certificate is as regards the cause of death?—Yes, as regards the cause of death; it is not evidence of the age.

1197. Nor of the legitimacy?—No, it has nothing to do with that.

1198. Simply the cause of death?—Yes.

Chairman.

1199. You will send a copy of the form that is used to the Committee?—Yes.

1200. Can you give us any more information bearing on this subject; any other tables that you may have compiled?—I can put in a table with respect to the uncertified deaths in London in the years 1882, 1883, and 1884.

1201. Will you read them out, and call attention to any particular point?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1202. "Uncertified" means without a certificate of death from a medical man?—Yes. There were in those three years 3,020 uncertified deaths; of these the medical attendant refused to grant a certificate altogether in 66 cases, and made an informal statement, that is to say, not one acceptable to the Registrar, in 215 cases; in 258 cases the patient was attended by an unregistered assistant; in 400 cases by an unregistered practitioner, and in 415 cases by a midwife; in 1,666 other cases there was no medical attendance at all.

1203. But can you distinguish those deaths in any way as being deaths in child-birth, because you spoke of midwives?—No, the table does not deal with causes of death.

Lord Belper.

1204. These are infants, are they?—I have got them at the ages of under one year, one to five years, and over five years.

1205. I understand from the first return you handed in, that the percentage of illegitimate (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

births has varied from 7.0 per cent. in 1845 to 4.3 per cent. in 1894?—That is so.

1206. Can you form any opinion as to what that steady decrease is owing to. I mean, in the first place, of course it is possible that there might have been some alteration in the way of getting the information; in the second place, of course, it might be owing to an increase of morality; or to different habits of life. I should like to have your opinion as to what cause you would ascribe it to?—I have no doubt whatever that it is owing to a very large extent to the increase of morality generally throughout the country. As regards all the causes for it, it is difficult on the spur of the moment to deal with them. I should be very glad to consider that subject if the Committee wish it.

1207. I should like your opinion as to whether there has been any change in the manner of getting the information that might account for the percentage being smaller now than it used to be?—I will consider the question. I am not prepared at the moment to answer it.

1208. In considering your answer you will bear in mind the evidence you have given. You say the births of illegitimate children are more strictly looked after now than they used to be, therefore the tendency would be to show an increase in that return of the percentage rather than a decrease, given equal conditions. We have probably got hold in the return of more illegitimate children than we used to formerly, you say; that would show a tendency to increase the percentage rate of illegitimate children rather than to decrease it; and, therefore, you have not only got to account for the decrease in that Table, but also for some tendency to alter in the opposite direction owing to the circumstance you have mentioned?—I will consider that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1209. What is the death rate of infants under one year throughout the country?—The deaths of children under one year to 1,000 births in England and Wales in the 10 years 1884 to 1893 were 147 per thousand births.

Lord Thring.

1210. One question on the evidence you have given: I suppose the evidence on which registration is formed is necessarily exposed to great danger of mistake because you rely simply upon the evidence of interested persons, do you not?—That must have some effect, unquestionably.

1211. That must have its effect. Though, no doubt, it is done with extreme care and with extreme skill, still we must take it as being subject to the infirmities of human interest?—Yes, that is unavoidable.

Viscount Llandaff.

1212. Could you not now give the general death-rate of legitimate and of illegitimate infants under one year?—I have already explained to the Committee that I cannot do that for the whole of England and Wales; the figures do not exist.

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5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

1213. Can you give us the figures for London?—No, only for Manchester. The reason why I can do it for Manchester is this. With respect to every death of a child under five years of age, I made inquiries by the help of sanitary inspectors and female visitors amongst the poor; I made inquiries with reference to all the conditions, as far as they could be ascertained, of the life, all the circumstances attending the death of those children; and in that way, amongst other things, I got to know about the question of legitimacy and illegitimacy, and the question of whether the children had received proper attention during life; and that is the reason why I am able to give you these figures for Manchester, though they cannot be given for the country generally.

Viscount Llandaff.

1214. According to your figures, Manchester was much worse than Glasgow?—Yes. I have tried to explain that. The Scotch law is different from the English law in regard to illegitimacy, as your Lordship knows.

Lord Thring.

1215. You mean that in Scotland subsequent marriage makes the children legitimate?—Yes.

Chairman.

1216. That would rather tend, would it not, to make people look upon illegitimate children in a lighter way in Scotland?—It is my personal opinion that this is so.

Lord Belper.

1217. You said that the figures are worse in Manchester?—In Manchester the deaths of illegitimate infants to 1,000 illegitimate births are 392 per 1,000; in Glasgow 286 per 1,000?—Yes.

Chairman.

1218. You mean that in Glasgow they are registered as illegitimate births, and then through the marriage of the parents they are subsequently registered as legitimate deaths?—Yes, I think so.

1219. What this really shows is this: that in Manchester the illegitimate children are worse cared for than in Glasgow?—

Viscount Llandaff.

1220. I want an explanation of that; why does Manchester kill so many more illegitimate children than Glasgow?—My belief is that the figures as regards illegitimate death-rates are incorrect, and for the reason that the number of illegitimate births upon which those rates are calculated is inaccurate; that is to say, they are fewer than they ought to be, and therefore the death-rate is greater. If the number of illegitimate births is increased in the way which I have described, then, of course, the rate will be lower. As a matter of fact, they cannot be corrected in Manchester; or can only be corrected in a very roundabout way.

1221. Both Glasgow and Manchester are above the average of deaths, legitimate and illegitimate?—You see you have not got the number or proportion of deaths from legitimate

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

children. You cannot get the proportion for illegitimate children, because the figures do not exist.

1222. But they are above the average of the whole; you have told us that the normal death-rate, legitimate and illegitimate, throughout England and Wales, is 147 per 1,000?—That is so.

1223. In Manchester and in Glasgow both the legitimate, and still more the illegitimate, deaths are far above that?—That is strictly true; but then it must be remembered that that 147 includes the whole of the healthy districts of England.

Lord Kinnaird.

1224. Do you check by name the legitimate deaths to see that they agree with the births; when a child is reported to be dead, do you see that it agrees with the child that was born, or not?—In certain districts, where the registrar knows the people very well, of course that can be easily done, but in very large cities the registrar does not know the bulk of the people.

1225. Is it his duty to do it?—The registrar has the general instruction to get to know the truth, as far as it is possible, from the people who come to him.

Viscount Llandaff.

1226. But is part of the truth which he has to ascertain whether John Smith, whose death is registered, is the same as Charles Jones whose birth was registered a few months ago?—Yes, as far as possible he ascertains that; but migration is very common.

Lord Kinnaird.

1227. Can you give us any experience with regard to the poor people changing their names?—I have no knowledge.

1228. You could not give any tables to show how many of those children who are certified as dying, differ from the names certified as born?—I could not give that information.

1229. Do you think the registrar would be particular in putting the question whether it was legitimate. You have told us that the mother would wish that it should be regarded as a legitimate child, and if he was a kind man would he put it down so on her statement?—He would do so at his peril. The Registrar General would not retain in his service a man capable of doing that.

Lord Thring.

1230. Has the registrar the power to go behind the form that is filled up?—He must secure that the facts entered in the form are correct, as far as in him lies.

1231. If the forms are rightly filled up apparently, has he any right to cross-examine on those forms; I thought you told me he had not?—He himself enters the particulars in the register.

1232. According to the forms?—He has to ascertain the facts *viva voce* from the person who comes to register a birth or a death.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1233. Does he go outside the office and find out whether the answers are true?—It is his business

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

business to ascertain, as far as he can, the truthfulness of the statements made to him.

1234. Does he go outside the office to do that?—In many cases I know it to be done. I speak from my own knowledge of Manchester and Salford.

Viscount Llandaff.

1235. A girl comes and says, "This is a legitimate child"; does the registrar inquire of a neighbour, or how does he find out whether the statement is true?—He is expected to ascertain by any means in his power that the person is telling the truth.

Lord Belper.

1236. In a case of doubt (because there must be a large number of cases in which the registrar cannot find out with absolute certainty), which column is the child registered in, "legitimate," or "illegitimate"?—I do not understand what you mean by a case of doubt.

1237. With the limited means of inquiry that the registrar has, he cannot prove in every case that the statement is absolutely accurate; and if he is left uncertain are there any instructions which would make him enter that child in the one column or the other, or is there a column "doubtful"?—May I put in a form of the register book with respect to births. That contains two columns, columns 4 and 5, and, *mutatis mutandis*, the like information may be got from the death registration book; column 4 gives the name and surname of father, column 5 the name and maiden surname of the mother. In the case of an illegitimate child the column containing the name of the father would be blank, and from that one might infer that the birth was illegitimate.

Chairman.

1238. If she is married she puts down her married name and her maiden name as well?—Yes, "name and maiden surname of mother," is the heading of the column.

1239. What is the practice, to put down the two surnames?—Yes.

Lord Belper.

1240. Are there no cases where the registrar leaves it open in the return that he makes; where he cannot find out whether the child was legitimate or illegitimate?—Only by omitting the column in respect of the father.

1241. That makes it illegitimate?—Yes.

1242. Therefore all those cases would go into the illegitimate?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1243. What is the penalty on the mother for wilfully giving false information?—£10.

Viscount Llandaff.

1244. Have you ever known the penalty exacted?—Personally, I should not know whether the penalty had been exacted or no; that comes under another department, and I cannot give evidence on the point.

Lord Thring.

1245. Supposing the woman refuses to answer in cross-examination, is there any penalty?—May I read this, it is from Section 39 of the (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

Act 37 and 38 Vict., c. 88, with respect to the registration of births and deaths: "Every person required by the Births and Deaths Registration Acts, 1836 to 1874, to give information concerning any birth or death, or any living newborn child, or any dead body, who wilfully refuses to answer any question put to him by the registrar relating to the particulars required to be registered concerning such birth or death, or fails to comply with any requisition of the registrar made in pursuance of those Acts, and every person who refuses or fails without reasonable excuse to give or send any certificate in accordance with the provisions of the said Acts, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 40s. for each offence."

1246. Not 10l.?—That was in the case of a wilfully false statement. The prosecutions do not come under my immediate supervision; therefore I have to depend upon my own reading of the Act, which, as Lord Thring knows, is not likely to be very trustworthy; medical men are seldom good lawyers.

Viscount Llandaff.

1247. Beyond what you have already told us, viz., the inaccuracy in the number of illegitimate births, can you account for the enormous disproportion between the illegitimate deaths under one year in Manchester and the general death-rate?—I have no hesitation, as the result of long experience in Manchester and Salford, in saying that illegitimate children are subject to a course of treatment very much worse than that which legitimate children receive, and that that has a very baneful effect upon their health and life.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1248. And would you say in the same way, from your experience as a medical man, that an illegitimate child is more likely to be an unhealthy child when born?—Yes, I think so, certainly.

Viscount Llandaff.

1249. Do they receive that want of attention and that indifferent treatment from their mothers or from others, as a rule?—From all those who have charge of them.

1250. The mother as well?—I am afraid that is so; in fact I feel certain of it.

1251. Is there much baby-farming (I use the word to describe the thing in general) in Manchester, or was there in those years?—There is no doubt that it does exist to a certain extent.

1252. But only to a certain extent?—Only to a certain extent; I believe, and am sure, it is less now than it used to be; but what the amount is I cannot say.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1253. Manchester has appointed no inspector for the purposes of this Act?—I am not certain about that.

1254. Did you, when you were there, give any particular attention to the subject of the administration, and the necessity of the Act of 1872, the existing Act now, with respect to the protection of infant life?—I thought it was my proper

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

proper business to look after the children because I was sure that they wanted more protection than adults did; and, therefore, under whatever Acts, I took very great care to inquire into the circumstances attending the death of all young children, and especially of those who were illegitimate.

Chairman.

1255. You know the provisions of the existing Act of 1872, what is known as the Infant Life Protection Act?—Yes, I do, generally.

1256. You know that it compels the registration of houses in which more than one infant of under 12 months is kept?—I am aware of that.

1257. Have you, in the course of your experience at Manchester, been able to form any opinion as to the advisability of extending the operations of that Act?—Yes, I should like to extend the provisions of that Act to children above one year of age.

1258. And have you formed any opinion as to whether registration, *per se*, is, as a rule, beneficial to children; I mean to say the registration of the houses?—Yes, I am sure that it must be.

1259. You mean to say that the fact of a house being registered ensures a certain amount of better treatment and supervision of the children?—Yes, a little more publicity, too. The inspector, for instance, I take it, would, if the house were registered, be allowed to enter the house at reasonable times, and ascertain that the children were properly looked after. You drag the whole proceeding into the light of day, and my opinion, as a medical man, is that that is altogether salutary; I mean in regard to the whole system of taking care of children for gain.

1260. So long as mankind remains as it is there will always be a large number of illegitimate children, I am afraid, and, consequently, there will always be a considerable number of children whom it is desirable to hide or put away in some sort of way; have you any opinion to express yourself as to the advantage, a further advantage, which an extended system of registration would have in, what I might call, bringing these children to light in the way you suggest?—I feel confident, from my own experience, that if the circumstances under which such children were attended to were looked into carefully, that would tend to the improvement of the health conditions of the children, and the prolongation of their lives.

1261. Yes; but my point is this: it has been urged that further registration would simply have the effect of driving baby farming more below the surface; that the registration itself would not necessarily enable us to get at the people that we want to get at; that we should only get at the respectable people who are willing to be registered. Have you formed any opinion as to the willingness or unwillingness of people to register; did you come across that in your capacity as officer of health?—Speaking of the question of registration generally, I never found that the effect has been such as you describe. It does not tend to drive information of that kind, as it were, below the surface; I have never found anything but good from the inspection of places of that kind. I may take the

Chairman—continued.

case of the Notification and Registration of Infectious Diseases, which, as your Lordship knows, was at one time looked upon with very great disfavour by many people. It was then said, If you insist upon it, the effect will be to conceal disease to a very large extent. Facts prove that that fear was utterly groundless; and probably there has not been passed in recent years an Act which has done more good than the Act for the Notification of Infectious Diseases has done.

Viscount Llandaff.

1262. Did you ever inquire how many houses there were in Manchester that came within the Infant Life Protection Act?—I cannot give you any figures as to that.

1263. Did you ever inquire?—I do not remember having done so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1264. Was any registration in force at all?—I cannot at this distance of time tell you.

1265. Our general impression from what we have heard is that it was not in operation there; you cannot tell us to the contrary?—I cannot.

1266. Then your view that it would be a good thing to extend it is, so to speak, an academic view rather than one based upon experience, because practically you do not know whether the difficulties existed or not?—Not as regards that particular Act. I am speaking from my experience of other and similar provisions.

Viscount Llandaff.

1267. Have you at all studied the way in which the London County Council have administered the existing Act?—I have not.

1268. Are you aware that their inspectors require certificates of character and respectability and of the perfect sanitary condition of the house before they register at all?—I am not aware of that.

1269. Does it not strike you that under that system none but the good houses register?—That would be the effect of registration.

1270. Registration does not make the house good, but the house must be good before it is registered?—Yes.

1271. And the result is that none of the bad houses are registered?—Yes; I should refuse the registration unless the house were fit to be registered.

Lord Thring.

1272. Is the registration of diseases an analogy?—I think I am entitled to take it so.

1273. Is it not the duty of the doctor to notify the disease?—It is the duty of the doctor to notify the disease; but I am speaking of the publicity given to the fact.

1274. That is the very point I want to point out to you. In the case of the registration of houses it is the interest of the keeper of a bad house not to register; but the doctor is bound, legally and professionally, to register a case of infectious disease; I do not see the analogy. Now, I want very much indeed to ask you this question: with your very great experience, you are aware that this often happens (I do not know whether it is so in Manchester, but I presume it is), that the mother goes out at six o'clock in the morning and stays in the factory till six in the evening,

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

evening, or whatever the time may be; you are aware that the child is handed out at six in the morning and brought back at whatever the hour may be when the mother returns?—Yes.

1275. Are you not aware that the infantile mortality caused by this taking of the child out from home and bringing it home in the cold, and the ill-feeding, is very large indeed?—I am aware of that.

1276. And is it not the fact that really and truly the mortality induced by that system of *crèches*, carrying the children out to places, is much more startling and much greater than that induced in any other way?—Well, I have not been able to satisfy myself on that point.

1277. Do you know anything about Burnley?—No.

1278. Would you agree with what I was told, that in the places where large wages are given to the mother, 20s., 25s., and 30s. a week they earn, do they not?—Yes.

1279. That the child mortality is greater amongst that well-to-do artisan class than it is in the class of the poorer artisan who does not go into the factory, for the reason I have stated?—I should be quite prepared to believe that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1280. What is, roughly, the population of Manchester, the district you worked in?—About half-a-million.

1281. In London, which we may call, say, 5,000,000, the greater London, there are now 41 houses registered; according to that, at the same ratio, Manchester would have four houses registered; would you feel that the registration of four houses in Manchester at all met the needs of the present case?—I am sure it would not.

1282. We have been assured by witnesses that they are of opinion that every house is registered in London which under the existing law ought to be registered; but you would feel that if that were so you would certainly require to register more houses than four in Manchester?—I think so.

1283. In which more than one child under 12 months was kept for hire, I mean?—Yes.

Chairman.

1284. But that opinion, again, is what I may call purely academic; it is conjecture on your part?—Yes; I can only give you my opinion. May I say this: any questions that you would allow me to have from you I will consider to the best of my ability; but it is very difficult with regard to great and most important questions, such as these, to settle them off-hand. I should be pleased if I could be of service in the way I have indicated.

Viscount Llandaff.

1285. Could you state why Manchester left this Act as a dead letter; the proportion of deaths of illegitimate children per thousand there is far beyond the figures in Glasgow; why did you never put the Act in force in Manchester?—If I said the Act was never applied in Manchester I made a slip; I did not mean to say that; I do not know whether it was or not.

(0,95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1286. Would it not have come under your knowledge?—It is a considerable time ago, and, if it was applied, all I can say is, I did not proceed under it; I had other and very much more convenient ways of getting information. I may say, without desiring to take too much credit to myself, that there are very few cities in England where the poor are better looked after than they are to-day in Manchester.

1287. It is a dead letter, because the town council felt that they could do better without it, by other means?—We could do much better; I do not think we wanted the Act in Manchester.

Lord Kinnaird.

1288. There are illegitimate children in Manchester, and they have to be put out somewhere to nurse, as in London?—Yes, not only illegitimate, but legitimate children too.

1289. What means have you for inspecting the places where they are put out to nurse?—May I explain that we have in Manchester, not only a large staff of sanitary inspectors, but also a large staff of female health visitors, as we call them; it was the business of those visitors to go amongst the people, and to get to know all about them, their families, their troubles, and their sickness, and to do all that they could to make life in the poorer districts more endurable. In that way we got an amount of information which I do not think is gathered in any other town in England; and that accounts for my saying that really I know very little about the Act of 1872, because we had an excellent means of getting to know all about the people without it.

1290. And do you think many children were not put out of the way there?—I am afraid I must ask you to excuse my answering that, if my answer is to go down.

Viscount Llandaff.

1291. Have you ever found any difficulty in working that system that you have described?—No; the people were only too thankful for it.

Lord Thring.

1292. These female visitors were philanthropic; not paid, I suppose?—They acted under a society called the Ladies' Health Society in Manchester, and, on the other hand, they were in touch with the medical officer of health, who directed their work.

1293. Were they paid?—They were paid partly by the corporation and partly by the Ladies' Health Society.

Viscount Llandaff.

1294. And they attended as well to children in their own homes as to children boarded out?—Yes; to anyone who wanted their attention.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1295. That was a more successful method than this Act?—I cannot say anything about the Act; I think the methods which are adopted in Manchester were better than could be carried out under any Act alone.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1296. Is there any formal paper or document which

5 May 1896.]

Mr. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

which gives an account of the work of these female health visitors?—Yes.

1297. What is it?—The reports of the medical officer of health in Manchester at the time give very full details on that point, and so likewise do the reports of the society itself. I should be very glad indeed to submit them to the Committee.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1298. If you had the houses registered it would rather take them out of the view of your health visitors, and put them under those looking after the registered houses?—Personally I have ceased to have anything to do with Manchester for three years, and I should not like to speak for my successor there.

Lord Thring.

1299. You would not like to take the people there out of the supervision of those ladies whom you have mentioned with so much approbation?—No; I would not for any Act that could be passed.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1300. If you come again, perhaps you will bring statistics of that society?—I will see whether I have them among my papers, and if not, I will write to Manchester for them.

Lord Belper.

1301. This society at Manchester was a regular society formed for the purpose?—The Ladies' Health Society is really a branch of the Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association, which is the oldest voluntary sanitary association in England. The Ladies' Health Society consists of a large number of ladies who associate themselves for the purpose of superintending the operations of the so-called female health visitors, and they devote a very large proportion of their time and money to the task. I know perfectly well that the work which they are doing is beyond all praise.

Viscount Llandaff.

1302. Is it not part of the conditions of their success that they come as voluntary friends of the poor instead of as official inspectors?—That is the secret of their success.

Lord Belper.

1303. There is a return here of 1890, giving the names of institutions dealing with children under five years of age; is this society you speak of the Manchester and Salford Refuges and Children's Aid Society?—No, that is a charity.

1304. I understand that the society you speak of is so far an institution, that they have funds?—I should like to explain that they receive part of the wages of the health visitors, the paid health visitors, from the corporation, and the rest they collect by way subscription from their friends; and a great deal of money they get together in that way; but I may say that the work of the ladies is entirely voluntary, and not only so, but it is a very expensive affair for them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1305. The society has a large staff of female health visitors who are partially paid out of the rates?—Partially paid out of the rates.

1306. Can you give me roughly an idea of the number of these people who are thus in part paid out of the rates?—The number of them at present paid out of the rates would appear, I think, in the paper that I propose to submit to your Lordships.

1307. Is it a question, I mean, of tens or hundreds?—It is a question of tens, rather.

Lord Kinnaird.

1308. Have you had before you any complaints by coroners; we have had two London coroners here who said that the present Act was utterly insufficient to stop a great deal of ill-treatment, and possibly worse than that, of infants; have your coroners in Manchester complained of the same thing?—I have no knowledge of the fact.

1309. They did not complain to you when you were health officer there?—No, I received no complaints from the coroners that I remember.

1310. Did you act under a private Act, a local Act, in Manchester?—The Corporation of the City of Manchester acted under the Public Health Act, 1875.

1311. Are the provisions of that Act not valid in London?—In London they have a special Act.

1312. Did yours go further than the London Act?—I am not acquainted with the present London Act. I know that up to the passing of the last Act for London the Public Health Act, which applied to the country generally and not to London, was very much more useful than the London Act was up to the passing of the last Act; it was very weak.

1313. Do you consider that this new Act is required?—Do you mean for the country generally? I think it would be beneficial.

Viscount Llandaff.

1314. What do you say as to Manchester?—I cannot speak for Manchester now. I am sure that I never proceeded under that Act of 1872 in Manchester, and for the reason I have given.

Lord Kinnaird.

1315. Then they would probably treat the amended Act, if were passed, as they did the old Act?—I cannot tell.

Chairman.

1316. You will think the matter over and let me know if you can throw any further light on it?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1317. You said that you thought it possible that the improvement of the percentage of illegitimate births from seven in 1845 to four in 1894 was owing to a general improvement in morality?—Yes, I think I am entitled to say that.

1318. Have you any figures to show that?—No, it is my opinion, that is all. I think the regularity of the fall supports it.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

5 May 1896.

Mr. WILLIAM CROOKS is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1319. You are a member of the London County Council for Poplar, I believe?—And also a guardian of the poor.

1320. A guardian of the poor for Poplar Union?—Yes.

1321. You have lived there most of your life, have you not?—I have lived there, with the exception of about 18 months, the whole of my life.

1322. I mean you can speak with considerable experience of the feelings of the working classes with regard to this question?—I believe I can.

1323. You have read the Bill which is now before the Committee?—Yes.

1324. Are you in favour of it generally?—Yes.

1325. You are in favour of extending the age of the children to five years?—At the very least.

1326. And you are also in favour of making it apply to houses where only one child is kept?—I am.

1327. Have you had any experience yourself with regard to what are known as baby-farmers, that is to say, have you come across them at all?—No, except in my experience on the Public Control Committee of the London County Council.

1328. It is a fact, I believe, that baby-farmers (you know what I mean) do not exist so much in a district like Poplar as in the more western districts, the suburban and the better neighbourhoods?—That I cannot say. I do not know whether baby farms do exist to any very large extent in the better-to-do neighbourhoods; I have no practical experience of that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1329. Do you mean that you cannot compare the two?—Exactly so.

Chairman.

1330. But do you think that they exist much in Poplar?—Not to a very large extent. I shall have in a minute or two to give you one or two cases of what has happened with people who have taken children.

1331. You say that you are in favour of extending the Act; is it your opinion that registration would be advantageous?—I am positively sure of it.

1332. Do you think that the feelings of the working classes, as a general rule, those whom you have come in contact with, are generally in favour of the proposals of this Bill?—Most decidedly.

1333. Instances have been brought before the Committee of cases of possible hardship if an extended system of registration were in force; can you give us any instances of the general practice of working men with reference to their children when they have not got a mother to look after them, and when the men themselves have to go away from home in search of work?—Yes. I can give you many.

1334. What do they generally do?—A man who is left with a family of children; or a man

Chairman—continued.

whose wife has deserted him, finds always considerable difficulty in placing those children in good homes, and invariably (speaking now for this last four years) men who find themselves in that dilemma in my immediate neighbourhood come to me. They say, "Cannot you get the guardians to take my children?" and I say, "I really cannot; the law is against it unless you personally go into the house with the children;" and they say, "Well, what do you advise that I shall do?" I say, "Have you no sister-in-law, no mother-in-law, no relation whatever that you can place the children with?" "No." "Do you think that you could afford to keep a woman to look after your children?" "Well, I think I could if I could find a proper woman to do it." I then make a suggestion of this sort: "Now what I want to say to you is, that you had better go and look round and find some decent people who have a couple of rooms to let in their house, take the rooms, state the whole of the circumstances of the case to the landlady, say to her that you have a daughter or a son 9, 10, or 12 years of age, as the case might be, and generally they can look after the little ones, and that if the landlady will give an eye to them you will make it worth her while."

The particular case that I have in my mind must have been very successful indeed; for last week, in going through a thoroughfare, a man rushed up to me, shook me by the hand, and said, "I am so glad to see you; I took your advice." I did not quite understand what the man meant, and he said, "Don't you remember that I came to your house and asked you about my children?" I said, "No, there are so many men who come to me that I do not remember this particular instance." He said, "Well, I have taken two rooms in such-and-such a street, and the children are going on well, and I assure you that I shall never pass you again as long as I live," meaning that he would give me some kind of acknowledgment for the advice given to him. The other instance I have in my mind is the case of a man who came to the guardians with two babies; roughly speaking one must have been about two years old, a diminutive little thing, and the other about six months; and in a most imploring manner he asked the guardians to take the children. The guardians said, "We cannot take the children without you. Where is your wife?" "My wife has gone to a hospital very bad. I cannot go to work; I have these two babies to look after, and I can get no one to take them, or, at least, no person respectable enough, and sober enough, to look after my children in the way that I should like." The man was in a terrible way. I was so struck with him that I followed him out across the road and got into conversation with him, and I said, "Now what do you propose to do?" "What can I do? I shall starve if I go on like this; I cannot leave the children and I cannot get anyone whom I can trust the children with." "Very well," I said, "now look here; you go back to the relieving officer; you see the children are gradually getting

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

getting worse; they certainly could not have been left like that when their mother went away; you go and ask the relieving officer to give you an order and then go in with the children, and to-morrow I will come and see you, and perhaps I shall think of some better plan by which I can get your children placed out than I can think of to-day, or I may find some institution that would look after the children."

1335. But what we want really to know is this: you put the children out, you found a lodging for these children?—No, we did not. The man went away and did not go into the house with the child. The point I want to make there is that if houses were registered, or if this man knew perfectly well that any person that took his children would be under inspection and registered, there would be a safeguard at once, and it would encourage him to find a decent person to take his children to; he would have said to himself, "You must register; the inspector will be sufficient guarantee for me that these children are being properly looked after." Now, without that registration and without that power of inspection the man had no certificate that his youngsters would be properly looked after at all.

1336. Is there anything to prevent his doing that now?—Certainly; the man has no guarantee that his children are going to be looked after properly.

Viscount Llandaff.

1337. Two babies require registration now?—But one of them is beyond the 12 months; and you do not get very many working men with two babies under 12 months, I venture to say.

Chairman.

1338. Can you give us any experience of the working of what is called the adoption system; that is, giving out the children on the payment of a lump sum down?—I can only give this experience: that we get into the workhouse several children who have either been adopted for a lump sum down or taken on a promise of a weekly payment which has ceased, and in regard to whom we get absolutely no guarantee that the children are illegitimate, have been boarded out and have been adopted. The foster mother or father comes up and says, "I have a little girl or a boy that has been left with me under promise of payment, and I have not seen the mother or the father for a year, or for three months, as the case may be, and I cannot afford to keep it; and the guardians must take it." And the guardians are obliged to take it.

1339. You regard it as generally a very bad thing for the child, I suppose, that a lump sum should be paid down with it?—I do, indeed.

1340. Can you suggest any method of preventing children being given out on the payment of a lump sum?—I think that the amended Act should be framed to make it a penal offence to accept a lump sum, with a child of that description. I admit there is some difficulty in it, and after all you cannot frame an Act of Parliament that some one would not find a way of getting round; but, nevertheless, it would be better than the present condition of things; you

Chairman—continued.

would certainly get hold of more people than you now do; and if you only got 10 per cent. more it would certainly be worth framing an Act of Parliament to enable you to do 10 per cent. more good than you are doing at the present time.

1341. It is very difficult, is it not, to define and attach a definite meaning to the term "lump sum;" in this connection it has been called "immediate payment"?—Yes, which lands you in this difficulty, that you have no positive proof that a person adopted the child for 30*l.*, 50*l.*, or 100*l.* When the person had got tired of it, and had exhausted the money, they would at once, if they did not take worse measures for getting rid of the child, apply to the guardians to take it.

1342. That is not quite my point. I am talking of the difficulty of drawing a clause so as to make the payment of what is called an "immediate payment" on taking the child, that is, the payment of a lump sum down, illegal?—I think you could under the Act. A person takes a child, and you could register all those particulars. You might say that you have no means of knowing whether the person has adopted a child for a lump sum or not; but I think it makes a great difference if you have got power of entry and notification, which is sure to come about in a crowded neighbourhood; the people are sure to know when Mrs. Brown or Mrs. Black has got a new child; they will begin to ask one another where it comes from; and it is notified; the inspector goes in and makes the necessary inquiry, and satisfies himself, or herself, that all is fair and square and above board; a record is kept of it; and supposing later on the person applies for the parish to take the child over, then immediately you confront them with the record that you have got of the previous inspection; and by that means you would reduce that system certainly to a minimum.

1343. Do you find that there is generally a considerable secrecy connected with the taking of nurse children now; that, as a rule, it is something the people are ashamed of, and like to keep quiet?—Yes.

1344. Do you think that there would be much dislike on the part of respectable people to register themselves as taking in children?—Indeed, I do not. I think the more respectable the person, and the more desirable that they should have the children, the more anxious they would be to register. I can give you several instances of that. I am chairman of a boarding-out committee; that is to say, a committee that supervises the boarding-out of the children from our union; the boarding-out committee of the union. It is our duty to go through the certified committee's reports from the various places where children are boarded out. Sometimes when we get an independent report from a particular committee the guardians suggest that we might ask the Local Government Board for permission to visit. This is usually granted, and I have been on several tours of inspection to children boarded out; and of course in the best homes the door is thrown wide open, and you are called in and are asked

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

asked to inspect the whole of the children's clothes, together with their bedroom, and there is a free and open offer to strip the child to satisfy you that it is perfectly clean. You get to an indifferent home and there you are met with all sorts of excuses as to why a certain thing is not quite clean, or little Tommy or Jenny are not quite up to the mark. At once I object; I say that such persons have no right to be registered under any circumstances, and have no right to have children in their charge. If we frame an Act of Parliament, or a Bill at all, it is that it shall be no injury to honest and good persons, but shall be a terror to evil-doers. I cannot for the life of me understand any objection to registration; and I have never heard a single person who was worth listening to at all object to registration.

1345. You have had considerable experience of the boarding-out system, I believe, have you not?—Yes, I have.

1346. Whereabouts do you generally board your children out from Poplar?—We have some children at Eyke in Suffolk; we have some at Apsley Guise, together with Woburn Sands in Bedfordshire; we have some at Corsham and round that immediate neighbourhood in Wiltshire; and we have also some children under a Balsam certified committee; I have not been there.

1347. Have you local committees in these places to look after them?—They are certified from the Local Government Board.

1348. They are committees?—Yes, or rather shall I qualify that by saying it ought to be done invariably through committees; but in one or two instances that is not literally true.

1349. Have you got any other further reasons to give for supporting the Bill than you have mentioned?—Yes.

1350. Have you any experience of what is called the traffic in children, handing them on from one to another?—To evade the law, do you mean?

1351. Partly to evade the law and partly to ensure all traces being lost of the children. I am talking now of the provisions in the Bill with reference to getting statements in writing from the people who bring the children and pass them on?—I should think that could be done with very little difficulty, but I have had no personal experience as to that.

1352. I did not know whether you might have come across such a thing?—No.

1353. Were you going to give me some other reasons for supporting the Bill?—Yes. My other reasons were these. I am acquainted with a lady who does, and has done, a tremendous lot of rescue work, and she has passed through her hands (in the 18 or 20 years she has been engaged in the occupation of rescue work), no fewer than 3,000 young women. At the present moment she has lying in her house five young women recently confined. She says that, speaking for herself, she should be delighted if even her house could be registered, and that the inspector might go from time to time to children she places out. She boards them out, one only in a house; she pays 5*s.* a week for the children until the mother can afford to pay; she secures a situation for the mother; and she is induced to do this by

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

the fact that where the child can be kept alive and looked after, the mother is encouraged to become a respectable young woman and is encouraged to work and toil for the child, who keeps her from going into bad ways. In answer to what she said, I said, "Well, now, what do you say, Mrs. —, to the person with whom you place this one child being registered?"—"Well," she said, "I believe that people with whom I place the children would be very glad indeed to be registered; and what is more, if they were not glad to be registered I should object to their having the children at all, for I should say at once it was not a desirable home; for in every instance the greatest amount of publicity should be given to these cases; that is to say, those who have the care and study of these children."

1354. She only talks of registering her home as a lying-in house?—Yes.

1355. The Act only applies to children kept apart from their mothers?—Yes; but I wanted to quote the authority of this lady who has had so much to do with these children and has placed so many out, one in a house, as to her opinion of the desirability of registration.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1356. With regard to what you said as to the absence of difficulty, you have not referred to temporary cases; do you think it desirable that where a child is only for a day or two allowed to go to a neighbour, a thing that must be common in your experience, for a trifling payment, that house should be registered?—No, neither do I think it comes within the four corners of the Bill, so far as I have read it, inasmuch as you have got the 24 hours limit, and the trifling payment is very trifling indeed, and you would not call a friendly act of that description receiving a child for fee or reward; hence I do not consider that such cases come within the four corners of the Bill as we now see it.

1357. I do not quite follow you?—Supposing you ask a woman in the next house to mind your baby, because you were going to the seaside for two or three days, or supposing a man going away to work, said: "Here is the money and food for the child, and I will give you 2*s.* for the trouble," that 2*s.* will not pay for the trouble; it is a neighbourly act.

1358. Still it is hire or reward, is it not?—I cannot see it; I do not think you could stretch the clauses of that Act to call it hire or reward; but my experience teaches me this: the working classes, as a rule, are only anxious to do one another a turn of that description without accepting a single penny at all. If you were to ask me to fix a sum, I should tell you at once I could not; but if you were to ask me if I could name anyone who had so minded somebody else's children I could name a dozen at once.

Chairman.

1359. Your desire is that the Act should not interfere in any way with the neighbourly and friendly action you refer to?—Certainly.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1360. My experience exactly corresponds with yours, that in the majority of these cases there is no payment; but I should have thought there

L 3

was

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

was a large number in which there was payment, and what I desire to do is to produce such a law as shall allow of that arrangement without the need of registration?—I am of opinion that the Bill does that, because what I find is that the workman who has no wife has rooms and apartments of his own in a particular house, where the landlady keeps her eye upon the children; that is to say, when there is a family of four or five whose ages run from ten down to one year or less.

1361. Why do you think there are not more registered houses now?—I do not think that the law is sufficiently known, and but for the publicity recently given in the public press, it would not spread as much as it has; that is to say, that it has been, if one may use the phrase, boomed rather, and it is one of those things that we are rather glad to see boomed, to call public attention to the condition of things; and no man or woman that I know of, no woman certainly who desires to look after children, would offer the slightest objection. Supposing she did, and it was pointed out that certain scandals were happening, and that by registering the children she has it would prevent a scandal arising again, like a true woman she would say, Oh, certainly, if it will prevent anything wrong, I am only too glad to permit the inspector to say that my house is all right. It is a kind of certificate of fitness to receive children which they would be glad to have.

1362. Do you think that there are a large number of people in London now who are taking in children, but who are not under the existing law?—I should say yes; and also there are very many people who are taking children who ought to be registered; who ought not to be allowed to take them.

1363. The existing Act allows them to take one, but do you think that there are many people who, as a matter of fact, are taking more than one; who ought to be under the Act, and who are not registered?—I should hardly think so; but what I feel about it is that you get very many children under 12 months not properly taken care of. I know it is so in the case of a man applying from time to time for out-relief; he has care of a little boy; I have watched him for months; the little chap is just beginning to toddle about. Now the man and wife cannot be far off 70, and are quite past work. I do not think any of us would register a house of that kind; certainly not myself. I should think more of the interest of the child than of benefiting the old man and woman.

1364. At present there are, we are told, only 41 houses registered in the whole of London; you would be of opinion that there must be a larger number of houses than that which come properly under the Act now?—I go as far as to say that there must be hundreds, and if the law was made a little more stringent than it is now the registration would go up by leaps and bounds.

Chairman.

1365. I am not sure that you quite understand the Bishop. You say there must be hundreds of houses where children are now

Chairman—continued.

kept which are outside the present law, but which would be within the provisions of the Act if the Act was extended?—Exactly. I also say there are very many houses where there are two children under 12 months that we have not been able to get at; also by the very fact of amending this Bill and getting them within the publicity, you would be able to draw them in also.

1366. You mean to say that, in your opinion, there are a good many houses which have these babies which it has not been possible to get at?—Yes.

1367. That is only conjecture on your part?—It appeals to our common sense.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1368. Have you formed any estimate at all of the number of houses that would require to be registered if this proposed Bill became law?—We could only hazard a guess.

1369. It would be a question of thousands, would it?—I should think so.

1370. If in every case where a child under five years of age is being boarded and a payment made, registration had to take place, you would have instead of 41 houses 4,000, or, at all events, a very large number?—I think you would; I do not know that it would be quite up to 4,000; we have no figures before us to prove that.

1371. But, summing up what you have just said, you would be of opinion that the amount of hardship that would press upon individuals on account of being compelled to be registered would be trifling compared with the benefit the Act would confer?—Certainly, I do think that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1372. Have you got any registered houses in Poplar?—I do not know; I do not think so. Of course, that is a question that Mr. Spencer, the chief of the Public Control Department, could answer. By the way, that reminds me; a lady called at my house the other day, and asked my wife whether I was a member of the London County Council, and she said, "Yes; what do you want?" "Well," she said, "I have got four children; they are very nicely looked after, and it is a very nice house, and I want him to come round and see the house, and to see if he would give me a certificate"; and the message, I left behind was to tell the lady to go to 21, Whitehall; but beyond that I know of no case.

Lord Belper.

1373. This was a case that was not registered, but where she did take more than one child?—Evidently.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1374. You think the working classes are in favour of this?—I should say, yes, decidedly.

1375. Would they be willing to put their children in a registered house for two or three days, supposing they wanted to go away to work, or to go to the seaside?—I do not think that is quite a fair question, because under the Bill the house

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

house must be registered before they get the children.

1376. But there might be children already in the house, and it might be registered?—I think they would in that case.

1377. Do you think you would find people who were registered willing to take in the children of a neighbour in that way?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1378. Do you think that people like being called baby-farmers?—A certified house would not be called a baby farm for any long time to come, but because of the wickedness and cruelty going on there is need to set a better fashion than now exists.

1379. But at the present time they call them baby farmers?—You do not call a person in the country who accepts children to board out a baby farmer.

1380. I ask you is not that the common term used; if a person is registered, we call him or her a baby farmer?—No, the working classes are not so rude as is generally suggested. If you mean that in a drunken brawl, something would come out of that description, that may be so, but that is a matter of no importance to us.

1381. You have told us broadly that the working people are in favour of registration; I want to know what possible evidence you have that the working men in Poplar are in favour of registration?—I think I have the best of all reasons for saying that. I am in daily contact with the men to begin with. I address in my own neighbourhood on an average three public meetings a week. I have taken the subject of this Bill three or four times since we began to talk about the framing of the Bill, and on every occasion the Bill has been squarely debated by the men assembled at the meeting, and a resolution has been carried in favour of supporting the Bill. I cannot go any further than that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1382. Then will you explain this: The parents are in favour of registration: the owners of the houses are in favour of registration, as I understand you?—I say that the parents of the children are strongly in favour, and that all respectable persons who desire to take the children are also in favour of it.

1383. How is it, then, that there so little registration; that there are so few registered houses, and that the existing law is so constantly broken?—I think I have said that I did not think the law has been sufficiently well known until within this last month or two.

1384. Do you mean that for 25 years everybody interested in this question has been asleep?—The best answer I can make to that is the fact that you have just had a witness in the chair who said that the Bill was a dead letter in Manchester; and if an authority like Manchester will not put the Bill into operation, the local authority, surely there is some other person to compel the local authority to do its work.

1385. In London the local authority have been trying?—Yes, and are doing it exceedingly well.

1386. But, nevertheless, with everybody in

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

favour of it, there are practically no registered houses; how does that come about?—Yes; you have some registered houses.

1387. In Poplar you told me you did not know of one?—I know of 40 odd that are registered.

1388. But in Poplar?—In Poplar, no; that is perfectly true.

1389. I am told that there are two in Poplar?—I did not know that.

Chairman.

1390. It would not necessarily come within your knowledge?—No; what I say is that the men who are most likely to be obliged to put children out are in favour of a system of registration.

1391. Do you mean that they are not able to find a respectable person to take them?—That is so; the complaints I generally get from men who want us to take the children are that the person with whom the children now are drinks too much, or has some other failing, not necessarily drink; perhaps there is no ability for looking after children. You may get a sober foster-mother sometimes who knows very little about washing or bathing a youngster or keeping him clean. That may be the fault of our system of not training them properly, but the fact remains

Lord Belper.

1392. I think you were not in the room when Mr. Spencer gave evidence?—No.

1393. He said that he believed that in the whole, or very nearly the whole, of the cases of the children that would come under the present law the houses are registered. The question I asked him at No. 341 was this: "I understand that you say that under the present law you practically get hold of the cases of the whole of the children that would naturally come under the present law, or nearly all;" and the answer was, "I believe that to be the case," and I went on to ask, "Then, if that be the case, as far as that class of cases go, that would come under the present law, there are really no malpractices going on or ill-treatment of children, because they are all under registration and under inspection," and the answer to that is, "That is my belief." I only put that to you because you have expressed the opinion that there are a good many cases not registered?—Notwithstanding Mr. Spencer's very wide experience, I am still of that opinion.

1394. And you still think that there are a good many cases that ought to register that are not registered?—I think so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1395. You told us mainly of the view, and I think your evidence most important, of respectable working men who want a place to which to send their children. The children we have to protect are, in the main, illegitimate children; I mean that the children who are baby-farmed in England, to use the common phrase, are probably 90 per cent. of them illegitimate; we have had evidence to that effect; do you think that the mothers of such children find a difficulty at present in a district like

L 4

Poplar

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

Poplar in disposing respectably of their children?—No, not when they are under the wing of some body of good voluntary lady workers. I should say that then they could do so; but if the girls are left to their own resources to find a home, then I think the children are likely to be very badly placed.

1396. That rather goes round my point. Take an average girl, not linked in with any philanthropic or religious association of any kind, who has gone wrong and has a child; I ask, does she at this moment find a difficulty in knowing what to do with it?—She does.

1397. Would that difficulty be lessened or decreased if this Bill be passed?—Lessened, because a person taking the child would say, "The house is registered," and it is a guarantee to the young woman that everything is fair and square; therefore I do think it will benefit that kind of girl.

1398. You do not think she would find desirable people who are at present ready to take the child quietly without saying anything about it, but who would be unwilling to take the child if they had to get leave from the county council?—I do not think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

1399. Do you know the system under which the registration takes place in London?—I think I do.

1400. We have heard that there is a certificate from the clergyman, a testimonial from rated householders, an inspection of the house to see that it is sanitary and in good order before registration is granted at all; therefore it is not the registration that makes the house good, but the house must be good before it gets registration?—Admitted.

1401. Then there are the houses not registered at present, but as good as they will be after registration; why does the young girl get any additional facilities from the fact that the house is registered; it was good before?—My contention is that the person who might have a good house would feel herself incompetent to take the child; she would say: "All sorts of suspicions would be caused in this girl's mind; I should like to have the child, but what will be worrying her is the thought of what is happening to the child; I know I could look after it properly; I will be registered and take the child, and then she has a guarantee that I am looking after it properly."

Chairman.

1402. Do you express any opinion as to the advisability or inadvisability of limiting the operation of this Act to illegitimate children only?—I express this opinion, and it is very clear in my mind, that it ought to include all children.

1403. Do you think that if it was limited to illegitimate children it would lead to great evasions?—I think it would. I have thought it over very carefully and I have come to this conclusion, that if you were only going to register the legitimate children, there is nothing in the world to prevent a young woman finding a certificate of marriage for the purpose of placing the

Chairman—continued.

child out; her sister, cousin, or some one of the kind, might lend her one; but supposing, for instance, she got married in Devonshire and she wanted to place the child in London, the person receiving the child, or the person responsible, cannot go all the way to Devonshire and take a number of children with them and get the parson or the verger to prove that this was the identical young woman who was married there. And if the number of legitimate children put out is so exceedingly small, where is the trouble; you say the percentage is so very low; why not include them? I am of opinion that if you leave out the legitimate children, the only result will be rather to encourage fraud, and to encourage a girl to find a marriage certificate from somewhere or other for the purpose of evading the law.

Lord Kinnaird.

1404. I understand your evidence to be that you think there would be no objections to limiting the Act to illegitimate children, and you do not think that the classes that would make use of it most would object to registration, or that they would see no need of it?—That is my feeling.

1405. Then would you exclude institutions from the Act, or have you any strong opinion upon that point?—Yes, I would not exclude institutions. I only give you this as my own opinion; and the reason why I would not exclude institutions is that I think it would mean a better attention to the administrative detail of an institution if it were registered by the members forming the committee or the responsible persons. And the reason why I should encourage that, even from a managerial standpoint, is this: if I were manager or chairman of the managers of some such institution, I should welcome the inspection. I should say, "Now here is an institution being run by voluntary contributions; we have an inspection by the Government or the county council, as the case may be, who certify that this home, this institution, is a really good one, that everything that can be done is done for the benefit of the children; and will you not give us some money with which to carry on this good work?" I think it would be such an advantage to the institution that it would overcome any little difficulty that might arise in the managers' minds as to the undesirability of registration.

Viscount Llandaff.

1406. The chief object of this amended Bill would be for the benefit of the houses, as far as I can make out; a certificate of goodness?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1407. You distinctly think that there are many children who are not treated as well as they ought to be, whose treatment would be improved; there is sufficient cause made out for extending the Act, you think?—I do think so; I think it would encourage even the indifferent ones, which we should not be inclined now to register, as good homes to improve. When those people were desirous of taking in children, they would put their house in order; and though you might have to strike them off the register for one year,

5 May 1896.]

Mr. CROOKS.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

year, you might put them on the next if they showed the necessary improvement.

Lord Thring.

1408. I should like to ask you one question: do you think the keeping of these children profitable?—Yes, in a good many instances, speaking from my knowledge of the boarded-out children, I should say decidedly so.

Chairman.

1409. What do the Poplar guardians pay?—Four shillings a week; 2l. a year for clothing, and 10s. a year for medical attendance in the case of each child.

1410. You say 10s. a year for the medical attendance; do you pay it to the person or straight to the doctor and tell him to attend the child?—In some cases straight to the doctor, which I think is decidedly advantageous; in other instances the money is paid to the certified committee; they might have a very heavy bill on one child, and in the others they may be perfectly clear; but the same thing applies to the doctor, for that matter.

Lord Kinnaird.

1411. You do not give the 10s. to the person who takes them?—Not to the foster-mother or father.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1412. Why do you go so far afield as Wiltshire?—The wisdom of the Local Government Board says that no metropolitan union shall board children out within the metropolis.

Mr. WYNNE EDWIN BAXTER, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1417. You are the Coroner for the Eastern Division of the County of London, and also for the Tower and its Liberties, I believe?—I am.

1418. And you have been Coroner for East Sussex, I believe, from 1879 to 1887?—Yes.

1419. And you were Deputy Coroner for the City and for Southwark, and the Duchy of Lancaster, in Surrey, and Middlesex, for several years?—I was.

1420. Also Coroner for East Middlesex; and now you are Coroner for East London?—Yes.

1421. Therefore I may say you have had considerable experience as coroner?—That is so.

1422. What particular class has your work mostly brought you amongst?—Amongst the poorest.

1423. And is it your experience that the evils against which this Bill is directed really more affect those of the better class?—It is. There are a smaller number of registered houses in my district, and there is a great absence of baby farming altogether.

1424. In your particular district?—Yes, in my present district.

1425. In what way do you mean that it affects the better classes more than the poorer ones?—(0.95.)

Lord Thring.

1413. Is not that what their wisdom says, because they wish to remove as far as possible the taint of pauperism from the children?—There are a good many sides to that question, which I have very strong convictions upon.

1414. Is there not that one side to it?—I found some villages to which children were sent to a certified committee where the children were actually known by the name of the union they come from. Therefore in that case it was not so.

1415. Is not the object, right or wrong, silly or wise, to remove the taint of pauperism as far as possible from the children?—Yes, but how does that apply to the provinces? You can board out within the union in the country, but you cannot board out within the union in London. That only applies to London, and does not apply to the kingdom generally. The Gloucester Union, for instance, of which I have some knowledge, board out almost within the city of Gloucester.

Viscount Llandaff.

1416. There is nothing to oblige you to go as far as Devonshire or Wiltshire; you might go to Surrey or Kent, might you not?—Yes, except that we find that other unions are anxious to get good homes, and most of the good certified committees have their hands full, and we have not as many homes in the country for that class of children as we might desire; hence we are obliged occasionally to go further than we should like.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Chairman—continued.

When a daughter of a working man gets into trouble, as a rule, she marries at the eleventh hour, whereas, amongst those in a more affluent position there is an endeavour to screen the shame and get rid of the child; and so baby farming starts.

1426. So that the customers of the baby farmer are, as a rule, in your experience, people of a fairly good position; of a comparatively good position?—Yes, a comparatively good position.

1427. What is your opinion with regard to the registration of houses in which nurse-children are taken for hire?—My opinion is that if a house is registered there is far less chance of the child being neglected, and I base my opinion on the fact that I have had no cause to suspect neglect in the cases of deaths that have occurred in registered houses in my district.

1428. Have you got any particular illustration to give us?—The only case of serious baby-farming occurred about a fortnight ago in my district; that is the only case in 10 years; and there two ladies appeared at the East-end at an hotel with a child; they inquired for the Stepney Causeway and were directed; they went into a general shop and inquired of the shopkeeper if

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5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

she knew of anyone who would take a child; there happened to be a poor woman in the shop at the time, and they asked whether she would like to take it; she promised to consult her husband; they eventually took it. The whole of the parties went to a solicitor's office, a formal agreement was drawn up, 25*l.* was paid in Irish notes, the woman took charge of the child, it was registered in the name of the foster-father, christened in the name of the foster-father as the foster-father's child, and the outcome was that the first night the foster-mother was drunk, the police locked her up, the child was taken to the workhouse, afterwards handed over to the foster mother, and the 25*l.* was soon spent. The child was then endeavoured to be got into institutions, and eventually was taken to the workhouse again, and died there. I submit that if this Bill was an Act nothing of that sort could have happened; a solicitor would never have drawn up the agreement without providing for registration; in all probability the police and the workhouse authorities also would have taken action.

1429. The facts which you are relating came out, I suppose, in the course of evidence at the inquest?—They did.

1430. And therefore, in this particular case, if the present Bill had been law, the child would have had some supervision?—In my opinion it would.

1431. Unless, of course, there had been a breach of the law and the child had been put in an unregistered house?—My impression is that the law would not have been evaded, considering the number of legal authorities through which the child passed; the hands of a solicitor, the police, and the workhouse authorities.

Lord Belper.

1432. But the workhouse was after the child had been taken away from the foster-mother, was it not?—The same night. It went twice to the workhouse; it was first taken by the police to the workhouse on the night on which it was received.

Chairman.

1433. As soon as the foster-mother received this 25*l.* she immediately got drunk?—She did, the same night.

Viscount Llandaff.

1434. How would registration have prevented her getting drunk?—It would not have prevented her getting drunk; but having received the child the home in which she was living would have been registered, and the child would have been looked after in the meantime.

1435. How would it prevent a woman suddenly flush of money getting drunk?—It would not have prevented that, but it would have guarded the child afterwards.

Lord Belper.

1436. Why; how would it have prevented the woman who was bribed by 25*l.* taking the child?—I think it would have prevented her taking the child because the necessity for registra-

Lord Belper—continued.

tion would have been brought home to her. She was a perfect stranger to baby farming?—It was the first case in which she had done it.

1437. You think a law about registration would have frightened her from taking the child?—Yes; but beyond all that the child was in her custody for about six months, and there was nothing to show that it was properly taken care of then.

Chairman.

1438. You are in favour of extending the provisions of the existing Act?—I am for the reason that I mentioned.

1439. Have you read the Bill which is before the Committee?—I have.

1440. You see it is proposed to raise the age to five years, and to compel registration in the case of only one child being kept for hire or reward?—Yes; I see no reason why it might not happen that one child would be neglected quite as much as two; and those cases of neglect that have occurred in my district had been cases where there has been only one child.

1441. What is your opinion with reference to the number of illegitimate children in the east end, in your district, as compared with other parts?—I believe that there are fewer illegitimate children. I can tell you exactly the number of illegitimate children last year.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1442. Fewer than what?—Fewer than in other parts of the Metropolis. I held last year 694 inquests on children, and of those there were only 18 illegitimate children. Of those 18 illegitimate children nine were with their mothers, six were with relatives, and three only were out at nurse.

Chairman.

1443. How many inquests did you hold last year?—One thousand six hundred and twelve.

1444. Of which, how many were on children under seven years of age?—Six hundred and ninety-four.

1445. And how many of these 694 were illegitimate?—Eighteen.

1446. Only 18 were illegitimate?—Only 18.

1447. What does that point to in your opinion?—It points to the fact that there is less illegitimacy amongst the working classes than in those parts of London where there is greater affluence; and it points to the fact that the Bill would not press hard upon the working classes if it was law.

Lord Belper.

1448. You mean a Bill which only affected illegitimate children?—But that is only part of my statement; because there are only three cases out of the 694 where they were legitimate, and out at nurse. There were three cases of nurse-children where the children were legitimate.

1449. But I was asking you about your statement that the poor people would be affected less by this Bill than the better class; then I say you understand by this Bill, a Bill which is limited to illegitimate children?—I understand that

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

that the Bill as drafted comprehends both legitimate and illegitimate.

1450. Then, how can you found an argument on it that poor people who have fewer illegitimate children would be less affected by the Bill than better to do people?—That is only half the argument; the argument is that only 21 children out of the number I have mentioned were affected at all; out of the 21, three were out at nurse being legitimate, and out of the 18 that were illegitimate, only three were out at nurse; so that there were only six altogether out of the 694.

Lord Thring.

1451. In other words the Act would have no operation at all?—Not in the east end; I take it that no law is intended to have an operation against the well doer.

1452. If they are not evil doers the Act is not wanted?—I think anyone reading the papers can see that there are plenty of evil doers; they do not happen to be in the east end of London.

Chairman.

1453. What class of children are the nurse children on which you have held inquests generally?—Domestic servants and work girls.

1454. You are talking of the three?—There were 18 altogether illegitimate children, and three were out at nurse.

1455. But in the case of the nurse children has there been fairly good remuneration given for looking after the children?—They have usually paid an adequate remuneration, and every effort seems to have been made to provide an adequate remuneration except in this one case I have already mentioned, which occurred a fortnight ago, which was a case quite strange to the east end, nothing whatever to do with the neighbourhood.

1456. Therefore you do not think that registration and supervision would be any real hardship?—I do not think it would be any hardship on the working classes.

1457. Have you in your other districts, as coroner, ever been brought into contact with any necessity for the present Bill?—I have had several cases, I could not mention instances; several cases where inquests have been held on children that had been out at nurse, and there has been grave suspicion that proper care has not been taken of them.

Lord Thring.

1458. You mean to say in the course of your whole experience?—In the course of my whole experience, yes.

1459. That would be some 20 years?—Yes.

1460. You have had several cases in 20 years in which children have been ill-treated, or there has been suspicion of ill-treatment?—Yes, there have been cases in which a verdict of manslaughter has been returned.

1461. Very seldom?—Seldom.

Chairman.

1462. Have you formed any opinion as to the practice of baby farming, based on your own (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

experience?—I take it that this Bill is more for single cases than for baby farming in the general acceptance of the term.

1463. Have you come across cases where children have been taken in only one at the time, more or less for the purpose of evading the necessity for registration?—I have had several cases, some last year, where children have been taken as nurse-children, and there has been great want of care taken with them. They have been handed about from one person to another. In one case I remember the father could not find out where the child was for a considerable time; it passed through four people's hands.

Viscount Llandaff.

1464. Was it an illegitimate child?—It was a legitimate child.

1465. Why was it put out in that way; was the mother dead?—Yes, it was because the mother was dead.

1466. The father in that case would have been rather glad of some supervision, I suppose?—He tried to find the child, and it took him nine days to do so.

1467. Did he put that child out with a lump sum?—No.

1468. He made weekly payments, I suppose?—He was to have made weekly payments.

1469. Did he make weekly payments?—Eventually, but during the time that it was being handed from place to place he had no opportunity of doing so.

1470. I suppose he did not make the payment without satisfying himself that the child was alive?—No; he had to wait till he found the child before he could pay.

Chairman.

1471. What was the object of handing the child round?—I think they were afraid the child would die and they did not wish the child to die in their custody.

Lord Belper.

1472. Do you mean that they bribed somebody else to take it?—No, they did not bribe; they simply handed the child over so as to avoid having it in their possession when the child died.

1473. They would not take a child without having a payment with it, if the child was likely to die?—Yes, they did; they did not see that it was so near death as the person who last had it.

1474. If no payment was given what was their motive?—They expected payment.

1475. Whom did they expect to get the payment from?—The father.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1476. Had they communicated with the father?—No.

Lord Belper.

1477. Then why did they expect that he would make them a payment?—Because they were told that he would; he had promised it in the first case.

M 2

1478. Did

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

1478. Did the father make payment to the transferee?—Eventually.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1479. To all of them?—All the transfers went on in about nine days.

Lord Belper.

1480. And eventually it was traced?—Eventually it was traced.

Chairman.

1481. Are you generally in favour of the provisions of this Bill?—I am. I consider that if the child is away from its parents it is important that there should be some supervision by a public authority.

1482. And you think that if the registration was extended as proposed there would be a better chance of the children being well treated?—I feel confident they would, for two reasons: the persons with the registered houses would know that they were being supervised, and they would have the dread that the inspector would be in at any moment to see what was going on.

Viscount Llandaff.

1483. I should like to ask you about these inquests; you gave us the number of 694 inquests held in your present district?—Yes.

1484. In what time is that?—Last year.

1485. In one year?—Yes.

1486. How many of them resulted in the verdict of manslaughter?—I cannot say that; I have not the statistics; I did not anticipate such a question.

1487. I presume each of the 694 were sudden deaths, deaths that called for inquiry?—Sudden death or cases of violence.

1488. If it were violence it would be surely murder or manslaughter, to say the least?—No, a child may be run over.

Chairman.

1489. In "violence" you include accidents?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

1490. The 694 were all deaths that seemed to call for inquiry?—Yes.

1491. And you cannot tell me how many of them resulted in a verdict of manslaughter?—I cannot.

1492. You said about one?—Of the 21 cases I originally referred to, one was a verdict of manslaughter; there were 18 illegitimate and three legitimate.

1493. Of the 21 there was one case with a verdict of manslaughter?—The case in which the verdict of manslaughter was returned was the case of a child who had been left in a parcel in the snow.

1494. Was that one a nurse-child, or a child with its parents or relatives?—I cannot say; it was left in the snow in a parcel. I put it down amongst the illegitimate.

1495. Do you know its name?—No.

1496. If you find a child in the snow you put it down as an illegitimate child?—That is according to the Home Office rule in the Return.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

1497. And in that case there was a verdict of manslaughter?—Yes, against some person or persons unknown. The child died within a few hours of its being taken to the workhouse.

1498. No registration of houses would prevent a child being dropped in the snow?—No; but still, in giving the full particulars of my cases, I was obliged to mention it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1499. I did not quite follow your argument about the legitimate and illegitimate children; we have been told by other witnesses that, in their opinion, the children whom, roughly speaking, we desire to protect are, in the main, illegitimate; that practically the children that die, that need not die, are, roughly speaking, mainly illegitimate; you seemed a little to traverse that. I was not quite sure what the point was; is it that you think that the proportion of illegitimate children who need our protection has been exaggerated, or is it that East London compares well with other places; what was your argument?—My argument was, that as far as East London was concerned there was not so large a proportion of illegitimate children as elsewhere; at the same time my experience is that it is mainly illegitimate children that require protection.

1500. You would quite corroborate that?—Yes, I had only three cases of legitimate children out at nurse during the year.

Viscount Llandaff.

1501. And only three of illegitimate children also, you have told us?—And only three of illegitimate; that is supplemental to the first proposition that there are fewer illegitimate children in the East-end than elsewhere; and as far as legitimate children are concerned there are very few out at nurse.

1502. I suppose you sometimes have a widower in Poplar?—Often; they are not widowers often for long; they marry again.

1503. You are a marrying district, but what would a widower do?—He either leaves the child with an elder sister of the child, or he marries again, or he puts it out to a relative.

1504. Would you interfere with the elder sister or the relative?—No, I should not.

1505. You would be in favour of that exemption?—Yes, certainly.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1506. Do you think that it is desirable that all the houses in which children under five years of age are taken should be registered, even if there be only one child?—I do.

1507. Have you formed any rough idea of the extent of registration that that would involve?—As far as the East-end of London is concerned very trifling.

1508. Why very trifling?—Because there are so few children that are out at nurse other than with relatives. Since I have been asked to give evidence, I have put it to I should think 20 jurors, who are mostly of the working classes, and they knew of no case in which a child was out to nurse except to a relative.

1509. You

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

1509. You are speaking here of a child under five years, of age and not of a child under one year?—Yes. I think that the necessity for supervision of course is weaker after a year; it is a vanishing quantity of course.

1510. That is very important evidence that you think it a very rare thing in the classes with which you have to do in the East-end to have a child put out for payment at all?—Other than to relatives. It is usual to pay even a relative.

1511. In asking that question of jurymen and others, did your question cover going out temporarily?—Of course I admit that there is a very large number of children that are left from morning to evening.

1512. I am not speaking of that but a few days; a mother goes into hospital or goes away to see another child that is ill, or something of that sort?—It would be as a rule with the mother's sister then.

1513. Or without payment?—Without payment.

1514. But at all events you think that the cases are few in which there is such boarding out for payment?—I feel confident it is so in the East-end.

1515. Then the cases for registration would be very rare in that part of London?—That would be so.

1516. But your experience has been varied; you have not only been in East London but in many other places; would you consider that in those places the need is much greater?—I do; I think there are far more cases in other parts than in East London.

1517. We are legislating, if we legislate at all, not for East London, but for England?—Quite so.

1518. Do you consider that, leaving East London out of account, the number that would have to be registered in London would be very great indeed?—I do not think very great. If you mean that in London it would be by thousands, I should not think so.

1519. At present you know there are only 41 registered houses in London?—I am aware of that.

1520. But you would multiply that by a good many, I suppose?—Perhaps 10 times.

1521. And you think that if you multiplied it, roughly speaking, by 10, you would practically cover all the cases in which any one child under five years of age is boarded with a person other than a relative?—I do.

Lord Belper.

1522. What is the practice amongst the class you are speaking about, the lower class where they have got no relations; supposing the husband to go away, or to go to work somewhere else, or that his employment takes him from home, what would be the usual practice?—I think the most usual practice would be to marry again, or for some woman to live with him as his wife.

1523. Then you think there are very few cases of working men who have no relatives, and who are obliged to make some provision for their (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

children?—Yes. I think, as a rule, that the working man remains a very short time without a woman in his house either as wife or otherwise.

1524. And are there no sailors or people of that sort in your neighbourhood whose business takes them away from home?—There are a very large number.

1525. What do they do supposing the wife is dead and they have got children?—Well, I should very much doubt whether most of them are wives; but they would go with relatives.

1526. I am taking the case where they have not any relatives; I suppose there are some?—All I can say is that there is the clear fact that they are not out to nurse from my experience.

1527. You mean there are none?—None.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1528. Can you account for the exceptional condition of East London in that respect?—I think the code of morals and the ordinary system of life there is quite different from what it is in a more mixed community. Of course they have got curious ideas of life, but I do not think that they would believe in a child being handed over to a stranger to be ill-treated.

1529. You have spoken of South London as well, which I know better than East London; would you apply that remark to Southwark?—I should not like to speak with much emphasis about Southwark; it is some years ago, 10 years ago, since I was there; but Southwark is a more mixed community than East London. Of course, it has quite as bad parts, I admit, as East London, but it is not of such even poverty as you get in East London.

1530. Greater poverty, of course, in some parts than anything in East London?—Yes, there are some of the worst parts in Southwark, but it is more mixed with others, tradespeople in a good position, and so forth.

1531. And therefore their morals suffer?—I think they have got a different code of morals.

1532. A lower code?—A lower code, so far as the poor are concerned.

Chairman.

1533. Therefore, when you said just now that there are fewer illegitimate children in the East End of London, you do not mean that the morality is greater, but that they get married just in time?—Yes. I think that when a young woman gets into trouble amongst the East End poor as a rule (of course, there are exceptions), the seducer does the honourable and marries at the last moment.

Viscount Llandaff.

1534. But I thought you told us it was an extremely common thing for a widower to live with a woman whom he did not marry?—Yes.

1535. Is not that a little inconsistent with what you have just said?—No; they would not live with a young girl, but with a middle-aged woman, probably; a widow, or something of that sort.

M 3

1536. I do

5 May 1896.]

Mr. BAXTER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

1536. I do not quite see why you think a Bill or an Act necessary at all as regards the East-end, because they seem to have an unusual degree of morality there?—The case that I have mentioned as having occurred a fortnight ago shows that these people may even attack the East-end in their practices.

1537. But one swallow does not make a summer; one crime does not make a criminal population?—No; but, like in the case of murder, how many murders do you get compared to the population unless you have a law against it.

1538. Do you think there is an analogy there?—I think a good deal; I think these cases of children, where they do happen, are practically slow murders.

Lord Belper.

1539. Mr. Babey said, in the course of his visits for the limited purposes of the Act now in force, he discovered 3,991 cases where children were kept for hire; whatever that referred to, he admitted there must be a very much larger number of houses than those 3,991. I asked him this question, at No. 501: "At all events, that 3,991 is only a very small proportion of the houses where children are kept for hire?" His answer was: "That is so; no doubt there are many more"; however, that would not be your experience in your district?—No; I can only make a guess when I say it would be magnified 10 times on the present registered houses.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1540. Do you think that there would, if this Bill became law, at once be an immense application of persons desirous to be registered?—I doubt very much whether the law would get known in a wide-spread manner at once; it would be necessary to have inspectors investigating them, compelling them to register. Every man is supposed to know the law, but there are very few who do.

1541. We have had two other gentlemen here who occupied positions as coroners, and they say that the witnesses who came before them were exceedingly familiar with the law about registration?—I think that they must have been from a more aristocratic quarter than the East-end.

1542. But as a matter of fact, you do not think there would be a great number of applications until time had been given for the law to be known?—I do not.

1543. But when it had, say, in six months or a year, do you think that a huge number of people would apply?—I think that they would apply largely, to the extent that the practice is going on; I do not think they would object to being registered.

1544. You do not think there would be any objection on their part?—No, I think that those who did take children would not object to be

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

registered. The others would refrain from taking children. My impression is that in the first instance these solitary cases are not taken with the intention of doing a wrong; but the idea dawns upon them, and they gradually neglect the child, or they find it convenient to take part of the 5s. for their own sustenance instead of devoting it to the sustenance of the child. The inspection would stop that, because there would be the visits from time to time, and the inspector would see what was going on.

Viscount Llandaff.

1545. What position in life was the woman of your one bad case, the one case that you say makes the Act necessary, that of a child boarded-out for hire?—She professed to be a married woman living at Tipperary, and the wife of a coachman; but no one with whom she came in contact believes anything of the sort.

1546. What was the woman who took the child, I mean?—She was a deck labourer's wife, out of work.

1547. Had she any children of her own?—No, never had any.

1548. A woman of respectable character?—Not very. I should say not at all a desirable person as a foster mother.

1549. Was her's a house that would have been registered or that would not have been registered, in your judgment?—She was only in lodgings; had only got one room.

1550. I suppose lodgings can be registered?—Yes; but I do not know what the rules would be about registration; and even if she were registered—

1551. She got drunk the first day?—She did; that would cancel her registration, I should think.

1552. But the inspector would not come in the interval between the morning when she took the child and the evening when she was drunk?—No, but she had the child for six months.

1553. She did not get drunk every day?—No, but I suspect that the child did not drink as much as it ought to have done.

1554. That was not a matter of evidence?—No; that is what one can imagine. The father was not in work; there was no means of keeping the house going except some casual washing that the woman did, and there was the child there without any means for its sustenance.

1555. What was the verdict in that case?—The child had been in the workhouse for three or four days, and the verdict was natural death. In the medical certificate the cause of death was given as embolism supervening on tuberculosis.

Lord Belper.

1556. No reflection on improper feeding or treatment?—No.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered,—That this Committee be adjourned to Thursday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 7^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.

Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord BELPER.

Lord KINNAIRD.

Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

THE REV. BENJAMIN WAUGH, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1557. You are the Director of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—Yes.

1558. And you are well known as having interested yourself for many years in the question of the protection of young children; will you tell us what is the extent of the Society's acquaintance with the trade of nursing children?—Our acquaintance with it is extensive; geographically it includes England, Wales and Ireland. The extent may, perhaps, be indicated by the number of cases: we have dealt with a little over 250 cases of nursing children for profit in the course of last year.

1559. You have come across 250 cases?—We have had to interfere with that number, and there are many other cases which we do not interfere with which are satisfactory, but we have interfered with 250, rather more, in that area last year. Our method of dealing with them is by warning where we see wrong tendencies, by information where we see ignorance, as the cause of the cruelty. We warned something between 220 and 230 last year, and we prosecuted about 30 for neglecting our warnings and neglecting our instructions.

1560. That makes up the 250?—That is about the 250. Our work is much wider than perhaps the mere criminal aspect or semi-criminal aspect of it. We diffuse and distribute, wherever we find persons taking children to nurse, this pamphlet, and we have sent out some 20,000 copies of it. (*Handing in a pamphlet, entitled, "How to Preserve Infant Life."*) That has been drafted by the doctor at the Great Ormond Street hospital, supervised by our own medical man; and wherever we find people nursing children for profit or from love, we furnish them with that piece of information, which is in many cases useful. Ignorance causes a great deal of the child suffering.

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1561. You say wherever you find people nursing children for profit or from love you send them that pamphlet?—Yes, if we find that they are not doing their duty by the children, if there appears to be any neglect through ignorance or criminal intent. Then we also furnish those who seem to be indifferent with a formal notice, of which I produce a copy (*handing in the same*), and in order to give a little point to that we furnish them with a list of a quarter's returns for the whole kingdom of the prosecutions for the neglect of children (*handing in a copy of one*). This particular one happens to be a return for nine months. We have, in the last seven years, imprisoned and fined over 9,000 persons, fathers and mothers chiefly, but some of them nurses. That is in the last seven years since the passing of what is called the Children's Charter.

Chairman.

1562. You have got no data, or numbers, or means, of identifying any of these cases on this list?—No, they are intended for general use; the verification is not for the public.

Lord Kinnaird.

1563. For what period is this paper you have handed in?—I am not sure; it will be, I think, for a period of nine months. During seven years the judges and magistrates have given 1,600 years of imprisonment for neglect of children and ill-treatment under the Statute.

Chairman.

1564. We are not quite clear as regards this list; is it a six or nine months' return?—I will get to know that, and send you the result.

Lord Belper.

1565. And does it include the 250 cases you mentioned of nurse children?—No, because we only prosecuted about 30 cases.

M 4

1565. Does

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

1566. Does it include the 30 cases?—I am very sorry the document has not got a date on it.

1567. At all events it would include all that class of cases that would come within the period for which this return is issued?—Quite so.

Chairman.

1568. Can you tell us anything about your experience as to the character of nurses, and their motives for nursing?—On the whole, I should say the large proportion are good, well-meaning people; the smaller proportion of them are either very doubtful or very bad in their motives. I will give an illustration of what I mean by "doubtful motives." It is a case that happened a week or two ago in Mr. Horace Smith's Court, where he gave six months' imprisonment. The woman who took the child was a labourer's wife, and he spent too much of his money on drink, and she took in a child to eke out her living. Her own child was well nourished, and the child she took in at 5s. a week was dying because she took it to maintain herself and a little child of her own. Mr. Horace Smith gave the woman six months' imprisonment with hard labour. That was one of the not-criminal intent cases, that is to say, it was not taken to injure the child, but intending to benefit her own child, which was in danger of suffering through the drunkenness of her husband. Many cases we have had where women have taken children in because their husbands were out of work in order to help to maintain the family; not in the interests of the child taken. And these are what I put down as doubtful motives, though not criminal. Many, too, take in children for a little pocket-money. There was a case at Yarmouth where that was assigned as the reason why the woman took the trouble to take these children in. But there are professional women who get a living entirely by advertising for children, and who have a succession of them so rapid as to make their income considerable; and their motive in getting the children is clearly income without regard to the child's life; and the children are fast got rid of. I have two or three cases that I made a note of of that type. There is a case at Southport in Lancashire. The mother was an independent lady of means; 7s. 6d. a week was given with each child; two children were left with her. She and her husband did nothing. Her boy was well nourished and well dressed. We induced the Coroner to exhume the two children, and they were found to have died from opium poisoning. They were both insured, and before their burial the insurance money had been paid; and both the husband and the wife in that case got five years' penal servitude. That is an illustration of a kind of case that I should call criminal. The intention was to destroy the children, and they were destroyed by methods which would prevent detection, simply drugged, made to sleep, and they slept to death and were buried. It was only on account of a quarrel between the husband and the wife about the insurance money that the case came to light.

Chairman—continued.

1569. What class of people were these?—The man had been, I think, a painter, and had given up all work in consequence of his wife's occupation, which enabled him to live.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1570. You say, "his wife's occupation"; what was her occupation?—The taking in of children.

1571. There were two children?—Yes, but she had a succession of them. We found two in the grave; and her business was to get another two from somewhere else; she continuously took children.

1572. What was the profit that induced her to do this?—She received 7s. 6d. a week for each of these children, and also a handsome sum of money for their death.

1573. Receiving 7s. 6d. a week would seem to be a motive for keeping them alive?—No, I think not. I should like to deal with that later on if I may be allowed to do so.

Chairman.

1574. Have you anything more to say with reference to the motives for nursing?—There is the case at Swindon where a farmer was unable to do his work through rheumatic fever, and his wife undertook to nurse children. We found eight children in the house at one time, and they were all starving; one died.

1575. What sort of ages were the children?—They varied from about seven months to five years; and the man got nine months' imprisonment in that case and the woman two years. Only one child died, and the rest we removed to our shelter and nursed back to life again; they were constitutionally strong, but they were being destroyed quietly and slowly.

1576. And this man was a farmer?—He had been, but he had become incapable of work, and his wife took these children in to get a living. She took with two of these children sums of money down; we could not say how much; she admitted to 10l. in each case. We have had a case recently in very high life indeed where a lady has taken to this sort of business, and at the second case (50l. had been paid for each) we were able to detect the proceedings, and brought them to the knowledge of the authorities, under whose favour she was living, and she had to resign her appointment.

Lord Kinnaird.

1577. What appointment?—I would rather not mention the case; she had a very important appointment in public life, a public, or semi-public, appointment.

Chairman.

1578. You do not mean an appointment in connection with the rearing of children; not an appointment by an institution?—No.

1579. You mean something quite independent?—Quite independent.

1580. When you mentioned 50l., do you mean that she got a lump sum down with each?—With each of the two she had taken; and these children were both illegitimate, and both over six years

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

years of age, and they both ran away from her house in consequence of the tortures they had to suffer. One came into our hands; the other we have been unable to find; and though it is six months since she ran away, there has been no discovery of her at all; nobody knows where she is. That is a case where 50l. was paid down, and in a few weeks the girl was gone.

1581. And was there her weekly payment as well?—No.

1582. Was it a case of starvation or of ill-treatment?—Ill-treatment; deliberate.

1583. With the purpose of killing them, do you say?—That I cannot say; it is very difficult to interpret motives; it was, perhaps, to get rid of them. We have had another case, where some were taken with weekly payments and some with lump sums, but all equally badly treated. It was a case that became rather notorious at the time, in which there were ten years' penal servitude given. In the cellar of this lady's house (she was the wife of a lawyer, who, owing to her success in her business, had retired practically from his profession) we found three hundred disused garments of children, all, or nearly all, under three years of age. The woman was a very accomplished woman, and her husband was an accomplished man; I may say with regard to this case that it is a rather peculiar fact that they had been conducting their business for some years, living next door to a constable, and on the ground, as the lawyer said, that the constable was the only man who could never interfere with his neighbour, which is true. Somebody must make a charge before a constable can interfere with any house. The skill of the man in the selection of this spot shows how, understanding the law, people can pretty well screen themselves.

Lord Kinnaird.

1584. Was this public; did it come out in the papers?—Yes; 10 years' penal servitude was the sentence. Mr. Justice Hawkins was the judge.

Chairman.

1585. How long ago was this?—In March 1891. In March 1892 we had another high-life case, a very ladylike person; the lord of the manor and a clergyman of the district were her principal witnesses. Fifteen years' penal servitude was the sentence. That was a weekly payment case. I have mentioned these because some are weekly, some are lump sums, and some are both; and for these reasons I selected them.

1586. Then with reference to the system of remuneration; perhaps you would state now any views that you have with reference to the two systems of a lump sum down and a weekly payment?—I should think we have had during the last seven years at least an average of 100 a year of nurse cases that we have had to warn or otherwise deal with. During that time we have carefully classified the system of remuneration in every case; and I have come to the conclusion that the question of remuneration has absolutely nothing whatever to do with the way in which the children are treated. The sole point is, the character of the woman receiving them. A (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

question was asked, I think by the Lord Bishop of Winchester, as to the matter of weekly payment.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1587. You have now said that remuneration has nothing to do with the case?—Nothing whatever.

1588. Supposing the payment to be, we will say, 7s. a week, and there has been no lump sum paid, is it still in the interest of the recipient to get rid of the child?—Certainly, on this ground: that if the child can be made to die on a shilling a week the woman nets 6s.; but if it required 5s. for the child to live, the woman would net only 2s. The succession of these things makes it profitable. There is any quantity to be got.

Lord Belper.

1589. I do not quite follow you; do you mean that the payment goes on after the child is dead?—Frequently for months.

1590. That the people who put the child out do not take the trouble before making the payment to inquire whether the child is alive or not?—I do not say that they do not take the trouble; they would like, many of them, to do it, but they dare not risk the exposure of their connection with the sad story; they would rather keep away from it entirely.

1591. Your argument is founded really on the fact that the same payment is continued in many cases after the child is dead?—I would not found it upon that, that I would admit; what happens is that another child comes into the house immediately the first is dead, but the same child is continued through the year, and often photographs of the same child are sent to the mothers of three, four, or five children; one child answering for that number.

1592. But if the payment ceases absolutely at death, the person makes no more profit out of getting rid of one child and taking in another, than she would by keeping the first alive?—But excuse me; supposing that a person is in receipt say of 5s. a child; the child will die on 1s. a week, and you can keep the 1s. a week going all the year through, and all next year, and all the year after, so as to provide sufficient nourishment for the child to die of inanition. Teething is the time when they chiefly go off; natural convulsions, the result supervening on too frail a system to throw them off.

1593. Then what you mean is that practically they spend so very little on the nourishment of the child that the child dies, and they are always able to replace it by another child which they can treat in the same way?—Yes, and which the parents do not know that they are treating in the same way, but which some if they did know would be very thankful to know. In this case, the persons interested in getting rid of the child are the people paying for its maintenance; hence comes the fact that there is no check against the destruction of the child on the easy lines of starvation. It would be well if they all strangled, as Mrs. Dyer has done. She is the most saintly of baby farmers I have come across; she gives six seconds of pain, and the

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

the others give six weeks of it. England is wrong altogether about this giving sudden pain and sudden death, and we hang those who do it; but six weeks of pain, six weeks of faintness and dizziness, and finally a collapse, all that is legally little. It may be caused by want of power to assimilate food. I could baby-farm a million a year in this country and never be convicted, and make a good fortune.

Lord Thring.

1594. What do you mean when you say that you could baby-farm a million a year?—Physically I should not be able to do it; but I mean that if the young child is underfed, it will not recover from the ailments of childhood. I mean that any quantity of children may be disposed of by starvation in their infancy. If ailments of infancy supervene upon their emaciated condition they die.

1595. But we have had evidence after evidence that very few children indeed are ill-treated?—In the society which I represent here we have given 9,000 persons imprisonment for 1,600 years in the aggregate for ill-treatment of children since the passing of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act.

1596. That is in seven years?—Yes.

1597. I only wish to point out to you that it is an exaggeration to talk of baby-farming a million a year?—Possibly it is; but I meant to point the statement that there are methods of destroying child-life much more safe than strangulation.

1598. We are quite aware of that; but very often these methods are resorted to through sheer ignorance?—And very often there must be criminal intent there because they are punished.

1599. The number punished is infinitesimally small compared with the number killed by ignorance, is it not?—Would you permit me to make this observation: that there are medical men in England who cannot tell whether a child has died from insufficient food or from inability to assimilate food, whilst it is under six months of age.

1600. That is the very point I put to you; the point I put to you was this, when you talked of this enormous number of children killed, many of them may be killed, at all events, through sheer ignorance?—Yes; that we assume, because we provide for ignorance in the pamphlet I have handed in; the object of that pamphlet is to instruct the ignorant.

1601. Only that is inconsistent with your proposition that so many babies are put out of the way criminally?—Well, it is impossible in early life to say whether the motive is criminal. When there is a profit from allowing a child to die, and a loss from keeping it alive, it is a matter of individual opinion which way the temptation will lie.

Chairman.

1602. Is it not a fact, with reference to these people who advertise, that they almost invariably stipulate for a premium, not for a weekly payment?—No, I think not in the advertisement; I did not read them in that light. I may say

Chairman—continued.

that we have 600 of doubtful character on our register.

1603. Do you follow up advertisements?—We do; and for three or four years, with a view to studying this question, we followed them up systematically. A doctor and a detective were, for that period, employed by us entirely on advertisements; but during that time the advertisements that we answered were not, I think, classified under the heads, advertiser advertised for a lump sum, and advertiser for weekly payments. My impression is that this arrangement is generally a private one, made by correspondence, and not announced in the advertisements. That is the general impression left on my mind.

1604. Therefore, you think that there are many more baby farmers besides those who actually advertise?—A great many. The advertiser is, in many cases, what would be called a middle-man in the market, who receives great numbers of children and disposes of them to persons who are willing to take 5s. a week, or anything that he may arrange with them amongst whom children are distributed.

1605. And those are people whom you have classed just now as the professionals who take in children and get rid of them quickly?—Yes, professionals; and many of them have no children at any time on their premises.

1606. They simply act as intermediaries and pass them on, and make a profit out of the transaction?—Yes.

1607. Can the nursing children business be suppressed, in your opinion?—It is not desirable to suppress it even if it could be suppressed; it is a necessity in the country. We have 50,000 children born out of wedlock in the United Kingdom every year, or thereabouts; I am speaking in round numbers; I believe that is about the number. These are born in various ranks of life, chiefly amongst the poor, but it is impossible for their mothers to maintain the children whilst the children are at their breasts or in their arms; they must be nursed for them, if the mothers are to provide for them. Therefore it is necessary, as it appears to me, that we should have some system which can give a kind of public certificate that a mother will find a proper place for her child, and that the woman who will nurse it will be under proper supervision. I believe that a great many women who in distress part with their children would be delighted to know that they were doing well, but at present they have to depend either upon a monthly nurse at the union or upon a local advertisement in one of the county papers or upon an advertisement in one of the London papers. On the face of the advertisement there appears everything they want, and many of them are bitterly grieved when they discover that they have been deceived, and that the money they gave was used for the life of the person that got it and not for the life of their baby. I have had some sad cases of that kind in the course of our proceedings where the mothers have come confidentially to Harpur Street, fearing that they might be summoned to appear in the case. We never summon the parent;

our

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

our starting point is this; that the child is a citizen; it must be fed properly, and it is not fed properly; prove that to the court, and in that the case is completed. The fact that it is illegitimate or legitimate, that it has a mother or has not, has nothing whatever to do with public duty. Therefore, I do not think that in any case, except where there has been a necessity we have called the mother of the child as a witness.

1608. Therefore you are rather in favour of regulating the business, than of attempting to suppress it?—Very much. It is a necessary business, and if wisely conducted is a business that will be a great advantage to a very distressed part of the community.

Lord Kinnaird.

1609. You said that there are 50,000 children born out of wedlock in the year?—Yes; I believe the return shows that.

1610. The majority of whom have to be brought up by someone other than the mother?—Yes.

1611. Have you any figures as to the number of children born per annum of other families whose parents could not bring them up, because they have to go and work?—There are a great many cases in such towns as Blackburn and Preston where children need day nursing, but we do not call their nurses baby farmers. Mothers go to the factories at six in the morning and return at six o'clock at night.

1612. I only want to know the numbers?—I have not the least idea; it does not come within my knowledge; but we do not call those nursing for-profit-people, those who simply take a child in the morning and return it in the evening, it is only of cases where they are kept for more than 24 hours that I am speaking of.

Lord Thring.

1613. They are nursed for profit as much as in the other cases?—Yes; they are nursed for profit, but under conditions which secure for the child proper treatment. The parent sees the child in the morning and in the evening.

1614-15. Are you not aware that the death-rate is appalling in those crèches?—I am, but it is not crèches I am thinking of so much now as the neighbours who for 3d. will nurse another person's child for the day.

1616. You told Lord Kinnaird that these children were taken in, but, as I understood you to say, not for profit?—I understand that crèches are conducted for charity; and, as I conducted one myself at a loss of 70l. a year for many years, I should be surprised to find that any one made a profit out of a crèche.

Lord Belper.

1617. Would you not correct your reply by saying, a properly conducted crèche?—That I should say: I have never met with an improperly conducted crèche; that is to say, my experience of this society has not led me to prosecute a single case of such a kind, but I should like to say further that I think it is an exceedingly bad (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

thing on many grounds to put a large number of infants of a similar age into one place; they are sure to kill one another; by the mere atmosphere they inhale they are killed.

Chairman.

1618. When you say you have never come across an improperly conducted crèche, what is your actual definition of a crèche?—A place to which various children are taken for the day at a payment.

1619. Do you mean a public institution, or do you mean some old woman who takes in half-a-dozen children?—I mean an institution conducted by a committee, such as a great many parishes have.

Lord Belper.

1620-1. Then your definition of a crèche is an extremely limited one?—It is very large in one way, I should think, for in manufacturing districts large numbers of churches in their parishes make provision of that kind, I believe.

Chairman.

1622. When you talk of regulating this business, I gather that you wish practically to make it easy for any mother who has an illegitimate child to put out, to put it out in a place where it will be looked after?—I do.

1623. Some people, you know, think (I am not expressing any opinion myself) that that might be regarded as what I might call a sort of premium on immorality, by removing one of the deterrents to immorality?—I do not understand immorality which should have a premium put upon it; I think it is far too rude and impetuous a thing to be influenced by remote considerations of that sort.

1624. Therefore you do not think that any harm would be done in that way; I only want to know your opinion?—No, and if it would, I should put a child's life before morality.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1625. One question upon that last answer; I only want to know what it means; do you mean that you think it better that a large number of illegitimate children should be born provided they could be kept alive, than that they should never be born?—No; I mean that when an illegitimate child is born it is a public duty to see that it is treated as a citizen and fed, and properly fed, and treated as one entitled to all the rights of a subject of the Crown; and if in the discharge of that duty we do incidentally seem to put some premium upon immorality, I would say it is our duty to do it. But I doubt it; I do not see any reason to think that it is so.

Chairman.

1626. Have you any experience justifying the hope of any successful regulation of this traffic?—Yes, indeed, a very great deal. Our experience of persons, who are nursing children, is that considerably more than one half of them are doing it to the best of their ability, and are exceedingly thankful for any hints as to a better way

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

way of doing it. Quite one-half of the cases, with a little supervision together with the hints that we give, improve, and very rapidly improve.

1627. You mean to say that quite half are, we will call them "baby farmers"?—I do not like that word, if you would kindly not put it into my mouth.

1628. Quite half, we will say, of the nurses you come across you mean to say are glad of supervision and inspection?—They are not glad of supervision; they are glad to do right by the children.

1629. They are glad of advice?—They accept advice and reform defects.

Lord Belper.

1630. Would they object if they were compelled to be registered?—If reasonable, they would be very glad, because, if I may give a reason, they will become more popular with mothers who want to put their children out, and they will have a larger business, which will make them more profit; it seems like registering a medical practitioner. A registered medical practitioner is a man who stands higher than a man who is practising unregistered. I do not make any comparison between the two in other respects.

Lord Thring.

1631. Are you aware that unless a medical man is registered he cannot recover his fees?—I was not aware of that.

1632. And not only that, he cannot take any appointment, and his certificate is of no value; and consequently an unregistered medical practitioner cannot make his living except by underhand surreptitious methods; what possible analogy is there therefore between that case and taking in children for hire?—I want to make the analogy complete so that no person taking in a nurse child shall be able to carry on, except surreptitiously, the business of nursing children, that is to say unless registered. I would further make it a parallel and say I would not allow them to recover payment unless they were registered as in the case of a doctor. I would make the case as completely analogous as your Lordship's remarks would suggest. It is not analogous at present, but my contention is that it ought to be.

Chairman.

1633. And what is your experience of the parents' desire for the proper treatment of their children when they are out at nurse?—We have given notice this last year to 20 or 30 parents that their children have not been properly treated, and within a few weeks those children have been removed; indicating their anxiety that their child should be well treated. That is an illustration as it appears to me of the desire of a great number (I could not say what proportion), of the parents of the children born out of wedlock, to have them properly treated and to maintain them.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1634. You gave notice to the parents that the children are not properly treated?—To the parents.

Chairman.

1635. How many cases per year of nursing children for profit do you find that you consider bad ones?—We have prosecuted last year about 30. We prosecuted one yesterday at Marlborough-street Police Court, where the magistrate gave six weeks to a woman who was neglecting a child. That we should consider in the class of bad cases; but it is not a bad case of its class; we catch it too soon. You see our business is to prevent a calamity, and we arrest the case before it becomes so serious as to be what would be called a bad case from the public point of view, but the conditions were bad conditions and the tendencies were bad. Therefore, it would be incorrect to say that even all the cases that we have had can be bad cases, so far as the results in the child's life are concerned. The conditions were bad.

1636. And what course do you take with such cases?—We give warnings; and if they are in a country village we give to the person who brought our attention to it a postcard, called the "repeated cruelty" postcard, and we give the name and address of the nearest officer of our society, and we ask that neighbour who called our attention to the fact in a village (they are very largely in villages these cases of bad nursing of children) to be good enough to post that the moment any reversion to the old practice appears. A complaint comes to us, say from a village in Leicestershire, to our inspector at Leicester or at Loughborough; we have two in that county. That complaint is then investigated, and if there be truth in it the woman is informed that she is badly feeding the child, and told what is the proper way of feeding it; also that she is running the risk of six months' imprisonment if this child is found with unnecessary suffering; and she is warned that if she persists in this method of feeding she may come to evil consequences, and that we are desirous of preventing that.

1637. By whom is that postcard posted?—The informant sends it as a postcard to us.

1638. Therefore you proclaim the fact on the postcard?—No, only the case number. The number would be, we will suppose, 19,700 on our books; it is entered; it comes to the society's office. That case number 19,700 is then looked out, and information is sent to the inspector in the district, in England, Wales, or Ireland: "Please call and see this woman." This is not exceptional treatment; we treat all cases of cruelty, domestic and nursing cases, in the same way. And if I may be allowed to refer to the power of this mode of treatment, I may add that the system of warnings is reducing the necessity for precautions very greatly. The system of supervision by the inspector is reducing it right through the country. Whereas seven years ago we had to prosecute in one case of three of complaints, to-day we have only to prosecute in one case in 9. People are beginning to know the law, and to conform their conduct to its requirements.

1639. Before I come to the question of your Bill, with reference to the general question of registration, I may take it that you think that the extension of registration will be decidedly of advantage to the children?—Decidedly.

1640. And

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

1640. And you think that registration, *per se*, does do good?—I do.

Lord Thring.

1641. Would you say why?—I think it gives a standing. If the registration is by an authoritative and competent body it is like a license, and gives a standing.

1642. You do it for the benefit of the person registered?—Both of the child and the person registered; but I was going to qualify my remarks as soon as the questions were finished. May I qualify what I said as to registration? The Chairman asked the question whether I thought registration in itself good. It would not be adequate if it were not supplemented by medical supervision; that I will deal with later.

1643. What do you mean by medical supervision?—I do not know whether I shall be asked any questions on the Safety of Nurse Children Bill.

Chairman.

1644. We are going into that presently?—Then it would come out naturally in the course of my examination on that Bill.

1645. We only wanted to get your general opinions first, before we went into the actual details of the Bill?—I think registration, where it is by a competent authority, by an authoritative body of people who can give standing by registration, and where it is also accompanied by other and adequate arrangements, may be both for the safety of life, to the benefit of the house, and to the great benefit of the sad mothers of these infants.

1646. I do not suppose that people of the worst class that we wish to get hold of would come and submit to registration voluntarily?—Well, if the provisions of the Bill that you propose to ask me questions about were made law, they could not nurse without it.

1647. Therefore those who are interested in this question hope that by making it illegal to keep children in this way we shall have a greater hold over them by making illegal what is practically legal now?—That is the point.

Lord Belper.

1648. What is your experience of the way that the law, as far as it now goes, is carried out?—That it is not carried out at all; I would not say that there are no inspectors under the Act appointed in other parts of England, but my impression is that we have only met with one in the whole seven years, and I think that was at Bristol, but I do not think the man is there now.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1649. Outside London?—I am speaking now of all England.

1650. And outside London?—Yes, I should have said with the exception of London.

Lord Belper.

1651. Would not your opinion be that, before making up our minds whether it is necessary to amend the present law, we should see what would be the effect of the law as it exists being properly carried out?—No, I think not; I think (0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

the law as it exists is not carried out, because nobody thinks it worth while to carry it out; there is a general idea that a law which protects children in a house where there are two infants residing under one year old, and will not protect the same children if there is only one infant under one year old, is not a law that it is desirable to enforce; and it is difficult, I believe, because the removal of one child from the nurse's home to any of her friends, if it be under twelve months of age, will at once render the necessity for registration null and void.

1652. You think that the local authority is justified, without taking any steps to satisfy themselves of it, to neglect the law because they think it is not likely to be as efficacious as it ought to be?—No, I should not say that, nor should I indict the whole country for neglect of it. It does not seem to have been anybody's particular business to carry it out, and that probably has been a reason for its not being carried out.

Viscount Llandaff.

1653. It is the business of the local authority everywhere to carry it out, is it not?—It is permissive, but permissive Acts are not imperative.

Chairman.

1654. It is not a permissive Act?—Virtually it is so, for it has been passed since 1872, and I do not think there are three boroughs in England that have taken any notice of it. I do not know whether I am correct in saying three; it may be more.

Lord Belper.

1655. The Act, as I understand, makes it illegal to do certain things, and it puts upon the local authority the duty of dealing with the question; that is hardly a permissive Act?—The practical application of an Act is very difficult if by the shifting of a child from one house to the next house in 24 hours you have rendered the application of it null and void.

1656. You are bringing me back to my question, whether you are justified in assuming that an Act would not be efficacious, if you make no effort to carry it out?—I should not like to say that the Act is permissive in the legal sense of the word; but if it is not, somebody has neglected a duty, and ought to be punished for the neglect of it. As a matter of fact it is not enforced.

1657. There is, however, one authority that has done its best to carry it out, in the metropolis; is that not so?—Yes.

1658. Both under the Metropolitan Board of Works, and now under the London County Council?—Yes, and very efficiently too, as far as our observation goes.

1659. Should you be prepared to endorse the opinions which have been expressed, that the houses at present registered in London, which, I think, number 41, are the whole of the houses where more than one child under one year is kept?—I have no knowledge.

1660. You cannot express an opinion?—I have no data at all on which to do so.

N 3

1661. May

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

1661. May I ask if any of the cases which you have mentioned are in houses which would come under the present law?—I should say that a great many of them are in houses that would come under the present law of registration, still, we have never dealt with them on that ground; we have only dealt with the child's life.

1662. However, if the local authority in which those houses are situated had carried out the law, at all events it would have prevented the cruelty that took place in those houses?—I doubt it; if it was mere registration, and if there was no supervision. They have power, of course, to appoint an officer; but to appoint an officer for one baby farm in a big part of a borough, or for one baby farm in the major part of a county, I think would be considered very ineffectual; anyway, it is not done.

1663. As I understand, the system in force in London is that the houses must be registered; and before they are registered they must fulfil certain conditions, which shows that the house is properly managed?—Yes.

1664. Why is not that possible to do in the country also?—There is no authority or agency like you have had in London to supervise these things and look into them, and keep them continuously under the eye of the central authority. There is no officer like Mr. Babey appointed in the country.

1665. The authority ought to appoint some one to carry out the duties necessary to be carried out?—They might appoint some one.

1666. There is the same authority in the country for carrying out the duties as in London?—Yes; the local authorities have power everywhere.

1667. And the reason it is not carried out is, in your opinion, because they do not appoint an inspector to do it?—Quite so.

1668. There is nothing to prevent them from appointing one?—That is so.

Viscount Llandaff.

1669. And you are aware that London only appointed an inspector when it was stimulated by the Secretary of State?—Yes.

Chairman.

1670. But in rural districts it is not necessary to appoint a special inspector; the police would deal with it I presume?—

Lord Belper.

1671. I think you said that you found that these cases of cruelty to young nursing children were very largely in the villages?—I do not say that there is cruelty largely in the villages; the business is carried on largely in villages.

1672. I understood that your answer was that you have complaints that call your attention to cases that you have to inquire into, very largely in villages?—I gave an illustration of a village to show the use in country stations of these post-cards. The number of cruelty cases is not necessarily large, but the business is large in villages.

1673. You only mean that a great many

Lord Belper—continued.

children are put out in villages?—Yes, and the proportion of cases of cruelty would be the same in villages as in towns.

1674. Do you think that there is frequently as much cruelty or ill-treatment of children in villages as in large towns?—I should say a little more.

1675. At all events, it is largely found in villages?—It is. Violence is greater in villages, according to our returns, than in towns.

1676. Have you had any cases where you have had to take action, where children have been put from institutions into these houses?—Yes, we have had cases where children have been boarded out by institutions; we have called the attention of the institution to the condition of the children, and they have immediately addressed themselves to set it right.

1677. Then would you think it desirable, however respectable an institution may be, to allow those houses in the country which take children from the institutions to be exempted from registration?—Under the condition that those houses were under some medical supervision.

1678. You would exempt them if each house was under some medical supervision?—Yes, periodical supervision.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1679. For clearness sake perhaps you will answer this question; you think that the local authorities throughout England who have not put this Act into operation have deliberately abstained from doing so (that is to say, from appointing inspectors) because they thought that the Act as it exists was not worth it?—I should not like to put the word "deliberately" in. The impression which I have gathered from a great many authorities with whom I have spoken with reference to this subject is that the Act is not worth enforcing; secondly, that the number of cases are small; and that to appoint an inspector would be expensive. I should say that those three things have combined: first, that the Act itself is not worth enforcing from one of its conditions; secondly, that there are very few cases in which it would be necessary to even attempt to enforce it; and, thirdly, that the expense of appointing an inspector to carry out the provisions of the Act would be wholly out of proportion to the work that would have to be done.

1680. Take a place like Manchester; what would you say to the reasons there, for example, why the Act has not been applied?—I could not answer except speaking generally over the country; there is no specific place as to which I could give an answer. We have not been in Manchester much more than 12 months; we have only had a branch there for 12 months, and I am, therefore, very little acquainted with the Manchester local authorities. I, therefore, could give no answer about Manchester in particular.

1681. We had a witness at our last meeting, who had been Medical Officer of Health in Manchester, and who told us that the work, which it would be possible to do under the Act, was being much better done by other agencies at present at work in Manchester. Have you any knowledge of

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

of anything of that sort?—I should say that our agencies are doing the work of supervising nurse children all over England, and with great efficiency and success.

1682. He was not referring to your society?—Then I do not know what he referred to.

1683. But you have no special knowledge of the agencies to which he referred which are subsidised from the rates?—I have not.

1684. You told us that in your opinion quite half the number of nurses who now take children would be glad to be registered; do you mean, would be glad to be registered, or do you mean ought to be glad to be registered?—No; my opinion is based on their character. The inspector who has been at this work for a long time past, Mr. Dowsett, who has been travelling about the country for a long time, and who has answered advertisements, is of opinion that many of them, and I speak roughly when I say quite one-half, would have no objection at all to be registered.

1685. Then how do you account for the fact that so very few are registered now, if, as you told us just now, the fact of being registered would give them a sort of *cachet* which would make people trust them?—I should say that the great bulk of them have no idea that there is such a statute as the Infant Life Protection Act. The great bulk of persons nursing children to-day have never had their attention called to it.

1686. That is in curious contrast with the evidence of at least one of the Coroners who have been before us, who told us that he had never had a witness who did not seem familiar with the Act?—Was that in London, may I ask?

1687. In London?—I am speaking of out of London; I am speaking of England, Wales and Ireland, not London. I can quite understand that in London there would be very few people who do this business who had not some opportunity of knowing the Act.

1688. Then if the Act, as it at present exists were better known, and people all over England were to be familiar with the Act as it stands, you think a great many more would register than are registered now?—Possibly; but the Act only requires registration if two infants are taken under 12 months old, and the practice with nearly all the nurses that we have to do with is not to take two infants under 12 months; they cannot attend to them; but to take one under 12 months, another a year old, and another older.

1689. That is just what I want to elicit; your view then is that even if the Act were to be rigidly enforced by close inspection throughout England to-day there would be a comparatively small number of those who take nurse-children who ought to come under it?—A very small number.

1690. In London at this moment there are 41 houses registered?—So I have heard.

1691. But you told us that you had no idea whether a large extension of that ought at once to take place under the present law?—No.

1692. But in England you think a very small number of those taking nurse-children are registered?—(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

gistered?—Yes. I do not know about London; the London County Council know better than we do. If we find a registered baby farm in London we do not keep it under supervision because we know that baby farms are there under proper supervision at present.

1693. What proportion, roughly speaking, of the children under your supervision are illegitimate?—I am sorry to say that I have not got the facts.

1694. Because in the paper which you have handed in to us here, and which is a paper rather to frighten people than to give any definite information, I suppose?—A paper to shew them that the law is against neglecting children.

1695. I should say, after glancing at a large number of those cases, that in more than 90 per cent. the persons convicted are father or mother?—Yes, that is so.

1696. Therefore that would not look as if you had the protection mainly of illegitimate children?—That is so; but more than 90 per cent. of the children of the country are legitimate.

1697. Yes, but that is not the point: Are 90 per cent. of the children we want to protect legitimate?—Under this Act do you mean?

1698. Under the general aim that such legislation has?—No, certainly not. If you include the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act the bulk of the cases, quite 90 per cent., are cases where the parental instinct has lapsed and vice has supervened and they have become unnatural parents.

1699. Then if a large proportion, something like 90 per cent. of the children we ought to protect are illegitimate, and your society is protecting mainly the legitimate children?—Yours form the 90 per cent. of the 50,000; mine are the 90 per cent. of 16,000,000; and that does not permit of comparison. There are 16,000,000 children in Great Britain and Ireland under 16 years of age or thereabouts, but 90 per cent. of 16,000,000 would be one thing, and 90 per cent. of 50,000 would be another.

1700. The evidence, speaking generally, that has come before us, so far as it has gone, and so far as I have gathered it, is that the overwhelming proportion of the children we want to protect are illegitimate children?—That is so.

1701. That you do not dispute?—No, not at all.

1702. But taking the evidence shown by the actual work of your society, the proportion of illegitimate children is extremely small, and you have given us the reason why?—Yes.

1703. But now you agree that we want to protect mainly the illegitimate children by such an Act as is now proposed; and you suggest, as I understand, that what is desirable is this: that some plan should be devised for facilitating the unmarried mother's knowing where she may respectably send her child?—Yes.

1704. Have you any plan by which that would be brought about?—The Bill that has been drafted, has been drafted on that line; the Safety of Nurse Children Bill, which has been referred to.

1705. We shall be asking you about that presently?—That embodies, in the first part of it,

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

provisoes and provisions which would meet that, I think.

1706. If it passed it would secure that the house in which a child was to be put should be registered?—It would.

1707. But it would not facilitate the mother's knowledge of those places, unless you propose that there should be a publication broadcast of the list of registered houses?—I should suggest that advertisements for children, if not rendered illegal, ought to be understood to be surreptitious, unless the house is registered, and I think that the good nurses, those who are well-intentioned, would be glad to announce that they were registered.

1708. But you do not put any such provision in the Bill?—No.

1709. Then if this Bill became law to-morrow an unmarried mother would have no place to which she could go if she wanted to find out where to send her children?—That is quite true, unless the practice came in, which I believe would soon come in, arising from its being profitable, that the announcement "Registered" would accompany the advertisement.

1710. Now, as to the average respectable mother, or married couple in London, who take children in for nursing, or take a child in for nursing; you have not, I think, yet told us how far you consider they would have an objection to be registered under the Act?—That I do not know.

1711. It is an important point, is it not?—It is an important point; but I should say that the objection should be set aside if it is in the interest of children at large that this registration should be made. I have not any means of knowing what view would be taken in a particular case of that kind.

1712. I should like to read you two or three sentences from a letter written to me. I do not mention the name of the writer of the letter, but it is a person of great experience in London, who writes this: "I cannot but think that such legislation as is now proposed will be found to be very vexatious in quarters where it is not needed, and would seriously interfere with a great deal of disinterested kindness which now obtains among our poor people. For instance, the respectable couple with two or three children are sometimes ready to undertake the charge of a child of a friend at a fair price, and it is often, in my opinion, the best possible arrangement both for parent and child; but if such an arrangement could not be made without registration, inspection, &c., it is pretty certain not to be made at all; in fact, the very persons who are most likely to do well by the child would refuse to submit their homes to the requirements specified in these Bills; I should fear that the result of such legislation would be to send many children who under existing laws are well cared for in respectable families into either (1) baby farms, the number of which would be greatly increased, or (2) institutions such as (I will not name them), a result most deplorable?"—Such cases no doubt are numerous, and there are a good many others that I could mention that we have come in contact with; but in the first

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

section of the Bill I have tried to cover and meet such a case by the words "subject to the opinion of the Court, that in view of all the circumstances of the case it is in the interest of the child."

Viscount Llandaff.

1713. I understand that you have agents who pretty well cover the whole of the country, both Great Britain and Ireland?—Not cover it, I am sorry to say. We are working in that direction; we have 150 stationed in the country now.

1714. Whose business it is to find out every case in which a child is maltreated?—Yes.

1715. And do you think you are approaching a tolerably complete inspection of the whole country?—Wonderfully rapidly.

1716. I see you have in seven years punished 9,000 persons?—Yes.

1717. Could you tell us how many of those 9,000 were cases of nurse children?—The persons punished of that class were a very small number.

1718. Therefore the greatest evils arise in the case of children at home under their own fathers and mothers?—For the reason that they are more easily detected.

1719. Have you any reason to believe that you failed to detect cases of cruelty among nurse children?—Yes.

1720. Do you not apply your operations to nurse children?—Yes; we have a woman that ought to have been hanged three times over, and for three years we have not been able to catch her.

1721. How many mothers have you hanged?—None; the Public Prosecutor takes murders.

1722. You cannot give me the number of nurse children in the 9,000?—I have not the particulars.

1723. How do you get your information?—Chiefly from a neighbour, who knows that something is going on wrong in a house next-door; he forwards a complaint to our office of which he has the address; we give to every house in our area of the country a notice of the law and its provisions as they apply to children, and where a complaint may be made. We have 12 correspondents in Leicestershire; they are all in the market towns in Leicestershire; but we deluge the villages with the information, that in their market town there is a Mr. Brown at such-and-such a house who will receive any complaint on behalf of a child illegally treated; that the names of informants are kept strictly private; that all expenses and inquiries are undertaken by the society; and it is through these leaflets, of which we have printed millions, that our work comes to us.

1724. Then you would propose, as it were, to duplicate that agency by another set of leaflets and inspectors acting on behalf of the local authority?—I would like the local authority to appoint our men; I am satisfied that in that case they would employ a competent and able man to enforce this Act.

1725. Employ them and pay them, you mean?—And pay them by a grant to the central office;

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

office; we should be glad to do it free if we had the funds, because it is a part of our work.

1726. You think, therefore, the existing machinery you employ would be sufficient for detection if taken over by the local authority?—No, not taken over; I would not like the local authority to manage it, but to authorise it.

1727. Why would you not like the local authority to take it over?—The conduct of our work is most delicate and difficult, and once let it get out of experienced and sympathetic hands, there will be greater fiascoes than the country has ever seen, I think. The most delicate and difficult work, I think, is to interfere between parent and child, and our work, therefore, is delicate and difficult, and no public authority could discharge our duties.

1728. Does that apply only to interference between parent and child, or does it apply to interference between foster-mother and nurse-child?—I think it applies chiefly where there is parental right as to which the public is sensitive; but the public is rather cruel about baby farmers, and prepared to adopt any innovation upon a baby farmer; so it would not be dangerous in that case. At the same time, I think it would be an advantage if the whole law in the interests of the children were worked by one institution.

1729. You think you would do the work better than any local authority?—Our men are so trained for the work; they have had large experience.

Lord Thring.

1730. I should like to ask you one or two questions: I quite understand the very great benefit of your society, and you have the greatest possible experience, but I wish to direct your attention to the object we have in view; first of all you quoted a case of opium poisoning; that is a case of murder; it is perfectly clear that registration would not have prevented that?—Mere registration would not have prevented that, but, as I said before, registration in the Bill that we have drafted on our own experience is to be supplemented by the supervision of an inspector and a medical officer.

1731. That is perfectly true, but in cases where they intend to murder the child, surely they would take care to put it in a place where there was no supervision?—Possibly they would, but the difficulties would be very great when the public came to know throughout the whole county or town the new law, which we should circulate to every house, of what was illegal, and that information should be given to such-and-such a person. The thing might be possible just as theft is possible, though illegal, but sooner or later it seems to me that the illicit business would die out.

1732. I cannot understand it; we are aware that there are a great number of illegitimate children, and that there is the strongest possible motive in the case of certain illegitimate children, I am sorry to say, to get rid of them?—Yes.

1733. Do you really think that these unfortunate mothers who get rid of their children, not because they wish to get rid of them, but because (0.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

they wish to enter respectably into life again, would put their children into registered houses?—I do, a great many of them.

1734. My point is this, that I cannot understand, with regard to these ghastly stories of cases where children are either quickly or slowly murdered, where there is an intention to murder a child either slowly or quickly, how registration is to prevent it?—But if the public could be informed that some murder was going to take place, or that some person was likely to commit a murder, and the place at which it was to be committed was pointed out, does not your Lordship think it would tend to prevent the committal of the murder?

1735. I consider that to be the whole point of the case which you have missed entirely; in all these things the difficulty is to detect the crime; if you can once find out where a child is going to be murdered or where it is going to be injured, clearly the police regulations are quite sufficient to prevent it. I want to know how the fact of registration would enable detection to be secured?—It would bring the authorities into contact with the character of the woman, with her daily habits, and with such features in her conduct as would arouse in any sensible medical man suspicion.

1736. I am afraid my question was misunderstood; under the existing law and under any proposed law, before you register a house you examine the house to ascertain the character of the woman; and you ascertain if she has a good character and if the house is well kept?—Yes.

1737. I say, in cases of intended murder or intended extreme cruelty to children, how would the fact of registering houses facilitate the detection; because by your own hypothesis those crimes would not be committed in the houses that were registered?—I see your point; in other words that if we limit the number of places in which murders can be committed or crime can be committed, by such limitations and by bringing all these under supervision we do not limit the crime; that is your point.

1738. You drive it into other places?—If there is an absolute determination to do something criminal, I quite agree with you; but my experience is that persons commit crime by a gently, steadily pursued course, from which, if our inspector gets into their company, and they know that he will visit them once a fortnight, they will desist.

1739. Is it not true, as you said yourself I think, that the object of these registered houses is to enable poor women to know where their children can be well kept?—Yes.

1740. Therefore the object of your Bill is to enable houses to advertise themselves as being registered with a view to show that they are well kept?—Yes.

1741. Then I do not understand why, at the present moment, if registration is so great a benefit, we are told that it is so little used, why do not people apply for it?—I cannot answer that except first, that persons who take in children to nurse are not required to register unless they take in two children under 12 months; secondly, that they are not

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aware

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

aware of the *modus operandi* or the existence of the power.

1742. I perfectly understand why it might be right to advertise the existing law more than is done at present, and why the local authorities ought to take it up more; but that does not answer my question. My question is, whether, in effect, the whole reason for our extending the law would not be to enable houses to advertise themselves more fully as registered houses, and thereby enable people who wanted to place their children out well to ascertain the houses where they could do so; is it not rather inconsistent with the fact that, at the present moment, there are few applications, and also that, above all things, the better class of nurses do not wish to be registered?—I could not say what will be the result of this new and better system, but my impression is that it will accomplish the purpose that you fear it will not, namely, reduce the facilities for, and reduce the danger of, the destruction of child-life.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1743. There are a certain number of these unfortunate women who, when they have a child, only desire to get rid of it somehow?—Yes.

1744. Is it not therefore likely that if their child were placed in these registered houses, where they knew they would be well taken care of, they would be afraid that they would be kept more in touch with the children than they would wish to be?—There would no doubt be a certain proportion that would answer to that description.

1745. You said a short time ago that half the cases would be glad of advice?—I think they would be glad of a doctor coming in now and again.

1746. Would they not object to compulsory inspection apart from medical supervision?—Some of the people who have had a little taste of sanitary inspectors and their arbitrary ways might imagine that the same arbitrariness was going to be carried into nursing children; but it is not necessary; there may be the most courteous treatment of these people; it will all depend upon the spirit in which the Act is carried out.

1747. Do these nurses make a profit, as a rule?—Yes, they do it for the profit.

1748. We were told that in very few cases they made a profit?—If the child is properly kept its nurse makes very little profit, but if she lets the child dwindle away on a small proportion of the money she receives for it she is making a large profit.

1749. Then, practically, on the registered houses there would be no profit?—I doubt very much whether there would be much profit if there was only one child; the business being larger there would be fair profit.

1750. The business being larger the children would be more crowded together, and consequently more liable to die?—If the registration is of a house for three children you cannot crowd them together, because the registration would limit the number.

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

1751. With regard to these cases of cruelty which you spoke of in the villages, do they concern cases under 12 months; most of your cases of cruelty are in the villages?—Most of our general cases, but not baby-farming cases.

1752. It would not include children under 12 months old?—Our ordinary cases include babies in the houses of their mothers and fathers from the day of birth.

1753. Would you say that they were mostly under 12 months, these cases of cruelty in the villages?—(Oh dear, no; they are distributed as in ordinary family life, at various ages.

Viscount Llandaff.

1754. As to Ireland: have you had any personal experience of the work of your society in Ireland?—Yes.

1755. Are you acquainted with the debate in 1890 on a Bill resembling the one that we are considering?—Mr. Stuart Wortley's Bill do you mean; yes, I saw him on the subject.

1756. You remember that the Irish Members raised the strongest objection to extending that Bill to Ireland?—I remember they did, but why I do not know. My own objection to the Bill was that it labelled the whole thing "illegitimate child," and that it required evidence to be given that would drag to light the shame of the mother. It appeared to me that it might have that result.

1757. The Second Reading debate was before the word "illegitimate" was put into the Bill?—Was it; it was a very bad amendment.

Lord Kinnaird.

1758. With regard to one or two questions asked you by Lord Thring, you would not admit that it is proved that there would be universal objection to registration?—I think that nothing is proved on the subject. I do not think we have more than evidence of probability, and my impression is that the probability is the other way.

1759. Then I understand that while you think that no Act probably would make it impossible that crime should be committed, you want to make it more difficult?—That is so.

1760. And that you are partly crippled for want of funds; if you had more funds you could put an agent in every district?—Yes.

1761. And you would rather that some grant in aid was made to you than that it was given entirely to a public authority to carry out?—I would rather that a public authority registered and looked to us to carry out the provisions of the Bill.

1762. Why would you not leave it to the local authority to carry out the Act?—Because I think it is a delicate thing to do, and it requires very special machinery for the doing of it wisely and well, and our machinery is specially adapted for the doing of it.

1763. I did not quite understand the figures you gave; you stated to the Committee that last year you dealt with 250 cases?—That is of nurse children.

1764. And you said that the average per year, for seven years, was 100?—About that.

1765. Is that number of 250 due to the fact that

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

that you are doing the work more efficiently?—That we have a larger number of inspectors; we had very few cases in the first year; we had only two inspectors in 1889, and we have 140 or 150 to-day.

1766. So that your figures do not show the proportion of cruelty, compared to what it was seven years ago?—They only show the proportion of detected cruelty now to what was detected seven years ago.

Viscount Llandaff.

1767. The 250 children are nurse cases only, I understand?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

1768. What are these, in this list of convictions which you have shown us?—Almost all parents; they are not necessarily all married persons. There are many cases in which mothers are nursing their own children, illegitimate children.

1769. Now, in reference to a question which Lord Belper asked you, you said that though a nurse could get 6s. or 7s. a week for a child, it would be more profitable to make a big profit for a few weeks than to make a small profit of 1s. a week for the entire time that the child was with the nurse?—Yes; if I rightly understand your question I should say, yes; that it is more profitable to take 5s. a week for herself and use 1s. for the child for a few weeks, and then get another and do the same with that.

1770. Then we have heard that London is the only town which is efficiently worked by an inspector; do you maintain that most of the other towns are inefficiently worked, or do you take it that your officers take the place in them of the London inspector?—Our officers do the work, not of the London inspector, because we are not limited to the case of a child in a registered house. We deal with any child badly dealt with. In London there is a special officer to deal with these special houses only, in other parts of the land we deal with all houses.

1771. Have you ever made any public statement as to what proportion of English children are not properly looked after?—No; I should say that in all the country there is a residuum of character rather than population by which a child is not valued but rather hated as a nuisance, and in that the tendency to ill-treatment exists.

1772. If the old Act which has been in force for 25 years has been for the most part a dead letter, what difference do you think would a new Act of Parliament make; would it not share the fate of the old one?—If it was inefficient it probably would, but if it was an efficient Act, it would be enforced, as efficient Acts generally are.

1773. Who would enforce it?—As soon as it was passed, I should take the liberty to write to every county council and authority in England, calling their attention to it.

1774. But could you not do that now?—It is not worth doing.

(0.95.)

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

1775. You cannot protect children, you mean?—Not under the Infant Life Protection Act; you can protect them far better than under that Act by enforcing the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act; even in baby farms the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act to-day is the better of the two Acts for the children; but a great improvement will be made, and a prevention of the necessity of interference on the ground of cruelty, if we can get people who take nurse-children started in their business with credentials that justify public trust.

1776. And do you give it as your opinion that over a large part of England there is a great deal of preventible cruelty?—I think that all cruelty is preventible. The alternative before the mind, "Proper treatment, or a just forfeiture of liberty," is the cure.

1777. What would be the effect, do you think, if the Act were limited to illegitimate children?—I think it would be to brand the children when they come out in after-life. I think the sooner the fact that they are illegitimate is forgotten the better.

Lord Belper.

1778. I should like to ask you one question before we go to your Bill. I think I gathered from your general description of your views, that you would like to see this law extended, but would like to see it extended with very considerable reservations and exceptions?—Yes, I would.

1779. And not only special exceptions, which may or may not be possible accurately to define, but also general exceptions, which would be left to the criminal courts?—Certainly.

1780. And you would not like to see a Bill become law without providing for these exceptional cases?—No, I should not; there would be great hardships if it did not.

Chairman.

1781. Shall we go through your Bill now, the Bill for the Safety of Nurse Children?—I am quite at the service of the Committee.

1782. Perhaps you would like to say something first of all as regards the general lines of the Bill; looking at it, first of all, as to how it differs from the existing law and how it differs from the Bill which I introduced into the House?—I am afraid if I were to compare the three I should take a very long time.

1783. The first clause begins: "Subject to the opinion of the Court that in view of all the circumstances of the case it is in the interests of a child, and as in this section mentioned;" that is very vague, is it not?—It is necessarily so, I think, and the phrase is quite new to legislation so far as I know, and therefore it cannot be defined very well. But in the enforcement of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children I have so many times seen that people have been brought technically within the law and were punishable, who ought not to have been brought within the law; who, by mere accident so to speak, have been brought within it; and, dealing with these I never allow prosecutions; I constitute myself a sort of grand jury. I direct all the prosecutions

O 2

of

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

of the United Kingdom, and I disallow the prosecution of 25 per cent. of the cases sent up from the country, on the ground that while technically within the provisions of the Act, they ought not to have been, and they must not, therefore, be proceeded against. That is my reason for inserting the words you have read into an Act that is to be administered, probably, by another body.

1784. What do you mean by "another body"?—The County Council, at the present time, so it is proposed.

Viscount Llandaff.

1785. I understand the first section to mean this, that if a person receives for profit a child under seven years of age, and is proceeded against before a justice of the peace for that offence, receiving the child without being registered, the justice of the peace shall be at liberty, if he thinks that in view of all the circumstances the child is well off, to dismiss the prosecution?—That is so; that is the object of it.

Lord Thring.

1786. It is to give him a dispensing power, in fact?—It is; and it is to set up the interest of the child and not of the Statute itself. The predominant thing is not the Act but the child.

1787. He may over-ride the law?—He may say that it ought not to apply.

Viscount Llandaff.

1788. That is to say, that the general rule would work so much injustice in that case that it is not to be applied to that case?—That is so.

Chairman.

1789. Then we go on to Sub-section (a) which says, "Any person who shall retain or receive for profit any child under the age of seven years for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such child apart from its parent for a longer consecutive period than twenty-four hours;" that is practically the same idea as that which exists in the Bill which we have before us?—It is.

1790. Only it is extended to seven years. What do you mean by the word "retain"; do you mean retaining the child against the will of the parent?—No; it means to have and possess; it is the word, I think, which is used in the original Act.

Lord Belper.

1791. I should like to ask you the meaning of the word "profit" in your Bill?—It is defined at the end.

1792. We have two Bills before us, one which says "hire and reward," and the other, namely, yours, which says "profit." Which page is that definition on?—It ought to be in the definitions; but I see it is not in them. I will make a note of that point.

1793. Then as it is not defined, would you tell me whether you mean taking any hire or reward for it, or only taking such a sum as they can make a profit by?—No, I mean taking any money whatever in return for the care of the child.

Lord Belper—continued.

1794. I do not know whether you would not think the words "hire or reward" better than "profit"?—I think they are.

1795. It is not meant that you shall have to prove that the person made a profit?—No. Without a definition it is an unfortunate word to use.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1796. Will you give us your reasons for increasing the limit of age to seven years in this Bill?—We have just had two cases of children in a woman's care, both over five years old, in their sixth year, and they were badly treated and ran away.

1797. They came under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act?—They came under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, but the woman under the Bill I am now proposing would not have been allowed to take them without registration; that is the point; the object is not so much to deal with cruelty as to prevent its occurrence.

Chairman.

1798. Then you say in Sub-section (b) of Section 1: "Any person who shall retain or receive to maintain a child under the age of 12 years apart from its parents for a longer consecutive period than 24 hours, with a view to deriving profit either immediately, or at any future time, for any act or performance of the child, or from exhibiting the child?"—That is intended to deal with the acrobatic institutions for the training of children. They are taken in usually about six or seven years of age, and come out about twelve years of age, and this is to require them to take a license for the training of children and for keeping the place under supervision.

1799. Do you come across many cases of that description in which strict supervision is necessary?—We did years ago, but we have nearly driven the trade out of the country. I am told that it is chiefly conducted in Antwerp, and on the Continent in various places. There are a great many children sent out of England to be trained for acrobatic work in consequence of our interference with the training here.

Lord Thring.

1800. Suppose I take a child at five years old with the intention of deriving profit at a future time, when he is 21, from his performing the act of shoe-making; is that what you wish to prevent?—How could you make a profit on a boy over 16 years of age who was not your boy, when, by the common law, he is his own master?

1801. I take him and apprentice him, we will say, with a view of making a profit?—An apprentice is taken for the purpose of education.

1802. That is in the exceptions?—That is provided for in the sub-section.

1803. Then what is the meaning of the word "act"?—"Act or performance." I have taken the phrase, I think, from the Dangerous Performances Act, and I am dealing now with the training

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

training of children for the acts and performances before they are acted or performed.

1804. Then this clause simply means "dangerous acts or performances" in the mode of acrobats?—Not necessarily limited to dangerous performances, but to dangerous training; for instance, putting a boy to do the "splits."

1805. You must put in "dangerous" or some qualification, because the word "act" applies to every action of a boy?—

Viscount Llandaff.

1806. A farmer who takes in a boy with a view to having a boy to scare the crows would be within this Act? Would that be "deriving profit"?—I do not think so; he pays a wage for what the boy is doing, fees him; that would not be "deriving profit."

1807. The clause reads: "Any person who shall retain or receive to maintain a child under the age of 12 years apart from its parents for a longer consecutive period than twenty-four hours with a view to deriving profit either immediately or at any future time from any act or performance of the child, or from exhibiting the child." A farmer who takes in a boy to scare crows would come within that clause, would he not?—That case ought not to come within the clause, and it is not intended to do so.

Lord Thring.

1808. I only want to point out to you that this clause would require amendment in view of such a case as I put to you?—Surely the provision "subject to the opinion of the Court" which comes at the very beginning covers a case like that.

Viscount Llandaff.

1809. Would it not be much shorter to say that anybody who receives a child may be called before a Justice of the Peace to show whether that child is properly treated?—It is a matter of legal phraseology which I am not clever at. I am not responsible for the phraseology of this Bill.

Lord Thring.

1810. I only meant that these words could not pass in their present form and I asked what you meant; did you mean dangerous performances;—I mean more than that; I mean that though the performance is not necessarily dangerous, if the training for the performance is painful.

Viscount Llandaff.

1811. This is an amendment of the Prevention of Cruelty Act?—It is an extension of it and the title of the Bill is "An Act to amend the Law for the Protection of Nurse-children, and Children on Exhibition or in physical training."

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1812. As a general question on the Bill, are you not trying to mix up two very different sorts of offences together?—Yes; I do not like to treat either of them as offences; two different

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

sorts of business, but having a common point in the fact that the persons have helpless children in their care for profit.

1813. It would be more simply done if you kept the two things apart?—Possibly; there was in our Act of 1894 a provision similar to this, but not going far enough; it did not require registration; the only alteration made in regard to the acrobatic children I think was that parents were allowed to train without supervision. It was modified to permit a parent to train his own child.

Chairman.

1814. Then you oblige any person who takes any child as mentioned, to "register the same or cause it to be registered" within seven days?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

1815. You put seven days' deliberately?—It is convenient to allow a week.

1816. You think 24 hours too short?—Very much; the distance to the County Council for a woman in a village might be considerable. you see I am not thinking of London, but of the country.

1817. We have been told that people habitually evade the present law, by parting with the child before they have had it 24 hours?—That is true; but once a woman is registered that cannot occur again.

Lord Thring.

1818. I thought in all the Acts the great thing was to register the house before the child is received?—Most desirable.

1819. Here it is seven days after?—They are bound to do it by that time.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1820. They would have now to go to the Rural District Council, not to the County Council, to register?—Even the Rural District Council they are great distances sometimes.

Lord Thring.

1821. Is it not the great thing to register the house before the child is received?—The practical difficulties suggested in the discussion of this original Bill years ago was this: how can you expect a person in the first instance to register before she has had a customer.

1822. What is the good of the existing Act if the registration is not to take place before the child is received?—For the first child it is not any, but once registered the nurse and house would be under the supervision of the Council.

1823. It would, in fact, repeal the existing Act, requiring registration before reception of the children; do you mean that?—No, I do not. As to the details of this Act I am only prepared, I am sorry to say, to answer on the principal object and its provisions.

1824. There is the difference between taking evidence after a man is sentenced and taking it before; the Act requires, or the Bill before us requires, that before the children shall be received the character of the person shall be investigated,

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

tigated, the house shall be investigated, and every circumstance necessary to show that it is a proper place; surely if you allow the child to have been there seven days before this investigation takes place it will be quite a different thing?—Maybe; but many children are deposited there and then at these houses. Somebody comes; a child is brought; it is now or never; the nurse to be cannot say, "Go back again," and it is to meet those cases that the provision is put in.

1825. I only wish you to consider the inconsistency between the existing Act and your Bill?—That I should not feel quite fatal to it; I do not like the existing Act.

Chairman.

1826. Then you do not think it necessary that a person should register before taking the child?—Should register in the first instance do you mean? I do not think it would be practicable to enforce this before taking a child.

1827. That is practically the present Act?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1828. Then you rather think these registered houses would be carried on for the purpose of a profit?—Yes, partly that.

1829. Do not most people, when they start a business, start it on the chance of customers?—Yes, in ordinary business. As a matter of fact a great many people in distress come with a child; the woman wants to get rid of the child, to place it with somebody in the neighbourhood known to be willing to take a child. To meet these people and treat them reasonably, and not harass them at the very start, would be, I think, desirable. I would not object to the other if it were reasonable.

Lord Thring.

1830. You have told us that you wish houses to be registered in order that it might be stated in the advertisements that they were registered, and that these unfortunate people should know where to send their children; how on earth can a woman know where to send her child when you allow the place to be registered seven days after the child is taken?—There are a great many avenues to these nurses. I mentioned one, but there are a great many others. I might write an article on how children get into the nurses' hands. Granted that there is an objection to giving seven days in the first case, all subsequent children will come into a registered house. It is not seven days' notice with each child; if a woman takes 20 children in any year and goes on 20 years, once registered it is only in the first instance that the seven days' applies, and every other child enters a registered house.

Viscount Llandaff.

1831. The registration is to be renewed every year?—Yes.

1832. So that a child a year may go into a non-registered house?—Yes.

Chairman.

1833. If a house takes three or four children

Chairman—continued.

you would only register the first child?—The house would be registered from the first child.

1834. And then suppose it came to her taking five or six children?—If her house is registered for less than that number there would be a breach of the regulations, and the children might have to be removed to a place of safety. I have defined what the law has constituted "a place of safety," an union, hospital, surgery, or place of a like kind.

1835. Then you deal with the exemptions?—Yes.

1836. Your first exemption says that the section "shall not extend to any person who receives a child (a) for any reasonable and temporary purpose," who is to interpret that?—A court. Suppose I have an invalid child, and I send it down to a woman in the country for a week's convalescence; a thing common enough by my society; we send a child for a single week down to some person, a friend of the society, who is willing to take a child, but requires some payment for its maintenance.

Lord Thring.

1837. It should not come before a court at all?—It should not come before the court at all, and it would not in practical working; if the court has the discretion, the people who proceed will exercise their discretion before proceeding to the court.

1838. You mean where the people in the village think it is for a "reasonable and temporary" purpose there would be no proceedings taken at all?—I do not say the people in the village. Suppose we confine ourselves to London. Mr. Babey is the inspector; attention is called to the fact that a woman has a child for which she is receiving profit; the child is there, say, for hospital treatment, it is going back in a week or a fortnight; that is a case obviously not to be brought to the court, and the inspector under the Act would soon lose his situation if he brought it to the court.

1839. It is the discretion of the inspector then?—It is the discretion of the court, and the inspector knowing that exercises his judgment whether he shall bring it into court.

1840. Then should not the villages be inspected?—The inspector would be the person acting under this general provision.

1841. Supposing there is no inspector?—Supposing there is no inspector the authority for the enforcement of the Act would not exist, I suppose, except with the police.

1842. Then it would be in the discretion of an ordinary constable?—An ordinary constable would, as I understand, have no right to exercise discretion; he would have to bring it to the court; I may say that in administering our own Act of Parliament I am daily exercising considerable discretion, and have done so for seven years, and everybody seems to think it is successfully done; the difficulties which present themselves to your Lordship do not seem to me to arise at all, perhaps only because I am not a lawyer.

1843. I admit the benefit that your society has been, but I point out to you that whether

you

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

you leave or do not leave it to the discretion of an inspector or constable, is not according to my notion, a trifling matter?—Who is to interpret the word "wilful" in our statutes? A child has been neglected and is taken ill; who is to interpret whether it is by wilful neglect or not? Should we sweep all children suffering from disease into the Court, for the Court to exercise its discretion whether the child ought to have been brought to it. That is not the way. The discretion is exercised by the person who discusses with himself, Shall I take proceedings? Not till then does the Court decide whether the proceedings are wise or unwise, and in practical work whoever undertook to enforce this Statute, if suitable for the purpose, would see that it was not enforced when the purpose of the Act was obviously not to have it enforced.

Chairman.

1844. "Wholly or mainly for the purpose of education" is the next exemption?—It excludes institutions taking children, such as Dr. Barnardo's institution, and others; they would not object to supervision, but not under this particular Bill probably.

1845. Supposing this lawyer's wife you were telling us about had simply said that she was keeping these children partly or mainly for the purpose of education, sending them to school every day?—It would be for the persons entrusted with the authority to enforce this Act, if they were satisfied that the children were going to school every day and were thus brought into contact with ordinary outside life every day, so that nothing could be done harmful to them without the ordinary public having the chance to see, under those circumstances I should say there was no need to enforce the Act; but if it was a mere pretext, then it would be the duty of the authorities to bring up the case before the Court.

Lord Thring.

1846. I send a child to a London lodging-house keeper; I take lodgings for the boy and send him there for the purpose of his being sent to a day school, and the child is ill-treated by that lodging-house keeper; why on earth should he be exempted?—The lodging-house keeper then would come under another Act, the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; for that a lodging-house would not require to be registered.

1847. This is again an amendment of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?—Yes, the protection of infant life is a part of the whole scheme; you cannot separate the main motive for what is now proposed from the main motive of the Society's Act.

1848. The Act may be always evaded where it is wished to be evaded, because almost every child may be alleged to be sent "wholly or mainly for the purpose of education"?—There are not many of these cases of ill-treatment by nurses except under five years of age, and the bulk of them are under three.

1849. Suppose a young child in the case I put is ill-treated at a school, why should that case be exempted?—There is no reason to put

(O.95.)

Lord Thring—continued.

schools under this Act; the object of this proviso is to prevent the application of the Act in cases which would be technical and vexatious, and beyond the scope of it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1850. That is exactly the point on which you need to be very careful?—Most careful.

1851. And the gist of the difficulty in an Act of this kind lies in the exemptions?—It does.

1852. Therefore we are necessarily to look very carefully to the wording of these particular clauses, because it is there that the real cause of the difficulty lies?—Yes.

Chairman.

1853. We have to avoid the two extremes; making the Act unreasonably severe where it is not intended to be severe; and, at the same time, to avoid drawing clauses through which cases would slip which we want to catch?—My own feeling is that the first Bill before the Committee of your Lordships is drawn without sufficiently recognising these dangers.

Viscount Llandaff.

1854. You know, perhaps, that the witnesses who have appeared here for the County Council have said that even the exemptions in the Bill of 1890, which are much less large than yours, would render the Act nugatory; they would not care to accept it with them?—I do not know what those exemptions are.

Lord Thring.

1855. Supposing it were possible to amend entirely to your own satisfaction your own Act, the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, and supposing we could supply you with sufficient money to conduct your investigations as you liked, do you think there is any use in the original Act, or in this Bill at all?—I think this Bill of ours would be of very much greater use; it would be much more an indirect preventive of cruelty. The Prevention of Cruelty Act is a direct preventive of cruelty.

Chairman.

1856. We had got as far as sub-section (b); now (c) is "a hospital, or convalescent home, or place of the like kind"?—The object of that is to prevent unnecessary irritation by the enforcement of the Act.

Viscount Llandaff.

1857. Do you include an orphanage, for instance, in "a place of the like kind," with a hospital or convalescent home; you seem to confine it to places where there are sick children?—That is one exception; there are others you will find later.

1858. In Mr. Loch's list of institutions where children are taken, there are a vast number that would not be of the like kind with a hospital or convalescent home?—I should be strongly in favour of including in the exemptions any institutions conducted by responsible committees.

1859. Or responsible persons?—Well, "persons," I am in a little doubt about that.

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1860. Then

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

1860. Then (d), "into a place which is, or may be hereafter, under Government inspection, or is conducted under a committee with the authority of the Local Government Board, or under any Act in pursuance of the relief of the poor." That is more or less exempted under the present Act?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1861. "Hereafter," that would include all time?—Why should you repeal the Act by universal inspection?

Chairman.

1862. Then (e) "into any place under the regular supervision of a registered medical practitioner." That opens rather a large question?—Well, it is a desirable exemption where a medical man is attending constantly; and there are plenty of places that are private places conducted by excellent people who would not like to register; there are persons of fortune who desire to be kind to children and who have a nurse whom they pay so much a year to, and servants to take the children, and they would not like to be registered because they are not doing it (though receiving pay in some cases; not always) for profit in the common sense, but still they do receive hire or reward as the Act would be interpreted; and if a medical officer is regularly in charge of the institution I think that would be a sufficient ground for exemption.

Lord Thring.

1863. Surely you are aware that the investigations we have had have shown that a registered medical practitioner is not always a sufficient safeguard for child life?—I think if an Act of Parliament cast upon him the responsibility of exempting from a Statute, the influence of that fact would be to give him great seriousness in the doing of his work.

1864. You must be aware that in the hospital investigations and various others that we have had it has been shown that registered medical practitioners are not always desirable guardians of children?—That is quite true; I quite know that there are black sheep in all flocks, and that if a medical practitioner's certificate would necessarily exempt a place, perhaps in one case in one hundred he would not be worthy.

1865. But, of course, there are certain bad people who wish to evade the law; we know, and you are quite well aware of it, that institutions might get a registered medical practitioner who would not be a proper person to safeguard children and that he might evade the law?—Yes, I am afraid that is quite true, and that there are cases in which it would be very undesirable to leave it in his power.

1866. Then do not you think that that exemption is not quite right?—I wish we could make it obligatory upon the medical authorities to turn out a lot of scamps in England; I could give them a few dozen to begin with.

1867. I think you will admit that that is rather too wide a provision in your Bill?—It is wide, I admit.

Chairman.

1868. Clause 2; have you anything to say as to that?—No, except that there are three things that are required; that the person shall be suitable, that the house shall be suitable, and that the number of children for which the house is adequate shall be specified.

1869. But, then, by your previous clause the person does not get registered before taking a child, but takes a child and then gives notice?—Yes.

1870. Then supposing the inspector comes and finds the house unsuitable, the person must give up the child, I suppose?—Give up the child, or be liable to the penalty.

1871. In the first part of Clause 2 I thought you registered the house and the woman; the second part is as to the registration of the child?—There is a register to be kept at the house by the woman, according to this Bill, and she is to put in it the child's name, address, and the person from whom she received it; registration of the house and the woman is by the local authority.

Viscount Llandaff.

1872. The effect of this clause is that none but first-class people and first-class houses will ever get registered at all, is it not?—I do not think that "first-class" would be quite the term ordinary common sense would treat these cases as in domestic cases. If a house is a reasonable house for a family of five children, the next door neighbour perhaps having five, it should pass; I hope it would never be carried out on the line of having model institutions created.

1873. At any rate the ignorant nurses and the indifferent houses would never get registration?—I do not think they would.

1874. Then your view is that they would be shut out altogether from the nursing business?—Yes, and that a better class would take their place.

Chairman.

1875. There is a slight error in the drafting here; it cannot be right as it stands; "The Local Authority of every district shall," and then there ought to be (1) in a parenthesis, so that it would read "(1) Cause a register to be kept," and then, secondly, "Immediately on the registration of a child make or cause to be made?"—That is wrong; it is a matter of printing.

1876. Then Clause 3, that is practically the same as the Act?—The same substantially as the present Act.

1877. Then Clause 4, I think, is rather different?—Slightly different.

1878. The sub-section is rather different from the other in that it puts "name and address of the person from whom every child was received," I think it is rather more clearly defined in the other which speaks of the places where the person has resided for six months; you think it is advisable to be able to trace the persons, do you not?—If you mean their parents, no.

1879. The person who brings the child?—I think it is desirable to know who brought the child, but as little as possible to drag the parents into the case. I think the Bill you have your name

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

name to, states that the time and place of the birth are to be put in.

1880. "Shall state truly in writing the name, sex and age of the infant"?—Yes. It appears to me that we have nothing to do but to protect the life of the child.

1881. You have "the registered name, age and sex of every child received"?—Yes.

1882. Practically the same?—I do not go so far as to give the birth; there is a little further provision in your Bill.

1883. "The place and time of its birth and the place or places at which he has resided during the period of six months?"—If the place and time of birth were put down there would be probably some scandals as the result, which could not, as far as I can see, be of any advantage to the child. I am most anxious to avoid scandal in these things, and simply seek the welfare of the little thing that is entrusted to the nurse.

1884. Are you in favour of obtaining the sanction of the Local Authority before removing a child from a registered house, except in certain exceptions, as in the cases of relatives or guardians?—No, I should not interfere too much with them; if you do you will turn out of it the finest spirits; they cannot bear too much interference; the less the thing is interfered with the better; after the genuineness of the woman and the suitability of the house and the number of children are certified, with the supervision of the medical officer of health of the district, then as little as possible interfere with anything, and the more respectable people will then conduct the business.

Lord Thring.

1885. The second sub-section of that clause amounts to this: that if I take a child under a false statement I am responsible for the false statement unless I can prove that it was made without any connivance or consent on my part, or without any knowledge on my part that it was false; but I cannot possibly prove a negative?—I do not think, my Lord, you would go into this business. The women who do go into it do make false statements, there is no doubt; and the only object one has in this clause is to prevent deception which would end in disaster to the child.

1886. This clause would do exactly what I think you would wish not to do, deter honest persons from undertaking the business, because I, the keeper of the house, should be responsible and had up for a false statement unless I could prove what it is impossible to prove, that it is made without my connivance or consent or without knowledge on my part; therefore I should have to be had up before the magistrate to disprove a thing that I cannot disprove?—It would not be necessary that you should go before the magistrates if the authorities prosecuting in the case took into consideration what you had to say.

1887. I only wanted to draw your attention to it; I think it does exactly contrary to what you wish, places an obstacle in the way of honest people?—The more of such obstacles there are removed the better; I quite agree with you.

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Lord Thring—continued.

1888. So I think that had better go out!—But I do not see the point myself.

Viscount Llandaff.

1889. The person who takes a child would, under your Bill, be obliged to announce that he had got it, unless he was already a registered person?—Yes.

1890. Why do you want to double the machinery?—Not "unless," but if she is registered. The registered nurse would not have to comply with this.

1891. Whoever takes that child, if the child is under seven, under your Bill, will have to give notice at the register?—No, the entry would have to be made into the register kept by the woman.

1892. That is book-keeping; if your Bill is enforced you would get hold of a child in this new place by a notice from the person who takes it?—Quite so.

1893. I do not see quite what you gain, except correct book-keeping, by forcing the person who parts with the child to make these entries?—When a child is within a few weeks of death it is frequently transferred from one to another, and three or four persons then have it in order to divide the responsibility. The cause of death is what we want to trace, and to get back to the original person who for months, say, had it in charge. It is the subtlest business when criminal intent is in it that there ever was.

Lord Thring.

1894. Clause 5. The same remark applies to Sub-section 2 of Clause 5; I need not repeat it?—It is to prevent untruthfulness; there is nothing in it that is not practically provided for in the original Act.

Viscount Llandaff.

1895. There is no presumption in the original Act, but here you say: "he shall be deemed to have wilfully and knowingly given these false particulars unless he shows that the false statement was made" without connivance on his part?—That is the person who keeps the house.

1896. There is the presumption of wilful falsehood against him?—In that case.

Lord Thring.

1897. I consider it obviously unjust to make a man guilty of a crime committed by another person unless he can show that he was not privy to the crime?—I think it would be very unfair to do so, but is that actually the bearing of this? An entry is made of a false kind contrary to the Act, and it has been wilfully or negligently done; it is assumed that that has been the case until the man brings some proof that this document, or this letter that he has received, or statement that he has received in the presence of somebody, was an authority which a reasonable and honest man would accept. That is the object of the clause.

Viscount Llandaff.

1898. You do not by your Bill allow the defendant to give evidence for himself?—It would

P

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

would be a great defect if it was so; but he is permitted in Section 12, which applies, Section 12 of the Act of 1894.

1899. Yes, I beg your pardon?—That section provides for that. I may say that I attach great importance to the evidence of accused persons.

Chairman.

1900. Clause 6, "Power to local authority to cancel licence;" that is practically as in the other Bill?—Yes.

1901. Clause 7, "Obligations to give notice of death to coroner;" that is the law at the present moment?—Quite so. It recites a great deal of the old Act because it proposes to repeal it. The reason for doing this is, that I much prefer one Act.

1902. Clause 8, "Punishment of offences"?—This Bill requires a written authority, which differs from your own Bill. The person having power of entry must be authorised in writing to enter; he cannot go with a free hand to go where he likes, but he must have a specific authority for the purpose.

1903. You are talking of Clause 10 now, "Power of entry"?—Yes.

1904. I am, myself, I may say, going to bring up an amendment that the entry shall be by means of warrant?—Warrant! I think that is most undesirable.

1905. You have it under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act; you have right to enter under warrant?—Yes, but to get a warrant in this case brings such an enormous hammer to bear on a trifling thing. We only enter with warrants where we are satisfied that the crime is of a serious kind and is being concealed; but in dealing with the nursing of children where crime is not assumed that would be a most undesirable thing.

1906. But if the Act were passed it would then become an illegal thing to keep children in a house not registered?—Quite so; but if they are fat and happy, it ought not to be dealt with as a crime. I would not use a warrant to enter; it is such a serious thing for people to have their house entered by warrant.

1907. Who is it to be authorised by in writing?—By the local authority.

1908. Has the local authority power to compel a person to admit?—By this Bill it would have it.

1909. It is practically giving a new power to the local authority?—It is giving a new power to the local authority.

Viscount Llandaff.

1910. You have deliberately, in Clause 8, cut down the imprisonment to a month instead of six months, and the fine you raise to 10*l.* instead of 5*l.*?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

1911. This would alter the provisions of the existing law relating to imprisonment and fine?—It would, and I think it very desirable that those provisions should be modified.

Chairman.

1912. You provide for entry by warrant in Sub-section (2) of Clause 10?—In Sub-section (2) of Clause 10; that would be on some information before the magistrate justifying such procedure; that would be on a genuinely criminal ground.

1913. I do not see anything more in the Act myself that calls for particular remark, except that I do not know whether the Committee have anything to ask you with reference to the "definitions" in Clause 15?—I would like to say a word if I might on Clause 14. I attach considerable value to all those provisions. In the cases in which we have proceeded under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act we have sometimes only had a child as witness, an assistant nurse, a child of seven perhaps, and her evidence has been momentous; it has been everything to link the crime and the criminal; but without the provision as to the evidence of a child of tender age, and without that presumption of age clause, and without the general provisions of the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, we should not have been able to have convicted the people, because the main point in the evidence would have been excluded from the court. They are matters which have been given a great deal of attention to, and whatever the Bill is, they should be introduced.

1914. Have you anything to say on the definition clause?—No, I have not, except that I am sorry to find that "profit" is not defined, and I should say, for my own part, that your own phrase "hire or reward" is a better term to employ.

1915. We have no provision in the other Bill for removing the children?—No; when you close a house your Bill leaves the children.

1916. Do we now?—Yes. You have no provision for removing the children. You have no future place of care for them.

1917. I do not think the children are left there?—I daresay they are not, but in the Act no provision is made for removing them.

Viscount Llandaff.

1918. The workhouse is the place they would be removed to under the ordinary law, is it not?—The workhouse under the ordinary law for any child presenting itself, or any parent presenting a child; but an ordinary person presenting a child I do not think comes under the ordinary law.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1919. Could not the inspector take it to the workhouse?—He could take them, but the workhouse authorities are not bound to take a child from an inspector. We have had to get a special power to get magistrates' orders admitted into the union. Any parent presenting himself with a child, or any destitute child presenting itself, would be admitted.

Viscount Llandaff.

1920. Or anybody presenting a child of tender years found, say, in the street?—If it is found in

7 May 1896.]

Rev. B. WAUGH.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

in the street the constable can take it under the Industrial Schools Act, to be dealt with temporarily; but he cannot take it to the union authorities to be dealt with by them permanently. In our Consolidated Act we got powers, in Section 11 I think it is, to compel unions to receive, with the sanction of the Local Government Board. The union authorities say, If persons could make ventures in public institutions, and, on finding they were a failure, cast the children on the workhouse, where would the parish rates be in some districts? If a person is found destitute in the street at any age a constable may take him to the union.

Chairman.

1921. Would not the ordinary law be sufficient on this point?—We have had a large experience of the ordinary law, and found workhouses shut by the dozen to us, and we went to Parliament with a brief justifying Parliament in passing a

Chairman—continued.

new section requiring guardians, when children were sent by magistrates, to be received. It was only in a few cases that that was necessary, because on the whole the guardians work amicably with us, and have always done so; but I think it very desirable that there should be some provision that it should be in the power of the authority, whoever it may be, legally to use the workhouse and at once.

1922. In Clause 16, you say: "In the application of this Act to Scotland"; does it apply to Ireland?—This Act is to be applied in the same way as the old Act. It is intended to apply to the United Kingdom.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

1923. This Bill of yours now before us is called "Safety of Nurse Children"; you gave another title, I think, some time ago?—I spoke of it as an Act for the "protection of nurse children and of children trained for profit."

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been recalled, is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1924. You put in a return which was asked for the other day recording the legitimate and illegitimate births and deaths in Salford?—That is so, for a large number of years.

1925. From 1877 to 1894?—Yes (*handing in the return; see Appendix*).

1926. From which I see that of legitimate infants there were 121,816 births, and 21,366 deaths under one year; and of illegitimate infants there were 5,372 births, and 1,993 deaths; and the proportion of deaths to 1,000 births was, in the case of legitimate infants, 175, and in the case of illegitimate infants 371?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1927. But that is subject to the deduction which you referred to the other day as to the number of children who are registered at their birth as legitimate and at death as illegitimate?—Yes; I referred to a law which prevails almost universally through England and Wales.

1928. By a law you do not mean an enactment?—No, I meant to say it is what one really observes to be a law. My reason for putting that return before the Committee, in addition to the others which I have already put in, is, that I could not get out the figures when last I was examined in time for your Lordships. I cannot, and I am afraid you cannot, get any more information on that subject; it is complete as far as I know; and your Lordships will allow that the figures for those three towns give particulars of a large number of legitimate and illegitimate deaths in the aggregate; I think the figures are as reliable as they can be made.

(0.95.)

P 2

mothers'

7 May 1896.]

MR. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

mothers' meetings of their districts, to use all their influence to induce those they visit to attend regularly at their respective places of worship, and to send their children to school. In their weekly report they must (i.) mention general sanitary state of house visited. (a) Number of rooms and number of occupants. (b) Presence of bad smells; if present, are they such as to arise from deficient ventilation or from bad drainage? (c) State of the walls and floors. (ii.) Report upon general mode of living, especially with regard to personal and general cleanliness. (iii.) Report upon the feeding of children, especially of those under two years old. (a) Is the baby nursed by the mother, or partly nursed and partly fed by hand? If the latter, state upon what it is fed. (iv.) Report upon any case or cases of illness in the house. (a) Nature of disease. If contagious, when and how supposed to have been contracted. (b) How many of the family are affected? (c) Is there a doctor in attendance? If so, state how far and in what way they have assisted" (that is how far the district visitors have assisted) "the people in carrying out his orders with regard to sanitary precautions." Your Lordships will see that the rules laid down for the guidance of the district visitors are about as complete as they could be.

1931. There is an enormous amount of clerical work to be done, apparently?—An enormous amount.

Viscount Llandaff.

1932. These ladies have no right to enter any house?—And I think that is the secret of their success.

1933. That is what I thought. Do they meet with any difficulties practically?—If I might associate myself with them I would say that we did not go about as policemen.

1934. I mean, do they meet with difficulties, or are they admitted willingly to all the houses?—Very willingly.

1935. They come as friends, and there is no objection to their coming in?—That is so.

1936. There is no necessity to put a clause in the Act of Parliament giving them the right of entry?—No, if this were done there would be a difficulty at once.

1937. "Irrespective of creed and circumstances" you read. Do they visit the houses of shopkeepers?—As a rule they visit the cottages of the poor; and on the sixth page of this same report you will see the number of cottages in each district, that is to say the number practically of houses with less than four rooms, or with four or three or two rooms in each. The number of cottages your Lordships will see is given for each district in Manchester, and the number of visits paid to each of those cottages. There are 13 districts in Manchester, and the number of cottages in each of those districts is shown, and also the number of visits paid to the houses in each district.

1938. Then there are two visits to each cottage per annum?—Yes, it averages about that.

1939. Nineteen thousand cottages and 35,000 ordinary visits?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1940. And do these districts cover the whole of Manchester?—They cover the whole of Manchester. I beg pardon, that is not the case; they cover the whole of the poorer parts of Manchester. I am sure that the ladies would say that they wanted to extend their operations if they could; it is a question of money.

1941. May we practically take it that, speaking of the poor parts of Manchester generally, every house is thus being visited now?—As far as possible and as far as the visiting powers go.

Viscount Llandaff.

1942. Every house of the cottage class?—Every house of the cottage class; we specifically term them cottages.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1943. But it is a system which, roughly speaking, is co-extensive with the whole town of Manchester, the poor parts of it I mean?—I would rather say the poorest parts; I am afraid not all the poor parts. That is in contemplation and will be carried out we hope some day.

Chairman.

1944. Where do the funds come from; these people are paid salaries?—A portion of those funds are derived by subscriptions, and you will see that the various ladies subscribe a very considerable sum every year towards the payment of these women, and the rest is contributed by the Corporation.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1945. Can you give us roughly an idea what the Corporation pay to them in a year?—I am afraid I cannot give you the figures.

1946. In the balance sheet here those payments do not appear?—No, and I am not able to explain why; I am not quite sure about it.

Viscount Llandaff.

1947. Look at page 44; you see a donation there, "Lord Mayor of Manchester, Clarke and Marshall's bequest," but it is only 5*l.*?—That is since my time.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1948. But you speak with some hesitation as to whether the system is subsidised from the rates?—I know that it is, definitely.

Viscount Llandaff.

1949. But under what authority?—The work of the Ladies' Health Society Visitors is a sanitary work, and is done under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health, and as such of course can be paid for by the Corporation. It is definite sanitary work, and, if I may say so, is work of the very first possible importance from a sanitary point of view.

Chairman.

1950. And does it have a beneficial result in the death-rate of Manchester, so that it is less there than in other large towns?—The death-rate of Manchester is steadily falling; it has fallen in recent years to a lower figure than it ever reached before

7 May 1896.]

MR. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

before the last extension of the city; but that is probably to a great extent because of that extension.

1951. I am afraid we are getting a little wide of our subject, but I will put this question: Do these ladies come across many of these children that are put out?—I have no doubt they do.

1952. You do not know what their proceedings are when they do come across them?—Yes; their course of proceeding would be at once to communicate with the Medical Officer of Health. If it was a case to refer to the police it would be referred to the police; but we never used to like to do that if we could possibly help it.

1953. I believe there is one registered house in Manchester?—I cannot speak definitely on that point; there are a large number of houses in which children are looked after, and looked after satisfactorily in the way of charity; but that is not what your Lordship means, I take it?

1954. No; I mean under the Act?—I cannot tell you about that.

1955. I presume from what you told us the other day that the re-act on the Act is not administered as an Act in Manchester, is because of the efficient supervision which this large committee of lady visitors is able to give?—So far as I was concerned, whilst I was there as Medical Officer of Health, I found no necessity to put the Act in operation. I suppose in certain cases it must be in operation; I cannot say.

1956. Then this arrangement is purely a voluntary arrangement on the part of the inhabitants?—Entirely.

1957. Do you know if such a society exists anywhere else?—I believe that in Glasgow a certain number of health visitors have been employed for many years by the Sanitary Department; but there is nothing of the kind in England, so far as I know, except in Manchester and Salford.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

MR. THOMAS JOHN BARNARDO, F.R.C.S., is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

1964. You are the founder of the homes which go by your name?—Yes.

1965. And you board out a considerable number of children at the present moment?—Yes.

1966. I believe about 1,900?—The exact numbers are 1,751.

1967. One thousand seven hundred and fifty-one boys and girls?—Boys and girls and infants.

1968. They are boarded out?—They are boarded out at present.

1969. All over the country?—Yes.

1970. And how many of these are under five years of age, and would come under the Bill?—448.

1971. That is about 30 per cent. of them?—Yes, a little less than that; and of that number 292 are under two years.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

1958. I understand you to say that in the Public Health Act there is enough to enable this machinery to be put in force anywhere?—I should think so, regarded in the light of sanitary work.

1959. About the cost, nothing appears in the balance-sheet about any contribution by the Corporation?—I am afraid I cannot explain that. I think I can put it pretty clearly before the Committee by saying that a definite number of the female district health visitors are paid by the Corporation, and they are, therefore, the servants of the Corporation.

Chairman.

1960. They are paid directly by the Corporation, and their salaries would not appear in these accounts, you mean?—I presume they would not; I cannot say that that is the reason why they do not appear, but of the facts I was mentioning I have accurate information.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

1961. Are you speaking of a substantial contribution, not a mere question of 5*l.*?—No; the visitors I speak of are paid; they are the servants of the Corporation, but they are connected with the Ladies' Health Society in this respect, that their work is superintended by the ladies of the Health Society on behalf of the Corporation.

Chairman.

1962. I do not know whether you made it quite clear to the Committee whether your experience makes you in favour of the Bill as a whole, or against it?—I am, on the whole, decidedly in favour of it.

1963. You are in favour of an extension of the law?—Yes, I am sure that it is wanted; it is, I understand, a general Bill, and refers to the whole country.

Chairman—continued.

1972. You have careful rules with regard to the boarding out of your children, have you not?—Yes.

1973. And you exercise supervision over them?—Yes, very close supervision; I produce a copy of our rules for ordinary boarding out (*handing in the same*). You asked me if I boarded out all over the country, and I said, yes; that is not strictly true; that is true only as regards 137 of the auxiliary boarding-out scheme; 1,614, who are among the generally boarded out, are in these districts marked on this map, that is to say in the south and east of England; the 137 who are boarded out under what we call our auxiliary boarding-out scheme, are all over the kingdom, some being in Scotland.

1974. Do you find that you have considerable difficulty

P 3

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

difficulty in finding suitable foster-parents?—There is some difficulty but not such as opposes a real barrier to boarding out.

1975. Do you think that the provisions of the Bill would interfere with your being able to obtain respectable foster-parents?—If it is passed as now printed, yes.

1976. I think I may say on the part of the Committee that there is no desire to subject institutions which are responsibly and carefully managed, to registration and inspection as provided by the Bill?—The principal Act, which is referred to in this Bill, excludes in the 13th Section, absolutely, institutions established for the protection and care of infants; but even if that be carried into the new Bill it is not sufficient for our purpose, because if you demand the registration of those with whom we board out children you oppose an effectual barrier to our getting good foster-parents, and the better the foster-parents are, the more certainly will they object to registration and consequent inspection.

1977. Inspection by whom?—By the officers appointed by the Bill.

1978. Do you find that they object to inspection by local committees?—No, because the local committee is formed in the village or hamlet where the woman lives. The local committee have recommended her to us as a suitable foster-parent, and therefore they are regarded as her friends. That local committee generally consists of say the clergyman of the parish and of ladies who are well known, and their visits are rather acceptable than otherwise.

1979. Then is what you mean, that in your opinion the provisions of this Bill are not needed for such societies as yours?—That is so; and not only so, but that they ought not to be extended to those with whom we board out children.

1980. It has been suggested to us by the secretary of a kindred society to yours that the difficulty might possibly be got over by the society being certified or licensed by some central authority, by some Government Department, and that then the society so licensed should practically have a free hand under details to be settled by that Government Department; is that your opinion?—That might meet the case so far as societies like my own are concerned if freedom from registration was not to be obtained on any other terms.

1981. You would not object to that?—I would not object to that except in a case of this sort. Many of our institutions are already certified under the Local Government Board.

1982. Then they would be exempt?—They would be; but some of our institutions are not, and the Local Government Board would probably not certify them simply on the ground, say, that the fabric was not such as meets with their approval in the first instance. But it is good enough for our purpose; and these uncertified branches are under the same management as the certified branches; yet according to the Act we would not be able to board out a child from an uncertified branch.

1983. That is not quite the point. I want to know this: Would you have any objection to one of the Government Departments, either the Home Office or the Local Government Board,

Chairman—continued.

making inquiries into your system of boarding out, the *bona fides* and the status of your committee, your rules, and various other items to satisfy themselves as to the stability of the society. I am assuming that you are an unknown society which applies for registration; would you in such circumstances have any objection to submitting yourself to the Local Government Board in order to obtain a certificate?—It would depend very much upon what that would involve. If it was merely a question of registration we could have no objection; but it might involve such changes in administration, for example, as we would not be prepared to carry out. I could not say that on the face of the thing there would be no objection to registration under a Government Department.

1984. What do you mean by your "uncertified branches"?—Our whole institutions are voluntary institutions as contrasted with certified institutions, but being voluntary and not certified under the Reformatories Act or the Industrial Schools Act, we apply to the Local Government Board to certify some of our branches, and they have examined certain of our institutions and have issued their certificate in their favour, while others remain without certificates.

Viscount Llandaff.

1985. Then you have several houses, have you, scattered over the country?—We have 82 branches scattered all over the country, and some of these are certified. Our object in getting certified under the Local Government Board, which does not interfere with our administration, is to enable boards of guardians to transfer children to these branches and make payments for their maintenance which otherwise the Local Government Board would not sanction.

Chairman.

1986. Amongst those 82 institutions do you include any of the places that you have just mentioned to us where these children are boarded out?—No; children who are boarded out are necessarily not in institutions at all.

1987. I did not know what you called an institution?—A home having its children resident in it, and a resident staff appointed for the purpose of control and training and education.

1988. What is the average number you have in these 82 branches, in each?—They differ so much I could not give you an average number, because the smallest have but 15 girls and the largest have 480 boys. We are especially anxious that this Bill may not be permitted to check or hinder our boarding out system, because, apart from its other great advantages, the mortality and sickness of children boarded out is so much smaller than in the case of children brought up in any other way whatever.

1989. What age are the children when they generally come to you?—They come to us mere babes of even a few hours old up to great fellows of 17 years of age.

1990. Do you take them in at once without any inquiry?—Certainly not; our investigation is very keen and very thorough. We do not admit any unless absolutely destitute; unless there

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

there are no relatives of any sort upon whom a legal claim can be made for the child's support.

1991. Are your children, those that you have in your charge, mostly legitimate or illegitimate?—I would say mostly legitimate, but with a very large number of illegitimate.

1992. And what do you do in the case of an illegitimate child that is brought to you by the mother who wants to get a home for it?—We would first institute a searching inquiry into all the circumstances of the candidate. For example, if the child was under one year old, we would endeavour to discover the putative father, and compel the mother to apply for an affiliation order, and if she declined, we would decline to assist her, on the ground that otherwise our institutions might be made mere coverts for licentiousness. Suppose that a woman applies for an affiliation order and does not obtain it, or, having obtained it, obtains a small grant, a weekly grant for the maintenance of the child, we would then assist her in some adequate way to maintain her child.

1993. And then you put these children out with foster parents?—A large number of the children so admitted are placed out with foster parents.

1994. And, of course, the infants have to be hand-nursed, I suppose?—Yes; but I must inform the Committee that I have a home for infants as well. We have a large institution of our own, for infants under two years of age, which it would not be suitable to board out, infants which come to us, for example, subject to disease.

1995. Then you do not board out infants till they get to two years of age?—We board out infants at the very earliest age if they are such as could be boarded out; but to board out a child who needs constant surgical or medical care in a hamlet with a poor woman who has little knowledge of such cases would be unwise.

1996. And then, having boarded them out, you take every precaution to see that they are properly visited and fed and looked after?—Yes; if you refer to the rule book you will observe that the boarding-out rules involve a weekly visit by the local committee; but in addition to that we have our own visitors, properly qualified medical women, among whom all our boarded-out children are divided.

1997. What do you mean by "medical women"?—I mean educated, who are qualified as medical practitioners; and these ladies visit the cases and, with such experience as only a woman can employ in these matters, report upon the children, and that is independent of the report of the local committee. Such visits are paid at the very least twice in the year; I mean the surprise visits of medical women.

1998. Do you find that the foster parents object to the visits of these people at all?—Well, we have had objection raised, but it is generally overcome, because, not being bound by any hard-and-fast rule, we adapt our action to the particular case.

Viscount Llandaff.

1999. Does that mean that you do not visit those who object?—No; but we endeavour to convince them of the value of visitation, and to visit them as seldom as we can.

(0.95.)

Chairman.

2000. Have you any personal experience of the registered and unregistered houses under the existing Act?—No; I mean to say I have no experience of the necessity of registration, and have not made inquiries. To avoid trouble I have never placed out more than one infant under 12 months old in any one house, to meet the requirements of the principal Act.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2001. Would you do so if the Act allowed it?—No.

2002. It is not because of the Act that you abstain?—No; I would not in any case consider it right to place out more than one infant under 12 months old in any house. May I suggest that neither of the Acts, neither the principal Act nor this Bill, proposes to put any limitation upon the number of young children under two or three years who are taken into any registered house.

Chairman.

2003. I think that is left to be decided by the registering authority?—I know that you give discretion to the registering authority, but I thought that I might mention the point.

2004. Then you cannot speak from your own knowledge either of the advantages or the disadvantages of registration?—I can only say that as a member of the public taking an interest in the subject I have formed an opinion.

2005. What is your opinion?—My opinion is that registration would be of great benefit in the generality of cases, but unless registration is accompanied by some other provisions I can hardly see how the waste of infant life will be checked.

2006. You think, therefore, that in the generality of cases registration would do much good, but that you require considerable exemptions to protect *bona fide* charity; is that what you mean?—That is so; and that something more than registration will be needed if the waste of infant life is to be checked.

2007. What do you mean by "something more than registration"?—I mean that if a house is only registered, if the woman who seeks registration satisfies the authority who grants her registration, and she desires, at the first application, to be registered for, say, five or six infants, the moment that is done the door is opened for the waste of infant life to continue, as these children, who cannot be identified, who cannot in any way be marked so as to be known, may be changed over several times, and the fact, therefore, that the house is registered may rather give a facility for crime than otherwise.

2008. You are talking of cases like these Reading ones?—Yes; these crimes now before the public. I mean that a great criminal would perhaps find the Bill as it now is rather a help to the commission of crime than a hindrance.

2009. I do not quite follow you there. If a house was registered, registration implies also visitation?—Yes.

2010. If the person who visited the house was worth anything at all, I should think he or she would be able to detect before very long that a

P 4

rapid

7 May 1896]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

rapid change of infants was going on?—Everything would depend upon the area of their visitation and the number of infants in each house. Everyone knows that the illegitimate infants, the children of unmarried mothers, are generally in a very poor state of health; the change that takes place in two months is such as to make it impossible to identify them. On this subject I have closely questioned my own experienced helpers, and they say the changes that take place in two or three months in any young infant make it impossible for those who only casually see it to recognise it again.

2011. Have you any suggestions to meet those defects which you say exist?—Yes. The suggestion I would make would be, first, that the number under three years of age admitted into any registered house shall be absolutely limited by the Bill, not by the discretion of the registrar, to one, unless in the case of twins; then that the inspection of such registered houses where infants under the age of three years are, should be not less often than fortnightly, or at most monthly; and that the area for each inspector (who, of course, must be a woman) should be limited. The reason why I mention three years of age as the limitation is this: that after that they can talk, under three or under two years of age they cannot talk; and that is a very important element in the whole subject of identification.

2012. But your first proposal would not prevent a person, who was determined to commit crime, from taking in one child at a time and getting rid of it and taking another?—It would render detection, I think, much more likely and more rapid. An inspector who visits a house will, of course, take notes of her visitation, and such notes would comprehend a general description of the child.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2013. Could you or anybody give such a description of a child of 11 months old as would enable it without fail to be identified two months afterwards?—Not perhaps by others and if it were mixed up with other children; but I am supposing that the inspector is a woman, and that her visits are repeated and not less frequent than a fortnight or a month. I think then she could, and only thus can she, retain any clear conception in her mind of the personality of each individual child. I think if there was but one infant in each house and the conditions remained the same, it is possible that identification would be much more rapid.

Chairman.

2014. May I take it, then, that you are in favour of an extension of the law provided it does not interfere with your institution?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2015. Why do you think it is that the existing Act is not put in practice more widely in England than it is by the appointment of inspectors and so forth?—That has always been a puzzle to me. I do not quite know why. We have always wondered why the existing Act was not carried out more. I am afraid I cannot offer an opinion as to why it is.

2016. Have you come in contact at all with

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

problems connected with the Act, that is to say, in your work in so many places have you ever found yourself liable to be checked by the Act if you had been acting illegally?—I think if I had sought, for example, to place two where only one was permitted, I might have been brought in some way under the restrictions of the Act.

2017. Of course you might legally, but do you mean that it would have probably happened?—I think it is possible that I might have boarded out more than the number of infants permitted by the Act in houses which were not registered, and no opposition would have been offered to my doing so.

2018. You are speaking, of course, of outside London; you exempt London?—I am speaking of the suburbs.

2019. But in London the Act is in full operation?—I think in London it is more difficult; but we board out very little in London.

2020. Do you ever use registered houses?—No, I have never boarded out children in registered houses. We have made inquiries in a few instances, and we would have liked to use them, but they are not, as a rule, of a sufficiently good quality, and that is an important point; that the registered houses under the Act are not, I think, of as high a quality as houses which are unregistered and are available to us for boarding out; and I explain that by saying that the best houses will not register.

2021. And do you think that the fact that the best houses do not register at present is due to the fear of the foster parent lest by applying for registration she should be ticketed as a baby farmer; or do you think it is for some other cause?—I think it is more likely the fear of inspection and interference; it may also of course arise from a desire to avoid the odium of the term, but I rather think it is the shrinking from anyone coming into the house by right to examine it when they like.

2022. But you are speaking there rather conjecturally than from experience, because you tell us that practically, the Act being a dead letter elsewhere than in London, the question has not arisen?—No; but in some instances, shortly after the passing of the Act, inquiries were made by our people as to the effect of registration.

2023. What do you mean "our people"?—The people whom I have under my control, our administrators who seek out these foster-parents; and then we found a very strong objection to register on the score that they were not willing to submit to inspection; they were not willing to have an officer come into their house whenever he thought proper.

2024. Do you think that would equally apply to a lady, if the officer were a lady?—No, I think probably it would be less likely to apply to a lady.

2025. What they are afraid of is a man in uniform?—They are afraid of official inspection. The official character of it frightens a large number of people who would be very willing indeed to take children, and would be probably the best foster-parents.

2026. Under the boarding-out system, sanctioned by the Local Government Board, there is inspection of the houses where the children are boarded?—That inspection is very much like our

own

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

own inspection; that is to say, they send a medical woman, or some other qualified person, generally a lady, to inspect the houses where the children are, and subsequently to inspect the children themselves.

2027. And if similar provisions were made for such inspection as this Act contemplates, the objection to it would *pro tanto* disappear?—Probably; but there would be very great difficulties in doing it.

2028. In what direction?—In carrying out such inspection under this Bill the expense would be enormous. The Local Government Board not only sends its inspector but places out the children; consequently it selects a given area, and when the inspector has to go she only travels over a given area; but let it be supposed that no central authority had the placing out of the children, but that they were placed out by unmarried mothers all over the kingdom wherever they could get a foster-parent, that would involve long journeys for inspection, and there might only be one or two houses registered and to be inspected over a wide area.

2029. And therefore no proper inspector appointed, you mean?—That might come to be so because of the great expense involved. By this map you see we limit our boarding out to definite areas so as to render the cost of inspection less. The more widely we scatter the greater the cost; and if the placing out of the children were done, not by a central authority, but by women everywhere who desire to find a home with foster-parents, that difficulty would be increased immensely.

2030. Would you say that, speaking generally, we are right in believing that the huge majority of the children whose protection is contemplated in such legislation as this are illegitimate?—Certainly.

2031. What is the ordinary course in your experience of a woman, a girl, who has a child, and wishes to dispose of it properly and respectably; I mean one that is poor. I note your paper here, with this auxiliary boarding out branch; but what is your experience of what she ordinarily does now?—Her first effort is to get a foster-parent; that she does either by the recommendation of some one whom she knows or she advertises, or replies to an advertisement, and as in these cases secrecy and privacy is a large element in it, so far as her character is concerned, she prefers to reply to an advertisement.

2032. Have you made it part of your work at all to follow up advertisements?—I did a few years ago; I replied to every advertisement that appeared in four or five of the leading papers; and as I said, in answer to another question, I found out that in hardly one of those cases where the advertisement was issued, and we replied to it, were they people that we would place the child with under any circumstances.

Viscount Llandaff.

2033. Not fit, you mean?—Not fit, neither the surroundings nor the character. Then when a girl (to continue my answer to the Bishop's question) gets such a foster-parent, her first desire is to obtain relief from the burden of the child. She agrees to pay

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

practically any sum they ask; 4s., or 5s., or 6s. a week for the child, and does pay it for two or three weeks, or perhaps a month, or perhaps a little longer. She is then no longer able to pay, and she practically deserts the child, who is thrown upon the foster-parent. In some cases a sum of money would be paid down, but those are the exceptional cases, where the girls have been in a better position, and have not been either domestic servants or employed in factories or workshops. Then the foster-parent finds the child thrown on her hands; it is not properly paid for, and as a consequence it very often is not properly attended to, a kind of rough justice being meted out to it: "This child is not paid for, *ergo*, this child is not to be carefully attended to;" and even if there be other children in the foster-parent's house, I have known the child who is not paid for to suffer, while the others were properly provided for.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2034. To come back to your general view as to this proposed Bill; what are the directions in which you think that such legislation would be specially beneficial, because several of your previous answers have rather seemed to show that the benefit would be doubtful?—I have no doubt in my own mind that, generally speaking, registration would be a benefit. I think the benefit would be increased if the number of infants under three years of age to be admitted to any registered house were strictly limited by the Bill to one. And then I add what the Chairman has already said, that not only institutions like our own should be exempted from registration, but that the foster-parents we select should also be exempted from registration.

2035. The dislike to registration which you spoke of just now would of course have to be faced by a very much larger number of people if this Bill became law, and especially if there were such further restrictions as you have just now spoken of: do you consider that that objection would disappear in experience or not?—I am not quite clear what further restrictions I have suggested which would be a hindrance, except the limitation of numbers where a child was so young.

2036. That is it?—It is difficult to say whether in the working of it the objection to registration would disappear or not, so much would depend upon the way it was worked. It might be worked in the letter; it might be worked in a very aggravating form so as to create a strong feeling of aversion in a locality; for example, against registering at all, and if it did then it might be impossible to find a foster-parent in that locality because a prejudice would have been created against registration.

2037. We understood you to tell us just now that you would object to have the foster-parents you employed registered, because you would find it more difficult to get the best people to take children owing to their dislike to registration; but you recommend that for the country generally we should demand such registration. Should we not then, with the exception of those who come under your society and similar societies, deter those foster-parents who are now ready to take children respectably from doing

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so?

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

so?—I think you would, undoubtedly; I think you would generally lower the class and quality of the foster-parent throughout the country.

2038. You would deter the best class of foster-parents from assuming that position?—Undoubtedly.

2039. And you admit that that would be what would happen if we passed the Bill?—I think so.

2040. And yet you would still say, Go ahead?—Yes, because the advantages to be gained are even greater than the disadvantages to be feared.

2041. Will you expand that a little?—I think cases of cruelty and neglect due to baby farming would absolutely disappear. Limit the number of infants to one, and then apply registration generally, and the great mortality arising out of baby farming would disappear.

Chairman.

2042. There would always be babies to be farmed, would there not?—There would, but then they would be dealt with in the legitimate channels suggested by the Bill.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2043. Lord Thring suggests to me this: In order to save a few baby farmers you would condemn the average boarded-out child to worse foster-parents?—"Worse," of course, is a relative term. When one speaks of the quality of foster-parents one has necessarily to speak in respect to a very superior standard, but when the large mortality of illegitimate children is contrasted with the mortality of legitimate children one feels that the gain to be obtained by the registration of all would be a very large gain, and not a small one, even if it lessened the mortality of illegitimate children by only one-half.

Viscount Llandaff.

2044. But you ought to compare illegitimate and legitimate children put out to nurse; there is no difference then?—But the greater number of those who will be boarded out and who are taken into baby farms are not legitimate but illegitimate.

2045. What kills the illegitimate more quickly is the fact that they have no parental care, and are put under strangers and huddled about the country?—That is so; and especially when the payments by the mother cease as is often the case within a few weeks; this breeds indifference on the part of those who have them in charge.

2046. But I understood you to say that registration by itself is worth nothing; you must have inspection also?—Of course registration by itself is a mere word, except so far as it means some investigation of the character of the foster-parent beforehand.

2047. And you think no inspection is worth talking about unless fortnightly and over a small area?—Not exactly; I only suggested that for children who could not talk, those under three, with regard to whom identification is difficult; but a great many children are boarded out who are over three, and to whom such exact stipulations need not apply.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2048. You said just now that if the stringency of this law were extended and the law universally

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

applied, baby-farming would disappear (I do not press the exact words), but is it not the case that in the worst sense of that word, that is to say in the cases of children who are deliberately made away with, who are taken not for purposes of profit of a legitimate sort or a plausible sort, but deliberately to make away with them, those are not people who would come under any law, make it what you like—I mean they would evade any restrictions; the people who are likely to register are not the scoundrels who intend to murder the children, and that process of murdering would be apparently, as far as I can see, carried on where it is carried on now without much greater difficulty?—But if this Bill becomes law the foster-parents who accept children must register; if they accept children without registration they immediately bring upon themselves police surveillance, and the evil is checked shortly. A woman may perhaps receive and keep some three or four children for a week or a fortnight without registration, but you cannot contemplate her having them much longer, if this becomes law, without its coming under the observation of those upon whom the law has cast the duty of carrying it out; that is my answer.

Chairman.

2049. Are many nurse children, that is children rescued from baby farms, brought to you?—We have had some, but very few.

2050. Not many?—Not many; they have been chiefly brought to me through Mr. Waugh's society, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; we receive children from them continually.

2051. I understood Mr. Waugh to express an exactly contrary opinion to what you gave just now as to the effects of registration; I understood Mr. Waugh to say that he thought that if registration was extended it would tend to level up the class of baby farmers, and that we should have a better class and not a worse class?—Mr. Waugh can only offer an opinion and a conjecture, and it is possible that his opinion and conjecture are better founded than mine; nevertheless, I stand by my own view.

2052. You told the Bishop, I think, at the beginning of his examination that you had not had any experience of registered houses?—I have never visited children in registered houses.

2053. I am informed that you are now contributing to three children in registered houses?—It is quite likely; but if so this is an exceptional case, and an exception that has not come under my personal notice; it is dealt with as an exception.

Viscount Llandaff.

2054. Do you avoid registered houses?—No, I do not avoid them, but we do not need them; our system of boarding out has not rendered it necessary; registration, I take it, under the old Act, applied only to where more than one infant under 12 months was boarded out, but as we never board out more than one under 12 months in one house I have not found it necessary to have resort to registered houses.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2055. Do you consider the system of taking children for hire to be one which can be profitably

7 May 1896.]

Mr. BARNARDO, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

ably carried on if the children are rightly cared for?—Profitably by the foster-parents, do you mean?—Undoubtedly.

2056. What terms would you consider profitable?—Our average payment is 5s. 6d., but we pay 7s. for children under three, 6s. until the child reaches four, and after four, 5s. A child under three requires the care of one person, if it is to be properly attended to. At those rates there is undoubtedly a profit.

2057. Those rates, of course, are very high as practice goes?—No, we average 5s. 6d.

2058. What is the Poor Law average?—Five shillings, I think.

Chairman.

2059. And the Foundling Hospital is 6s.?—Yes. I know that in some country parishes, where the boarding out is done immediately round the local union, they get them at lower rates, 4s., and so on, but where I have inspected some of these justice has not been done to the children, in my opinion.

Viscount Llandaff.

2060. Four shillings, and 5s. for infants?—I think all round; they do not make a difference.

2061. I mean they only pay 4s. or 5s. for a child for whom you would pay 7s.?—Only in some cases; in those cases where they are boarded out immediately round the local union. I do not think I have stated the number I have boarded out. The total number we have boarded out since we began has been 3,841.

2062. How many years have you been boarding out?—We began boarding out in October 1886.

2063. You have got 1,751 boarded out now, and in all those years the total is what you have stated?—Yes, the total number is 3,841.

2064. It began on a small scale?—Yes, it began on a small scale; and as children remain boarded out until 14 or thereabouts, the changes are not very frequent.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2065. Why do you have so many institutions where the children are congregated, if, as I understood you to say and as others say, it is so much better for the children to be boarded out; is it on grounds of economy?—No, but because boarding out is not applicable to every child; it is only applicable to certain classes of children. For example, we have to consider in boarding out the age of the child, we have to consider its physical condition, and its relatives. The latter are often a great barrier; in some cases the relatives insist upon seeing the child so often in the year; those cases we cannot board out. Then, again, no boarding out is in our judgment of value unless it is begun before the child is seven years of age. Well, a great number of our children come to us over seven; consequently they are not eligible for boarding out.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered,—That this Committee be adjourned to Tuesday next, at Eleven o'clock.

Die Martis, 12^o Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord KINNAIRD.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH, IN THE CHAIR.

MR. HUGH PERCY DUNN, F.R.C.S., having been called in ; is Examined, as follows :

Chairman.

2073. You are a Fellow, I believe, of the Royal College of Surgeons of England?—Yes.

2074. And you are on the staff of the West London Hospital?—Yes.

2075. May I ask how many years' experience you have had as a medical practitioner?—I qualified in 1876 ; I took my Fellowship in the year 1880.

2076. I believe that you have been interested in this question of what is known as baby-farming?—I have.

2077. And you have been writing some special articles and making inquiries, I believe, on behalf of the "British Medical Journal"?—I have, at the desire of the editor, Mr. Ernest Hart.

2078. May I ask what sort of investigation you have made ; how you proceeded?—I first of all ascertained all the facts in connection with the former inquiry in 1871 ; I went carefully through the Blue Book of that date, and ascertained all that I could learn in respect to the inquiry then ; and subsequently I was appointed a Commissioner to interview certain gentlemen who had paid a good deal of attention to the subject, and from whom was thought that I could acquire information.

2079. When you say you were appointed a Commissioner, you mean that you were sent as a Commissioner by the editor of the "British Medical Journal"?—Yes.

2080. And what did you do then ; how did you get your information ; did you go and investigate any cases yourself?—No, I did nothing of that sort, because I found that when I went to Mr. Spencer of the London County Council a great deal of that ground had been covered, and it did not appear to be necessary then to make further inquiries beyond those that had been so admirably done by the London County Council.

2081. Therefore you have no personal knowledge of registered or unregistered houses?—No.

2082. And you have no personal knowledge as to the effect of registration?—No.

2083. You have read the Bill, I believe, which is before the House now?—I have, and I (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

incorporated it in my report in the "British Medical Journal."

2084. Have you got a copy of your report?—I have. It consists of six articles, beginning on the 22nd of February and going on to the 28th of March. I merely brought it down here to answer questions from.

2085. Speaking on the general principles of the Bill, are you in favour of the second clause of the Bill which provides for the extension of the provisions of the present Act to children of five years of age?—As the result of my investigations into this, I am decidedly in favour of the extension of the Act.

2086. Can you give any special reasons?—Well, I think it is proved by the investigations which I made from the chief constables of England, that the Act really is a dead letter in the provinces ; that is to say that under present circumstances there are only two registered houses in England apart from London.

2087-8. You made inquiries in the provinces?—Yes, after doing so in London. These are incorporated also in my report.

Chairman.] But the Committee have not had an opportunity of seeing your report, you will remember.

Lord Kinnaird.

2089. Did your inquiries extend all over England?—I made inquiries of the chief constables of about 28 of the largest towns in England.

Chairman.

2090. Did you see them or write to them?—I wrote to them ; I have their answers here.

Lord Kinnaird.

2091. Did you include Scotland?—Scotland, as far as Edinburgh only.

Q 3

2092. In

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

2092. In the first portion of your report you deal with the baby farming system and its evils, and you give its history; but I think the Committee are fairly well acquainted with the general lines on which baby farming is carried out. And you also give an account of the working of the Infant Life Protection Act in London, with which, I think, we are also familiar; and now, I think, comes your report on this Bill. With regard to the extension of the age, you say that from the information which you obtained in the provinces you found that the Act was to a great extent a dead letter?—That is so.

2093. How many registered houses have you come across in the provinces?—Only two throughout the provinces.

2094. Where were they?—One was at Manchester and the other was at Bath.

2095. Do you know how many children were kept in each house?—No information was given me upon that subject; it was only that the houses were registered.

2096. And, I suppose, they were registered by the ordinary local authority; there was no special inspector told off for them?—No.

2097. Have you got any remarks to make with regard to the numbers of illegitimate births in these large towns?—Yes; I made an analysis of the number of illegitimate births as recorded in the Registrar General's Report for the year 1894, which was the nearest that I could get to this date, and I made out that, excluding Manchester and Bath, the number of illegitimate children born in that year, 1894, in 27 of the large towns in England, was, approximately, 5,000.

2098. That list does not include London, I suppose?—It excludes London; and it also excludes Manchester and Bath, because there was a registered house in Manchester, and a registered house in Bath. To this large total the Infant Life Protection Act has been shown not to apply.

2099. How has it been shown not to apply?—Because, from the answers of the chief constables, I learnt that there were no registered houses in those towns.

2100. That does not necessarily show that the Act did not apply to them; it might point to the fact that the Act was not enforced?—But that comes to the same thing, almost, does it not?

Chairman.] No, I do not think it does at all.

Viscount Llandaff.

2101. So far as I have gone, and so far as the constables' answers have gone, they all say that the police make diligent inquiry, and that there is no evasion of the Act?—I refer to that in my report.

2102. For instance, I read this in one of the letters: "Persistent and regular steps are taken by the police to ascertain whether the Act is evaded. No cases of evasion are known to me"?—Yes.

2103. Here, again, a chief constable writes, in reply to your circular, "I am only able to say that in Leeds some years ago the matter was

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

taken in hand, but it was found there was little or nothing to supervise or register, so that the matter may be said to have comparatively dropped. I have received a long letter from our medical officer of health, and from that it would appear that there was really nothing in Leeds to register"?—But there were 435 illegitimate children in Leeds in 1894. The population was 222,154 in 1891, and in 1894 the births of illegitimate children were 435.

2104. Where do you get that figure from?—From the Registrar General's Report; that is to say, that 435 illegitimate children had no benefit from the Act.

2105. It does not follow that they were all put out to nurse?—That may be so; but it does not show that the Act was in force.

Chairman.

2106. If the extracts which Lord Llandaff has just read may be taken as fair samples, your inquiries may be taken to have resulted in showing that under the Act, so far as it goes, due inquiries were made in all large towns with regard to it; that is what you mean, is it not?—One conclusion that I formed with regard to the chief constables' letters was this: it would appear that no systematic inspection is resorted to by the police; that is to say, that no officials, as in London, are especially made responsible for the inquiries respecting the administration of the Infant Life Protection Act in the districts. So far as the two registered houses are concerned, no information was given with regard to the inspection carried out in the one at Manchester, while in the other it was stated that the house was visited by an inspector of police.

2107. But what I mean is this, that as far as you can gather from the replies that you have got to your questions to the chief constables, you believe that due inquiries are made by the police with regard to the existence or non-existence of baby farming in those towns in the provinces; that is what they say, is it not?—Well, the impression that I formed was that they did not know much about the Act; I may have been wrong in that impression; that was the impression I formed because their results were so entirely negative.

2108. But if they do make inquiries, and find that there is no evasion of the Act, that may point to the fact that, owing to the limited scope of the Act, there may still be a considerable number of children put out who are outside the limits of the existing Act?—That was the impression that I formed.

2109. And, therefore, that is the reason why you say that you would like to see the Act extended to children of five years of age?—That is so. Now I may also refer to this; I issued four questions; they are included in one of the letters; you will find, first, the number of licensed houses under the Act in the district; second, the system of inspection carried out; third, the cases of evasion of the Act known to the chief constable himself; and fourth, the defects in the Act, as proved by local experience of it.

2110. I have

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2110. I have the answer of the chief constable of Sunderland before me, and the answer was "nil" to all four questions?—Yes; I think I was justified in my conclusion; there are several others of the same kind.

Chairman.

2111. I see that there is one from Plymouth. Plymouth is a place, I should think, where there would be a great number of children put out. The chief constable says, "The Infant Life Protection Act has not been enforced in this borough, no circumstances having arisen to call for such action. We have an officer of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in the town, who works in conjunction with the police, and whose work undoubtedly acts as a deterrent to those who would, if they had the opportunity, infringe the Act." Here is another from Portsmouth. The town clerk says, "Your letter of the 27th ultimo to the chief constable has been handed to me, and, in reply, I beg to say that there are no licensed houses in this borough under the Infant Life Protection Act. There is, of course, therefore, no inspection of such houses. I understand, from the medical officer of health, that he has only heard of one case of evasion, and in that case the practice was discontinued before, in fact, the evasion was found out"?—I should like to draw attention to the following answer as a perfectly unique one. This was a reply to the question of systematic inspection, and the answer was, "In strict conformity with the Acts of Parliament." I have not included it in this report, but the letter is there.

Viscount Llandaff.

2112. From what place?—I cannot remember without looking at the bundle. I may say that very few chief constables categorically answered the questions.

Chairman.

2113. Do you think that extending the necessity for registration to children of five years of age would interfere with such cases as have been mentioned before this Committee; cases of children whose mother dies, or the cases of children being sent home from India and other hot climates to England?—My view is this: That Indian children are usually sent over for purposes of education, and that that being the case they are generally over five years of age. I have had several friends, at all events, who have had children sent over from India to England for education; they have all been above five years of age. I do not think the Bill would interfere with them at all.

2114. Have you anything else to call attention to with regard to the reasons for the non-administration of the Act outside London?—My reasons are explained in this report.

2115. I should be glad if you would state them to us?—Perhaps I may be allowed to read the article.

2116. I think that would be the best thing?—"It is very evident, as may be gathered from a close scrutiny of the Bill, that much time and

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

care have been expended upon the details of its clauses. Moreover, there is evidence that the details have been elaborated by those who have had an intimate acquaintance with the defective working of the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872. In this connection the hope may be expressed that due weight will be given to these facts by those who may evince a disposition to amend the Bill when it comes to be discussed by the Legislature. Upon the whole, the alterations proposed are to be approved. The clause in which it is laid down that it shall be unlawful for any person to receive for hire or reward in that behalf any infant under the age of five years, except in a registered house, is excellent. In the principal Act it will be remembered that the corresponding clause permits a person to receive one infant under the age of one year, a privilege that has done more than anything else to render the working of the Act abortive. That is my opinion. Another important clause in the Bill is that which prohibits the transference of infants from persons who receive them for hire or reward to another person without the consent of the local authority. Obviously, the principal Act makes it quite possible for evasion to be practised in this respect. A few remarks may now be made with reference to certain details with which the Bill might have dealt with advantage. In the first place, the principal Act requires amendment in the clause relating to the holding of an inquest upon the death of an infant occurring in a registered house. The discretion of whether or not an inquest is necessary is in the hands of the coroner for the district, and if a certificate of death signed by a qualified medical practitioner, be forwarded to the coroner, it is open to the latter to give an order for the burial of the infant without further inquiry. The amendment, however, which the circumstances of the case seem to call for, is to make it compulsory for an inquest to be held in every case of the death of an illegitimate child living apart from its mother. The deterrent effects of those public proceedings could not fail to stimulate the baby farmers to do their best for their charges, so as to avoid official inquiry. It may here be observed that a clause with this provision forms part of the Infant Life Protection Act of Australia, passed in the year 1890, and the coroners of the district there are of the opinion that it has had a most beneficial effect in lessening the evils of the baby-farming system. Of course, in London such a clause might not be necessary, but it should be remembered that the amendments of the Act printed above are intended to apply to the whole of the United Kingdom, in parts of which it cannot be said that the coroners and the local authorities have shown as much vigilance in enforcing the Infant Life Protection Act as is displayed by the officers of the Public Control Department of the London County Council. But there is another point to which attention may be drawn. It is possible that the best results of the working of the Act would be obtained if the local authority in all cases save that of London were made to mean the police."

Q 4

2117. That

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2117. That is, the police to register the house and inspect it?—Yes.

2118. You think that would have a conciliatory effect?—It would have a deterrent effect. That is the kind of thing I want to point out.

Chairman.

2119. You mentioned an Infant Life Protection Act in Australia; there is an Act in force there, I believe?—Yes, passed in 1890; it came into force a few years afterwards.

2120. Do you remember what particular lines that Act is on?—It is a very much more stringent Act than we could have in this country.

2121. In what way more stringent?—As to inquests; as to the thorough inspection which is carried out in the baby farms.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2122. Have you a copy of the Act you allude to?—I have here a *précis* of the Act, which I took from an Australian medical journal.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2123. In what part of Australia is the Act in force?—In Victoria; I do not think it applies to the whole of Australia, though it is called the Australian Act. It was passed in Melbourne. It was passed by the Legislature in 1890, but did not come into force till January 1893; that is to say, it did not come into force till three years afterwards.

Chairman.

2124. Dealing with the question of inquests, I gather from what you said just now, that this Australian Act makes it obligatory on the coroners in Victoria to hold an inquest on every illegitimate child that dies apart from its mother?—That is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2125. Will you give us the *précis* of the Act?—The following is a brief summary of the leading features of the Act (my impression is that it is a *précis* of it): "No person is allowed to adopt or maintain a child, apart from its mother, for a longer period than three days, unless registered by the police under the Act. The chief commissioner of police keeps a list of all persons so registered, with a description of the house, &c. The term of registration lasts only until the last day of December in the year of registration, and a new application has to be made for each year, but no fees are charged either for registration or its renewal. The police have right of entry into these registered houses, and may take a medical man with them if they deem it necessary. Each nurse is bound to keep a roll in which she enters the name, age, sex of each child below two years coming under her charge, the date of admission, and full particulars of the person from whom the child was received. In case the child is removed from the nurse, the name, address, and signature of the person receiving the child have to be entered on the roll, together with the date of removal. A copy of each such entry has to be sent to the chief commissioner of police within three days

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

of the reception or removal of each child. The police have the right to ask for these rolls and inspect them, and, if they deem fit, retain them. Falsifying the roll or furnishing false particulars of any matter that is required to be entered in the roll is punishable under the Act. If, from information received, it seems advisable to the commissioner of police to remove a registered nurse from the roll, he is empowered to at once remove the children from her charge, and place them in the charge of the department for neglected children, and leave a notice at the registered house that the registration will be cancelled within ten days. The nurse may give written notice within seven days of her intention to appeal against this removal, if she deposits the sum of 20s. with her notice. The chief secretary then appoints a time to hear the appeal, and his decision is final. Every person registered under this Act is compelled to report the death of any of her charges within 24 hours at the nearest police station, and an inquest is held on the body of the infant. A death certificate cannot be received from a medical man or registered by the registrar for deaths when it applies to an illegitimate child living apart from its mother. No infant dying under three years of age while in the care of a registered person can be buried without the production of a coroner's certificate. It lies in the power of the chief secretary to give a written order for the Act not to apply in the case of a public institution for the reception of infants, or in any special case in which he may deem it advisable. The occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child is born is obliged to give notice in writing to the deputy registrar of births in the district within three days of the birth."

Chairman.

2126. Well, the principal thing that I observe there is, first of all, that they insist upon registration of children kept more than three days apart from their mother?—Yes.

2127. Whereas in our Act it is 24 hours apart from the mother?—Yes.

2128. Have you any opinion to express upon that?—I do not think that is a very material matter. I should say that 24 hours is a very much better limit than three days; a child may easily die within three days.

2129. And they put in this first clause that, "No person is allowed to adopt or maintain a child apart from its mother," and so on, but they do not put any age; and then further down they say, "Each nurse is bound to keep a roll in which she enters the name, age, sex of each child below two years." I take it then when they speak of a child they mean a child under two years?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

2130. What is the penalty of a breach of the Act; have you got that?—It was not included in this *précis*.

Chairman.

2131. I think you might read the rest of your analysis?—It will thus be seen that the chief features

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

features of this Act differ very materially from those constituting the amendments to the Infant Life Protection Act of 1872, which appear in the Bill published in these columns last week. Perhaps the most noticeable difference in this regard is the prominent position assigned to the police in the administration of the Australian Act. Practically the whole responsibility of the Act is placed in the hands of the police authorities. A plain clothes constable is told off in each district to see that the provisions of the Act are properly complied with. Moreover, the police are expected to take the initiative in the organisation of details, the adoption of which might seem to render the Act more perfect in its working. For example, it was found soon after the Act came into force, that the baby farmers displayed generally gross ignorance of the care and feeding of infants. The police accordingly applied to a well-known authority in children's diseases in Melbourne, who drew up for them a schedule containing full directions in respect to the care and culture of children. This schedule was printed and distributed by the police among all registered houses, and ordered to be hung in a conspicuous position in some room thereof. The administration of the Infant Life Protection Act by the police in Australia has undeniably added weight to the views already expressed in favour of the adoption of the same course being followed in the administration of the corresponding Act in this country. In London indeed, as was pointed out, no necessity exists for the police to assume any such responsibility, owing to the very admirable manner in which the Act is carried out by the Public Control Department of the London County Council. But there are strong reasons for the belief that in other centres, as well as in rural districts in the United Kingdom, the police alone can administer the Act."

2132. Will you give us your opinion as to the prevention of these cases; you might read the last paragraph?—"It will be further observed that in the Australian Act no age limit is mentioned, so far as this relates to the reception of a child or children; but in a somewhat indefinite manner it states that the names of all children under two years of age must be entered on a list with their age, sex, and date of admission, &c., into a registered house. In this connection a question arises as to what is done with regard to illegitimate children who are over the age of two years. The Australian Act contains another clause which refers to a somewhat important point, and that is the power of appeal against the cancelling of her license, which is afforded the baby-farmer. Possibly the granting of this concession really only amounts to a matter of form, nevertheless no harm would be likely to accrue if it were incorporated in the Amendment Bill which is now before the House of Lords. The next important point in the above Act is the clause relating to the holding of an inquest upon the body of every infant under three years of age, whose death occurs while under the care of a registered person. The Act, it will be observed, lays down that in these cases a death certificate from a medical man cannot be received or registered by the registrar for deaths. This (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

detail, from several points of view, can only be regarded as expedient. It appears also to be the rule of the coroners in Melbourne to hold inquests upon the bodies of illegitimate children, even when residing in the same house with their mothers, unless the infants are certified to have died from some disease not due to errors of diet."

2133. You do not, I suppose, know how many registered houses there are in Melbourne or in Victoria?—No, I have no means of getting that information.

Lord Kinnaird.

2134. Nor the number of illegitimate children?—I think it would be possible to make out the number, but it would be very difficult.

Chairman.

2135. Have you ever seen any report other than this one which you have quoted to us as to the working of the Australian Act?—No.

2136. You do not know of anybody of practical experience from there who could give us any evidence as to the actual working of the Act?—I should think some information might be obtained from the Agent General for Victoria; he certainly would have a copy of the Act, I should think.

2137. If an inquest were insisted on in the case of every illegitimate child that died apart from its parent, there would be an enormous increase in the number of inquests in the country?—There would; but a great many of such inquests might be necessary.

Viscount Llandaff.

2138. What is the cost of an inquest; there is, first, the fee to the coroner?—There is the medical man's fee, if there is a *post mortem*, of two guineas.

2139. The cost of summoning the jury?—I do not know what the jury get.

2140. The jury are 24, are they not?—Twelve; seldom more than 12. The coroner is paid by salary.

2141. Do they not get any additional fees?—No; his salary is based upon the number of inquests. When the salaries were fixed by the County Council for the new districts the coroners had to send a return of the number of inquests they had in their districts, and I think the salaries were based on that.

2142. Is the salary revised as the number of inquests increases?—I think not; that is beyond my knowledge.

Chairman.

2143. We have had some evidence given here in the course of this inquiry as to the subject of lying-in houses, and we have been told that it is the practice in these lying-in houses to send the children away to these professional baby farmers of the worst class; have you any experience of that yourself?—No, that has not been within my experience.

2144. Have you any evidence or opinions to give us with regard to these lying-in houses?—No direct evidence at all; my inquiry did not include

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

include any investigation with respect to these lying-in houses.

2145. It has been suggested that all lying-in houses that are habitually used for the purpose of confinement should be registered, with a view of keeping some sort of control, or obtaining accurate knowledge of the births that occurred; is it your opinion, as a medical man, that such a regulation would be much resented by the medical profession?—I do not see that it could be practically carried out.

2146. You do not think it could be carried out?—It could not be carried out.

2147. Why?—Because it would be impossible to define what a lying-in house is.

2148. There are a great many private lodging-houses to which people in the country come up for the purpose of confinement?—That is so to a large extent.

2149. Perfectly respectable and well-kept houses, which are attended by leading practitioners?—Yes, usually lodgings.

2150. Would there be any objection to registering those?—I think a lady who wanted to come and be attended by her special medical man in London would very much object to have the house that she went into submitted to any sort of supervision. The position of affairs is this: the hotels will not take such ladies; the proprietors object to children crying and so forth; the nursing homes will not take such ladies; they have objections of their own; and so there is nothing else left for these ladies who want to come to London to be attended by well-known obstetricians than to take private apartments; and what is done is this, they take rooms as close to their medical man as they can, and there they are confined; and these apartments are simply lodgings. The confinement takes place, the attendance is carried out, and the lady goes.

2151. Therefore you mean to say it would be very difficult to draw the line between a lodging-house keeper who takes in one lady for her confinement, and lets the rest of her house to other lodgers, and another lodging-house keeper who devotes her house to that purpose?—That is so.

2152. Can you suggest any way of ensuring a better supervision of the children that are sent out from the low-class lying-in houses?—My impression is that the way of meeting that evil would be by registering every still-birth. In these lying-in houses, according to my information and what I have read, it is possible clandestinely to interrupt the life of these children; and that was proved also in the evidence of the 1871 Committee. There is very strong evidence indeed there showing that those houses were the great source of infanticide, and that they were also the houses from which the baby farmers acquired the material for their trade.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2153. You have given us your experience, or what you were led to believe, in writing these articles; but have you any experience as a medical man of the subject at all personally?—Personally I have not.

2154. Have you had any experience from work or visiting among the poor, I mean any large

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

experience?—Not among baby farmers. In earlier days, about 1883, I used to attend some patients who were in a low class.

2155. The object of my question is this; as far as I gather the value of your evidence will depend really upon what knowledge it is based upon; you have put in the answers from the constables, from the chief constables, or rather you have shown us what these answers are, and you have told us that you have read up the Act and so forth; but you do not claim to be able to speak from any further knowledge; you merely speak as one who has looked into the question as any of us might?—That is so.

2156. You having looked into it and formed your opinion you tell us that you think that the Act ought now to be strengthened, because it is a dead letter everywhere else than in London. To me it would seem that it did not lead to that conclusion; it would rather seem that some new system might conceivably be wanted altogether, but not that you should strengthen an Act which even in its present form is not practically put into operation?—My answer to that would be that in London there are only a few registered houses, but the County Council inspectors have found out a very large number of unregistered houses.

2157. Then you do not base your opinion upon the fact that the Act is a dead letter in the provinces?—If there are such a large number of unregistered houses in London, and only a small number of registered houses, I should infer that there are a good many houses in the provinces, the existence of which is unknown to the authorities.

2158. What sort of houses?—Unregistered houses; that is to say, baby farms. I was told that there were 600 baby farms in England, out of London.

2159. Who told you that?—I think you will have the witness before you who gave me that information.

2160. When you or this witness say that there are 600 baby farms, what do you mean by baby farms?—That is what he told me; that is to say, houses in which children are continually received for hire.

2161. You might call anything a baby farm in which a single child is kept?—No, I should not be inclined to say that a single child being kept would constitute the house a baby farm.

Viscount Llandaff.

2162. Do you mean houses that ought to be registered under the existing Act, in which more than one child under 12 months is kept?—I could not say that.

2163. That is the point?—I could not say that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2164. Then, to come to another point, you said that inspection by the police would, in your opinion, have a deterrent effect; deterrent on what; on the reception of children, or on the maltreatment of children?—I merely meant on the reception of children.

2165. Exactly the conclusion that I should form, that the inspection by the police would have a deterrent effect upon the reception of children.

12 May 1896.]

Mr. DUNN, F.R.C.S.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

children. The children must still remain under present circumstances unhappily; they will go somewhere?—Women would not embark on baby farming if they knew that they had to be so thoroughly inspected. The point is, that if they knew that they were liable to be continually inspected it would not be a trade in which they would care to embark.

2166. Now look at it from the other side; there are a large number of illegitimate babies in England to-day; what is the proper mode in which, when this deterrent effect has been exercised, the mothers are to dispose of babies for whom it is increasingly difficult to find a home?—That involves a large question.

2167. The very question we are set here to consider; the babies exist, and they have got to be kept somewhere; what we have to try to do is to find a place where they can be put, where they can be properly seen to, and not either by carelessness or maltreatment die, and we want your help and the help of other witnesses in showing us how that is to be done?—I think that all those women who wish to conduct baby farms honestly will not object to registration, it is a perfectly legitimate trade if carried on legitimately; but this Act, I contend, allows dishonest women to conduct the trade dishonestly.

2168. Then, do you consider that the inspection by the police to which you have referred as having a deterrent effect would only be deterrent upon bad foster-parents, and not upon good ones?—That is my impression.

2169. Have you considered at all the point whether inspection by the police in such a way as you have described as prevailing in Australia would be a popular thing with the respectable foster-parents?—Well, I think I should have to be in Australia myself to answer that.

2170. Let us leave Australia out; do you think in London or England generally it would, or would not, be a popular thing for the respectable foster-parents to be constantly inspected by the police?—I think, if the police found that a baby farm was being properly conducted they would use all their tact in not making the Act disagreeable.

2171. But the ordinary policeman before he found that out must in the exercise of his tact pay a great many visits?—At first, in the exercise of his duty it would be necessary for him to do so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2172. With regard to your reply to the Chairman's question as to how this Bill would affect people sending children home from India, assuming that some are sent under five years of age, the people who took charge of them would have to be registered, would they not?—I do not think I could assume that from my own knowledge.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

(0.95.)

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Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

2173. You spoke with regard to these lying-in houses; with regard to those houses, there are many kept, are there not, by midwives, people of not very respectable character, but who keep them for the lying-in of women?—I do not think I ought to answer that question, not having any personal knowledge of the subject.

Lord Kinnaird.

2174. Do you think that medical men would or would not object to the lying-in houses that they attended being registered?—I think the medical profession would object to the registration of lying-in houses, that is to say, that if a lady wanted to come up and be attended by a practitioner I think he certainly would object having to send his patient to a house, then to find that that house was visited afterwards by a police officer or some other authority. It is a private matter altogether with reputable medical men attending ladies in confinement in that way.

2175. Then you think they are to be protected in a way which others in a different class would not be?—I said it would be impossible to give any definition of a lying-in house, and that I could not see the possibility of registration of such houses for that reason.

2176. You have given in Leeds 435 illegitimate births; how many of those, within your personal knowledge, ought to be in some registered house?—I could not answer that.

2177. Your investigation did not show that?—No.

2178. Did you form any opinion of registration as to whether children are protected under quite other Acts than the Infant Life Act; I mean you do not think, do you, that the chief constables in the whole of England would ignore the fact that a great many infants were not protected as they ought to be; if that were known by them to be the fact they would bring the Act into play?—Might I answer the question by reading this? "It might be well that the Legislature should call for a return from all the large towns in the kingdom, showing as nearly as possible the number of unregistered houses to which the present Act does not apply. If full details were forthcoming in this particular, including the number of the children received, their ages and the rate of mortality, the data would undeniably be of use in showing how far the need for some change in the Act was urgent, as would appear to be the case."

2179. Have you in your hospital many infants who apparently have been ill-treated?—I cannot answer that question without consulting one of the house surgeons. I have no doubt they would be able to say something on that.

2180. You would know it if there were many?—Yes, but I do not think that a person who ill-treats her child would take the trouble to bring it to a hospital. We do not get any cases of the kind, at all events within my experience.

12 May 1896.

[Continued.]

DEACONESS GILMORE, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*.

2181. You are the head of the Deaconesses' Institution of the Diocese of Rochester?—Yes.

2182. And the Home of the Institution is in Battersea?—The Home of the Institution is on Clapham Common.

2183. The work lies in the poor parishes of Battersea?—Yes.

2184. Your work consists, if I understand it rightly, partly in personally visiting the houses of the poor, and partly in training other ladies who are going to be deaconesses, to do the same?—Yes.

2185. You have under your care a considerable number of probationers; ladies who are being so trained?—Yes.

2186. And the district in which your work lies is a characteristically poor one, including some of the poorest parts of Battersea?—Yes.

2187. The whole district in which your work thus lies, as I gather, contains about 20,000 people?—Yes; the people we work amongst; it does not entirely cover the whole of the parishes.

2188. And therefore you have a fairly complete knowledge of the life of the poor population over that large area?—Yes.

2189. Have you given any special attention to the working of this particular Act, or to the question of registration?—No.

2190. But without doing that you have been able to form, no doubt, some general opinion of your own as to the frequency or otherwise of the existence of nurse children in such districts?—Yes.

2191. You have placed in my hands a paper taking one division of that large district, containing 129 houses, or 256 families. In the case of that district you have tried, as far as memory serves or notes serve, to recall the number of nurse children whose cases have come under your notice within the last two years?—Nurse children who are not related to the people who have them.

2192. Not related to their foster parents?—Not related to their foster parents.

2193. And you find that 16 such children in that comparatively small district have come under your notice in this year and-a-half?—In about three years. That, of course, does not, I think, cover the number of children; because, of course, it would be exceedingly difficult for us to find out when there were nurse children in a house. You notice a baby there, and are told that it is a baby brought in for the day; you have no evidence to prove that that child is only there for the day; it is possible that it may be a nurse child. It is only when you see it constantly that you suspect that it is a nurse child. We may have had many more cases than that, but those are the cases of nurse children actually paid for and there as nurse children. It is quite possible that those cases which they told us were day cases were nurse children.

2194. Roughly speaking, all these children are illegitimate?—Yes, roughly speaking, I think nearly all; I do not remember any that were not.

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

2195. And you do not include illegitimate children who were being nursed by their own relations, grandmother or mother's sister?—No, not even her own sister. The most common case is that of a girl in service; she comes home to her sister to be confined and leaves her child there.

2196. To a married sister?—To a married sister; that is a very common occurrence; oftener than with her own parents.

2197. And those are cases of receiving for hire, where the child would be received by a relation?—Yes.

2198. But still for hire?—Still for hire, generally speaking.

2199. What is your impression as to the advantage or disadvantage of making more stringent regulations about such children?—I think it is a most difficult question. I am afraid it would be constantly evaded in some way; they would find means to evade it.

2200. You mean that if registration were required they would find means to evade it?—Yes, judging as I do by the class of people who take these children. In several of the districts in which one works there is a very respectable artisan class, and among those you hardly ever find these children; if you do it is under exceedingly exceptional circumstances; and the class that we find taking them is the casual labourer class, and even lower than that; they move about so.

2201. You do not find nurse children among the artisan class?—Among the respectable artisan class, the upper artisan class, we do not.

2202. But they are among the poorer labouring class?—Yes.

2203. And the difficulty there is increased by the constant fluctuation and movement of that class?—Yes. In that district which I have given you I often find that there have been 30 moves in one month.

2204. Out of 129 houses there have been 30 movements in one month?—Yes.

2205. Now would you go on with what you were about to say?—I think they would evade it in that way by moving, because I know how difficult it is for the School Board people to trace them; they find great difficulty in these very degraded districts in tracing people; and I think in the same way you would find a great difficulty when the houses became registered; they would manage to evade it by moving to another part; and it is very difficult in London to trace them.

2206. That is to say, a house once registered, the occupant would be moving immediately somewhere else?—They give no notice to the police of their moving or to the Local Government Board if they wish to evade the law, and I fancy they could do it very easily. I know that they do it very easily with the School Board officer.

2207. Do you think that the process of registration would be unpopular with that class?—Not if it is done wisely, with, I should think, women

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

women visitors; but if it were done by the police I think it would be fatal to it immediately. In some of these streets which I give you there where these children have been found, a policeman could hardly go except two or three together; they could not go into places that would be perfectly safe for me.

2208. You mean that you would fear that the registration you mean would be a non-reality because it would be so evaded; or I will put it thus: Do you think that the endeavour to give increased stringency to the rule of registration is desirable or not?—Judging from what one sees of frightful neglect among these children I should think that something ought to be done, but what, it is impossible for me to say.

2209. In what way does that neglect come under your notice; is it deliberate ill treatment, or is it from ignorance or poverty?—Mostly from ignorance, and I think very often from poverty. I have found children taken at 3s. 6d. a week; it is perfectly impossible to keep a child for 3s. 6d. a week with any profit.

2210. And would that payment of 3s. 6d. a week in such cases be likely to be regular?—Constantly, not regular. For instance, I had a case of a woman with a child a little while ago; for five or six weeks she had nothing, she was keeping it herself; and we find constantly that these servants leave the children with these people; they pay for them for a few weeks, and then the foster parents never get anything more from them, in fact they vanish altogether. I know of several of those cases. There was a case of a child of eight years old; she was left in one of those lying-in houses that you were speaking of, a house of very bad character indeed, and I knew her before that age, but about that time I found out that she was a confirmed drunkard; she was sent to Canada.

2211. That is to say, you give that as an instance of the kind of neglect that has produced such an indifferent class of people?—Yes.

2212. You give here other instances. "Lodger's child died through neglect; woman reprimanded?"—Yes.

2213. Another case, "two nurse-children, one died at the age of nine months, weighing five pounds," and another case "Lodger's child starved, dead; aged two years, weighing seven pounds." Another "Baby starved; woman imprisoned." Now, are all these cases which you would describe as non-criminal neglect?—Some of them amount to criminal neglect, but how far it was through ignorance, or how far it was from any intention to do it, it would be almost impossible to say. I think in one case, the case of the woman —, it was intentional.

2214. Should you say, speaking generally, that wrong doing of the kind that has come under your notice was intentional, or that it was from poverty and ignorance?—Unintentional, very often through the woman who has the child being a drunkard. That I think is the commonest of all, the woman who has the child being a drunkard.

2215. And should you say that a large proportion of foster parents in whose houses you have found nurse-children were people who (0.95.)

Lord Bishop of *Winchester*—continued.

could not properly have been registered under any well-administered Act?—Certainly, if you come to regard it as a matter of character. I have been asked occasionally by women (I dare say you know that they get children from the Lying-in Hospital and the Maternity Society), to write a letter for them, saying that they are fit people to have such children in their care. Of course in doing that I have always been most careful that they should be women, clean, and having a fair knowledge how to bring up children.

2216. The Maternity Hospitals, that is to say, who send their children to Battersea, apply to you for the character of the foster-parent, or the foster-parent asks you for a testimonial which she may take to the Lying-in Hospital?—Yes, that is what it really is; the woman asks me, and she takes it to the Lying-in Hospital; and they know that these children are to be had, and that the pay which they guarantee them is 5s. a week.

2217. Is that a common system in the district that you have to do with?—Yes.

2218. To receive the children at 5s. a week from the Maternity Hospital?—Yes; both the Lying-in Hospital and the Maternity Hospital.

2219. For what length of time does the hospital continue such payments?—I do not think the hospital finds the payments, but they guarantee that the servant whose child it is shall pay it, and they see that it is paid.

2220. For how long?—I cannot tell you how long.

2221. And do you think that unsuitable people obtain children in that way from respectable institutions such as the Maternity Hospital?—No. I have not found any evidence of that.

2222. Because they ask for some certificate of character on the part of the foster parent?—Yes.

2223. But if such certificate were required by the authorities before registration many of the foster parents you have known would be unable to obtain it?—Decidedly.

2224. And for that reason you would think it a good thing so far that there should be some system of registration if it could be properly worked?—Yes; but on the other hand one is very much afraid of increasing the evil of infanticide if there were greater difficulties put in the way.

2225. Do you consider that at this moment a girl in that district who has an illegitimate child finds it usually difficult to obtain a home for the child?—I think so.

2226. Would there be a competition among people to obtain the child at low terms?—If the girl is known in the district there would not be a difficulty, but supposing she comes as a stranger, as they do sometimes, to be confined in some poor, out-of-the-way place, then I think she would find great difficulty in getting the child taken in; it is then that one would have fear of its leading to murder.

2227. Then your general impression; you have told us that you have given no particular attention to the working of the Act?—None.

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12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2228. But your general impression is that some increased stringency in the system is desirable, though you are not prepared to say exactly what it ought to be?—No.

2229. Would that fairly represent your view?—Yes, that would fairly represent my view. It has been a matter of trouble that one sees these children constantly in these horrible houses with drunken foster parents, and in the most terrible surroundings. The Act of 1881 is practically a dead letter. For instance, I mean children living in a house frequented by prostitutes.

2230. You mean the Criminal Law Amendment Act when you say the Act is a dead letter?—Yes, the Criminal Law Amendment Act; it is practically a dead letter. We constantly find children in houses of this class, and they generally go to the same life of immorality. It was so in the case that I spoke of just now. That house was a very typical house; it was a house of ill-fame; but one could not bring it under the law; and yet we have known cases of girls who have been confined in that house, who have gone on living there lives of bad character; and girls have been taken there and drugged; and altogether it is as evil a house as you could possibly imagine. These children have been left behind by these girls in the house, and some of them have grown up there. The woman owns to about five or six houses altogether.

2231. And you would desire to see some system of registration in order to check the possibility of that?—For instance, in the case of that woman, when first I got to know her, I told her that my great aim would be to bring her in some way under the law if I could (but I have never been able to do it), and I let her know that we were watching her.

2232. How far do you consider that a change of the law in the direction of increasing the age is desirable; that is to say, at present, as you know, the law says that after 12 months there is no restriction upon the children who are taken in; is it in that way that you would desire increased stringency, or merely with regard to the registration, at all?—I think it is most necessary to increase the age.

2233. Do you think the wrong doing is often done to children more than 12 months old?—Yes, certainly older children, they are grossly neglected, if they are not absolutely made away with. Of course you have to consider, have you not, not only the children murdered but also the fact that they are kept in such a state that it absolutely unfits them for life hereafter.

2234. Of course we are considering at present the protection of life, but undoubtedly the other question is very closely allied to it?—Stringency in registering would improve the condition, would it not?

Viscount Llandaff.

2235. You have spoken of a large class of poor miserable people having only casual labour who take in foster children?—Yes.

2236. Have they children of their own?—Yes.

2237. Is there a marked difference between the treatment of their own children and that of the foster children?—No.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2238. Then it is the misery of a whole class we are dealing with, not merely the nurse children taken by that class?—No; the only thing is that these people are utterly unfit to have the care of these children.

2239. They are unfit to have the care of their own children, are they not?—Yes, they are.

2240. Take such a house of this bad character that you spoke of, nobody would dream of registering it?—No.

2241. What would become of the children there?—There would be no children in that house except these illegitimate children.

2242. You ought to take away the children and put them into the workhouse. How can we by any measure deal with those children?—Certainly you should take them out of such a house as that. We have two of those lying-in houses in that district, and I think that is the worse of the two; the other is nearly as bad.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2243. Are not the mothers there with their children?—I think the evidence goes to prove that the mothers were there a short time ago.

Viscount Llandaff.

2244. Do the women voluntarily keep these children?—I do not think the children were kept for a long time; what becomes of them we do not know. In the case of the other lying-in house, we have had grave suspicions for some years, and have not been able to prove anything; the woman there is a midwife, and the registration of midwives would be some help. These unregistered midwives often keep these lying-in houses.

2245. Where did you send this drunken girl you spoke of?—To Canada; she was sent away to Dr. Barnardo's Home, and then sent to Canada. That is one case.

2246. You suggest that we should pick out these illegitimate children, and leave these women with their own children?—In those two cases, neither of the women had young children of their own, they had grown-up girls.

2247. That is houses of ill-fame, but I was thinking of the larger class, casual labourers with children of their own. It seems a little invidious to pick out the nurse children for preferential treatment over the legitimate children?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2248. I will ask you this question: Would your argument be that we cannot help their having their own children, but, at least, we can prevent their taking other people's?—I should look upon it that they have their natural protectors; that the illegitimate child has no protector, its mother practically cannot protect it; therefore the State should step in and protect that child.

Viscount Llandaff.

2249. Where would you recommend us to send those children; you are to shut up the house, I understand?—Board them out under some system, or else in the country, where people could be properly inspected and visited.

2250. If

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird.

2250. If necessary, at the public expense?—Yes. Many of these girls who have children, do not get at the outside more than 12l. or 14l., or 15l. a year, and it is perfectly impossible for them to pay 5s. a week and buy clothes as well.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2251. Therefore, the payment must be what they can promise to give to the foster parent?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

2252. Have you formed an opinion of the least weekly payment that would keep a child in good condition under 12 months old?—I have never allowed anyone to take a child under 12 months for less than 5s. a week if she is to clothe it and feed it.

2253. The practical result would be that the State would have to take charge of all the illegitimate children who could not be provided for by the payment of that sum?—Yes.

Chairman.

2254. Do you think that that might tend to encourage immorality?—I am afraid it might in one way. You see, the great fear one always has of these people being watched, is that they will evade the law in some horrible way or other. I do not think we ought to make it more difficult for the unhappy girl herself to find a home for her child; it is already sufficiently difficult.

2255. Do you adopt then the opinion which Mr. Waugh I think expressed, when he said that he did not want to see baby farming suppressed; he only wanted to see it regulated?—Yes, certainly not suppressed.

2256. It is what you may call a necessary evil which you desire to regulate?—Yes.

2257. May I ask do you know the proposal in this Bill, to extend the Act to children of five years of age?—Yes.

2258. Do you think that that would be a good thing?—I am sure it would.

2259. From your knowledge of the poorer classes do you think that an extended system of compulsory registration in these cases would tend to raise or to lower the class of existing foster parents, because we have had two contrary opinions expressed. Some people think that registration would tend to bring forward a better class of people who would be willing to take children in?—I should hope so.

2260. Others, on the other hand, say that it might tend to prevent any respectable person coming in, and therefore you would have rather a worse class of baby farming carried on *sub rosa* than goes on at present?—I find this, that the respectable people have no objection whatever to the sanitary officer of the parish coming into their houses, but the disreputable class have an immense objection to his coming in.

2261. And those are just the people from whom you wish to rescue these children?—Yes; and that gives one the idea that they do not object to inspection if they are not afraid of inspection.

2262. Then these casual labourers you spoke of (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

of, how do they generally get hold of the children?—I cannot tell you.

2263. Do you think that they generally answer advertisements?—I think what happens is, that a servant girl comes to be confined in that district.

2264. But how does the servant girl know them; you spoke of servant girls who come as strangers to the district?—I remember one case in point of a girl who went into a room that was to be let; she came from the West-end of London; she knew nothing about the neighbourhood; all she wanted was to hide herself, and what she wanted when she left was to leave her child with some one and to go back to work. It would be known among the women in that street or in those few houses near, that she wanted to leave the child and that she had promised to pay a certain amount and to find the clothes. We got that girl into the Maternity Hospital.

Lord Belper.

2265. You do not mean that these places systematically advertise for children; but that when they are offered they take them?—When a girl has been confined these poor women know everything that is going on; one will say that she will take the baby. Some are naturally very kind-hearted with all their bad habits and drunkenness.

2266. They say that they are willing to take the baby; they have not made a system of taking babies or keeping them, or allowing them to die from starvation or neglect, but they are people who do it casually in different cases?—Yes.

Chairman.

2267. May I ask whether in the course of your visitations among the poor, or generally, you have ever come across any of these professional baby farmers?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2268. Have you noticed any respectable foster parents whose treatment of their children was unobjectionable?—Yes.

2269. About how many?—I could not tell you.

2270. Would it be dozens or a few?—A good many dozens.

2271. Do they do it for gain or pay chiefly?—A woman said to me once that they found that the 5s., although it is not much, coming in as it does in a lump, helps them to keep house; I am speaking of respectable women that one does really believe are tidy, decent women.

Chairman.

2272. But those respectable foster parents are the ones you say who would not have any objection to registration?—I think not.

2273. Or to inspection by anybody except the uniformed police?—They would not like the police going into the house.

2274. Do you know personally the two inspectors of the County Council that we have had here?—No.

2275. Do they visit in your district?—I dare-

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

say they do, but I have not the pleasure of knowing them.

2276. I did not know whether you might come across them?—No.

2277. Do you know whether they have any of the registered houses in your district?—I have not the least idea.

2278. You spoke of these children who are kept in these houses of ill-fame; are those children found out by the School Board officer?—Yes.

2279. They go to school?—Yes, pretty often; when they can get them there; it is a great difficulty.

Viscount Llandaff.

2280. They are able to summon them?—I should think the School Board officer could give evidence as to such cases being left behind.

2281. You spoke of the 129 houses which you visited, I understand, in a certain district, does that mean to say that that includes all the houses in that district?—Yes; you see I divide off the work for a probationer; she has to visit all the families in that district, and know fairly well all about them as far as possible.

2282. You never find any difficulty in getting admission to these houses?—No, never into that class of house.

2283. And do you think that even if the Act was extended it would still be possible to trace these children; to a certain extent you would find out sooner or later whether there were children in the house?—It is very difficult in a low neighbourhood like that to find out; it is very difficult for us to find out actually how many people there are living in those houses.

2284. You have an average of two families per house?—Yes, fairly.

2285. In some three or four?—Yes, but it is difficult to find out what people are actually living there; they take so many lodgers.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2286. This is a mere specimen section?—It is a mere specimen section where I should expect to find nurse children, and do find them.

Viscount Llandaff.

2287. Probably the worst?—Yes, quite; it is marked in Booth's map as very poor and semi-criminal, but I should mark it blacker.

2288. And yet even in that district you say there are a good many decent and reputable foster-parents?—Yes, very poor.

Lord Belper.

2289. I understand your experience is in London?—Yes.

2290. You have not had experience of the people who take children in the country?—No, I have no experience at all of country visitation.

2291. You could not express an opinion as to whether your remark that the respectable parents do not object to being registered would apply to the country?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2292. I gather your experience to be that these houses you complain of are past cure; they could not be inspected and made better?—No.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2293. You think there is nothing to be done with the children in them except to take them away?—I think so.

2294. I mean you cannot suggest any system of inspection for the purpose of instructing the foster-parents, and telling them how to take care of the children?—No; these houses are very difficult, except now and again, to do anything with.

2295. Those houses of ill-fame we must put out of the question?—I do not think such houses are uncommon.

Lord Kinnaird.

2296. You do not think there is anything special in those houses of ill-fame?—I expect there would be plenty of such houses.

Viscount Llandaff.

2297. Where children left by the former inmates are brought up by the subsequent inmates?—They have been left behind; there would not be many such.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2298. The Criminal Law Amendment Act does take care of such cases as that, or the Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children does allow you to take them out, does it not?—But there must be some distinct cruelty towards the child before you could put the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act in force; even starvation is not enough unless it is a serious case.

2299. Can you possibly state how many of such houses there are in your own special district?—No.

2300. You mentioned two in this division?—Yes, in that small division; there are only about a thousand people in that district, it is a very bad district.

Lord Kinnaird.

2301. Have you a vigilant society in your district?—I do not think they are very active there.

2302. Do not you think that the illegitimate children brought up by relations are well looked after?—Yes.

2303. Speaking of the class of servant girls, those with first babies, they do not wish to be unkind to their children?—No, they are very fond of them.

2304. And they would be glad to find some home where they could put them safely?—Yes; we look upon it as a great means of reclaiming the girl.

2305. Then your evidence would be that the better class of artisans do not take these children?—No.

2306. They are mostly the more casual labourers of the worst class?—Yes.

2307. And you would not mind how stringent the law was with regard to them?—No.

2308. And the artisan would not mind how stringent it was?—No, I am quite certain that the visitation must not be by the police.

2309. The police you think they would object to?—Yes.

2310. The

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

2310. The County Council inspector you have not come across?—No.

2311. Do you think they mind Mr. Waugh's inspectors?—I have not come across them among these people.

2312. I do not know whether you have already given this clearly; do you think there is a great deal of cruelty, making a need for some extension of the law?—I am sure there is need for an extension of the law.

2313. Then as to your evidence with regard to the moving, of course London is the worst part in that respect?—Yes.

2314. And the law would be for the whole country, and you can quite imagine that excepting big towns you could easily follow the foster parent moving about?—Yes.

2315. So that your evidence on that point would not be a reason why you would not like the law strengthened?—No.

Chairman.

2316. There are several registered houses in Battersea (*handing a list to the Witness*); would you tell me whether any of them are in your district; do you know them?—I know Ingrave-street, but it is not actually in the parish; we have probationers and a deaconess working in that parish, but we do not know it from personal visitation, Simpson-street; I know that street, but I do not visit it personally.

2317. You do not know personally any of those names?—I do not know by personal visitation any of the streets in this list.

Viscount Llandaff.

2318. So that even you, familiar with the district as you are, do not know the registered houses?—No.

2319. But the places where those houses are, are places where a deaconess is at work, and more or less away from your immediate supervision?—She might know of those houses.

2320. But you know two of the streets?—I know the streets.

2321. It is suggested to us that registration gives an advantageous publicity if a girl wants to know where to send her child?—If the law was extended I should immediately go to the registration list, and see who was registered if I found a child was in the house.

2322. In your district, I understand you to say you would not register a single house?—I do not say that. Even in that very degraded part we have some poor decent people. I should not be afraid to put a poor girl's child there; a poor girl could only look for a poor home.

Chairman.

2323. I wanted to know one thing with regard to the case we have had named several times, of a man who goes away to work, whose wife is dead or has left him; or the case of a man whose wife is lying ill, and he wants to make some temporary arrangement for his children to put them out somewhere; can you say from your experience what the general method adopted in cases of that sort is?—They generally divide the children among their relations.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

2324. You think they generally send them to their relations?—Yes, nearly always. When a young mother dies the baby is generally sent off to the grandmother, and within a few days I have known three children divided up among relations.

Viscount Llandaff.

2325. Then is some payment made?—It does not always follow.

Chairman.

2326. But there might be?—There might be. 2327. In the Bill that was before the House of Commons in 1890 relatives are excluded from the necessity for registration; but is it not a fact that the word "relative" is a very vague one amongst the poorer classes?—Yes, very much so. 2328. Very vague indeed?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

2329. What do they understand by it?—I do not know; it is very vague; they would hardly know the meaning of the word.

Chairman.

2330. It has been suggested, therefore, to define the word "relative" in the Act as meaning anybody within the degree of first cousinship; do you think some sort of definition of that kind would be useful?—It might be useful; it would not meet the case entirely; I do not know what would; I have known these people not know their own relations' names, but only their nicknames. That gives you some sort of idea how little they would know what the actual relationship was.

Lord Kinnaird.

2331. You cannot trust the names very much among the poor?—No; some people go by two or three names, and I have asked them sometimes why.

Chairman.

2332. Do you mean surnames or christian names?—Surnames. For instance, I have had a register come to me and I have been told, "It is our right name but we are always called so-and-so," "why?" sometimes it is a man who has come; he has worked with another man of that name; they have given it to him and he has kept it.

2333. What is the general practice amongst the poor in the case of a man who goes away for the inside of a week to work; for instance, in the case of a bricklayer, or a man engaged in the building trade who goes to a distance and comes back at the end of a week?—He leaves the wife and children behind.

2334. Suppose he has not got a wife?—I cannot tell you.

2335. We have been told that such a man rarely remains unmarried long?—It is very rare to send the children away; they get a woman to come in.

2336. Do they generally get some one to come in, or do they put them out?—Generally get some one to come in.

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2337. There

12 May 1896.]

Deaconess GILMORE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2337. There is another very common case which must be familiar to you; a mother goes into a hospital for a week or a fortnight or a month; that is a very common event indeed; what would you say was the normal practice in such a case as that?—With little children they would send them to a friend or relation; with the older ones they would get someone to come in and do for them, send them off to school in the morning. Sometimes we help to find a woman who will do that for them.

2338. And there would you say that registration would be somewhat irritating. If a mother was going into a hospital and a neighbour was going to take her child for a day or two or a week and that required registration, would that be somewhat irritating?—I think it would be a great difficulty.

2339. A thing you would hardly wish to see enforced by law?—No; you would have to educate people very much to get them up to that point.

Lord Kinnaird.

2340. But if the law were properly carried out you do not think that suitable persons would mind, in order to protect the lives of children, putting themselves under registration and inspection?—I am quite certain that the good ones would not object if it was put before them in that way that it was done to protect the lives of children who had no protection.

2341. You think the Act must be stringent to be any good?—I am sure it must.

Chairman.

2342. When you talk of the respectable people who would not mind being registered, what class of people are they?—The poor labourers' families; they are perfectly respectable, but the man earns, say, at the outside a pound a week, and it is very difficult for those people to maintain a family at a pound; the wife gets another woman's child, at 5s. a week; that helps the whole resources; she says, "One amongst a number, the food that it has is not missed." If she has no little baby of her own, it is quite possible that she can do very well for the child; and in

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss MARIAN H. MASON is called in; and Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2353. You are, I believe, the Local Government Board inspector with reference to boarding-out children?—Yes, beyond the union; beyond the union all the children must be placed under committees certified by the Local Government Board. The committees are committees of ladies; there may be gentlemen upon them, but there must be ladies. I have not the inspection within the union, but that beyond the union to which the children are chargeable.

Chairman—continued.

the case of respectable women I should not object to their having them in the least.

Lord Kinnaird.

2343. You mean that if we say Class 1 is the artizan, he does not take these nurse children, practically?—No.

2344. The second would be the class in which the bricklayer's labourer and people of that kind would come, and they might take them?—

2345. And Class 4 you would exclude altogether?—Yes, those would be the semi-criminal class.

Viscount Llandaff.

2346. There are illegitimate children in Class 4?—They would get them.

2347. Have you formed any opinion as to what sort of authority would be the best to administer this stringent Act that you are inclined to; would it be poor law officials or justices of the peace, or district councils; or what authority would you suggest as being the most sympathetic and likely to do good?—I suppose one must judge by the existing officers; our present sanitary officers, the medical officers, work very well with the people; they would come under the Local Government Board.

2348. They are popular with the poor, are they?—Yes, fairly popular.

2349. You would recommend, I suppose, either women or medical men to inspect these houses?—I should think the ladies would do it better; a thoroughly good type of woman, not a mere working woman; that would not do.

2350. On the other hand, I am afraid there is no existing body of ladies in the service of any of these local authorities; you would have to create fresh officers if you appoint ladies?—It would hardly do for a man to be always interfering with woman in bringing up children; a woman would do it so much better.

2351. I mean it would involve the appointment of fresh officers?—Yes.

2352. Is there any existing class of ladies of that description?—No.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2354. A board of guardians that boards out children within its own union makes its own arrangement for inspection?—Yes.

2355. And if they board them out outside the union it devolves upon you to inspect?—Yes. Within the union, of course, they are also subject to the regulations of the Local Government Board, but they do not come within my inspection; that is to say, if the London children are sent, for instance, to Devonshire, or

to

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

to Westmoreland, or sent even to Middlesex beyond the union to which they are chargeable, then they come under, and their committee also comes under, my inspection.

Chairman.

2356. When were you appointed?—On the 2nd of November 1885.

2357. And you have been at work continuously ever since then?—Yes.

2358. And before that time you had, I believe, great experience amongst the poor?—Yes, that was why the Local Government Board asked me to undertake this work. I have lived amongst the poor people, the labouring people, the people of all classes, helping them all my life, and my family too; and then for some years I, at the guardians' request, inspected the children boarded out within the union for six unions out of the eight in Nottinghamshire, and I organised a staff of ladies to look after them under my supervision.

2359. At the guardians' request?—Yes, voluntarily.

2360. You also, I believe, drew up the manual of infant life protection?—Boarding out and infant life protection. I have put some cards on your table of the manual. It is not under my own name because officials may not publish in their own names. This (pointing to a book) is the manual; there is not very much reference to infant life protection, but it is just to show where it comes in, with boarding out. It is a manual for guardians and boarding-out committees.

2361. It is a manual of instruction for the guardians, not for the people you put the children out with?—No, for the guardians and for the boarding-out committees.

2362. Can you say how many children you inspect annually?—No, I never could say that, because I sometimes see the same child many times; sometimes I go to visit a child and it may be away, another time I see the child without intending to visit it; and I often settle myself in a district for a week or several weeks at a time, and while I am inspecting one committee, driving perhaps a distance 20 miles off, I am seeing the committee in the midst of which I am settled every day. It would scarcely be possible to say how many committees, and never possible to say how many children, I see, or how many times I see them.

2363. But you have an idea how many children you have on your books?—Yes, it is about 1,800, roughly.

2364. Does that include England and Wales?—There are no children actually boarded out in Wales beyond the union, not one. There were three, and now there are none. Those three have ceased to be chargeable. Wales is within my district, but as it happens there are no children boarded out there beyond the union.

2365. Is there any reason for that; there are some very populous towns in South Wales, large manufacturing districts?—No, I do not know of any reason why they should not.

Viscount Llandaff.

2366. In what district are the 1,800?—In England, all over England, nearly every county. (0.95.)

Chairman.

2367. Do you inspect the children themselves as much as possible?—Yes.

2368. Do you go to the homes when you go down to a district; you say you see the committees every day; you also see the children, I suppose?—Yes, I inspect the homes, and I inspect the children themselves most carefully; partly undressing them. I inspect every room in the house, and overhaul the children's stock of clothing, and put down every single garment they possess in my note book in case of reference.

2369. What weekly sum is generally paid to those who take the children in?—London and the larger towns pay 4s. a week for maintenance, 10s. a quarter for clothing, any schooling expenses there may be, about 10s. a year for the doctor for each child, and extra nourishment if they are ill, or any other expenses, cod liver oil, or any extra nourishment or anything else that they may want.

2370. And what profit is there to be made out of children paid for on this scale?—The country guardians, I should say, pay a little less, such as Nottingham and Plymouth; they pay about 3s. 6d. a week, and a little less for clothing; but I think the way to count how the profit is made is not by saying how much one person eats in a week; but if you take a labourer's wages, say 15s. a week perhaps (of course in some places they receive more, in others less), supposing that a man and his wife and three children have to live on 15s. a week, that gives 3s. a head all round. Out of that must come the rent and the clothing for the whole family, and the man's working clothes and boots and Sunday clothes, and perhaps the rate, besides the maintenance of the whole family. Then, if you put even one child into that family with 4s. a week, and 2l. a year for clothing, and the doctor and everything else besides paid for it, you must see that it is easier for six persons to live on 19s. a week besides 2l. a year for clothes, and the doctor, &c., than it is for five persons to live on 15s. And then there are cases where some of the foster-parents have nothing at all to live upon, and they simply live on the children.

2371. Do you find that the condition of the children varies very much with the amount that is paid for them?—No, I do not think that the amount that is paid for them has much to do with their treatment. I think a conscientious person will treat a child as well for 3s. a week as she would for 4s.

2372. Can you say anything with regard to the number of good homes and foster-parents?—It must be limited; it is quite impossible to find a very large number of really satisfactory homes. If you take, for instance, any village that you know, and go through it, either there is not enough room in the house, or else the people may not be suitable in character, or they have too many children of their own, or there is something else; so that when you come to take a village house by house, and ask which house you would put a child in, it is not very easy to find a large number of really proper ones. There are places in England, a great many places yet, where there are no committees, where homes might be found; but I mean taking each place, you cannot

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not

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

not place a very large number of children suitably in any one parish. You may perhaps have been told by voluntary societies that the number is almost unlimited; but I should like to point out that they are not tied as the Local Government Board are by rules. They make rules, but practically they make as many exceptions; and then they are not strict about having the children under committees; you see we are very strict about our committees; we must have three people at least to look after them, three people on a committee. We allow no boarding-out committee, no local committee, without at least three persons upon it.

2373. Three persons in the district, that is?—Yes.

2374. Not three people in the village?—No, three people in the area defined for the particular committee. But with reference to the voluntary societies, they do not follow that rule, and they just put the children out with somebody to look after them, an individual perhaps, and not a committee; and as far as I know, I think they have no radius, no area within which they must be placed; their supervision is very much less careful than ours; they scatter their children broadcast, but we do not; we have them in certain areas which we limit by parishes; and where we have a committee they are bound to be kept up to their number and to their duties.

2375. How many of these committees have you got under your control?—I could not say the exact number, but it is nominally between 150 and 160.

2376. That is committees?—Yes; but some of those committees are dying off; you see they have done their work, and they perhaps have only one child left; then others perhaps after they started have not been able to find homes, so that those committees are only nominal; it is nominally about 155 now.

2377. Why should they die off; there is always an everlasting supply of children to put out?—Yes, but the committees are not immortal; they sometimes die themselves; and then, too, the persons leave the neighbourhood sometimes, and those who succeed them in the same houses may not be interested in the matter, or competent, or capable.

2378. Do you find it difficult to get people to serve on these committees?—I do not find the committees.

2379. Who arranges that?—They start it themselves; anybody who has a desire to bring pauper children down to their neighbourhood to put into cottages may form a committee in their own place, and apply to the Local Government Board for sanction, for authorisation; they are formally authorised by a regularly drawn up form.

2380. What are the conditions required before they are authorised; must there be a certain number?—Yes, there must be three people, one of whom must necessarily be a lady. If it is one parish we consider three sufficient; if it is two parishes we generally do not think three enough; according to the number of parishes which they take in so we insist on the number of workers in proportion to the area. Then they have to report on the children to the guardians; they have to enter into an agreement first with the board of guardians from whom

Chairman—continued.

they propose to take children. This agreement, with the scale of payments, has first to be sanctioned by the Local Government Board. The committees have to engage to keep the regulations, and to visit the children at least once in six weeks, and report upon them to the guardians. They have also to send in returns every half-year to the Local Government Board of their own number, to show that they are still alive and looking after the children.

2381. Can you say anything as regards the motives of boarding-out committees?—Yes. With regard to the reasons why they take these children, some of them, of course, do it from interest in the children themselves; some of these people who live in the country are interested in London children, and have the children for their own sake; others have them for the sake of their poor people, quite avowedly, because their payments are a help to them. There are a great many motives; and speaking of the inspection of infants, I think you will have to remember that there are always those local motives to contend with in inspecting them. You will understand that I am seeking to help you, and I do not want to bring in any names, nor to bring any difficulties; but I could tell you of cases where really the children are paying the rents of the cottages. When we come to the question of the difficulties of inspection, the inspector has to contend not only with the homes in which the children are, but with the motives from which the ladies and gentlemen in the place have the children there. As I say, sometimes the payments of the children are actually paying the rent.

Viscount Llanduff.

2382. Like the pig?—Yes, only that the pig is the property of the tenant and not of the landlord. In the case of the children the children are the property of the landlord, which increases the difficulty.

Chairman.

2383. Then with reference to these voluntary societies, do you often in the course of your inquiries come across children that are put out by the various societies?—Yes, constantly.

2384. Do you find that as a rule they are pretty well looked after?—Yes, some are; but you see I cannot answer so certainly for them as I can for my own, because I undress my own, and I have no power to undress others. Therefore, if they are neglected, if they are dirty, or if they are beaten, I should not know it so long as their outside was tidy.

2385. But have you come across many cases in which they are not, in which they are palpably badly looked after?—I think you cannot talk of palpably, because outside appearances are so deceptive; there are very few palpable cases. I sometimes find children placed by voluntary societies or persons in comparatively large numbers in the houses; they do not keep to the regulations as we do as to numbers; professedly they do, but they make many exceptions.

2386. Do most of the voluntary societies that you know of have a local committee of some sort, or local individuals, to look after children that they put out?—Yes, local individuals; but I know none that have real committees.

2387. You do not know any voluntary societies that

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that simply put their children out and do not bother to look after them afterwards?—No; they have someone to look after them, though not a committee. Then, in speaking of why the ladies and gentlemen take children, I should say that they do it to help their poor people sometimes, and sometimes they do it even to help an old servant. I could find you cases where the old servants are provided for in that way.

2388. And are the children well looked after in those sort of cases?—Some are, some are not; but when they are not it is very difficult to get them away from an old servant.

2389. What do you do when you go round?—I report on every case indifferently, whether good or bad; I report on each child in each case; and whether the committee will remove the child of their own accord entirely depends upon the particular committee. Some are quite ready to do it directly they know the facts; others say, "That was my housemaid, and I trust her entirely."

2390. What happens then?—It depends upon the board of guardians, whether they take the part of the housemaid.

2391. It depends entirely upon the board of guardians, does it?—The Local Government Board sometimes say that they think the children ought to be removed, but as a rule they leave the responsibility to the board of guardians. I report to the Local Government Board both on the committees and on the children. My report on the committees is confidential, but the report on the children is forwarded to the board of guardians, and they have to act upon it.

2392. I suppose you find a great deal of difference between committees; you find some very much better than others?—Yes, very much.

2393. And where the committees are not so good, I suppose you find the children in a worse condition?—Yes, undoubtedly.

2394. Therefore, we may say that the well-being of the children depends to a very great extent upon how they are looked after, after they are put out?—Altogether.

2395. Even in the case of respectable foster-parents, if they are not properly looked after they may be apt to neglect the children, you think?—Well, some people, some of the foster-parents, look after the children thoroughly well and conscientiously, even though the committee may not be looking after them; but then there are others who do not, and of course you do not know till you prove them which will turn out good and which will not, and those of whom you would least expect it sometimes are those that fail you.

2396. At what sort of age do you generally put these children out?—No earlier than two, and nominally no later than 10, years of age, but the elder age is rather elastic.

2397. And you have some rule, I fancy, with reference to the number of children which the foster-parent already may possess; you do not put a child into a house if there are already a certain number of children in it, do you?—No. From every source there must be no more than five; you cannot put one of the poor law children into a house where there is more than one other boarded out from some other source; that is to say, you cannot put a poor law child into a house where there is more than one nurse baby.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

2398. Families sometimes increase?—We do not make a rule that they shall not increase, but we only say that when the boarded-out children are first put there, there must not be more than a certain number of children. That rule was made in consequence of the number of children that we found boarded out voluntarily, especially by Dr. Barnardo; there were such a number of his children placed in the same houses that I inspected. The rule was made in 1889, in the last boarding-out Order, that there should be a limit to the numbers who might be boarded out from other sources; before that, I once found a home where I saw six children besides those I had to do with boarded out in one house, and I heard that these were not all; I do not know where they all came from.

2399. Do you find that in houses like that, even when they are well looked after, there is considerable mortality, merely from the fact of there being an unusual number of children on the premises?—You see I do not follow the careers of those children whom I have nothing to do with, so I could not say.

2400. But when you go round to inspect a certain house that you have perhaps seen before, I suppose you compare your notes on that occasion with the notes on the previous occasion?—You see, since 1889, I have not found them in my houses except now and then, so that there has been practically scarcely any overcrowding since 1889; and in those few cases either the poor law children or the others have been removed, so that I have not seen the house again under the same conditions.

2401. And what do you find is the general attitude of foster-parents towards inspection?—I have been now inspecting more than ten and a half years, and I do not think I could say that I have found 12 foster-parents who have resented inspection.

2402. By you?—By me; and in every case where they resented my inspection they had very good reason for not wishing me to find out the facts. Even those who are not doing right do not resent it openly, because they know it is right; and those who are doing their duty are always rejoiced that you should inspect. My difficulty is to get away from the place without inspecting everything belonging to the foster-parents themselves, and without seeing the people that I have known before. Even when their children have gone, I continually have to pay them friendly visits, because they would be hurt if I did not. For instance, I was spending one Sunday at Amptill, where there was a committee, in order to inspect committees further off; and the Amptill children saw me in church, and waited outside the church, and asked me to come and see their foster-parents, because they said they would be hurt if they heard I was there; so I had to make a visit on Sunday to see them.

2403. You know that it has been raised as an objection against an extension of the present law that it might interfere with the work that is done by these voluntary societies if they were included in it. It is said that if all the foster-parents with whom they put children had to be inspected they would find it very difficult to get the more respectable class of foster-parents to take the children in; do you think that is correct?—I think that would entirely depend

s 3

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

depend upon who the inspectors were. For instance, within the last year I had a case where children were boarded out with a foster-parent who was rather a grand lady. She made no trouble about my inspection, but she said she would not stand the visits of "paltry people," as she called them; she told me there was not a "real lady" in the parish whom she would admit; there was a committee which boarded out there, and I understand that a lady they put on was turned out with ignominy.

2404. That is rather an exceptional case, I suppose?—Yes, it is; but at the same time they always tell me they will only have real ladies; they discriminate; they are very particular.

2405. And therefore you think that an inspection is much better carried out by a woman than by a man?—I do not think that a man can carry it out; in the case of girls he cannot, he might in the case of boys; but I find that you cannot know the facts unless you see the children's necks and arms and feet, to see whether they are kept clean or not; and you cannot tell whether they are beaten by asking questions, because no one would tell you, least of all the child.

2406. Do you find many cases which you have come across, cases of ill-treatment like that?—Yes, a good many.

2407. And beating?—Yes.

2408. What do you do then?—Then I report it like the rest; I have no power to take the child away; I wish I had.

2409. Have you thought over the best method of carrying out inspection under this Bill, if it became law?—I do not know very much about how the local authorities are found to act, but I believe that they do not do all they should do, do they?

2410. The evidence that has been given before us rather tends to show that the local authorities do not pay so much attention to the existing Act as they might?—That was what I wanted to answer. I think the reason is that it is because they are local, they are so much afraid of giving local offence to their neighbours; that is the difficulty of inspection; that is the difficulty with the boarding-out committees of ladies; they are very often afraid of offending their neighbours, and as I was saying, some of these nurse children are put with the people by the ladies themselves. I gave a case in this report (*pointing to a report*) of such a child. There was a child boarded out in Devonshire; it was a case near Plymouth; the foster-parent was sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude for manslaughter of a baby; two or three children had died in that house, and there was one child who was boarded out under a committee; as a matter of fact the ladies of the place had helped that woman; the very same ladies who had supervised my boarded-out child had actually put these nurse children with the same woman in order to maintain her, and they took her part when she was sentenced, and declared that she could not have ill-treated the child; they would not receive any evidence, they would not believe it. She is in prison now doing her time.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2411. What sort of age were the children?—These children were all under one or two years.

Earl of Buckinghamshire—continued.

2412. They probably came under the existing Act?—They did.

2413. Was the house registered?—No, the house was not registered.

Chairman.

2414. How does that case bear upon your objections to the local authorities as inspectors?—Because the local authorities are interested; I mean the committees themselves, who put the children out, are interested in the person they put the child with; and you see the local authority does not like very much interfering with the interest of the local neighbours.

2415. You do not think, therefore, that the inspectors should be local people?—I think that it is a good thing to have a local supervisor, and I would not destroy the local authority; but I think that there should also be an inspector from a distance, from a centre, who should also inspect as well as the local authority; so that she should be behind the local authority. I mean that there should be someone for the local inspector to fall back upon and to support her.

2416. It has been suggested by some that the police are the proper people to administer the Act; is that your view?—No, I do not think the police are, because I do not think that many respectable people would like the police inspecting. I think that there should be a woman appointed, and I think that there should be a central woman behind that woman; that there should be a local supervisor made responsible, and there should be a central inspector behind the local supervisor to strengthen her hands.

2417. When you say a central woman, you mean a person appointed either by the Local Government Board or one of the Government Departments?—I should say by the Home Office, because she would have the police behind them in the case of emergency, and because the object is not the relief of the poor, but the detection; and I think that the inspector should either be appointed by the county council or by the Home Office direct; I am not sure whether even the county council would not be too local.

2418. There would hardly be enough work for a separate inspector for each county council, would there?—If not, two or three counties might combine to appoint one.

2419. Then it has been suggested that the local medical officer of health might visit the children?—I do not think that would be a good plan; because they have their private practice. I have the very highest opinion of doctors; I think they are most devoted and most good; but when it comes to a matter of reporting upon a child, I find them quite ready to certify for one of their own ladies that a child is all right, when I have found it in a state very much the opposite. I mean that they do that if the lady who has placed out the child is a patient.

2420. All this evidence that you have now been giving deals more or less with the children when you have found them out; of course, part of the Act, you understand, is discovering the children in these homes, finding them out?—Yes.

2421. And

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

2421. And therefore that would be another argument against the medical officer of health; he would be hardly the proper person to engage in the detective work of finding out the children?—No, I do not think he ought to be; I think it ought to be some one unprofessional and independent; an independent local inspector or supervisor, and an independent central one.

2422. You see the work which your committees do is really only one-half of the question; your committees simply look after the children when once they are put there?—No, they place them.

2423. They find out the homes for them, you mean?—Yes.

2424. But what we want to find out is the proper authority for administering this Act, more especially in the rural districts, and that local authority will have to find out children that are kept in unregistered houses and insist upon those houses being registered if they come within the Act, and then look after the children after they have discovered them?—Yes; then I think that should be a person, a woman, quite independent of anything else.

2425. Do you think a woman is a proper person to go round and do the detective part of the work and find out where children are?—Yes. I do not think a policeman, to begin with, could get in, and I do not think a local policeman, above all, is the person; I think it should be a woman, and a woman who is independent; but at the same time, I do not think she should be the sole authority, because I think, even for a woman, it would be most difficult to interfere with the neighbours; it would be a most unpopular task, in any case, where they are doing wrong, I mean; where they are doing right, I am sure she would be welcomed.

2426. Another difficulty, of course, which arises is this, that supposing you had an inspector, a lady inspector if you like, told off to look after a certain district and make inquiries, if she went into a village, you know how people get known in a village, when they know them once they know them again?—Yes.

2427. Supposing she went on a second voyage to that village inquiring about children being kept at any unregistered houses, if there were any such, the children would be very soon hidden out of sight before she got there?—Yes; and that is an additional reason for not leaving the inspection to a local inspector alone. She would be better known by sight than one from a distance. But in the country I think you could generally find out from someone whether there is a baby in the place. I had one case where a woman would not let me go upstairs and see the room; she refused; I thought the children ought to be removed, and I recommended it, but the guardians did not carry it out. I let two years pass, and then I went again, and this time I took the chairman of the board of guardians with me as a witness; that woman kept me waiting for about a quarter of an hour before she let me go upstairs; meantime I saw two nurse children in the house, but she must have hidden some others away. I was certain

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

there were some others, and I got to know about it afterwards.

2428. You think that the fact of a woman having a nurse child in a village is generally pretty well known to her neighbours?—Yes, nearly always; the neighbours, in a village, will always know it, almost.

2429. Therefore it is easier to find them out in the country than it is in towns?—Much. Those nurse children I was speaking of last had also all been placed there by the ladies themselves individually, and they had not told each other.

2430. Your evidence rather tends to point to this, that your local committees require just as much looking after as anybody else?—My whole life is spent in looking after them. I am speaking now of those that concern your point; many of the committees do their work excellently, and many of the foster parents are excellent.

2431. You are in these remarks talking of certain individuals?—Yes; I am only speaking of those that concern your point.

2432. Do you think it would be in any way possible or feasible for your existing committees to undertake any work under this Act?—I think some would, but most would not, and they are too local. They would be afraid of giving offence, and would not inspect thoroughly. It is all I can do to get them to inspect thoroughly the children whom they place out themselves, and for whom they are actually responsible, for this reason. They are so needlessly afraid of giving offence.

2433. Are these children that are put out by the poor law authorities mostly illegitimate?—No, they are orphans, or deserted, for the most part; they are all nominally orphans or deserted; but the term orphan is very widely extended to mean a child of a parent who is bed-ridden or in prison; in fact, it takes in almost all the permanent children.

2434. Therefore they are not classed as being either legitimate or illegitimate?—No.

2435. May I ask whether you are generally in favour of the Bill which we are considering; I am presuming that you are acquainted with the provisions of the Bill?—I have not read the whole Bill through, but as far as I know its provisions, I think it is very much wanted. I understand that you propose to raise the age.

2536. We propose to raise the age to five years?—Yes.

2437. And do you think that any hardship would be caused by the provisions which apply this registration in the case of a child only kept 24 hours away from its parents?—I think it would be almost impossible. The mother goes away for perhaps one night, and might put the child with a neighbour; it would be hard if she could not do that.

2438. And gives the neighbour something to look after it for her?—Yes; I think a week would be better.

2439. Then perhaps you are not aware that the objection to that proposal is, that the people that we wish to get at very often do not have the children in their own house; sometimes but a very short space of time, sometimes not at all,

s 4

and

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

and they simply act as intermediaries and pass the children on?—Yes.

2440. And, therefore, in a week's time the child might be passed on to three or four different people and all trace of it be lost?—I have not thought enough about what should be done, but I think the fact that the person has the child should be declared and registered, though the house itself need not be registered; if you see what I mean, that the fact that she has had the child should be registered, although her house should not be a permanently registered house. The fact should be notified, I mean.

2441. To whom; the local authority?—To the local authority, perhaps.

2442. Therefore, you mean to say that you are more in favour of a mere notification from the person who takes the child in than the actual registration of the house?—I think it would be scarcely possible to register every house where a woman takes in a child for one night for a friend.

2443. That sort of thing is very common, I suppose?—Yes, and often quite harmless. If a mother has to go away she must leave her baby with somebody; and then there are cases where you cannot exactly say whether the nurse children are paid for or not; I know many cases where a mother places her child with somebody on payment, and she practically deserts it and pays nothing for it, and the woman will take to that child and bring it up as her own without having a penny for it; I know numbers of those cases, most deserving people; and those would be most difficult cases, because you could hardly say whether the woman was paid or not; still they might be registered; and I am sure such women would only be too glad to welcome inspection to show what they had done for the child, and they desire that it should be known.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2444. Have you considered, speaking generally, the advantage of increased stringency as proved to your satisfaction?—Yes.

2445. The evidence you have given us, of course, has been mainly drawn from, if one may use the word, the professional experience you have had in the last 10 years; but speaking generally, with your knowledge of the life of the working classes as a whole, do you think that that increased stringency would inflict much hardship or not?—It would inflict, I should almost say, no hardship at all on the working classes.

2446. Even the registration of children up to five, or as one Bill proposes seven, years?—No, I think not. Perhaps I might give you another case. One of my foster parents (it was at Axminster, and we have published the case) was a farmer, a churchwarden, communicant, everything; he was considered the parish model; they took a child four years old and beat it continuously; no one knew till at last one day its screams attracted the neighbours, and they found it tied by the thumbs to the bedpost, its thumbs almost cut through, and beaten so as to be a mass of bruises. They were, I think, both sent to prison; but all the other foster parents whom I visited in that neighbourhood hailed me as a

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

deliverer, because they said, "You can certify for us that we are doing our duty; I am so glad you have come," they said, "because you can certify that we are doing right by our children."

2447. Why do you think it is that the Act is practically a dead letter in England outside London?—Because I think London is a large enough area for the inspector not to be local.

2448. And do you think that if arrangements were made for a non-local inspector the authorities who have at present failed to put or decided against putting the Act into operation would at once put it into operation?—No, they would not unless they were obliged to; but as far as I know what the present authorities are, I do not think they are the right people. I am not sure whom they now are.

2449. The district councils who have the power under the Act of appointing an inspector, but who neglect to appoint an inspector; and without saying that they do not administer the Act, practically they do not do so because they appoint another agent to do it?—I see.

2450. It would hardly seem obvious that your objection to a local inspector would set that difficulty right?—I think apparently they do not take enough interest in the matter, and I do not think they would; I do not think for the most part they care who have babies in their houses; I should not say the district council of my own neighbourhood would trouble themselves at all about it; I am not sure whether they are even aware that they have got the power.

2451. Let us put it like this: you know what the present law is; the proposal now before us is that that law should be made more stringent in two directions; first, that it should be forbidden to take, without registration, even one child, while at present you are allowed one and no more under 12 months; and, secondly, that the age should be raised from 12 months to five or seven years; I do not follow how that Act, if it became law to-morrow, would mend matters, from your point of view?—No; but I think the district councils do not take enough trouble. I should appoint a central inspector, with county council inspectors under her, to see that the district councils appoint their own, and carry out the Act. The district councils are too local to act by themselves.

2452. Then if you were given power to-morrow to set the present wrongs right, as far as the law could, it would not be by passing such a Bill as is now proposed?—I would pass the Bill, but I would not give it to the district council to administer alone.

Viscount Llandaff.

2453. To whom would you give it?—Supposing you gave it to the county council, or to the Home Office, then it would not be local. I am quite sure that 99 out of 100 district councils would not care; they do not know that they have got it, and if you told them, they would not trouble about it, and whom would they be able to find? I do not know any local persons who would do it or who could do it alone. I will take my own district council; I am quite sure that there is no one that the district council could find.

2454. But

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2454. But you do think that such an Act is wanted?—I do; but I think that it cannot be carried out by too small localities alone and unsupported.

2455. Your recommendation would be: Pass some such Act as is now suggested, but give the administration of it to the authorities of a larger area?—Quite so.

2456. And you do not think that there would be a hardship in either of two directions, either the case of the mother who is temporarily absent, or the case of the widower, let us say, whose children are left without a mother?—No, not if the mother might only notify the fact that she left her child, without putting it in an actually registered house, because you might not find one registered house in the parish, and yet she would want a woman to take care of her child. I think those cases should be notified, but certain houses also registered.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2457. In country parishes, to whom should she notify?—She might notify to the local inspector. I think she should be obliged to notify to the local inspector.

Viscount Llandaff.

2458. She must notify to the authority that has the administration of the Act?—She could notify to the local inspector, or to the clerk to the district council, or to whoever appoints the inspector.

2459. You suggested the County Council or Home Office?—Yes; but I think you might appoint some one in the place to whom she should notify. I have not had time to think of that. I think that would not be an insuperable objection.

2460. Then to pass to another point about the amount of payment, have you a large experience of illegitimate children boarded out by others than the guardians; I mean not professional experience, but have you observed it much?—Yes, a great deal.

2461. What do you consider is the minimum payment for which such a child in the country can be properly received?—Some parents pay, I think I have known, as little as 1s. 6d. a week; some 5s.; 2s. or 3s. is the average for babies; 5s., perhaps, for bigger children.

2462. But what do you consider is the minimum sum for which such a child can be properly done for?—That is most difficult to say, because they live so much on their wages and the produce of their garden, and it depends upon whether the person who has the child keeps a pig, or whether she has a garden. It is impossible to fix a sum in money, because it all depends upon the particular circumstances.

2463. That is all in the country?—I am only speaking of the country; I have no experience of London.

2464. Do you think that, speaking generally, a girl who has an illegitimate child in the country, whose home is in the country, finds a difficulty in respectably disposing of it?—That depends rather upon what you mean by "respectably disposing of it." They are not always places that I should put the children in; I find them (0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

sometimes in very undesirable places; and so long as the baby is very young it takes up no room, and it does not matter where it is put so far as space goes, so long as it is well nursed, I mean well fed. I am speaking of little children, babies, because they only want milk.

2465. Have many instances come under your notice in which a girl has been honestly put in a difficulty as to finding a home, even if she was ready to pay for it, for her baby?—Yes, often, because there are not so very many suitable people to take them. There are so many girls who have been in difficulties, and that is why some of the ladies I have mentioned have helped them. And they have done it partly to help the mother. In some of these cases these ladies have done it not merely for the woman who receives the baby, but for the parent who places it.

2466. Do you think that that would be remedied in any way by an increased rule of registration?—No, I do not think that would touch the matter one way or other. It would not help you to find homes, only to see that the children were properly treated when they were in the homes.

2467. Might it not increase the difficulty of finding the homes?—No, I do not think that.

2468. Are there not a great many respectable working people who would be quite willing to take in a child, not as a common business, but occasionally once in a way, if you like, who would entirely refuse to be registered for that purpose?—I do not think many.

2469. Is it not a very much more formal step on the part of a respectable couple in a small country village to go to the County Council and ask to be registered to take in a child, than quietly to take it in without saying anything about it?—You have not given me time to think to whom they should notify it. You ask me all in a moment a thing you have been considering yourselves for some months, but I will think it over and think to whom you might notify. I think they might be registered and inspected by a local authority, but the inspection should not be only local; the inspector should have an authority from a distance.

2470. I do not follow that; you have not quite met my point, which is, would there not be many a quiet couple who would be ready enough to take in a child in an emergency, but who, if they were obliged officially to have their house registered for that purpose, would say, We do not want that registration implying inspection?—No, I do not think so. You would only propose to register that house if the child remains, say, over a week. I think the fact should be notified that the child is there, and that it should be liable to inspection; but I do not see that the house need be registered as a house for infants. The fact that a particular infant is in a house ought to be registered locally, and then it should be liable to inspection by the local and central inspectors; but it would not be necessary that that house should be for all time registered as a house for babies.

Chairman.

2471. But that would imply when the place came

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12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

came to be inspected, when it was found to be unsuitable or overcrowded, that the inspector ought to have the power of taking the child away?—Yes, quite so; anyone registered as having a baby in the house ought to be liable to inspection, but I do not think it necessary that the house should be a registered house for babies.

Viscount Llandaff.

2472. The Lord Bishop put to you the case of decent people who want to take a child permanently, but would rather go without the child than go through the formality of registration?—I do not think it would often happen; I think that these decent people would be quite willing to submit to it.

2473. They would like the inspection of somebody sent down from the Home Office, you think?—I do not think they would object if they were doing their duty; I do not find that they do so myself. I never find that they object to my committees' inspection, if they are doing right. I have seldom had a complaint of anyone doing it carefully and kindly.

2474. Is there not a great difference between the inspection of a neighbour, who comes in the light of a friend, and the inspection of an official who comes from the Home Office?—I think it does not matter if it is done kindly.

2475. You think that an official is as friendly as neighbours?—Yes, and possibly more so. I think it should be an official who would do it in a friendly way; but if you send a policeman down or a rough person, or a "paltry person," as I was told, that is an objection; but it entirely depends upon who she is, and how she does it. You might send someone either from the village, or from a distance, who would set them all up in arms. It is not the fact of an official lady's call or inspection that would make them angry.

Lord Belper.

2476. You think they would not object to the mere fact of registering, having their names sent to the local authority, so that everyone could see them?—No; I think they would regard it only as permission to have the child.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2477. But you have drawn a clear distinction between two things; namely, on the one hand, notification to the authority that a child is there, in the same sort of way as an infectious disease is notified, and, on the other hand, registration of the house as a place for the reception of babies?—Yes, I meant that.

Lord Belper.

2478. If that is to lead to anything else, it must mean that the fact that the child being there is registered; you may not call it registration of the house, but at all events the result would be, that the local authority must put that name and address on some sort of a register to which people can refer?—If the child is only there a night or two there can be no grievance, because the child would be gone when the inspector came.

Viscount Llandaff.

2479. I understand you to confine your recommendation of a notice that the child is there to the transient case, not the permanent one?—Yes; it would be merely the fact, in case there should be any question afterwards as to what had become of that child; you would be able to trace it and know where it was; for instance, in such a case as those Reading cases, you would be able to trace the child by the fact of its being notified.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2480. In your experience in the country, does a girl who has to find a home for a baby usually have to pay?—Yes.

2481. Or frequently obtain a home with relations without payment?—I think she always pays; she always professes to do so; she always pays at first; sometimes it is with relations that she puts the child, her mother or her sister; but even with a sister she pays, as a rule.

2482. That is what I want to get at; would you or would you not exempt those people from your notification; I use the term notification rather than registration; ought a sister to be registered if she takes an illegitimate child?—Scarcely; and yet there are cases where, of course, the sister's object is to get rid of it. I think that is a very difficult point. I think it is a point that wants a great deal of thinking over, because in the first place, in most instances, the sister would be the kindest, but on the other hand it is the sister who would more wish than anybody else, perhaps, to get rid of it; so that I think it would want very careful thinking over to say on which side the balance lies.

2483. You would not be prepared at present to speak as to where you would limit the need of registration?—Not all in one moment.

Lord Kinnaird.

2484. A respectable woman who was not in any way a criminal would be afraid to do anything to bring herself within the law?—No; I think it is so easy to get rid of a baby, that it does not require any science; you have only not to give it enough milk, and it is gone.

2485. You think they are getting to know that?—I think everybody knows it; too many of them know it. I think nature tells you that if you put the feeding bottle outside the cradle the child will not last long; I mean I could not give a hard-and-fast opinion about it, because I think that, as a rule, the sisters would be kind, and are kind; but there are cases where sisters, like the mothers, are only too glad to get rid of the babies.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2486. But with all the possible drawbacks you are in favour of some fresh legislation for the protection of infants?—I quite think that there ought to be such legislation.

Viscount Llandaff.

2487. I have not quite gathered the extent of your experience; did your inspection extend to the whole of the 155 committees that board out children?—Yes.

2488. And

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2488. And that is the total of the committees, as I understand, in England and Wales?—Yes.

2489. Do you remember the number of unions?—Yes, but that has nothing to do with the number of unions.

2490. No, I know, but I wanted to know how many unions adopt this system?—I should say, speaking roughly, between 40 and 50.

2491. How many unions are there in England and Wales?—I think the number is 647, or it is very nearly that; and of those I should say between 40 and 50 board out beyond the union.

2492. Then why are there 155 committees; is there more than one committee for a union?—Yes; they are not committees for a union. If I might give you an example, there is a committee at Windermere, a committee of local ladies there; they receive children from, I think, six different London unions and I think one country one. There is, again, a committee at Sidmouth in Devonshire; that receives children from three London unions.

2493. I do not want the details; there are then 40 or 50 unions out of the six hundred odd which adopt the boarding-out system?—Yes, outside their union.

2494. Then you say that those unions contribute 1,800 children in all?—Yes.

2495. We should have to deal with a number something like 20 or 30 times that if we extended this Act?—You would.

2496. We should have to deal with the great bulk of illegitimate children in the country?—Yes.

2497. And a great number of the orphan and deserted children?—Yes.

2498. It is not fair to ask you what the number would be?—I have not the least idea; you would know better than I should; but I think for that you would require an inspector for each county almost.

2499. A central inspector you mean for each county besides the local supervisor?—Yes; I would make the local supervisor responsible for at any rate informing the central inspector of any children who might be put out to nurse in the local supervisor's district.

2500. Now you have told us that some of your committees practically use this boarding out system to benefit the poor people in the neighbourhood, or even to benefit their own old servants?—Yes.

2501. About what proportion of the 155 comes under those two categories?—Well, I should say that taking those who use it to benefit the people, almost half or one-third.

2502. May I take it as a rule that where the boarded-out children are sought for in order to benefit the people, those people are poor and they are in a miserable condition of life?—Some are miserable, but by no means all; even when they are pretty fairly off, a boarded-out child or two, that is 8s. a week say, and 2l. a year for dress for each child, besides other things, is a great advantage to them.

2503. Do you find that in those districts under those committees the children do less well than under the really philanthropic ones?—Yes, on the whole; but I think the motives are mixed.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2504. The mixed motive does not hurt the child, you think?—No, not always. In nearly all of them, in the first instance, they take the child for profit; but they say, "We are paid for this, and we ought to do right by the child," and they do their duty. You cannot imagine that they would take a child from love that they have never seen and as to which they do not know what it is like; nor that they would simply take it for company when they have got children of their own.

2505. Now, in all your experience, in 10 years how many criminal cases have you come across?—Do you mean by criminal, where the people have been sent to prison for ill-treatment of a child; or where they have been convicted of crimes independently?

2506. No, I mean when convicted of some crime connected with the child; wilful neglect or wilful injury done to the child; how many criminal cases of that sort have you known?—You mean of persons sent away to prison?

2507. Take those first; how many cases of conviction have you known?—You are asking me, you see, to run over 10½ years in a moment.

2508. Give it me approximately?—Four.

2509. Are there more numerous cases where you have suspected criminal conduct?—There are cases where I think if an inspector of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society had found them, he would have prosecuted them; but I do not prosecute; I only report and recommend that the child shall be taken away, but I think if other people had seen what I have seen, they would have prosecuted.

2510. In the class of parent you employ, is that sort of conduct, cruelty or wilful neglect, common or uncommon?—It is not uncommon.

2511. About what is the proportion?—I am always afraid of stating figures, and "cruelty" and "wilful neglect," you see, are a matter of degree and opinion.

2512. I will tell you why I ask the question: yours is a picked class of foster-parents?—It is.

2513. If there is a large proportion of those people who in your experience are guilty of cruelty or neglect, the question is, what precautions should we have to take with regard to others not belonging that picked class?—Exactly, I understand.

2514. Can you give me any idea of the sort of proportion in which cruelty or neglect has existed, in your opinion?—As to what I call a bad case of neglect or cruelty, when I am going round inspecting every day or every other day, I find a bad case of that kind about once a fortnight; perhaps one in every 15 or 20 cases.

Lord Kinnaird.

2515. How many cases do you inspect in a day?—Sometimes I have inspected as many as 30 in the day; sometimes I inspect only one.

Viscount Llandaff.

2516. There is one case in 20 then of the boarded-out children where, in your opinion, there has been cruelty or neglect?—Yes, where I think the child ought to be removed.

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2517. Do

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2517. Do you recommend the removal of one child in 20 of those you inspect?—Yes, I should think perhaps about that.

Viscount Llandaff.

2518. That is the severest condemnation of the boarding-out system I have heard?—I think it wants the utmost care; but then if the child is moved you may find a better home for it. I would not stop the system for that, but I would move the child.

2519. But in your case you have first the selection and supervision by a local committee then the approval by the guardians, and lastly the supervising examination by the Local Government Board?—Yes.

2520. And that is the result you are landed in, that one in 20 turn out unfit?—I think so. I think the system is excellent. Nothing is so good as the system when the child is in a good home; but it does require the utmost care, because even the local people are deceived as to the people they put the child out with.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2521. And you are sometimes deceived in the local committees, I suppose?—Yes, sometimes. But not much. I know them too well. I try to keep them up to the mark, and also I let them put anything on my broad shoulders that they like.

Viscount Llandaff.

2522. Your inspection is in the country?—Yes, but I have had children boarded out by a committee even in the town of Birmingham itself.

2523. Have you met with much difficulty from the foster parents disappearing, changing their residence and going away?—No, because the committee and the guardians are bound to let us know every alternate three months where the children are. Before that regulation was made I used to have a great deal of difficulty, but in 1889 we issued a new order, and by that the guardians are bound every April and October to send us a return of the children with their foster parents' names and addresses, and the committees have to do it in January and July.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2524. I suppose it might be possible that if you took an average of 100 homes where the parents are with their own children you might find one case in 30 where a child would be almost better off if you placed it somewhere else. Your standard, I mean, of what is required for a child is a high one; there are many homes in which that standard is not reached by parents for their own children?—I take the poor people's own standard; I go by what they think or what they say.

2525. I am not sure that you understand me. I am speaking of this, that human frailty being what it is all the world over, there are a certain number of homes where people dealing with them according to what anybody who is a wise judge would think desirable, and you might find one home in 30 which might seem to you to be conducted in a way which, if the children were nurse children, you would think required

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

removal?—In that sort of case I do not think that the people generally ill-treat their own children in the way that they would ill-treat or neglect a nurse child, but I should certainly say that such a large proportion of the men drink that I think other people might be better in charge of their children, because of their moral character, taking them all round, and of course the children I inspect are supposed to be with those of good moral character.

2526. That is to say the drunken father who is left responsible for his children would be condemned by you as a foster-parent?—Quite so; for a child under the Government you would not choose that man; but at the same time the wife of the drunken man would very likely take care of her own children and treat them well.

Viscount Llandaff.

2527. Among the local authorities suggested for administration are the poor law authorities; are they suitable for the administration of such a Bill as this, do you think?—I would rather not have those children in communication with the poor law.

2528. The poor law and the police should be excluded altogether, you think?—Yes; but the police should be in reserve in case of resistance to the inspector.

2529. The poor law authorities have a medical staff ready to hand; but you think, as I gather, that they are too busy with their private practice?—The doctor is in a very awkward position when he has to report upon a child placed in a house by one of his own patients, or even in the house of one of his patients; there are so many ins and outs, you see.

Lord Belper.

2530. I rather want to understand what your proposal is; I rather gather that you, in the first instance, would suggest that anybody who takes in a child into their house should have to notify the fact to some conveniently near authority; we will not now specify what the authority is?—Yes.

2531. That that authority should not have any powers of inspection, but that the powers of inspection should be given to some central authority, either a department of Government or possibly the County Council?—Yes. That there should be central authority and inspection behind the local.

2532. Have you yourself formed any opinion as to which you think would be the best authority for the purpose of inspection. I do not want to press you on it if you have not?—You see my hands have been very full, and I had only two days' notice; but if you like I will think it over and let you know; but I think there should be no smaller area than a county.

2533. I understand you think it should be at all events something in the form of a central authority, so that no local influence could come into play?—Yes, and I do not think anything else would be fair upon the local people; you must expect them to have human motives.

2534. You think there are no places or districts where there would be an objection to that

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper—continued.

that sort of notification and to inspection by a central authority?—I think there are no places; I do not say there are no individuals, but no places where that feeling would be generally held.

2535. Not in the country?—No, I am sure there would be no general feeling against it; I could not say no individual feeling, but I am sure no general feeling.

2536. Do you think that the necessity for such an inspection is larger in the country districts than it is in the populous places, or the reverse?—I do not know so much of populous places; but I should say that there would be a good deal more necessity for inspection in populous places, because there the neighbours know less of what goes on. And for the same reason, the inspection by local authorities is more difficult in the country districts than in populous places, for neighbours know each other too well.

2537. Most of your work lies in country parishes?—Yes, and most of my life has lain in country parishes too.

2538. But you are strongly of opinion that there is a necessity for such inspection in country parishes?—I think so.

2539. Therefore you would not like to see an extension of the present law which would make exceptions with reference to them?—Oh, no.

2540. And I rather understand that you would like to see an even larger discretion given to such inspectors with reference to the question of the child being removed or of any child being put in that house at all, a larger discretion than ever would be given under regulations such as the County Council have issued?—I am afraid I do not know enough about the regulations that the County Council have issued.

2541. I mean that they issue certain definite regulations; they do not register a house unless they consider that the house comes within those regulations?—Yes.

2542. But I rather understand that your suggestion is that the inspector should have a very large discretion, and that without being able to say that a house is not within the regulations, he should be able to say "I do not think the child is being as well looked after here as he ought to be, therefore I shall remove him to another house"?—Yes, in cases where ill-treatment or cruelty is found.

2543. Practically it would give a very large discretion to the inspector?—Yes.

2544. I rather gathered from your evidence that that was the view you took, that a house might not be an improper house for a child to be in, but that it might be found out that he was not looked after as well as he ought to be; in that case you think the inspector might require removal?—That is so much a matter of degree. The inspector might have too high a standard; and if the parent was satisfied that the child was tolerably done by, it would be rather difficult to interfere.

2545. I did not mean to suggest that the inspector should do it with a high hand; but there is the greatest difference between a hard and fast rule and discretion?—Yes, there is.

2546. And as far as your experience goes, you

(0.95.)

Lord Belper—continued.

would like to see discretion come into play?—Yes, I think so.

Viscount Llandaff.

2547. You said that the number of satisfactory houses in the country was limited?—Yes.

2548. Can you give us any sort of estimate how many satisfactory houses you could find throughout England?—Scarcely; because one place is so good, and another is so bad, as a rule. Sometimes when I go to a village, I am surprised at the number of good ones that I find in one place.

2549. Do you think there would be any difficulty in finding homes say for 100,000 children instead of 1,800?—You mean boarded out. Yes, very great difficulty.

2550. I have not calculated the number of children we should have to deal with under this Act, but they would be extremely large?—But you see, you would not have to place them; they are placed already; you have not the responsibility of placing them.

2551. We should have to find proper places and houses?—If you took them away.

2552. We should have to put them into houses fit for registration?—Yes. I think you will not find a very large number. But I do not understand that the authority who took them away would have to find more than a temporary place of refuge for them.

2553. It has been represented to us by many witnesses that the supply of good foster parents is practically unlimited; that you can find as many as you want?—Well, that is really not the case.

Chairman.

2554. In the cases of children who are boarded out in the country in the holidays, they do not have much difficulty with them?—They only put them out a fortnight at a time; and then, too, they crowd them a great deal, not as much as they did, because owing to my reports the principal society asked me to recommend them a lady as inspector, and she now inspects the homes and sees, as far as she can, that they do not put too many in one home; but, at the same time, they have not the regulations that we have, and I know places where they put a great many in, in the summer; there are so many different societies and agencies who send holiday children out; some of them use very unsuitable places, and I hear continually that they crowd the villages. That is temporary, you see, and I do not think you can compare the two, and it does not matter so much if they crowd for a little time.

Lord Kinnaird.

2555. Do you think that there would be a difficulty in getting houses for the children boarded out if the number were greatly increased?—Yes, there will be certainly a great difficulty in getting proper homes for a very large number; but there are districts in England quite untouched, and where you might find new centres for a great many more.

2556. And if they take them to a certain extent for profit the price might affect it?—I do not think that would come in at all; the price is high enough already.

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2557. It

12 May 1896.]

Miss MASON.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff.

2557. It is almost a condition of this Bill that you should find these proper houses in every district; you would not expect a poor girl with an illegitimate child to go to a distance to find a home for it?—I did not understand that the authority should find a home.

2558. But they are to register the home, and the homes must be there to be found by somebody; it is proposed that every place where a nurse child is permanently taken in should pass the ordeal of registration, and be a fit and proper place, therefore, for a child to be taken to?—Yes. But I do not think that the fact of registration should carry with it any certificate of fitness of the house or home. It should be clearly understood that registration merely places them under inspection in order to provide, as far as possible, for the actual safety of the child.

2559. By the necessity of the case you must have it somewhere in the neighbourhood of the mother who has just had the child?—You would be able to find more homes for young babies than you would for older children; that is to say, if they are only temporary, because the mother will take them by-and-bye; they do not go there for good; and besides you can put a little baby in a place where you could not put an older child; it sleeps in a cradle beside the mother; you do not want a separate room for it; you do not want to divide the boys and girls when the children are so very young; so that you would have less difficulty in finding homes for very young children than you would for older ones; and, moreover, if the foster-parents take care of the child, I do not think that their character signifies so much, if it is only for a baby. You cannot attempt to have too high a standard, and I think you might be satisfied with a lower standard where the mother puts her own infant into such a home temporarily. It is impossible for any authority to find or choose homes for people's own children, or to make themselves responsible for their fitness; all they can do is to protect the child's life.

2560. These registered houses, if this Bill becomes law, must be scattered pretty well all over the country?—They must certainly.

2561. The mothers of these children would not have to go long journeys to find a place where to put their children?—No, certainly not; I should have them everywhere that I could.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. CROWDER, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2562. I BELIEVE you are a guardian?—No, my husband is a guardian; I am not. I am one of the honorary secretaries of the Charity Organisation Society and a Board School manager in St. George's-in-the-East.

2563. And you have had considerable experience among the poor of that district?—Yes, some 11 years. I have been about there constantly.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

[I should make it quite clear that I did not mean to recommend the *substitution* of central for local inspection, but the strengthening and enforcing of local inspection by central. I should propose the appointment, as at present, of a paid inspector by the district council, but also the appointment of a paid inspector by the county council, in order to ascertain whether the district councils have made these appointments, and to see that the inspectors of the district councils do their work. I would also suggest the appointment of one paid central inspector by the Home Office, to supervise, in the same manner, the appointments of the county councils, and the work of their inspectors. The placing of children in each district should be notified to the inspector of the district council, who should be responsible for the district, and should report to the county inspector; and if local circumstances make it difficult for the local inspector to carry out particular inspections, she should apply to the county inspector to carry them out in her place. The county inspector should be able, in the same manner, to call in the central inspector. I would have it most clearly understood that the fact of registration of houses does not carry with it any certification of their fitness, but only places them under inspection which shall, as far as possible, provide for the safety of the children. It is not possible either to find an unlimited number of satisfactory homes, nor to prevent the placing, by private persons, of children, especially if their own, anywhere they please, except so far as to prevent gross neglect or ill-treatment. The Government, by official inspection, cannot be responsible for more than this. The Government do not board out these children, nor find the homes, and cannot undertake more than the protection of the children from injury. With regard to the classes for exception, a register might be kept, at the Home Office, where each should be entered. I would not allow voluntary or philanthropic societies to be generally excepted under the Act, but they should be registered separately in the register to be provided for in the Act. Forms of return, with the names and addresses of the children and foster parents, like those furnished to the Local Government Board every three months, should be filled in by the district inspectors, and forwarded by them to the county inspectors].

Chairman—continued.

2564. Can you give us any opinion with reference to the points of this Bill?—The general opinion of those I have spoken to, and my own opinion, is that it is too interfering; that it would hinder many acts of kindness and help that neighbours show to each other now by taking children in time of sickness or other special circumstances.

2565. Because they would object to being compelled

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

compelled to register, you mean?—For temporary cases they would not be inclined to take the trouble; they would feel that there was a sort of law against them, that they could not do it without permission, and they would make that an excuse probably for not assisting their neighbours.

2566. Are you in favour of the extension of the age of children to be registered to five years?—I really do not know that if they had to register at all it would matter much continuing it up to that age.

2567. You have not thought that matter over?—No. Five years of age is rather high; it would interfere with the sending away of children to convalescent homes or sending them away to friends in the country, which we do in a poor district like ours. We continually send them at the age of three, and it would be inconvenient to have to register them. I often send them to persons at the seaside whom we know.

2568. I suppose in the same way as is done in connection with the Country Holiday Fund?—Yes, I do not personally work on it, but I generally take the children who are not quite suitable to send away in that way, perhaps children who are too young for the Country Holiday Fund, and who want a longer time; and we often send a child away for three or four months.

2569. You pay so much per patient?—Yes.

2570. And do you have it supervised while it is away?—I generally send it to some person in the country who has been recommended to me by a lady living at the place.

2571. And that lady would look after it?—She would look after it sometimes more, sometimes less; but she would recommend somebody who was personally known to her to take the child.

2572. You heard the proposals put forward by Miss Mason with reference to the notification; do you see any objection to the woman in such a case notifying that she was taking in a child in the same way as a person would have to notify that she had got measles in the house?—I think it would hinder in many cases acts of kindness among neighbours. We find widows apply to us, and they tell us that a neighbour or a relation, a cousin or a married sister, has taken one of the children for them during the time of their distress; and such a requirement would very much hinder them, I think, especially if they were of a little better class. I think you would find generally that those of a lower class are accustomed to being visited by district nurses and other visitors; they do not seem to mind how much inspection they have; but the minute you reach rather a better class they resent interference; persons like the parents of old servants; and servants themselves even in my employ, have told me that their parents have often had nurse-children, and they tell me they would not have them if they had to be inspected. I have asked them whether if relations or persons of that class had nurse-children they would submit to inspection; and they say absolutely no, that they would not take the child on those conditions; and one of them knows the practice well; her mother has (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

had such a child, and she says it has grown up like one of themselves.

2573. We had one case of an old servant mentioned by Miss Mason; that was a most necessary case for inspection?—Yes, it may have been.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2574. You are speaking entirely of London, are you not?—This particular case was in the country; the relations live a little way out of London. Many of these poor people in St. George's-in-the-East would choose a friend who lived a little more on the outskirts of London, St. George's being absolutely town. If they had a relation a little way out of London, that would be the one they would select; probably one in a little better circumstances than themselves.

Chairman.

2575. We had a witness from Poplar, a member of the County Council, who is strongly in favour of this Bill, and he scouted the idea of any resenting of the interference; can you give any reason for what you suppose to be likely to be the feeling?—I think the higher the class you go to the more self-respect they have, and the less they would like to feel that all their private affairs were known.

2576. Which would be the highest class, Poplar or St. George's-in-the-East?—I meant the higher the class of person who takes the child in. The St. George's-in-the-East people would resent inspection very little; but then we are in and out of their houses and bed-rooms. They do not seem to have any objection to inspection; but they are not the higher class people; those people like a little more privacy.

2577. But we have been told by two witnesses to-day that the better class rather welcome inspection?—I think the last witness was speaking of a better class, though a very poor class.

2578. If the inspection was by a lady, she said?—I think the last witness was speaking entirely of a class earning very small wages; a very poor class, though no doubt very respectable; as I understand your Bill, it would apply to all.

2579. We could not distinguish one class from another?—It would reach a much higher class than at present comes within the Act; it would apply to relations, too, would it not.

2580. That is a matter to be settled; the present Act does apply to relatives; but your objections to the Bill are limited to a general fear that it might stop benevolent action?—Yes, and make it exceedingly difficult for persons to know where to place their children when they could not keep them themselves; it would add to the difficulty instead of making it less; and speaking of the particular class you wish to deal with, it would almost make it impossible for some of them to find homes for their children.

2581. That objection, if it is a valid one, would apply equally to other things; I mean it would be a universal objection if it was proved to be a valid one?—Yes.

2582. Have you come across any of these people who take in children for hire or reward?—Not those who do it regularly as a practice,

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

or as a living; but a few who have taken children in, and in those cases they have been exceedingly kind and careful of the children; I am talking of infants. The only case of unkindness to a nurse-child that I have seen was in the case of a child who would have been too old to come under this Bill, a school child; there the payments were very irregular; the father had charge of the child and in the result they were unkind.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2583. What has been the nature of your experience as a worker; you have spoken of your being secretary to the Charity Organization Committee; but besides official work of that kind you have had a great deal to do, I believe, with the actual work of visitation?—I visit every case almost that applies for relief.

2584. That applies, you mean, to the Charity Organization Society for relief?—That applies to the Charity Organization Society for relief. I go into their homes and visit every room in their house and see their children.

2585. That has been for a great many years? Ten or 11 years.

2586. And during those 10 or 11 years you have had a very large experience of the working-class homes in the district of St. George's-in-the-East?—Yes, certainly.

2587. The children whom we have to consider are in large proportion illegitimate?—Yes, I understand so.

2588. You must have seen during that time a very large amount of the difficulties from one point of view and another in regard to the disposal of illegitimate children?—Not so large an experience as you would think, perhaps. Somehow or other the children become absorbed in the family; the grandmother perhaps takes the child, and it is not till you visit it once or twice that you know that it is not of the family.

2589. But that child, as a matter of fact, is being received for hire?—Yes.

2590. And that child would come under the Act if it were passed without the exemption of relatives, and they would require to register it?—Yes.

2591. And your view would be that the grandmother would resent very much having to register it?—I should think she would not take it if she had to produce it for inspection. I should almost say that these homes would never pass the inspection that a country home would pass. They treat the child as a part of their family; but there are a great many homes in St. George's where the treatment of the children would not pass any inspector.

2592. And you think that what you have described by what seems to me a happy phrase as the absorption of these children into the ordinary family life of the neighbourhood, would be hampered by a system of detailed registration?—Yes, I certainly think it would.

2593. And I gather that you think that the people who would object to it would be the upper-class, more than the lower-class of foster-parents?—Yes, I should say they would object

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

to it mostly; but I should think that relations would always object.

2594. Do you find an objection felt to the Act about notification of infectious illness, and so on, which implies inspection?—It is the doctor who notifies that.

2595. There is such a thing taking place, in that case, I mean?—They do not like it when it results in the child being taken away sometimes; but they are often very grateful when the child is taken away. I think they would resent it more in a higher class. Now and then they complain "you have taken away my child."

2596. Do you think that in the district in which you have had so large an experience there is, as a matter of fact, much difficulty for the mother of an illegitimate baby in finding a place for it?—I should say there is difficulty; I think there always is. I have been speaking to Miss Steer, who has a large experience in that way, and she says it is very difficult indeed, because most of these mothers in that district are weak lethargic girls, and not worth very high wages, and therefore they earn in wages if they go to service only about 14*l.* a year, and they are called upon to pay away 12*l.* a year for the support of their child.

2597. That is the fact as it is?—They cannot all do it, and therefore it is very difficult for them to find homes for their children, because they are not prepared to pay the full price.

2598. And would your idea be, that if a foster parent was required to register she would be entitled to insist more strictly on getting her money?—I suppose she would, and it would make it more difficult certainly; it would be more of a process to be gone through.

2599. But, on the other hand, you admit that it would be a better protection to the children?—Yes; I should think it would when they were taken, but then what would you do with those who did not get taken; would they be driven to the workhouse, where they certainly never thrive. The question is, what would become of the mother who could not get her child taken care of for her by a weekly payment.

2600. The alternative, I suppose, would be the mother having to find a home for her child where the people are ready to take it for an inadequate payment; that is one alternative; or the other is the workhouse?—Yes.

2601. And of those two alternatives which do you consider the worst?—Well, it depends how inadequate the payment is.

2602. What would you call a totally inadequate payment; or rather, what would you call a minimum adequate payment?—Five shillings is the proper payment, and that is what institutions give; and Miss Steer and other people would always pay that for a child; and I understand that out of that people are supposed to clear about 2*s.* or 1*s.* 9*d.*

2603. That is to say, that the child can really be kept for 3*s.*?—Three shillings and threepence, they put it down that the child is able to be put out for; that is, exclusive of clothes.

2604. Who puts it down at that?—Miss Steer, who has had an immense experience of that class.

2605. Do

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2605. Do the mothers for whom such agencies as Miss Steer's care find, as a matter of fact, difficulty, even with their help, in getting homes for their babies?—She has great difficulty in getting homes for them; because you are talking of very young infants. There is not much difficulty in finding a home for a child of three or two and a half years, but up to two years old it is very difficult; people do not like the responsibility. Most of these children are very delicate.

2606. Even for the sake of the 5*s.* payment, which Miss Steer guarantees in some way or other, there is difficulty in finding a home?—Yes; because these people are not actuated only by the desire to gain money; they want to do the best they can for the child, and these children are often delicate. We give credit to the human good feeling of the foster parents towards the children.

2607. Who are "we"?—I mean by "we" St. George's-in-the-East; the workers among the poor that I know there. We think that the evil of the treatment of these children is somewhat exaggerated.

2608. You put it a little time ago that they are treated very much as other children, and absorbed into the general life of the neighbourhood?—A great many are.

2609. Then, of course, the homes that Miss Mason described were country homes of a different class from those you are speaking of; they are homes where they ought to be well treated?—Yes; Miss Mason must have a very high standard, I think. I know some of the homes she spoke of in the country. Miss Steer rather told me that the great difficulty is that these unfortunate girls have not the means to pay properly for their children for the first two years; that they have to make a most tremendous sacrifice of everything that they receive in wages for the sake of their child; and she considers that the object of every institution, or of anything that is done by law, should be to try and help the mother, by encouraging her to make that sacrifice, and not to take the child absolutely off her hands if she fails to make it.

2610. And do you consider that if this Bill becomes law it will have that effect?—I think the suggestion was, that if the child was not in a proper home it was to be taken charge of by some other authority.

2611. I do not think anyone has suggested that the mother should be relieved of such responsibility as she can bear in the matter, but merely that we should not allow the child to be put into an intolerable home owing to the mother's inability to pay for it?—Of course we are against her paying a sum down; but we think that the course of legislation should be to encourage the mother to keep herself in touch with the child as much as possible, and so the maternal feelings would become more and more developed, and she would watch over the child herself.

2612. But in what way will the legislation proposed hinder that?—I thought there was a provision of that sort if the child was not properly cared for.

(0.9*s.*)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2613. But, roughly, the gist of your evidence and your opinion is, that on the whole the hardship or inconvenience caused by making the Act more stringent would be greater than the advantage that would result from it?—Exactly so; making it so stringent that it would interfere with the action of neighbours towards each other too much, and would interfere with the relations assisting each other.

2614. Then, if the Act did pass in any such form you would be very strongly in favour of an exemption clause for relations?—Yes.

2615. You would admit, I suppose, that you would wish to protect an illegitimate child which was not with relations, but you would consider that we might go further in the protection of an illegitimate child not with relations than we should think it necessary to go where it was with relations?—Certainly.

Lord Belper.

2616. I rather understand that your view is that a great deal of the insufficient nourishment, to use no stronger term, that is provided for children, is not owing to the carelessness so much or the cruelty of the people with whom they are put, as to the very small amount of payment, and the inadequate payment, that is given for the purpose?—Yes.

2617. And you say that so many servant girls, I understand, if they were to give sufficient for the child would be giving practically about the whole of their wages?—Yes.

2618. It is clear that they cannot do that?—Yes.

2619. And therefore they give what they can?—Yes, and very often that is not enough, unless there is a kindly relation who will help the child.

2620. Therefore, you think that any system of registration which would keep a control over these houses would not effect its purpose unless there was some payment made to supplement the mother's payment?—I am not speaking of houses where they take more than one, but where they take one. I should think they did it more out of kindness for the mother than for gain, or what they would get out of the payment.

2621. You think that that kindness would not be given in the same way if they were forced to register?—Yes, and also I believe in better class persons it would prevent their taking children, especially in cases where, after the child is two or three years old, they get so fond of the child as to keep it and adopt it. That cuts off the ground that supplies these cases. Personally I should know more of how it affects an ordinary person, a widow or widower suffering from temporary illness, say, who sent their children to a neighbour in the country.

2622. Generally speaking, you are afraid of its interfering with natural kindness and assistance given by a neighbourly friend?—Yes.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2623. Only when that assistance is given for money?—Very often there is a small payment.

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2624. Not

12 May 1896.]

Mrs. CROWDER.

[Continued.]

Lord Belper.

2624. Not a *quid pro quo*, but a small payment is made and they give a great deal more than the actual money they receive?—Yes; sometimes the mother says, "I will clothe it," but she does not pay the whole expenses.

Viscount Llandaff.

2625. Supposing this Bill be enlarged in the way suggested, it would cover a vast proportion of the illegitimate children born in the country, I take it?—Yes.

2626. They are largely put out as nurse children?—I suppose they are, in the domestic servant class. The working girl that goes to the factory leaves her baby to be cared for by day, and when she goes home she has it with her at night; or she might work at home; that would be what you would call the lowest class.

2627. However, in the class that you come across, I suppose the poor girl naturally has her child in secret, as far as she can; she hides herself somewhere for her confinement?—Yes, if she has any self-respect.

2628. Of course it is vital that she should find some place where she can place the child as quickly as possible?—Of course those who have no sister or no one to take care of them would go to the workhouse infirmary.

2629. Then the child would remain in the workhouse?—No, the mother would have to take it away when she left.

2630. What was in my mind was this: you say it is difficult now for her to find a home?—So I understand, because the people are so afraid of the responsibility of having the care of an infant.

2631. It will become more difficult if this Bill passes?—Certainly.

2632. Because you weed out a great many houses which now do take them in?—Yes.

2633. And this girl would have her difficulty

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

of finding a place increased?—It would drive mother and child more into institutions or work-houses.

2634. Or to worse still?—Or to worse still.

2635. Surely it would not be a benefit to the class we are dealing with, unless you get these registered houses dotted all over the country, and easily accessible to everybody?—No.

2636. Do you believe that in your region it is possible to have a number of picked places?—I think a great many of them would resent being registered, who do not do for a child what we think ought to be done. They would generally do as well for nurse children as they do for their own.

2637. You put a scale that a poor servant girl could not possibly reach, 5s. a week?—Some of them who earn 14l. a year could for two years go on paying 12l. a year for the child; and Miss Steer feels that very often there ought to be more feeling shown to these poor girls who have taken such immense pains for their children. Instead of all this registration, she wants to raise the tone of these girls themselves, and increase the sympathy of their relations towards those who have done their utmost for their children.

2638. Have you got any houses in St. George's-in-the-East where they take any babies in as a business, if I may so call it?—Not that I am personally acquainted with. Where they take in one child perhaps, but I am not acquainted personally with anywhere they take in more.

2639. Is that done for the sake of the profit, or from a mixed motive?—A little bit of both; partly for profit I should think in the case of most of them; the people very often call them by their own name, so that it may be some time before you became aware that they are really nurse children.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned to Friday next, Eleven o'clock.

Die Veneris, 15 Maii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.

Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.

Lord KINNAIRD.

Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH, IN THE CHAIR.

Mrs. HARDIE, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2640. I BELIEVE you are the President and one of the Secretaries of the Ladies' Health Society, Manchester?—I am chairwoman of the working committee.

2641. May I ask how long you have been connected with it?—Since, I think, 1880; 16 years.

2642. And would you mind telling the Committee what the particular relation of this Manchester and Salford Sanitary Association is to the town authorities, how you work the association, I mean?—The association began first as a voluntary one entirely, and about six years ago, I think it was, it occurred to the corporation that as we were working on lines of which they approved, and which they had tried themselves unsuccessfully, it would be a good thing if we could to a certain extent amalgamate and work together. That gave rise to our connection with the corporation.

2643. Are you the oldest voluntary society of the kind in England?—We are the only one, as far as I am aware; I mean working on our lines.

2644. Working on those particular lines?—Yes; there has been one started in Leeds during this last year, but they have no connection with the corporation, and they have only one health visitor; it is an experiment.

2645. What is your particular connection with the corporation; do the corporation find any of the funds?—Yes, the corporation find the salaries of six health visitors. The idea on our part was originally that the corporation should find half, and that we should find half; however it has generally been that we have found more than the corporation. At present we have either 13 or 14 visitors, and the salary of six of those is paid by the corporation.

Viscount Llandaff.

2646. Under the Public Health Act, is that?—I do not know. I believe under the authority of the sanitary committee of the town council. (0.95.)

Chairman.

2647. How is this society organised; do you have district committees in different parts of the town?—We have not committees, but lady superintendents; one lady superintendent at least for each health visitor, possibly with one or two other ladies to assist her, but she is responsible. We have a central committee which meets once a month when cheques and subscriptions are paid, and the various subjects that come up before us are discussed by the ladies of the working committee. I think you have seen a copy of our report; a list of the working committee is given there. Each lady manages her district entirely on her own lines, subject to fulfilling certain rules, very simple rules.

2648. And your health visitors are all salaried?—All the health visitors are salaried.

2649. May I ask what you pay them?—Fourteen shillings a week.

2650. And how many have you?—We have 14 in Manchester, and six in Salford. I may say that we did not begin in Salford at the same time as in Manchester. It was two or three years later before we worked with the corporation there.

2651. I take it, then, that the health visitors are told off to certain districts, that they have certain duties to perform in the matter of visiting houses, and inquiring into the sanitary state of those houses and the state of the people, and that then they report to the central committee. I take it that that is the general way in which it is organised?—Yes; they fill up every day a record of the visits they have made. Might I show you one of the forms filled up; it would give a clearer idea, and a more rapid idea than anything that I could explain (*handing in some forms*). They send in those report sheets every day to the medical officer of health of Manchester, possibly two or three; and I may say that this gives a very imperfect idea and does very little justice, in fact, does not do justice at all to our health visitors. It has always been a difficulty with us to get them to do justice to themselves.

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

If they call at a house they do not put it down as a visit unless there is something specially said or done, and besides that, they work very often much longer than their appointed hours. Their agreement with us is for six hours every week-day except Saturday, and I am quite sure there is not a woman among them but devotes a great deal more time than that to the work; and she is at the beck and call of the people at all hours as a labour of love, which it is, quite as much and more than a salaried affair.

2652. They are all women, are they not?—All women.

2653. You have a column here, I see, for "Remarks as to Sickness, Overcrowding, &c.," and in this column I see you have remarks about the condition of the children that you find in these houses?—Yes; of course if they come across anything abnormal it is put down. At the back of the sheets you will observe that there are often remarks made, but those are more for the ladies. I do not think that the medical officer of health takes much notice of anything that is put on the back. These reports go into the town hall; they are posted every day, and at the end of the week they are returned to the lady superintendent of each district for her inspection. Of course she sees her health visitor at least once a week, and sometimes oftener; but these are handed to the lady at the end of the week, and they are returned in three months to the town hall.

2654. Have you seen the Bill which is before the Committee with regard to the Protection of Infant Life?—No, I have not.

2655. Are you acquainted with the particular points at issue?—I do not know that I am particularly.

2656. You know that there is an Act that was passed in 1872?—I am aware of that.

2657. For the purpose of preventing anybody from keeping more than one child under 12 months of age apart from the mother, for hire or reward, in a house that is not registered; you know that?—I do not know the number, but I knew there was something of the kind.

2658. Then the authorities in Manchester have never specially brought the provisions of this Act to your notice?—No; I do not think that it was necessary in our work; and in the condition of the poor in Manchester I do not see how it would apply very well. If a woman goes out to work, and has a child to leave behind her, if she has a mother, the child goes to the mother, as a rule, or to an aunt; failing relations, it goes to some neighbour, as a rule. There are two *crèches*.

2659. That is a different question; you are talking of children only put out for a day?—I am speaking only of children put out for a day.

2660. I am referring to children put out to nurse for a longer period than 24 hours?—There are not many of those in Manchester. We talked it over the other day; we were speaking of that, some of the members of the working committee, and we arrived at the conclusion that it hardly touched the people among whom we worked, the lower classes in Manchester; it seemed to apply more to people in a higher grade of society (unless they were domestic

Chairman—continued.

servants) who wished to hide something. It concerns merely the mill hands and working people of Manchester, who marry so very young that really there is nothing there for them to hide of that kind, or to lead them to wish to put out children.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2661. No illegitimate children?—I do not say that there are not any, but there are comparatively few, I should think; and if there are any they are taken care of by their relatives.

Chairman.

2662. Do your health visitors pay any special attention to the condition of these illegitimate children whom they may find in houses when they are going round?—Not specially more than to others, but they look after all the children as much as they possibly can.

2663. But your visitors have not practically paid much attention, or have not had their attention called to the existing law with reference to the registration of houses?—No, I am not aware that they even know of the registration of houses. But might I just consult these few notes that I took from the women the other day.

2664. Certainly?—There is one remark made here by one of the health visitors in one of the lowest parts of Manchester, where there are a great many lodging-houses, very large lodging-houses indeed, and they say that there the mortality is very great indeed. I dare say that there there is also a tremendous deal of illegitimacy among the people.

2665. When you speak of mortality, do you mean infant mortality or general mortality?—Infant mortality; for that matter I might say general mortality, but I am speaking of infant mortality at present. Frequently the mothers there are in prison, or may have to go to the workhouse; in that case the other dwellers in these lodging houses will take over the children, and will even hide them; I believe they do the best for them in their ignorant way; so that the children are not a bit the worse because their mothers are away. We find that there is some ill-treatment, principally due to ignorance, and intemperance, practised as much by the mothers as by the care-takers. In fact, we find that there are two principal causes of infant mortality; the one, perhaps, results from the other. The great one, and it is one which applies both to intemperate people and to ignorant people, is the bad feeding of the children, the improper feeding of the children; but that is very largely caused, very often, by intemperate mothers. That is a second great cause, the intemperance of the mothers, and the consequent carelessness.

2666. Do you find that the people in Manchester in any way resent the visits of your health visitors?—It is the very rarest thing that they do, and if it occurs at all it must be in a new district that we have begun, or where strangers have come for the first time. Our women go as friends, we keep as much as possible the official aspect out of view; in fact, it would, I believe, quite nullify the good effect that we have on the people if they thought that we went

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

as inspectors. Our women go as friends, and as servants of the Ladies' Health Society.

2667. Yes, but I suppose it is generally known that your society has a very close connection with the corporation, and with the sanitary authorities?—Yes, it is known, especially among the better classes, but we never bring it forward any more than we can help. Still the poor people will often complain to the health visitors; if there is anything wrong in the sanitary arrangements of the houses they will draw their attention to it. I think in some of the sheets which I have handed in you will notice remarks on over-crowding, and on the babies being badly fed.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2668. "A little baby who lodges with its mother in this house is very much neglected," that is the entry in one case?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

2669. Who says that with regard to that particular baby?—The visitor has discovered it in some way or other, or has seen with her own eyes that it is so.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2670. Here is another such case: "Reported a case to the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society. The mother is hardly ever sober; she has a baby eight months old, which is shamefully neglected; her husband is a jewel-case maker, and she receives in all 2l. every week, and I do not think they have a blanket in the house"?—Yes.

Chairman.

2671. I suppose your health visitors are practically powerless to do much good in cases of that sort unless they can prove actual cruelty to children which brings it under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act?—Yes; we rely on that society for doing anything for us in such cases.

2672. Do you find that they work cordially with you?—We do, but we endeavour as little as possible to come into collision with the people, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children have met us in a very friendly way. Our information is given to them, and they undertake to find witnesses apart from us; our information is given not publicly but privately. If the people got the idea that our women were going about spying it would do great injury to their work. Might I show you the cards in regard to the deaths, especially of children, which are issued by the corporation, and which our women have to fill up; this side, you will see, is filled in by the medical officer of health or his assistants, and this side is filled in by our women. I should like to put these in (*handing in some cards*). See Appendix.

2673. Do you notify every death you come across?—No; so many of these are sent to each health visitor; whenever a death has been notified at the town hall, if the medical officer of health wants the information, he sends to the visitor a card filled in on one side at the town hall, and the other side she fills up herself. (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

I have marked them, and you will see the questions she has to reply to. It places in the hands of the medical officer of health the full details as to the causes of death and all that sort of thing, as a family history in many cases.

Viscount Llandaff.

2674. Why are some of these cards pink and some of other colours?—Because they distinguish the different ages and various little matters. These are a few suggestions for the ladies, privately distributed among ourselves for the guidance of beginners in the work, and so on (*handing in a printed paper of suggestions*).

Chairman.

2675. I see the first of the suggestions in the paper relates to the sale of soap?—Yes, we sell as much soap as we can in Manchester; we get it at a cheap rate in Manchester; we do not in Salford, we have to buy it and sell it again. The corporation both supply us with carbolic powder, and with limewash and brushes. They also have supplied us at various times with these papers, as regards the feeding of children, for circulation (*producing the same*), and our health visitors use them very extensively. We can always get as many as ever we like to apply for. There are other papers which have been given to us to make use of in various emergencies, in case of epidemic or anything of that kind, which our women circulate and leave; these also I should like to put in (*handing them in*).

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2676. The health visitors, I gather, circulate different papers giving information upon sanitary and other matters that would be useful in those houses?—Yes, and very specially with regard to the care of children.

Chairman.

2677. Do you find as a rule that the visits of your health visitors result in the children being better looked after?—Decidedly; I am not good at figures, but I believe the population of Manchester alone is over 500,000, and it must be remembered that there are only 14 health visitors; we should want four times as many to do what we would like to do. Naturally, they do not get over their districts in the regular routine more than at the outside three or four times in the year, and many times not perhaps quite so often as that.

2678. You mean they do not get to the same houses more often than that?—Except in special cases which they are particularly interested in looking after. We have mothers' meetings in each district once a week, where sanitary subjects are taught much more than in the general run of mothers' meetings; and if any of those women are ill, or their children ill, or in want of any particular care, the health visitor visits them of course a great deal oftener.

2679. Can you account for the very high infant mortality in Manchester, if you take all these precautions, because it is very large?—It is very high in some particular parts of it. If

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

you go to the better parts on the outside of Manchester, I believe the mortality would perhaps prove to be rather low.

Lord Kinnaird.

2680. That makes it worse in the other parts?—It makes it worse in certain parts.

Chairman.

2681. And I suppose that these worse parts are the very places to which you devote much attention?—As much as we possibly can we do.

2682. You do not trouble yourselves about the better parts?—Not at all.

2683. Therefore the efforts of your society have not been very successful in the way of checking infant mortality?—I do not know what the efforts of our society may have done specially, but I understand that the rate of infant mortality has fallen very considerably during the last years in Manchester; but we still find that there is plenty to do. One great cause in Manchester, I think, of the infant mortality is the very youthful marriages that they make. In Manchester a boy and girl are practically independent of their parents almost directly they leave school; they earn such good wages, and the first thing they do is to get married, totally ignorant of the duties they take in hand. And the children live in unhealthy neighbourhoods; the air is saturated with smoke and chemical vapour. The work to keep a house clean in Manchester in the poorest parts must be, I should think, three times what it is in London in any part; and that joined to the intemperance, which I am sorry to say in the lowest parts prevails so much, causes, I think, the great rate of infant mortality. But of course there are very respectable working people in some places, and it would be a scandal to include the whole of the working population in those remarks.

2684. You say that they marry very young in Manchester?—They do.

2685. What sort of age?—Oh, you will have boys and girls of 15, 16, 17, and 18.

2686. Marriages at those ages are frequent?—Very frequent; especially the lower you get among that class of people the more marriages there are.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2687. I am rather interested in the evidence you gave as to the small number of illegitimate births, because it is with illegitimate children that we have mainly to do in considering the protection of infant life which such an Act as is now contemplated would encourage. In the evidence Dr. Tatham gave us we are told that in the years that he referred to there were 2,807 illegitimate births, and of these 1,099 died under the age of one year; does that surprise you in connection with what you have just told us?—No, not at all. The mortality in the low parts of the town is very great among all classes both illegitimate and legitimate, and if there must be any difference I should suppose that the mortality would be greater among the illegitimate, not because the caretakers neglect them, but because their parents neglect them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2688. You say, "if there should be any difference." According to Dr. Tatham's evidence, which he qualified owing to certain particulars, but still, taking it roughly, the proportion of legitimate infants who died under one year was 174 per 1,000, and of illegitimate infants 392 per 1,000?—Yes.

2689. That is a contrast, you observe; more than double?—Yes, but I think that the statistics of the births of the legitimate children include the births in all the better classes, not only in the lower parts of the town, both the better-class working quarters, and the residential parts; and there the children are, as a matter of course, well taken care of. There are some parts in Manchester, Angel Meadow, one portion of Ancoats, parts of Hulme, and Deansgate, where there is a very low moral tone altogether; those people think less of it, naturally, than the respectable working people would do. These are places where rents are high, but where these people are obliged to live; but respectable working men get away from those places as fast as ever they can. If they go there it is only as a temporary thing, or because of sickness or some reason like that, which causes them to live there; but their neighbours are too uncongenial for them to live there any longer than they can help; and I think it is there that the great death-rate of illegitimate children would take place.

2690. Well, however we explain it, and wherever the locality may be, it is clear that there are in Manchester, as elsewhere, unhappily, a large number of these illegitimate births?—Yes.

2691. Do you think that, as a rule, the mother of an illegitimate child does find in those neighbourhoods, we will say, any great difficulty in discovering a home or foster parents for her baby?—They do not appear to find much difficulty; there is always some old woman ready to take a child for 5s. a week; in some parts of the town, for 2s. 6d. or three shillings a week.

2692. There is always some old woman you say ready to do it. Are those old women people who seem to you, I will not say ideal nurses, but are they sufficiently good usually to do well by their charges?—Usually they are, as well as they know how, and quite as well in many cases as the mother would do by them. In reading this little paper in my hand I notice that I say here, "In Angel Meadow, in Ancoats West, and in Deansgate there are great black patches, showing a death-rate of upwards of 40 per thousand." (When I say "these black patches" I must inform you that that refers to a map that was published in one of Dr. Tatham's books. In reading this paper I had this map enlarged in order that these black patches might be seen.) "And that is the average of the best and worst parts of each district put together, for, taking Angel Meadow for instance, what do you find? Here is a diagram of that district divided into sections, and in none do you find the death-rate under 45, whilst in this section just behind Miller-street it is 58.4. And in one way even that is not the worst, for the deaths in two large lodging-houses, if included, would bring it up to over

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

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Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

over 80. Very justly, Dr. Tatham has not included those, as the deaths in them take place among tramps and strangers to the city. And if you look at the map you find that irregularly, up and down the whole of Ancoats in Hulme, and in Deansgate, the black shows in almost as large areas."

2693. That does not refer to children particularly; that is the general death-rate?—That is the general death-rate; but of course the children figure in it very largely.

2694. But speaking generally, do you consider that any system of registration, either what the present law nominally enforces or what is contemplated under this Act, is desirable, or do you think it necessary?—We consider it desirable; it could at least do no harm and it might be useful in other parts of the country, and we might find it useful.

2695. If I understood rightly, the purport of your evidence, taken with what Dr. Tatham told us, is this: "What is proposed by this Act is not really necessary in Manchester, because we can do better. We have got a system at work there which covers the ground roughly, and practically gives us, at all events, what the existing law could give us if it were enforced, and a great deal of what would be even if the law were more stringent?"—I think that would have to be somewhat qualified, for various reasons. In the first place this society of ours is entirely voluntary, and a cessation of subscriptions would stop it at once. Also, it is within the power of the corporation to change their minds and withdraw the sympathy, if you call it so, that they give us. It is simply a perfectly voluntary thing which might be brushed away at any moment; therefore, I think that the law would be very necessary in view of that if nothing else.

2696. And if the law, as here sketched, were to become law to-morrow, and it was put in force, do you yourself see reason to think that much hardship would result?—No hardship whatever that I can see; but I do not know what the Act is.

2697. What is proposed, roughly, is this, that no one shall be allowed to take a nurse-child, even one nurse child, under the age of five years, except in a house registered for the purpose, certain large exceptions being given to charitable institutions?—These people you must remember are very poor; would registration involve a money payment?

2698. No, absolutely no payment for procuring registration; but registration involves inspection, and what we want to get at is, will such registration, with the consequent inspection that follows, be a hardship to foster-parents, people who ought to be allowed in a free country to take children by whom they mean to do well?—I think in the lower classes it would be no hardship at all. I do not think their feelings are so very keen that they would feel hurt by inspection; and if they were, I think that the child's welfare ought to be the first interest. But I do not know that it would always be possible to enforce it. For instance, a child might be sent to an aunt or a grandmother only temporarily, as long as the mother was at work; she might have work only

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

for a month; she might have work only for a fortnight; and I question in such a case if the woman receiving the child would think it worth while to register, and it would be very difficult to check it.

2699. That is a very important point; then you consider that even if registration were desirable or practicable with regard to the permanent care of such children, it would be undesirable or unworkable with reference to the temporary care of them?—Well, I do not at all say it would be undesirable, but I think that possibly it might be difficult.

2700. The Bill proposes that for any period longer than 24 hours there must be registration?—Well, if you could get it drilled into these people's heads, I do not see where the hardship comes in. The difficulty would be to get it into their minds.

2701. And you would not be afraid of difficulties arising from the inspection, from their resenting it?—I think that they are a law-abiding people, and when they know that a thing is the law, they are willing to submit to it. I suppose it would come in as something under the same category as the school board and school inspector. Of course we all know that very often the parents evade that law; they will keep a little girl or boy at home to take care of some other children, and the inspectors have a very lively time in looking after those boys and girls; and it is to be expected that the same thing would occur with this.

2702. You have in Manchester, I suppose, some large lying-in hospitals or institutions where women are confined?—Well, there are, of course, the workhouse hospitals, very large workhouse hospitals, but I think there is only one, as far as I am aware, where they take in women for confinement, unless it is an abnormal case; they take them in abnormal cases, but there is only one I think which takes them in in the natural course of things.

2703. Then you have no special experience of difficulties which such institutions as that might find, or those who visit there might find, in discovering suitable foster-mothers for illegitimate children whose mothers have to go to work?—That hardly comes within the category of our work, but from what I gather from other ladies who have visited in the workhouse hospitals where such cases are more certain to occur, and where the death-rate is extremely high, there is serious difficulty because of the expense, not that other working women would not be kind and good to them, and take them in; but where is the money to come from to pay for them. The real mother when she goes to work barely makes money enough for her own living.

2704. And she has to pay what she can to a foster-parent who will take the child?—Yes, to a foster-parent who will take the child.

2705. Do you think that registration would make it more difficult for her, by cutting off, so to speak, the supply of foster-mothers who would be prepared to take the child very cheap?—I do not think that it would, but I do not know sufficiently about it to say exactly. If it is of any value to you, I can tell you what the rates

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15 May 1896.]

MRS. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

are that these poor people generally pay for a child going out.

2706. Will you please do so?—In one district, for instance, in Regent-road, one of our health visitors stated that, among the people she visited, she only knew one house where they take in three children. I was asking the women very particularly if they knew of any houses in their districts where the people take in more than one, and this woman who really knows the district very well, says she only knows of one house, and this person takes in three children, and they are the children of her sister, who goes out to work. Then in another district there is one where the grandmother takes in two illegitimate children.

Viscount Llandaff.

2707. Of her daughter's?—Of her daughter's; and she is paid 2s. and 2s. 6d. for them per week. Of course there is less given to her, being the grandmother, than there would be to a stranger. In the same district where this sister takes the three children, there is another child cared for by a blind girl, she gets 5s. a week for taking care of this child, and provides whatever food it gets. She had one before, which died. She is very kind to the child and very fond of it; it is a servant's illegitimate child. Then I find that 5s. is about the highest rate that is paid. In Hulme the prices are 2s. 6d. to 3s. per week, and sometimes milk is given with it; that is to say, the mother pays for the milk; and it is a very common occurrence, if the child is young, for the mother when she comes out of the mill to come to the house and nurse her child in the middle of the day. Yes, I find that these sums, from 2s. 6d. to 5s., are what is paid.

2708. I gather from your evidence that you have not much experience of what are commonly called baby-farms, that is, places which make a business of taking these children?—No, almost none; whether that is owing to the nature of our work I cannot tell, but I do not think there is much baby-farming, properly so called, in Manchester.

2709. You say that you think registration and inspection would be no hardship to the lower classes; do you mean by that the classes who inhabit those two or three black districts that you so graphically described to us?—Yes, in the first instance.

2710. Do you think those are people likely to get registration?—Not if they can help it, certainly.

2711. But you are aware that in London and, I suppose, everywhere else, there would be strict conditions as to the state of the house, the capacity of the foster-parent to take care of children and so on, conditions that would exclude, I should have thought, these lower classes?—Well, they have a wonderful knack of slipping out of things.

2712. What would be the good of registration if it were to be slipped out of; the object of registration is to secure a sanitary house with almost ideal surroundings for these nurse children?—That is not possible, I think, in

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

Manchester, as far as I can gather; but I think, you know, that there are degrees of poverty and of morality, and if you come just a shade above the very lowest, I think that there would be no difficulty at all about the registration; and it would be for the inspectors, I suppose, to judge whether a house was suitable or not. I cannot tell what the result would be, but I certainly think it would be no hardship, and I think it would be a very desirable thing. We all think that.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2713. What does that mean, "We all think that;" that is an important point?—Perhaps I am speaking a little too generally; but those members of our working committee whom I have consulted think it would be very desirable.

2714. They are in favour, in short, of such a Bill, as far as they have understood it, as is now proposed to Parliament?—Exactly.

Viscount Llandaff.

2715. On the other hand, you said that official inspection would nullify all the good you do?—Yes, but we should not inspect; we should have nothing to do with it.

2716. But there must be official inspectors?—Yes; but our women would never be allowed to inspect in that way.

2717. Would not the inspection of these official inspectors come under your condemnation, that official inspection would be resented by the people, and be disliked by them?—We should not care to run any risk, and I do not see that that comes within our province at all. The inspector very probably might inform the lady superintendents, and we should endeavour to keep the people up to the mark.

2718. Then do you think that the visits of official inspectors, appointed under this Bill, would not be resented by the people whose houses they visited?—To a certain extent they might be; I am not prepared to say that they would never be resented.

2719. Would they not be habitually resented by all the more decent people?—I do not know that they would.

Lord Thring.

2720. I should like to ask you a question or two; I do not quite understand the gist of your evidence; I do not think you quite understand what this Bill proposes to do. Registration means this: that no person shall keep more than a certain number of children in a house unless the house is registered?—I understand that.

2721. Before the children are kept the house has to be registered?—Yes.

2722. Before the children are kept the occupant of the house must apply for registration?—Yes.

2723. Whereupon the official authority examines this house, and, above all, ascertains that the person who wants to keep the baby is competent to keep a baby, and understands how to treat a baby, and is a proper person to keep it; and that the sanitary condition of the house

is

15 May 1896.]

MRS. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

is proper and good for the baby; do you follow me?—Yes.

2724. Now, I will assume that this Act is passed; what happens in Manchester: do you imagine that in these black patches they will apply for registration, because that is the question; they have got to apply?—I do not think they would unless they were obliged to do so.

2725. You cannot oblige them to apply; do you imagine that if they applied from these very bad places they would get registration; in other words, would the foster-mother in most of these places be competent to feed the child, when not one mother in 100 knows how to treat her child; do you think that they would apply for registration, and get it?—I do not think they would in most instances, in fact.

2726. We have this fact, that in Manchester, in these black patches, the people would not apply; and if they did apply they would not get the registration. Therefore, where are the babies to go who are now kept in these insanitary places?—That is what I do not know.

2727. I thought that would be your answer; but I want to draw your attention to your evidence, because you tell us that the foster-parents are hardly ever cruel, that they treat their nurse children as well as they treat their own children?—Yes.

2728. Then you tell us that in the case of Manchester we need not go into that question of rescue work in the ordinary sense, because there is very little of that required; but how would you deal with the great mass of Manchester children who are now maintained in houses which could not possibly get registration, if you pass an Act saying they shall not be kept except in registered houses; how would it be practicable?—I do not know.

2729. Then with respect to these poor foster-parents, what you have told us is that the foster-parents do their best. You also tell us, virtually, that the majority of these foster-parents are not very competent to keep the children. If you exclude the majority of the foster-parents, where are these unfortunate women who now get their children put with their friends and neighbours to keep them?—That is what I do not know; but I would like to draw your attention to the fact that I do not think these people who at present take care of children take any worse care of them than their own dissipated mothers would.

2730. The foster-parents are not cruel, you say; they do their best for the children, but they are very often incompetent?—Yes.

2731. If we strike out the incompetent foster-parents, which is one of the objects of this Bill, where are they to go to?—Might I ask, would you consider the foster-parents capable of taking charge of the children if they were on a par with the mothers themselves?

2732. Certainly not, according to the Act; the mothers themselves are, *ex hypothesi*, very often incompetent; the Act requires that the foster-parents should be competent?—That is where the difficulty comes in. I do not see how you can demand a higher state of competency

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Lord Thring—continued.

from the foster-parents than you can demand from the parents themselves.

2733. Then let us go a little further; I am not in the least degree wishing to puzzle you in any way, but do you not see that we are in this dilemma; you cannot by an enactment provide competent foster-parents or sanitary houses; no Act in the world will make a competent foster-parent or sanitary house; they cannot be created by legislation; then, if we pass the Act, do we not inflict a great hardship on these poor people who, at all events, exist and maintain their children somehow, and who, if we passed this Act, would not be able to maintain them anyhow?—No.

2734. And to maintain them somehow is better than doing it nohow?—That seems to me the difficulty all along. The only thing is this, that my experience is very narrow and simply applies to Manchester and Salford, I cannot in the least tell how it would apply to London or to other towns.

2735. Then I wanted to ask you one other question; you said, and I daresay it is so, that yours is the only society of the same nature, except one or two; you are aware that there are in London what they call ladies' societies for the protection of friendless girls, and the Pimlico Ladies' Association for taking care of friendless girls; the object of those societies is this: they find that a poor girl has gone wrong, we will say in service; she is either going to have a child or has had one immediately before; they take the mother and put her in a home and they keep the child near her in order to keep up the supervision, if possible, of the mother over the child, and not trench upon the maternal instincts; they then do their best after a time to get this mother into service and reclaim her character; now, in order to do that it is necessary to have a good foster-mother; next to have a home for the mother; lastly, that it should not be publicly known that this particular child belongs to this particular mother; now, supposing that that were made a difficult thing, would not it be a great hardship on those poor mothers who could not recover their character?—Yes, I think it would be if these ladies took every care as to the homes into which the mother would be introduced, but I think that also it might be a hardship for a mistress to have a young woman of immoral character introduced into her family, perhaps among young children, without knowing something of her previous history.

2736. Pardon me, it is a rule of the society that these ladies never conceal from the person who takes the girl her error?—That would be right.

2737. Then in time the woman re-establishes her character, and perhaps does not fall back for all the rest of her life?—That is perfectly right.

2738. Then does it not come to this, that the Bill is, I will not say impossible, but one extremely difficult to work in Manchester supposing we passed it?—I think it would be.

2739. And what good would it do in Manchester?—There is a great deal of suffering and sin in Manchester.

2740. How would it relieve the suffering?—
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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Well, I do not know. As I say, our work is limited, and is of a precarious nature to this extent, that various things might do away with it.

2741. Supposing we wait to bring in the Act till your society is abolished, that would suit you very well, would it not?—There is no objection to the Act at all; I do not see that it would touch us at all; but I think that it would be very difficult to work.

Viscount Llandaff.

2742. Assume this, that the local authority are not to register any house unless they are satisfied that such house is suitable for the purpose, and unless they are satisfied, by the production of certificates, that the person applying to be registered is of good character and able to maintain the infants; how many of these people who take foster-children in Manchester would satisfy those conditions?—Very, very few I should think; they would hardly be worth mentioning. If I might say so, it appears to me that the standard you propose is very high.

2743. You say that very few foster-parents in Manchester would come up to that standard?—I should say very few.

2744. I suppose your suggestion would be that we should take the people who do not come up to that standard and give them good advice and improve their houses as much as possible?—That is just what we are doing every day.

2745. And that is what you would like the official inspector under the Bill to do?—I am afraid you must leave me an open mind as to that Bill; I do not feel prepared to give any opinion on it. We are a very old-fashioned, simple-minded sort of people and really know nothing about Acts of Parliament.

Lord Kinnaird.

2746. You mentioned that the corporation had done some work in this line and have not succeeded; what did you mean by that?—The corporation for a great many years had felt that the work of the male inspectors did not do all that they require; for instance, women would not complain to men of things or explain to men things which they would to a woman; therefore, about 16 or 17 years ago (I cannot be quite sure as to the time) they engaged a woman as an experiment, and they laid down their own rules, which were (I do not know) perhaps something similar to ours; but she was more in the capacity of an inspector pure and simple. The result was that at the end of nine months at the outside she could bear it no longer. The constant seeing of so much sin and suffering and dirt, without any outside influence to uphold her, without any power to relieve suffering, was too much for her, and she resigned her position. About a year afterwards our society engaged that woman for us, she did most admirable work, but she was obliged to give up owing to ill-health. We found her full of tact and consideration and liked by the people. The reason of her giving up with the corporation was this, as I tell you, because she found it such an overpowering experience.

Viscount Llandaff.

2747. But why was it more overpowering under the corporation than under you?—Because in our case she had a lady superintendent behind her. In a case of extreme poverty, or deserving people (very often undeserving, but at all events suffering people), the lady steps in and helps, and the lady also communicates a spirit of encouragement, and the woman has her fellow-workers, whom she meets occasionally, and when things get too bad for her she can always go to a lady superintendent for advice and for sympathy and seek help. On that occasion the Corporation forgot this; I suppose a new series of town councillors had arrived in Manchester, and so on; and they knew nothing of this past experience, but again they found the very same thing, the same difficulty, and they applied to us for advice and again they started an experiment and engaged two visitors. These women kept books and filled in the forms for the corporation, whatever they were, but they very soon found that it was done in a very perfunctory manner. It was simply a means of earning their bread, and the Corporation found it so useless that again it was given up, and it was on the cessation of this that their connection with us began.

2748. I do not quite gather what the case is; we heard some days ago that there was no need for the corporation to do the work which the inspectors of the London County Council are doing, because your society did it; now, what I gather from your evidence is that your society is a philanthropic society?—It is so.

2749. And you have further told us that you would not like your visitors to pry into too many questions, because it would interfere with their work?—Yes.

2750. They will not find out crime?—Yes, they know all the people and all the people know them, and it is wonderful how they know everything that goes on without any questions. It comes to them naturally.

2751. I do not like to ask you again questions on figures, but your evidence makes the figures of Dr. Tatham worse, because he says that taking the whole of Manchester the percentage of deaths among illegitimate children is 392 per 1,000. Now you say, "Oh, it is only a small part of the district which we work;" therefore, if you take it in your black district, probably that number would get up to 500 or 600; do you think that something should be done to stop that, because there is no more reason that an illegitimate child should die of smoke or the fumes of chemicals, is there, than a legitimate child?—No.

2752. Therefore, taking even Dr. Tatham's figures, which are appalling, does not something want to be done more than merely friendly visits and friendly advice?—There certainly wants something to be done; the difficulty, it appears to me, is how to do it.

2753. Which side do you take, because on this question there are two clearly different opinions; all acknowledge that there is something wrong; but some think that it is so difficult to get at and that Acts of Parliament fail so much, that they would do nothing; others say they would pass an Act even if it is not carried out, in order to

try

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

try and stop it; which side would you and your committee go with, those who try to do something, or those who sit still?—I think we have always to try to do the best we can; and so as you say it might be well to pass an Act even if it did not succeed, at least to try it.

2754. Do you prefer any other existing authority better than making a new one to carry out this; would you like to give it to the medical officer of health, for instance?—I could give no opinion on that.

2755. Your committee has never talked over that subject, what authority they would give it to; because it is a pity to multiply authorities in these days, is it not?—Most certainly.

2756. Perhaps the local authorities, either police or sanitary, or county councils, might have powers which they could put in force, delegated to them?—Yes; I think that the medical officers of health have so many duties that they have hard enough work to get over what they have at present.

2757. I do not know whether it is fair to ask you this question; it was hinted that the charge for making houses sanitary would fall on the tenant; that would not be the case in the least, would it; it would fall on the landlord; supposing that an Act was passed that no child should be brought up in an unsanitary house, somebody would have to provide a house of the same rent?—I may say that in certain parts of Manchester a great deal of property has been pulled down, owing to railway extension, and so on, and in the near neighbourhood no other houses have been built, and the people simply do not know where to go to, and the result is that it is increasing the overcrowding in some places.

2758. Then with reference to the foster parents, if this Act were passed, if incompetent people living in insanitary houses could not take in a child, do not you think that a number of competent parents would gradually grow up to take charge of these children. If you could send your 14 ladies to tell these women of a number of people who would be willing to take them in, making some profit, could you not help them?—We could advise them to find out proper people.

2759. And, therefore, would it not be possible if this Act were passed, that gradually a better class of foster parents would grow up?—Possibly; it would be very largely a question of money it seems to me.

2760. If there was a sufficient demand the supply would grow up; is that what you mean?—No doubt if it was made to the interest of the foster parents.

2761. If it could not be done for 5s.; then 5s. 6d. or 6s. would produce it?—Yes, it would pay the people.

2762. Do you not see a difference between giving a licence to a foster parent to take in these children, and bringing in an Act to force a parent to be a good parent?—You cannot force a parent in that way.

2763. But you can propose that anyone who is going to make profit of it shall do it efficiently?—Yes.

2764. Do you think that it could be done for (0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2s. 6d.?—You must remember that in the instance in which I gave you that figure, that was the grandmother.

2765. I thought you said old women would take them in at, from 5s. to 2s. 6d., or 3s.?—From 3s. to 5s.

2766. I took down your first answer as being, that old women would take them in for, from 5s. to 2s. 6d., or 3s.?—I believe it was in an exceptional district, I said 2s. 6d. to 3s. In Hulme, it is a very poor district.

2767. And you said that grandmothers would take them cheaper?—This grandmother did. I do not know that you could infer a great deal from a single case.

2768. Do you think that the evil is great enough at present to call for a stricter supervision which might even cause some hardship to a few parents. Which side do you take; there are two; some are for liberty, allowing this to go on; others want to try and stop it, even if it gives some hardship to a few, and they believe that the intelligent working people will not object to try to stop this awful mortality. Do you take that view, or would you be afraid that there would be an outcry against it?—I am afraid I have not considered it enough to answer, yes or no.

2769. Do you think that there is much crime with reference to the treatment of illegitimate children in Manchester, making away with them?—I do not think that there is straight out deliberate crime of that kind. I think the Manchester people as a rule are fond of their children, and I believe I noticed in some evidence of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, that they found not nearly so much cruelty practised in Manchester and in Lancashire generally, as in London.

2770. What is your relation to this Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society?—Nothing, except that we co-operate with every society that will help us in any way.

2771. If there was a case that you did not want to bring your visitors into trouble about, would you hand over that case to the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Society?—We should; we report to them frequently.

2772. Could you say how many you have handed over to them?—I could not; I have a very bad head for figures; but I do find from my practical knowledge of the state of various parts of Manchester that my experience always coincides with figures when it comes across them. For instance, I may refer to Dr. Tatham's statistics; I could have told him the worst part without figures at all.

2773. You said that in Manchester you have large workhouse hospitals where many of the mothers go to be confined; you said that the mother cannot afford to pay for the child such an amount as 5s.; what happens to those children born in a workhouse hospital?—A large proportion of those born in the workhouse hospitals belong, of course, to immoral women, and they go out with them, and the children get battered and knocked about, and they come back again to the workhouse just to be nursed up again, and a large number of them die.

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2774. Would

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. HARDIE.

[Continued.]

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2774. Would you not rather that they should be kept there instead of being allowed to go out and brought back to die?—What are you to do? These children are the women's children; when the mothers go out you cannot keep the children; we have reported in many cases to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and in many cases it is difficult for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to work. Take the case of a drunken mother; as long as the father does his very best, and places enough food before these children by hook or by crook, the mother may neglect them in every other way, and allow them to grow up in immoral habits, and all the rest of it, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children can do nothing.

2775. If it could be shown by figures which are given by public authorities that other towns, with something of the same conditions as Manchester, by applying certain Acts have improved their infant mortality, and illegitimate mortality, if London could show it by figures which could not be broken down by any cross-examination; then do not you think that Manchester would set to work to bring her mortality down to the others?—I am quite sure of that; there is nothing that we more desire in Manchester.

2776. You would be glad of an Act that would help you to such a result, would you not?—Most certainly.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. BOSTOCK, having been called in, is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2781. You are one of the health visitors of whom we have heard from Mrs. Hardie?—Yes.

2782. And you have worked under the Ladies' Health Society for how long?—Six years.

2783. Where?—In Ancoats.

2784. A very poor district?—Yes; but we have poorer parts in Ancoats, south.

2785. You live in the district in which you work?—Yes.

2786. Do you know about what, roughly, the population of the district in which your work is?—About 1,500 houses, I believe.

2787. Will you give us some particulars of your domiciliary visits to the poor cottagers?—We go to them in the first place and bring them disinfectant powder, ask them about the state of their drains and that sort of thing, and we speak about their children, especially if we find infants in their house, and ask them what they are fed on; and if they cannot read we sit down and read this paper to them, call again and find out how the children are going on.

2788. You make special note, I suppose, of any bad cases that come under your notice?—Yes, we do.

2789. If you find children in a bad condition you go and pay another visit?—Yes, perhaps the next day.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

2777. Do you think it would be any good to compel the grandmother and sister you spoke of to register?—It appears to me that it would be a hardship in those cases decidedly.

2778. You would make an exemption of children put with their relatives?—I should think so decidedly because who else would take an interest in them if their own relatives would not.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2779. Would you use the word "relatives" in making an exemption; because we were told by someone that these people hardly knew what relatives were?—I think, speaking of the class that go to work, that is somewhat of a libel.

Chairman.

2780. I think we have asked you all the questions we can think of, and I think I may safely say on behalf of the Committee that we all should like to compliment you on the excellent way in which you have given your evidence; and it has been most interesting; and I think we may also compliment you and your fellow workers in Manchester on the good work you are doing now?—Thank you, my Lord; I may say that we are exceedingly proud of our health visitors. For very little remuneration they do a very noble work.

Chairman—continued.

2790. Do you find as a rule that your visits have a good effect upon the parents?—The people are always glad to see us again.

2791. And they do not resent your coming?—Not in any case that I know of.

2792. And do they look upon you as being connected in any way with the sanitary authorities?—They nearly all seem to know it, but they do not mind.

2793. Do you ever have to report them to the sanitary authorities, or to call the attention of the sanitary officer to the bad state of things in their houses?—Yes; but it is in some cases the neglect of the landlord, and the tenants are rather glad that we do this, because it gets the work done.

2794. And then you pay these visits to the houses, and then you send in these reports, I take it, that Mrs. Hardie has put in?—Yes.

2795. Do you visit all the 1,500 houses in your district?—Yes.

2796. Are you able to get round them pretty often?—Well, not to them all very often, because I go three times in one week to one house, or to five houses in one street. If they are pretty fairly tidy people we do not get to them under three months. Living in the midst of the district we know the people so well that

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. BOSTOCK.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

that we soon find out where it is necessary for us to go to them often.

2797. Do you keep in touch with the corporation inspector and with the medical officer of health?—We report to the medical officer of health.

2798. You report to him as well as to your own committee?—The forms go every night to the medical officer of health, and we receive those death-cards that Mrs. Hardie has handed round, and I have got one here filled in. This is a child whose mother died in child-birth and left twins, and one of them is dead; these are the questions which we ask (*handing in a card*).

2799. Then what do you do when you receive notice of a death; do you go and make enquiries and fill up these cards?—Yes, it shows how the child is being fed; whether it is being neglected or not.

2800. How do you deal with cases of sickness and overcrowding, and destitution?—If they are overcrowded we report the case, and sometimes the inspectors come and have them removed.

2801. And cases of destitution and deserted children?—We do not meet many deserted children. If they are very poor we try to get some benevolent people to give us something to help them. Often our ladies give us something to relieve these very poor people; we never come across a child that we think is starving without they do something.

2802. Do you distribute charity at all?—We are not bound to distribute charity, but if we meet a case of direct poverty, we help them.

2803. From what fund?—The ladies give us that; sometimes we go to the District Provident Association, and they give a little help; or we might apply to the workhouse for them.

2804. Do you come across any cases of what are known as nurse-children?—Not many; there are some children put out to nurse, but they are not badly cared for.

2805. Are they generally taken in by people who have got children of their own?—Yes, or sometimes the grandmother. Often, in our experience, the wife goes to work, and the child is left in the care of the grandmother; that is often our experience.

2806. That is not what I mean by nurse-children; I mean principally illegitimate children who are put out; the children of domestic servants and others who cannot have the children with them; do you come across many cases of them?—Not many.

2807. Have you ever had your attention called to the Act which is in existence for the registering of houses in which more than one child of under 12 months is kept?—No, I have not.

2808. You do not know of the existence of the Act?—No.

2809. You do not know anything with regard to the necessity or otherwise of registering houses in which such children are?—No.

2810. So that when you go round you do not pay any attention to the question of registration?—No, I have not done so. We always advise them for the best what to do under the circumstances; to take care of the children of course.

(0.95.)

Viscount Llandaff.

2811. I see, in a report I have got of yours, you say this: "There is something appalling about the dense ignorance, even among affectionate well-meaning mothers, on this all-important point, namely, infant feeding; but many, especially young mothers, in first cases, are willing to listen and learn"?—Yes; that is why I say we sit and read this paper to them; they are so ignorant that they could not read it, and they would not understand it unless I explained it thoroughly.

2812. I have three of your reports in my hands; your reports to the officer of health, I mean; and I see that out of 18 houses you only report two as dirty?—Well, I should be in a very tidy street that day.

2813. The streets are Newby-street, Kirk-street, Stone-street, Johnson-street, Russell-street, Thompson-street, Junction-street; are those very tidy places?—Stone street especially has just been improved; the houses were very bad before.

2814. The other streets, are they among the bad part of Ancoats?—They are principally improved streets.

2815. I only find two that you report as dirty?—I have some much worse.

2816. You say you have not many foster-children?—Not many in our district.

2817. Are they mostly legitimate or illegitimate?—We have very few illegitimate children.

2818. You have no people then who make a livelihood by taking in nurse-children?—Yes; we have a few cases where they take a child in, charwomen principally. They perhaps keep a big girl to look after it while they are out one or two days in the week; but we have no case where they are badly neglected.

2819. The few cases you have then are fairly well taken care of?—Yes.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2820. If there was a bad case in the district, would you be sure to know of it?—Yes, I think so.

Lord Thring.

2821. We have often been told that infants are usually killed by ignorance, not by intentional neglect?—I think that is the case, especially in the feeding in some cases.

2822. And, I suppose, improper feeding?—Yes.

Chairman.

2823. Do you think that improper feeding takes place more frequently with regard to these illegitimate nurse-children than with legitimate children living with their mothers?—No, I do not think so.

2824. But the proportion of the death-rate of illegitimate children is very much larger than the death-rate of legitimate children?—Very few of these things have come to my notice.

Lord Kinnaird.

2825. Would the evidence you give be very much the same as that given by other visitors in different parts, or would some come across these cases

x 3

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. BOSTOCK.

[Continued.]

Lord Kinnaird—continued.

cases of nurse children more than you do?—We meet with rare occasions of the sort.

2826. How many would you meet with?—We meet possibly with a case once in a month of a servant girl's child, something of that kind, put out to be nursed, but we do not meet cases where they distinctly ill-treat them.

2827. Would the sentiments of the people be against ill-treatment; would some people in the neighbourhood come and tell you if there was any cruelty?—Yes, they would come to us because they would know that the name would not be divulged, that their names would not be heard of in the matter.

2828. You said that you can only go over your district three times in the year; but you can get to all the houses that it is necessary to visit as often as you wish, cannot you?—Time does not permit us to get round very often; if we know of an extreme case we go to it.

2829. There is no reason to go to a street where all is going on well?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2830. Have you ever been refused admission?—No.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. JOHN F. W. TATHAM, M.D., having been re-called; is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2835. You want to hand in something, I understand?—Two forms which you asked for on a previous occasion; one is the form of the medical certificate of the cause of death, and the other is a copy of the death register.

2836. This is the ordinary certificate that is given?—Yes.

Lord Kinnaird.

2837. Would you like any addition to be made to this form?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2838. The registrar asks the name of the parent in the registration of death?—That is so.

Lord Thring.

2839. Could you fine them if they refused to give it?—I am not aware that anything of that sort has been done.

2840. You have the power to do it?—The power, I told you of, the last time I was here.

Chairman.

2841. Since you gave your evidence the other day has anything further occurred to you by which you can offer any satisfactory explanation of this very high death-rate amongst illegitimates in Manchester as compared with legitimate children?—I have looked over my evidence and nothing further occurs to me at present. It is a very difficult subject, as your Lordship must know, of course.

Chairman.

2831. If you do go to a house, what is the way you proceed; do you knock at the door?—Yes, and I carry a bag of disinfecting powder; where we are known we do not need to carry that with us; I only mean in the case of a strange householder.

Lord Kinnaird.

2832. You come to them as an official to that extent?—They do not regard us as officials; they come to us in any difficulty. If a child was in a fit some mothers would rush to me about it.

Chairman.

2833. You do not think that the people have any objection really to ladies coming and doing the work that you do?—No.

Viscount Llandaff.

2834. And I suppose they know that you give help as well as disinfectant powder?—We have a very good mothers' meeting once a week, and the ladies come and get 150 of the women there, and give them a good talking to; they get to know us, and of course they get to know the ladies, and they like them.

Chairman—continued.

2842. You still think that it is partly owing to the deaths being registered better than the births?—Yes, I feel certain of that.

2843. So that you think that the actual proportion is not really so large as it appears?—I think it is not, and I think I have very good grounds for that conclusion.

Viscount Llandaff.

2844. We have heard another suggestion from Mrs. Hardie, namely, that the illegitimate births are mostly in the lowest class of the population of Manchester; consequently that they are less well cared for than the other children?—Unfortunately the illegitimate births do not take place exclusively amongst the very lowest of the population, and Mrs. Hardie, I think, mentioned cases in which they did not; it is a sad thing to be obliged to own that it is so. I understood Mrs. Hardie to say that some of those illegitimate children were the children of servant girls who, of course, reside in the better parts of Manchester.

Lord Kinnaird.

2845. Do you think that the charge of making the houses sanitary would fall upon the inhabitants of those houses?—No, it would fall on the owners of the houses, of course.

2846. And it would not necessarily raise rents?—I do not think it would, except very exceptionally.

2847. It

15 May 1896.]

Mr. J. F. W. TATHAM, M.D.

[Continued.]

Chairman.

2847. It is only structural sanitary alterations that would fall upon the owner?—Structural alterations I am speaking of.

Lord Kinnaird.

2848. Internal structural alterations included?—Yes, altogether.

Lord Thring.

2849. Does the owner whitewash?—As a matter of fact he often does.

2850. I fancied that the ordinary whitewashing and cleansing out of drains would fall upon the tenant?—As a matter of practice, in tenement property that is very largely done by the owners in Manchester.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mrs. WETHERED, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2855. You are a member of the Committee of the Paddington and Marylebone Association for the Rescue and Care of Friendless Girls?—Yes.

2856. And also a member of the Committee of the London Diocesan Council for Rescue and Preventive Work?—Yes.

2857. And to-day you have an additional authority as representing a large meeting of rescue workers and ladies interested in the care of friendless girls, who have, so to speak, deputed you to represent them to day?—That is so.

2858. And you have handed in here a list of the delegates who were present at the meeting in question when this Bill was under consideration?—Yes.

2859. There were delegates from 18 different associations in London and the neighbourhood, all of whom are connected with associations of this character for the protection of friendless girls?—Yes.

2860. And engaged more or less directly in rescue work?—Yes.

2861. And therefore you really represent a large body of opinion upon the subject of the arrangements possible or necessary for the care of the children of such girls?—Yes.

2862. I think you would like me to read, as summarising the points that you wish to emphasise, a letter that you have written to me?—If you think it would make my evidence clearer.

2863. "I am sending you a few typical cases to explain how Clause 2 would practically injure one of the most important branches of our rescue work, and in my opinion would increase child murder and suicides by making it so very difficult for friendless girls to find suitable nurse-mothers. Many girls are bitterly ashamed of the first false step. Now shame and despair, without time to consider, drive girls to suicide and to child murder; and the publicity and difficulty of finding suitable nurse-mothers would intensify these feelings; and, again, friends who are now

(0.95.)

Lord Kinnaird.

2851. And the landlord would have to do it in order to keep a tenant?—Or in order to comply with the requirements of the sanitary authority.

2852. And the proper working of the Sanitary Act would not be a hardship on the working men occupying those houses?—I do not think it would be a hardship.

2853. Somebody else would do it in order to get their rent?—Somebody else would do it in order, I would rather say, to comply with the requirements of the sanitary authority; that is the great lever.

2854. The sanitary authority is not harder on the poor people than on others?—No, certainly not.

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

ready and willing to give a girl they know a helping hand by receiving her child, would utterly refuse to allow themselves to be registered as receivers of illegitimate children. We, rescue workers, are trying most earnestly to raise the moral tone of these girls, and to encourage them in every way to take up the responsibilities of motherhood. In many cases no better inspector can be found than the mother, and the closer the tie between the mother and the child the better. In the Act of 1872, based on the Report of the House of Commons Select Committee of 1871, Clause 2 seems to have been drawn up with a view to meet the cases I have described; and now it is proposed that this Clause should be repealed, and a rigid one with no elasticity substituted. The London workhouses are realising the importance of voluntary work. Our association was asked by the Marylebone Guardians to send a worker to their lying-in ward, and we have now a workhouse-aid committee. There are at least 13 workhouses in London helped in this way. The Act does not deal specially with the adoption of babies, with a sum paid down, and yet this is manifestly the root of baby farming in its worst form. No registration or inspection could be too stringent for this class of case. The financial side seems also to be ignored. Registration will not attract nurse-mothers unless it makes the payment more secure. Who will be responsible for this? If the State, then surely that means making vice easy, and encouraging the very sin we are all trying to check. It is quite right to make the mothers pay, and as a rule there is no difficulty about this, but the wages are often inadequate. It would be well if more men could be persuaded that they are responsible for their children. Who will be the inspectors, men or women? It is evident that the only efficient inspection of babies would be the inspection by well-chosen women. Whether the Act was administered by the police or by any other authority the actual inspection should be by women?"—

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2864. "We

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2864. "We have just had our annual ladies' meeting. The Bill proposed by Lord Denbigh was fully discussed. I forward the two resolutions proposed and unanimously carried. I can now say when I give evidence on Friday that it will not only be in my private capacity, but as the representative of the most experienced lady rescue workers in London." That is the letter which describes your views?—Yes.

2865. The resolutions are these: Resolution No. 1: "We, the delegates from the above-named associations" (which are all named here, 18 of them) "gathered together in council, 13th May 1896, desire to record our belief that the proposed repeal of Clause 2, in the 'Act for the Better Protection of Infant Life' (25th July 1872) and the substitution of Clause 2 in Lord Denbigh's Bill, would be highly detrimental to the interests of infants necessarily separated from their mothers, because it would cut off the supply of more respectable nurse-mothers, who would refuse to be registered, and would thus increase the danger of suicide, desertion, and infanticide." The second resolution was, "That it ought to be rendered illegal for institutions or individuals to adopt one or more infants or children on the payment of a lump sum of money unless such institutions and individuals are registered and inspected"; and then there follows a list of all the ladies who were present; and this you desire to put in because it shows the representative character of the meeting?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

2866. That may be considered as representing the views of the Pimlico Ladies' Association?—Yes, I think so; there were six representatives from Pimlico; the Duchess of Bedford did not come herself; the six members who were there came as representatives, and they helped to draw up these resolutions.

2867. Their evidence would be probably the same as that of yourself?—I do not know that, but we are entirely at one on this subject.

2868. But what you say, as far as you know, represents the views of the Pimlico Association?—Yes; but you might be glad to have somebody else as a witness.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2869. One of the points you desire to emphasize to us to-day is, that there are two kinds of nurse-mothers, and you want to draw out the difference between them?—Yes.

2870. Will you tell us that yourself?—May I take one of my cases to illustrate the two? The two distinct classes of foster-parents are nurse-mothers, and baby-farmers whom we all want to aim at. I think this clause would interfere with good nurse-mothers without checking the evils of baby-farming. I will take a typical case from my own experience, "Ellen C—, a girl of 21, with first child a month old, no friends, no money; in her despair tried to smother the child. I visited her and took her and the child straight to our Refuge. On investigating the case I found she had good past characters; so, after a few weeks, she was placed with a lady who was told

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

her history, and the child with a very good middle-class woman. Ellen, with a little help, pays for her child. Once a month, when she has a 'day out,' she spends it with her child at the nurse-mother's, and is devoted to the child. This nurse would certainly not submit to being registered, nor would the husband allow it." So that, in that case, the girl would have lost the opportunity of placing the child with a very suitable woman; and she would also have lost a very good friend in the nurse-mother. This child is inspected by me and by our matron, and by the mother herself.

2871. That is one case?—That is one case. That is an instance of a nurse-mother, I should say, who loved children and wanted to have a child, but could not quite afford to keep a child without some payment. In most cases we should arrange for 5s. a week; but if the girls arrange they can make any arrangements they like. There is one nurse-mother taking 3s. a week because she is a friend of the girl's. Now, for my next case, "Beatrice S—, age, 18. "This is a young dressmaker who had a child, and herself found a nice young couple to take the child, and for a time she paid for it; then she went utterly wrong, and came under my care. I found that the best chance of reforming her was to send her to a two years' home, but the child was the difficulty, as the foster parents said they would not keep him without payment." (It is expensive to pay for a child in a home and to pay for the mother in the penitentiary at the same time; our funds do not allow of it), "Dr. Barnardo said he would receive the child free during the two years the mother was in this home on condition that he was told when she went to service, and that then she should contribute towards its support. This was arranged. After I had put the child with Dr. Barnardo, the foster-mother came to the Refuge, miserable at having given up the child, and stated that her husband offered to have it back and adopt it altogether. I feel so strongly against cutting a mother off from her child that I made it a stipulation that they should only have the child on Dr. Barnardo's condition, viz., that when the mother earned wages she should make some payment for the child. These people certainly would not allow themselves to be registered as this Act proposes, and many of such kind homes would be shut to these poor children." It was a great responsibility to take the child away from Dr. Barnardo after I had placed it there, and I asked the woman what would happen if she died, and she said, "If I die my sister has promised to take it"; and she said that she cried all night because she saw the little cot empty. That was a real case of mother's love, and I felt it better to take the child from Dr. Barnardo and put it with her. I could give many such cases. This next one is rather different: "Fanny P., a girl aged 22; first fall with good previous characters; I sent her to the Main Memorial Home, 49, Burton-crescent; she was received there before her confinement, and taken back again with her child when discharged from Queen Charlotte's Hospital. Fanny was placed in service and the child boarded out with one of the staff

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

staff of nurse-mothers. The payment of 5s. a week in this case is entirely paid by the mother herself." (She can earn 20l. a year; she is a cook.) When wages are less than 20l., 1s. a week is given from a fund for that purpose. The nurse-mothers are most carefully chosen; they bring the child, if possible, once a week to this home to be paid, and are inspected by a lady who is a trained nurse, and the mother of the child is encouraged and expected to come as often as she can to see her child. About 50 nurse-mothers are on the books at this moment. Mrs. Bonham-Carter tells me in the last six years she has had only two cases of babies thrown on her hands, deserted by their mothers.

2872. On the list of nurse-mothers you refer to, there are about 50, you say?—Yes.

2873. Those nurse-mothers always keep in touch with the child's actual mother?—Yes.

2874. And to that point you attach the greatest importance?—The greatest importance.

2875. There are only two cases within these six years of failure on the part of the actual mother to keep in touch with the nurse-mother with whom the child is placed?—Yes; of course that number 50 is liable to be increased or diminished according to the demand.

2876. Then are any of the nurse-mothers registered?—Yes, there are some of them registered under the old Act.

2877. Have you any reason to think that on this list of 50 nurse-mothers there are some who are taking more than one child under 12 months old?—Yes, certainly.

2878. They are therefore registered?—They are therefore registered; but they are a lower class of nurse-mothers than the others. Mrs. Bonham-Carter tells me that her better nurse-mothers would refuse to be registered; it would shut the door to her work considerably. Then I have another case of a girl of 20 sent to Miss Darling, 61, St. Charles-square. (Ours is a refuge, and we pass our girls on.) The child has been placed out from there, and the nurses there are most carefully chosen and inspected. Miss Darling says the proposed clause would hinder her work sadly. "Mary C., sent to 31, Arbour-square" (another home in connection with our work, and they are kept there for six months, which is very desirable if you want to keep a mother and a child rather longer together). I have a letter from Miss White (Honorary Superintendent) which I should like to read.

2879. I will read it for you. This (*pointing to a letter*) is the letter from Miss White. "Dear Mrs. Wethered, Thank you for letting me see the resolutions passed at the meeting of the Rescue Associations with regard to Clause 2 in Lord Denbigh's Bill. I most cordially agree with what is said in those Resolutions. I have had, as you know, an experience of 10 or 11 years in rescue work, and I have devoted a great deal of time to the finding of good nurse-mothers for illegitimate children. I do not know of one single case of cruelty in all these years, and scarcely any of neglect; I feel sure that if all houses have to

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Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

be registered where illegitimate infants are it will greatly hinder a most important part of rescue work; I have long thought that it is not the weekly or monthly payments which are the temptation to nurse-mothers, but, as you say, sums of money paid down and children adopted"?—Yes.

2880. Have you any more cases?—This one only, of a girl aged 26. She had very bad companions in London, so it seemed better to send her out of London, and I sent her with her child to Miss Bell's Home in Eastbourne. There is a laundry attached to it and an admirable system of boarding out in connection with the home. I have not had time to write to Miss Bell, but I feel sure she would agree with us. I could multiply homes and illustrations.

2881. What you are afraid of in the case of such registration is that the better class of foster-parents would be afraid to register because of the inspection which would follow registration, and of, one might also say, the stigma that would attach to them?—That is what I should be afraid of. I do not think they would be afraid of voluntary inspection; we all inspect them; but they would not like the stigma of receiving illegitimate children, nor the official inspection.

2882. If by any means we could adopt a system of registration which carried with it no stigma, and avoided anything like the appearance of what would be vulgarly called baby-farming, that objection might possibly be obviated?—No, I think not; there are so many practical difficulties. For instance, I wanted a nurse-mother for a child in a great hurry, and I wrote to a woman I knew; she said she could not take it, but her sister would, and we sent the child to her. The child proved to be a very crying child, and a short time afterwards the husband appeared at the Refuge, and said he was very glad for his wife to have a child, but he could not stand having his nights disturbed; he was a working man on the line, and if his wife was to have a baby he must ask me to get one that did not cry. I wanted this child, who was delicate, to go to this woman, because I knew it would be well taken care of. I have now given them a child of a year old, which I hope will not disturb them. They kept the crying child temporarily till other arrangements were made.

2883. So that what you are afraid of is not inspection, but the stigma?—Yes, registration, which means both.

2884. Have you considered at all whether any system short of what would be ordinarily called registration, such as merely giving notice to some authority that there was such a child in the house, would meet the case?—No.

2885. Of course we do give notice, or notice is given for us in all of our houses when there is infectious disease, and so forth; has it occurred to you that a similar notice, something short of what might be called registration, might meet this case?—I think it would not. There is a natural love for babies in many women,

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15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

and constantly when they have no children of their own the wife arranges to have a baby in her care and the husband is willing if it does not put him out; but if he thought it was necessary to have registration he would not consent. And a great many of our girls are very superior and their one idea is to hide it, and that is a good feeling to foster.

2886. That is another point; let us keep to this point now. In some of the letters that you put in the phrase was used "registered as a house for taking illegitimate children." That one can obviously see would arouse the strongest objection on the part of almost everybody; but there might be some form of registration far short of that which is no greater stigma than notice that there has been scarlet fever in one's house. You still think that, however modified in its form, there would be on the part of the man, if not on the part of the woman a radical objection to intimations to any authority?—I think there is a widespread objection to an official inspection.

2887. Now comes the point you mention; you say you do, as a matter of fact, register?—Yes, we enter the names and addresses of our nurse-parents in our books. A nurse mother when she takes a child from us would not mind my going down to see the child. I can go whenever I choose. Our matron would run down perhaps in the evening just in time to put it to bed for her. The mothers themselves spend as much time with the children as they can.

2888. You wish to show here how important it is to keep up the mother's personal care and charge over her infant?—That is the chief point.

2889. But that does not directly interfere with registration?—No, but you would get a different class of person under the proposed registration. The nurse who asks to be registered does so because she wants to make a livelihood. It means that she is taking in more than one child for the money's sake. That person ought to be inspected; but those people who take a child because of their love for the child, or for its mother, are on quite a different footing.

Viscount Llandaff.

2890. You could not distinguish them in an Act of Parliament?—It would be difficult; in our work we distinguish between these different kinds of nurse-mothers, and there are the nurse-mothers found by the girls themselves.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2891. You think that the nurse-mother who takes in a child, or children, for profit, ought to be, we will not say registered, but inspected, supervised?—Certainly, I think that we should apply the registration to those cases.

2892. But the registration at present is only children under 12 months of age, and you would

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

not, I presume, limit it to that?—No, but I thought, under the present Act, you could take one child, but not two, without registration.

2893. Yes, certainly?—I should keep to that, I think the old Act was better. If you only give 3s. 6d., or 4s., or 5s. a week, there cannot be much profit made.

Viscount Llandaff.

2894. It has been suggested to us that a woman can spend 1s. only out of the 5s. for the child, and it will probably die in a month, and then she will get another?—I have not met with them. It may be so in some cases.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2895. But that class of cases has not come under your notice?—No, because a weekly payment, to a certain extent, means supervision or inspection.

2896. Then still keeping to the point of the manner of registration, what would you say to a plan whereby such an association as any one of those to which you have referred was obliged itself to be in some way registered, and that then powers were given to the ladies of that association to supervise the nurse-parents?—That would suit us, because we should not mind being registered; but it would not meet the case of the nurse-mothers found by the girls without the association.

2897. No, except so far as the girl if she was in touch with your association could intimate to you the home she had found, and that over that home would be cast the protection of your association?—Yes, but then there are a great many girls who find nurse-mothers without being in touch with any association.

2898. Are those safe?—If there is a cousin or somebody belonging to them they need not come to us at all.

2899. But I am afraid you must admit the fact that a very large number of illegitimate babies are put in quite unsuitable homes where they may die. We want in some way or other to protect them; you say that lest we should interfere with a girl who is going to find a suitable home, we must not make a law which would interfere with one that will find an unsuitable one?—We must be sure that the law would do what we want to do. I do not think the proposed clause would do so.

2900. Still you want inspection?—We want inspection, but the best sort of inspection.

2901. You are strong upon the point that the inspector must be a woman?—Absolutely. I think inspection of babies should be carried out by carefully chosen women. It is ridiculous to have anything else; a man, as a rule, cannot even nurse a baby, and it is absurd to suppose that he can inspect it.

2902. In London at this moment there is a gentleman who has been inspecting babies for, I forget how many years, 20 years?—That is probably not the kind of inspection that I mean.

2903. Then

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2903. Then you wish to say something about the financial side?—It seems to me that these people will only register if you guarantee payment, and who is going to pay? They would not take a child without some certainty of being paid.

2904. The argument of some people is that if there were a great number of registered houses a girl who wanted to find a proper home would find it much easier to find one?—A penniless girl would not; they would not take her child.

2905. In your notes you have put down "How to check baby-farming"?—We consider that all institutions and individuals who receive children for a lump sum should be registered and inspected. If a woman can get a child with 5l. and then kill that child and get another with 5l., there is a distinct object in getting rid of it.

2906. Your wish is that we should if we can legislate so as to prevent the taking of a lump sum?—Yes.

2907. Have you at all thought of any process by which we shall be able to find out whether a lump sum is paid?—That will be one of the difficulties. I think adoption of babies with payment without registration should be made illegal, and when advertisements are seen in the papers asking for a child to adopt, that person ought to be visited and asked for credentials. Constantly girls have brought me these advertisements and shown them to me, and I have always said "have nothing to do with that." I should like to read a bit from a lady's note who has taken this up a great deal: "I answer advertisements and ask if I may call, not giving my name or proper address, but the name and address sent to me by some person anxious to help in some small sort of way; they appoint a time to see me, and you can gather from what you see, and from the woman herself, quite enough to condemn her if you wish. My relieving officer can only tell me of cases, but I have very often used my knowledge to reclaim the woman from her awful crimes and I have, under God, been the means of persuading several women to give up their awful trade, and they are now respectable members of the community. I should not care to specify cases; that would not be fair on those who have sought God's blessing, and found it."

Chairman.

2908-9. By "her awful crimes" she means what?—The making away with the children.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2910. You have written here "Who are the most likely people to carry out the law"?—I have not thought that out, but it occurs to me that the Poor Law officials might afford a better machinery than the county council; and if they were in touch with voluntary associations like ours, the law might be more efficiently carried out and, working together, we might make a strong body of inspectors, and help to enforce the Act.

(0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

2911. What you mean is inspectors who should be partly under the supervision of the Poor Law authorities, and partly volunteers?—Yes, like the lady whose letter I have quoted.

Chairman.

2912. You stated just now that you thought there would be great objection to registering only one child?—Yes.

2913. But do you feel equal objections to raising the age?—No; I have not thought that out, but I think it would be desirable.

2914. You know, I suppose, that the present Act applies only to cases where there is more than one child of under one year of age?—Yes, that is how I understood it.

2915. So that if a person keeps one child of under one year with half-a-dozen of over one year, there is no necessity for them to register?—Yes, I should like to alter that.

2916. Therefore, when you said just now you would like to see the old Act remain as it is, you had not got that in your mind?—No, I was not thinking of the age.

2917. Do you see any really practicable way of drawing a legal distinction between what you call a nurse-mother and a baby-farmer?—Yes, I think the one to whom a weekly sum is paid is a nurse-mother; I think the one to whom the lump sum is paid down is the baby-farmer.

Viscount Llandaff.

2918. It is not the one child or the two children, but the lump sum that makes the difference?—Yes, because that is the temptation; if you can go on piling up 5l., 10l., 30l., you get a very large income.

Chairman.

2919. But have you considered the question how you are to find out whether a child has been paid for by a lump sum, or whether it is paid for by weekly payments?—It is very difficult, but if it was illegal to do it I think it would be possible to set to work and find it out.

2920. How would you find out that it was not a mere instalment of a weekly payment? These professional baby-farmers are very ingenious people, and they have the reputation of being able to evade the law if you give them a loophole?—They will probably do their utmost to evade it.

2921. And, therefore, if you simply make it illegal to accept a lump sum with a child, it would be very simple to say, "We have received 10l., but we are going to receive 5l. next month"?—It would be difficult to prevent that sort of thing, and there might be cases where a lump sum paid down was perhaps the best way of doing it.

2922. I think we are fully alive to the fact that most of the worst cases of professional baby-farming are traced to lump sums; I do not press

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

you on the point; I think we are rather anxious to find a satisfactory way of stopping it?—I think that a lump sum down ought to be struck at. I think it would be a pity to injure the enormous amount of good rescue work with the possible idea of getting at the baby-farmer. I do not think the proposed registering of these one-baby cases would do it.

2923. I take it your only hostility to the Bill is that it would interfere with the good work done by your society and similar societies?—A great deal more than merely the effect on our societies; it is the girls themselves that I am thinking of. I think you would be making it so hard for them; they would be driven into a corner. I think this clause would tend to drive some girls to suicide and to child-murder. By our association, and associations like ours, no doubt it would be considered objectionable, but it is the girls themselves I am thinking of.

2924. But the girls themselves generally obtain foster-mothers for their children through these advertisements, do they not?—In some cases, but not generally.

2925. Generally privately?—Yes, through friends, relations, and chance acquaintances, and in many other ways.

2926. How do you generally proceed in your questions?—We have been at work for 15 years, so that we have a very large circle of acquaintances, and people know us. When nurse-mothers apply for a child we make preliminary inquiries, personal inspection of the house, take up references, &c.

2927. Then there was another thing I remember in your evidence. You said you generally tried to keep the mothers in touch with the children after you have put them out?—Yes.

2928. That is exactly the contrary policy to that of the Foundling Hospital; they lay the greatest stress on the necessity of entirely cutting off the mothers from the children?—They have never done any rescue work on our lines. We try not only to save the babies, but to reform the mothers.

2929. I was only remarking on the fact of the difference of the two policies?—We endeavour to develop the mother's love for the child. In the first beginning they think of the shame and disgrace. As a rule child-murder takes place in the first few weeks. After that the mother's love springs up, if it has not already shown itself.

Viscount Llandaff.

2930. You spoke of 50 nurse-mothers, were those 50 in houses in connection with your Paddington Association?—No, in connection with the Main Memorial Home.

2931. There are more than 50 nurse-mothers employed by all these associations you mentioned?—Hundreds; that is only one home.

2932. Of your 50, you said some were registered, how many?—Mrs. Bonham-Carter did not tell me that. We have a refuge, an open-all-

Chairman—continued.

night refuge; we get our girls in all sorts of ways, mothers and babies are only one branch of our work. When we have got these we have to sort them; I can only send Mrs. Bonham-Carter girls who have previous good characters, and are likely to do well.

2933. What does Mrs. Bonham-Carter represent?—The committee and the management of the Main Memorial Home.

2934. You said that the registered houses amongst those 50 were of a lower class?—Yes, because they are the class of women who want to make a living out of it; it is perfectly legitimate; I do not mean that they are not nice women, but they are women who are taking the children with the hope of adding to their income.

2935. Have you ever had any cases of insuring the children you put out with nurse-mothers, by the nurse-mother?—No, it is done, but I have never known it.

2936. Would it be as objectionable as the lump sum, in your opinion?—Well, very near akin to it.

Lord Thring.

2937. You said, I think, in answer to the Bishop, that the nurse-mothers did not object to inspection; I presume you meant inspection by ladies, such as yourself; voluntary inspection?—Yes.

2938. But would they be equally content with official inspection?—I think not.

2939. Then your opinion with regard to the Bill generally, is, as I understand it, this; that there are at present a number of nurse-mothers who are not prompted by gain, but by maternal instinct?—Yes.

2940. And those are the very best class of nurse-mothers, and you think that the Bill would in fact exclude that class?—Yes, it would to a great extent.

2941. Then you said that you thought the guardians were better than the County Council?—That is my impression.

2942. I will not press you; have you had much experience of country guardians?—No, only in London. The relieving officer seems to know so much about everybody.

2943. But have you had much experience of country guardians?—No; I did not begin rescue work until I came to London.

2944. Then you are not at all warm on that question?—No, it was simply an idea that came to me, whether it was possible the best people have not been chosen to administer the Act. I only threw that out as a suggestion.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2945. Your reason was that the guardians have already officers going round?—Yes, ready to hand.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

2946. If I understand, while you are hostile to the idea of this Bill, in so far as it insists upon

15 May 1896.]

Mrs. WETHERED.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

upon the registration of every foster parent who keeps even one child, you are not at all hostile to the raising of the age where registration is necessary?—No, nor to having registration where two children are kept.

Viscount Llandaff.

2947. Have you had any experience whether the existing Act has done much good in London?—I do not know that it has made any difference; I think they would be just as good without it.

2948. The good ones as good and the bad ones no better?—Yes, I think so.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2949. You do not think it is because they are inspected that they are good?—I do not think so, but inspection helps to keep them up to the mark.

Viscount Llandaff.

2950. Have you formed any idea why there are so few houses registered in London; do you think there are many that evade the present Act?—Yes, I think so.

2951. In spite of all the care that the London County Council take to find out the houses, you think that many escape?—Yes.

2952. Have you come across many cases of houses with more than one child under 12 months that do not register?—I should not like to assert it positively. I have heard of several cases from a trustworthy source.

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

2953. In your opinion there must be a great many more than 41 houses that ought to be registered?—Yes.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Miss STEER, having been called in; is Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

2962. You are the honorary superintendent of the Bridge of Hope?—Yes.

2963. What is that, a rescue institution?—It is a sort of general mission in Ratcliff Highway chiefly for the rescue of women and children.

2964. It is the Bridge of Hope Home?—Yes, or mission.

2965. And it is established in Ratcliff Highway?—Yes.

2966. For that purpose?—For the purpose of helping the women and children there.

2967. Have you been many years connected with the work?—Just 17.
(0.95.)

Chairman.

2954. Still, that is only an opinion; you do not know it as a matter of fact?—I have not gone into that.

Viscount Llandaff.

2955. We have had evidence that considerable trouble was taken by the officers employed by the London County Council to find out all the houses?—I still think that the Poor Law guardians would be the more natural people to carry it out, because they have got more local machinery that they could use; but that is only my private opinion.

2956. All the cases that you have mentioned that have come under your immediate notice would be very difficult to trace if they did not register; take the girl who picks out her friend, there would be nothing to assist in finding out that case?—Nothing.

2957. Unless the officer went from house to house?—Yes, and had the truth told him.

Chairman.

2958. Is it not very desirable, in the cases of these unfortunate girls, to conceal in some degree the fact of their misfortune?—Yes, most important.

2959. Therefore, while you wish your society to have great powers of inspection, practically you take care to conceal the poor women who have fallen into these difficulties?—Yes, so far as I can do so conscientiously.

2960. And you attach great importance to the possibility of that concealment?—Yes, there are many cases in which it is necessary.

Viscount Llandaff.

2961. You have not said a word about Section 3; would you approve of sending to gaol for six months a girl who would not give her true name and address?—Most certainly not.

Chairman—continued.

2968. So that you have got considerable experience?—Yes.

2969. Are you acquainted with the proposals of the Bill which is before the Committee?—Not fully. I think I understand the general intention.

2970. I may ask you this: do you know that the present law only insists on the registration of houses in which more than one child of under 12 months of age is kept for hire or reward apart from its parent?—Yes.

2971. And our proposal is to extend the Act to any child up to five years of age?—Yes, I think I understand as much as that already.

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2972. And

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

2972. And the reason is that it is believed that there are many houses in which such children are taken in which are now outside the scope of the present Act, and which it would be very desirable to bring under some sort of regulation and control?—Yes.

2973. Have you any views to offer the Committee on that point as to whether it would be desirable or not to extend the Act in that way?—I think it would be desirable to extend the Act so that all children taken in by other than relatives should come under registration. I do not see any objection to it. I board out several children; I am constantly boarding them out with foster mothers; we always have several children boarded out with foster-mothers.

2974. Have you to find homes for these children?—Yes.

2975. I suppose all of them illegitimate children?—Yes.

2976. And do you think that some sort of control over the foster-parents would interfere with your obtaining suitable homes for the children?—It is somewhat difficult to obtain good foster-mothers for the children because respectable women are afraid. These children are very delicate and difficult to bring up, and I have found a difficulty in getting respectable women to take them, and I think we never do get them except when we will be at the back of the woman to superintend and provide doctor's expenses and that sort of thing.

2977. Then when you have boarded out a child in this sort of way you exercise supervision afterwards?—Yes, always.

2978. How do you do it; have you any committee?—Yes, of workers in the mission. With regard to the children, the children are brought to us one week usually and we usually visit them the next.

2979. Are the children boarded out in London usually?—In the suburbs of London, usually, where we can get at them.

2980. What sort of amounts do you pay?—Five shillings a week, and provide them with clothes and medical expenses. I always pay the women well, because I expect the children to be well cared for. I do not think the women can take care of the children for profit for less. Of course, if they wish to retain it out of kindness, they can do it for 3s. a week; but to do it for any kind of profit they cannot do it well under 5s. a week.

Lord Thring.

2981. And you clothe them and find them medicine?—We always clothe the children. The foster-mothers are usually very kind to the children; some of them err through ignorance, but it is generally through ignorance, I think. When the payment comes regularly there is no temptation for them to ill-use the child.

Chairman.

2982. Have you any experience of the regular professional people who take in children of this

Chairman—continued.

class, who take them in for lump sums?—No, I have always so discouraged it.

2983. Have you ever come across such in the course of your work among the poor?—No, I have not come across people who do it in that way.

2984. Therefore, you have no knowledge of the actual working of the system?—No, not when a certain sum is paid down at the time, I have never come across that. I think that with the class of foster-mothers that take the children and do badly by them for 2s. or 3s. a week, it is simply a matter of poverty; the mother is unable to afford a larger sum. When the mother is able to pay 5s. a week, or when she is helped to pay 5s. a week, the child is better looked after; we can get a better class of foster-mother to look after the children in such cases, and there is no difficulty or danger about it. It is where a mother is left alone, and has nobody to help her, and has not enough money to pay for it, that the child is neglected, owing to the smallness of the sum she is able to pay. I have occasionally rescued a child when the mother has not been able to pay for it, or has only been able to pay a small sum, and then I have found that the child has been neglected.

2985. You do not keep the children at all in your mission home for any length of time, I gather?—I find that babies do not get on so well by putting them together several in a house; I prefer to board them out, because they get on better.

2986. Do you board them out at once after they come to you?—When they are three months old, usually; I generally keep the mothers till that time, if possible.

2987. Do they come to your home to be confined?—No.

2988. You do not take them till afterwards?—No, I do not take them till afterwards; I generally take St. George's and Whitechapel workhouse cases.

2989. People who have gone to the workhouse for the purpose of being confined, and you take them afterwards for the purpose of trying to reclaim them?—Yes.

2990. There is a certain class of lying-in houses which have been mentioned to this Committee; do you know anything about them?—No, I do not send any cases to those lying-in houses; I send them to the hospitals.

2991. Some of these women come to you before their confinement, and ask for your advice?—Yes; I very often have to pay for boarding them out before they are confined.

2992. What class of women are they, as a rule?—Nearly always domestic servants, those that I have to deal with; sometimes they are young women in shops; sometimes of a little higher class, but usually domestic servants. I always take the mother's wages, or a portion of the mother's wages, and assist her in paying for the child.

2993. You do not find that the foster-mothers, when

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

when you put children out, object to the visits of your committee?—No, not in the least.

2994. Do you think that the people whom you put your children out with would object to notifying the local authority in some way, or being registered?—I should think they would not, because I am careful that I have thoroughly respectable people, who, I should think, would be glad to be recognised.

2995. You do not think that the respectable people would object to being registered?—I should think not.

2996. Have you ever asked any of them?—No, I have not; of course, excepting this, that when I have given a second child under 12 months of age to a woman, I have had to say, "Are you registered; can you take the child?"

2997. You do sometimes send a second?—I have occasionally done so; I do not often do it.

2998. Have you come across any of the registered houses at all; do you know any of them?—Oh, yes. Of course some of the foster-mothers I have, have been registered; because they may already have had a child from somewhere else, when I have given them a child, and I have found that they have been registered.

2999. Do you communicate at all with the officers of the County Council who administer this Act?—No; we visit these women to see that the children are well kept.

3000. But when a woman tells you that she is registered, do you do anything for the purpose of verifying her statements?—No, I have not. That has not occurred lately, because I have been careful to give only one little child to a woman.

3001. What do you mean by "lately"?—The last five or six years. I am quite sure it is largely a question of money. It is because the mothers cannot afford to pay properly for the children that they get a low class of women to take them, who are not very conscientious. I know that that is the reason; I feel sure in my own mind that that is the reason why they do it. When they are obliged to put out a child, and can only afford 3s. or 4s. a week, they must get anybody to take it. Of course it is extremely likely that there would be a higher average of mortality among these children than among other children, because they are generally much more delicate, and everything is against them.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3001*. Roughly speaking, how many children might you have at a time boarded out?—I should think about a dozen at a time. When I get a baby three or four years old I take it into one of my cottage homes.

3002. Do you exercise supervision over them from the time of their first boarding out, if that is early after birth, to three or four years of age?—Yes, unless the child is adopted. It is sometimes adopted by the foster-parent. Sometimes the mother marries or takes away the child for some (0.95.)

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

reason or another. As long as we help to pay for the child, we supervise it.

3003. You spoke of the larger number of the mothers with whom you have to deal, being domestic servants?—Yes.

3004. Do you attribute that fact to the larger number of the young women being in domestic service, or to the fact that such things are more likely to occur with those who have gone into domestic service?—You see if such a thing happens to a girl who is in domestic service she cannot go on with her work, as a factory girl can; the factory girl can have her child at home and look after it and yet go on with her work.

3005. You mean that you have to do with cases of domestic servants, but it does not necessarily follow that you are having, so to speak, a fair average of illegitimate children?—I think that that accounts for our having the domestic servants in our homes. It is only from what we hear that I can speak, but we hear that more domestic servants have those children than any other class.

3006. Did you hear the evidence that Mrs. Wethered gave a little while ago?—No.

3007. Mrs. Wethered was speaking very strongly, from obviously a large experience, as to the objection which many of the foster-parents with whom she has had to do would certainly have to registration of any sort or kind: your experience differs from hers?—Yes, of course. I work in the East-end, and I do not think there would be much objection there. I cannot see that it would be well to register every home for one child, because so often a relative will take a child; and as I think some one said this morning, you will very often find a grandmother or an aunt who will take a child for 2s. 6d. a week; that just pays her out-of-pocket expenses, and she gives the care of the child for nothing; and in those cases I think registration would be found difficult. But I know how difficult it is to make exceptions. I think everybody having the care of two children should be registered.

3008. Do you desire to change the existing law?—I think it might be prolonged till the child is five years old, not limited to 12 months.

3009. Of the two aims which the Bill has, firstly to prohibit even a single child being kept under 12 months of age, and secondly to enlarge the limit of age up to five years, you would be clearly in favour of the second?—When there was more than one child.

3010. Only when there was more than one child? Would you not register a house where there was only one child if it was two years old?—So many poor people you see are willing to help a mother of an illegitimate child in that way. Sometimes if they have no children of their own they will not mind helping a girl by taking one child. I do not suppose they would make a business of it and take two children, but it is often the case that they will take one child perhaps for less than 5s. if they know the girl; they may be relatives, and it would be very difficult to register a house under those circumstances, would it not?

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3011. Of

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

3011. Of course much depends upon what you mean by registration; if registration means being placed upon a list which is open to inspection, and which gives the impression of such registered houses being what were described to-day as places for receiving illegitimate children, many people would object who might not object to merely having to give an intimation to some authority of the fact that they had a child who was not their own?—But to give notice that they have a child who is not their own even for 24 hours, seems to me rather stringent.

3012. You would object to that; you would wish a longer period than 24 hours named in the Act?—Yes.

3013. But suppose that period to be named, let us suppose that a week is named, what do you say then?—I perfectly well see all the danger of it, and the objection to it, that many a relation or a friend will take a child while the mother goes to the hospital for instance, or to a convalescent home, or has to be absent for some reason or another; they will often take a child for a few weeks, perhaps for nothing, or for only a very little payment.

3014. If for any kind of payment, that would come under the Act directly?—Yes, of course.

3015. We wish to see which way the balance of your judgment inclines; would it be a good thing that registration should be required there, or would the harm be greater than the benefit?—I think they might leave the registration for one child alone; but I think when it comes to more than one child the question of profit comes in, and then I think the house ought to be registered, and the people ought to be looked after.

3016. I quite see that you speak guardedly, but your general impression is that it is in that way that the Act wants strengthening; that we should register every house in which more than one child was kept, even if the children are anything under five years old?—Yes; but I think there is great difficulty in requiring registration if there is only one child.

3017. Do you attach much weight to the importance or desirableness of keeping the mother in touch with her child?—A great deal; it is everything to do that as far as possible.

3018. You would regard the system of the Foundling Hospital and such institutions as being on a mistaken ground, therefore?—As only fit for exceptional cases; all those places are wanted for exceptional cases.

3019. But speaking generally, I mean?—Speaking generally I should say keep the mother in touch with her child. It is so very difficult for that mother herself when in a situation, and perhaps only having a day's holiday once a month, to see or supervise her child.

3020. I am not clear about the class of people who are the foster-parents that you are familiar with?—They are generally widows, single women, women with daughters; sometimes a woman who has brought up her own family and has a girl of

Lord Bishop of Winchester—continued.

13 or 14 years of age for whom she is glad to have a little occupation at home.

3021. Do you find many cases in which a married couple with a family of their own desire to take a nurse-child?—Sometimes, especially where it fits in with the other children.

3022. Where there is a big girl, you mean, who can mind them?—Yes, sometimes there is a big girl who can mind them, and a little child that comes in is well taken care of.

3023. In such a case would you still feel that 5s. is the least for which such a foster-mother could profitably, or suitably, keep a child?—I should never, myself, offer less than 5s.; I could not conscientiously do it.

Viscount Llandaff.

3024. Do you find in your experience that the mother contributes towards that 5s.?—Always gladly. It is only that they pay, according to their wages, 2s. to 4s. a week; it is always willingly given, and I think it is wonderfully well kept up. I have very few cases of desertion; of course occasionally I have such, but not often.

3025. You have told us two things; in the first place you have said that the foster-mothers are usually very kind?—Yes.

3026. And that where there was neglect of the children, it was because they had not enough money paid to them to enable them to do their duty by them in fact?—Yes. I do not come across those foster-mothers much; because I always see that they are paid; but I believe that to be the case.

3027. I do not quite see how these large provisions of this Bill would help that difficulty of cases of neglect and injury to the child through poverty; how would this Bill help that?—I do not know. I think it looks over the fact that poverty is at the bottom of it all; the mother cannot afford it, and that is how it all happens.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3028. You would not mend that by legislation?—No.

3029. You must not expect too much even if you pass such an Act as this?—The Act would do something.

3030. That opens up the question of affiliation?—Until some way is found of money being regularly paid to help the girl, I do not see how it is to be dealt with. A girl with 14l. a year cannot pay properly for a child; that is why we give so much time and money to subsidise the mother's wages.

Viscount Llandaff.

3031. Would not the result of the Bill be this, that foster-parents who only get 2s. 6d. would be excluded from registration, and those children would have to go to the workhouse?—Yes; the mothers would have to go with them.

3032. I understand

15 May 1896.]

Miss STEER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3032. I understand your opinions to be that the maternal instinct is so strong that women as a general rule only wish to get rid of their children when they cannot afford to keep them?—Generally speaking.

3033. And that when they can afford to keep them they do their best to have them well kept?—I think on the whole they do wonderfully. Of course there are exceptions to the rule.

3034. Therefore, it would not be expedient to do away with places where women who cannot afford to keep their children at the 5s. limit could get them taken in at a lower limit?—I should think it would be a very good thing to do away with such places, excepting in the case of relations, or when it is done from kind feeling.

3035. How would these poor women who only pay 2s. 6d. a week, find a home for their children then?—They would have to go to the workhouse.

3036. You think that would be the proper remedy?—No, I do not; but it might awaken more public sympathy.

3037. You mean that a society like yours, might, as the result, get more assistance?—No; what I mean is, that I think the girls might be helped more individually, by individual ladies.

3038. By charity, in fact?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3039. Do you think all your foster mothers would pass the ordeal, if I may use the phrase, of registration?—I think so.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Mr. ALFRED SPENCER, having been re-called, is further Examined, as follows:

Chairman.

3045. IN the evidence of Mr. Rudolf, the Secretary of the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, he stated that a home for infants was handed over to the society by Lady Derby, and that this home was registered, but that the society found that the aggregation of a number of infants in one home was seriously injurious to the infants, and had therefore broken up the home; Mr. Rudolf stated that the home was in the north of London, and was registered under the Infant Life Protection Act; can you give the Committee any information as to this home?—I have ascertained from Mr. Rudolf that the home was situated at 143, Carlton-road, Kilburn. This road is now called Carlton Vale, and the greater part of it (including the site of what used to be the home), is not in London but in the parish of Willesden, in the county of Middlesex. It is, therefore, not registered or known to the Metropolitan authorities. Formerly the home was under the jurisdiction of the (0.95.)

Earl of Buckinghamshire.

3040. If the mother has to go to the house, it prevents her hiding the fact of the child's illegitimacy?—Yes. Of course there are difficulties everywhere.

3041. And it is very difficult to balance the difficulties?—Yes. I should like to say that I think, when a girl has been in court, and when a certain sum has been adjudged to her, it ought not to be left to her to get the money. That is where I think the present law is very weak. You see if the magistrates had the money paid into court that difficulty would be met.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3042. You mean in an affiliation order?—In an affiliation order. There is the difficulty. It is not difficult to get the affiliation order, but when you have got it the difficulty is to get the money. We have had to pay 2l. or 3l. to try and get the money back, and then it does not pay the legal expenses; the man leaves off paying again, and we have to institute the same sort of thing over again.

Viscount Llandaff.

3043. Have you any cases where the father contributes to the payment?—Yes, sometimes the whole 5s., sometimes he pays 2s. 6d., and the mother pays 2s. 6d.; but we see that the child is cared for.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3044. Do you insist on an endeavour to obtain an affiliation order?—No, not in all cases, because sometimes they plead so very earnestly that we should not try it.

Chairman—continued.

justices of the Kensington Petty Sessional Division for the county of Middlesex, and if registered it would have been registered by that authority.

3046. In one of the former Committees the police put in evidence with regard to the number of infants found dead in the street, picked up dead; have you ascertained the number of dead bodies of infants found in the Metropolitan and City Police District during the year 1895?—I have. The return which was presented before the 1871 Committee gave 276 as the number which were found by the police in the year 1870. I present returns prepared, respectively, by the Commissioners of Police for the Metropolis, and the City Commissioner of Police, which show that the dead bodies of infants found in the Metropolitan and City Police Districts during the year 1895 was 231, of which there were 118 males and 109 females, and in four cases the sex was unknown.

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3047 Do

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3047. Do you mean infants under one year?—No, merely infants; they were probably quite young infants in every case.

Viscount Llandaff.

3048. Is there anything to show whether they died a natural death or not?—No, there is nothing to show that in the returns. I think it may be taken that in all cases they were young infants, they are simply given as dead bodies of infants.

3049. Does it merely show that the people wanted to avoid the expense of burial, or that the infant came into their hands in an improper way?—The return given does not supply that information.

Lord Thring.

3050. What does "found" mean?—As far as I know, it means found either in a street, or in some place to which the police have access.

Viscount Llandaff.

3051. There is many a mother who would drop a dead child in the street, but who would not contribute to its death?—I do not think it necessarily follows that these children have been made away with.

Chairman.

3052. Your evidence was not clear upon the point of the actual number of infants under one year, received in registered houses in London. The numbers you gave were infants Mr. Babey found at the houses on successive visits, and there was a certain amount of duplication. Can you now give the Committee the actual number of infants under one year received in those houses, and also the number of deaths of infants under one year, that took place?—I find that the number of infants under one year received in registered houses in London from the 1st of January 1887, to the 31st of March 1896, was 694; that the number of deaths of infants under one year in registered houses during the same period was 137, being a death-rate equal to 197 per 1,000, or 19·7 per cent.

Viscount Llandaff.

3053. I should like you to contrast with that the deaths of infants during the same period under one year, not in registered houses?—The inspector in the course of his duties is brought into contact with unregistered houses, and he does obtain what information is available as to the deaths of infants under one year. Those deaths I have already given in evidence, so far as they have been ascertained by his inquiries, and they amount to 285 per 1,000 or 28·5 per cent.

3054. That is, infants put out for hire in unregistered houses?—Yes, infants under one year.

3055. But you cannot give me the total deaths in the same area, and for the same period, of infants under one year, everywhere?—I do not think I can answer the question; I do not believe the information is in existence.

Viscount Llandaff—continued.

3056. I wanted to know the normal death-rate of infants for the same area and the same time?—I quite understand. As far as we do know it, the general death-rate of all infants under one year is about 16·3 per cent. I think that is given in my evidence before, as the death-rate of infants under one year in the County of London. That was for the year 1893, but it does not vary very much from that in the different years. I think you might take it that the average rate is something between 15 and 17. The death-rate which I have now given you at registered houses is 19·7, and the death-rate at unregistered houses, as far as it has been ascertained, amounts to 28·5; but while the figures are, I think, accurate as regards the general death-rate of infants, and also the death-rate at registered houses, they are not accurate as regards the unregistered houses. That rate is probably very much in excess of the figures I have given you, because we have only ascertained that number by inquiry, and there must have been a great number of deaths that we could not ascertain.

Lord Thring.

3057. It seems to me that the excess of deaths in unregistered houses over those in registered houses has no bearing upon our investigation, because we have been told over and over again now, that the children in the unregistered houses are the children of poorer people, and that the children in those houses are worse fed, and that whether they are worse fed or not, they do not die in a larger proportion than the foster parents' own children, and that they die, not because it is intended that they should die, but because the foster parents often have not the capacity to do well for them?—Probably the greater death-rate is due to incapacity of some kind.

3058. How can you bring up that incapacity by registration; you cannot make people competent by registration; you cannot make the pay given them higher by registration. Do you not see what I mean; the registered houses are selected houses, a higher class of houses, the people are competent; whereas in unregistered houses they may or may not be competent; and therefore the children often die from the incapacity of the foster parents because the poor mothers cannot afford to pay more for them. That is not susceptible of remedy by legislation?—I think that a certain amount of capacity both of the person and in the house ought to be a primary condition of the permission to take in infants for hire. I am not speaking now of isolated cases of single infants, but where two or more infants are taken for profit. I do think that there should be some reasonable provision made so that they should have a fair chance of being reared.

3059. You say that where they are kept for profit, two or more (those being the very conditions we have been talking about), the houses should be registered; we all agree to that?—Quite so; but the Act falls short by limiting the age of the child to one year.

Assuming

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring—continued.

Assuming that the principle of the Act of 1872 is right, so far as the limiting of the Act to cases where two or more infants are kept, that is to cases where, *prima facie*, there is a trade being carried on in infants, then I say there is no reason in stopping the operation of this principle at the age of 12 months, and that it is quite desirable to extend the protection that the Act gives up to five years, when the Education Acts step in, and, in a sense, take the child under their wing.

3060. The difficulty in my mind has been, all through, this: confine yourself to the case where one infant only is kept; we are told that a child is kept well or ill in proportion to the money that can be paid for it; we are further told that when sufficient money is paid, and the child is not well kept, it results from the incapacity of the foster mother. Now, supposing that we make a rule that every house shall be registered where one child is kept, that would exclude a great number of places where the foster mother is incompetent, would it not?—It would prevent the registration, you mean, of those places where the foster mother is incompetent; probably it would do so.

3061. Then, what are we to do with those children who otherwise would be with incompetent people?—These questions that you are now raising I propose to deal with at a later point in my evidence, and I should prefer to answer the questions in their proper place; because you will see that I have formed a conclusion which I think will answer your questions.

Chairman.

3062. Now, on another subject, Mr. Babey gave the Committee the number of persons registered from November 1878 to March 1894, but these numbers were those of persons actually on the register from year to year. Can you now tell the Committee the number of persons who actually registered in London since the passing of the Act of 1872, and the periods during which each person was registered?—Yes. The number of persons who have actually registered, and the periods of registration as distinct from the registrations granted from November 1872 to March 1896, are as follows. There have been a total of 255 persons registered under the Act in the metropolis. The Committee were anxious to know the periods during which they were on the register; 147 were on the register for one year; 53 were on the register for two years; 18 were on the register for three years; 18 were on the register for four years; four were on the register for five years; five were on the register for six years; two were on the register for seven years; two were on the register for eight years; two were on the register for nine years; two were on the register for 12 years; one was on the register for 13 years, and one was on the register for 16 years. And at the present time out of 41 persons that are now on the register, two have been on for one year; eight have been on for two years; five have been on for three years; two have been on for four years, and one has been on for five, six, seven, eight, 12 and 13 years respectively.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

3063. When you say 255 persons, do you mean houses or persons?—I mean persons, not houses. The Committee particularly desired that it should be persons, because it was the number of persons who actually placed themselves under registration that you wanted to get at. The same person may have registered two or three houses, going from place to place.

3064. You do not count in there re-registration of the person?—No, not at all; my figures show how many distinct persons have been registered under the Act.

3065. You informed the Committee, in reply to Questions 10 to 15, that 24 houses had from time to time been struck off the register, and Lord Llandaff asked you if you could state how many were "for serious neglect and how many for unfitness of the house, and so on"; are you prepared to give that information now?—Yes. I find that in two cases the persons were struck off the register by order of the magistrates, under a power given by Section 9 of the Act. The remaining cases were struck off by the local authority under Section 7; three for serious neglect, six because the registered person was incapable of providing the infants with proper food and attention, and 13 because the houses became unfit for the reception of infants. I want to qualify that last number of 13. I find that of the 13 struck off because the houses became unfit, in 12 instances the registered persons gave up keeping more than one infant and reduced the accommodation in their houses. In the answer to Lord Llandaff's question I said that I thought about 25 per cent. of the whole cases were struck off because it was the desire of the person. It is really more than that; it is about 50 per cent. There are actually 12 cases out of 24 cases that were struck off at the desire of the registered persons, where they gave up keeping more than one infant and reduced the accommodation of the house. That gave us the opportunity of striking off on the ground of reduced accommodation.

3066. Then Mr. Babey's evidence was not altogether clear as to what course has been taken where cases of serious neglect came to the knowledge of the Council's officers, but where no infringement of the Infant Life Protection Act was found to exist. Can you give the Committee any further information on this point?—The invariable course taken in such cases has been either to give information to the police, or to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and in one case to the Reformatory and Refuge Union, 32, Charing Cross. I find, on searching the records, that about 12 such cases have been handed over to the police, one such case to the Reformatory and Refuge Union, and six to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and those are all that I have any actual record of; but there may have been others.

3067. Then it has been stated that the Council has made regulations compliance with which is necessary before the house can be registered under the Infant Life Protection Act; can you give the Committee any information on that point?—There are no regulations relative to registered

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15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

gistered houses, and every application is dealt with on its merits. It is considered desirable that in a registered house there should be a cubic air-space of at least 400 feet in respect of every adult, and 250 feet in respect of every infant living permanently in the house; but there is no regulation on the subject, and houses are registered with less accommodation than this where there is a fair amount of ventilation, and if in other respects the house of the applicant is suitable. The only thing in the nature of a regulation in connection with registered houses is the bye-law which the local authority is required by Section 3 of the Act to make, fixing the number of infants who may be received into each house registered.

3068. Then Mr. Babey mentioned a number of cases in which infants had been received for lump sums, and had then been immediately passed on to some other person, and he was asked whether he found out these cases in sufficient time to have stopped the trafficking taking place, or to trace the people, and prosecute them. Do you desire to add anything on this point?—I wish to make it clear to the Committee that wherever there was evidence as to cases of this sort taking place on a considerable scale the police were at once communicated with, in order that the people should be punished if sufficient evidence could be brought home to them, but that in only three of these cases was it possible for the police to get evidence sufficient to ensure conviction.

3069. What were these persons charged with?—They were charged with obtaining infants, money, and clothes under false pretences, the false pretences being that they would adopt the infants or provide for their future welfare.

3070. Were any considerable number of infants traced to any of those persons?—In one case 34 infants were received in this way by a clerk and his wife named Roadhouse, who were convicted and sentenced to periods of 18 months' and 12 months' hard labour respectively. It was shown that with the 34 infants they had received 219*l.* in money, and jewellery to the value of 32*l.*, besides clothing. In another case 30 infants were traced to a woman named Passmore, who was sentenced to nine months' hard labour, and she was known to have received 150*l.* with 14 of the infants. In a third case a woman at Wolverton was known to have received 24 infants in this way, with at least 80*l.* in respect of two of the infants, but sufficient evidence could not be obtained, and she was not proceeded against, although at the instance of a coroner's jury, at an inquest on the body of one of the infants, the case was sent to the Public Prosecutor. There are records of many other cases where a less number of infants were traced to people.

3071. Clause 5 of the Bill is included to meet cases of this description; have you considered the suggestion made by Lord Llandaff as to the desirability of adding the words "for hire or reward" after the word "person" in the third line of the clause?—I have given the matter very careful consideration, and have come to the conclusion that if that alteration is introduced

Chairman—continued.

into the clause it will not meet the whole of the cases it is intended to meet. The instances which I have just described to the Committee included cases where the trafficker did succeed in disposing of some of the infants without any agreement to pay money, and I remember that, in one case where an infant was thus passed on to some one to take charge of it for love, the infant was found abandoned in the garden of a house in the Marylebone-road, whence it was taken to the workhouse and died within a fortnight. I also point out that if the words "for hire or reward" were added, it would be a most difficult matter to prove "hire or reward" in cases of collusion between the parties. Lord Llandaff made another suggestion, that the words "or guardian" should be added after the word "relative" in the fifth line; and I think the addition of these words would probably meet the difficulty and remove the reasonable objection that was expressed to the clause in its present form. I think that would meet his Lordship's objection.

3072. Then you have heard the evidence given, and have doubtless noted the objection to some of the provisions of the Bill now before the Committee?—I have.

3073. Can you indicate briefly what those objections are, and in what way you suggest that they should be met?—I think the objections given in evidence may be summarised as follows:—(1) General objections to registration, and the consequent increased difficulty in providing homes for illegitimate infants. (2) The objection of neighbours or friends to register when they merely take charge temporarily of children while their parents are absent at work or for other purposes. (3) The objection of persons who receive an infant from an organised society or through a boarding-out committee and are therefore under some kind of supervision. (4) The objection to register of persons who receive children sent from India for purposes of health and education. I think those four heads briefly summarise the whole of the objections to registration that have been given before the Committee in evidence. I have considered very carefully in what way those objections could be met, and I have come to the conclusion that the proposal to limit the Act to illegitimate children that was included in the Bill of 1890 would not meet the case; and that in addition to that it would be almost impossible to administer the Act with a limitation of that kind on account of the great facility there would be for evasion. I have also come to the conclusion that the whole of those objections would be practically met if the Act is limited to two or more infants; that is to say, if, instead of extending the operation of the Act, as is proposed by Clause 2, to the keeping of single infants and to the keeping of infants up to five years of age, the Committee simply limited the extension of the Act to the raising of the age of the child from 12 months to five years, they would find that all the valid objections that have been urged before them would have been met. And although I am unable to-day to speak with the authority behind me

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

me of the London County Council, whom I represent, for my own part I do say that, having regard to the nature of the evidence, the experience of the witnesses, and generally to all the objections which have been so well put before the Committee, I am in agreement with the view that it will be politic in the first instance to limit the Act to the keeping of two or more infants. I do see, and see very clearly, the great hardship that would be worked by the extension of the Act to one infant, and I have formed the opinion that on the whole it would do more mischief than good. In the first place it would put the very greatest difficulties in the way of mothers who desire to do well by their offspring, and those difficulties would be almost insuperable, and there would be, therefore, a largely increased inducement to crime. That, I think, is a very potent reason; one that the Committee cannot possibly ignore. Then again, I think that where only one infant is taken it never, or rarely ever, is taken as a means of profit; as a trade. On the other hand, directly you get two infants, directly two infants are taken for hire or reward, it then does become more or less a trade; and no doubt that was the reason why the Committee of 1871 recommended that the Act should be limited to the taking of two or more infants. Another reason, and from my point of view an overwhelming reason, has presented itself to

Chairman—continued.

my mind why the Bill should not apply to single infants. You have heard in evidence what happens even within a limited area, within the experience of some of the visiting ladies. I have the evidence of Deaconess Gilmore in my mind for the moment. In a small area in Battersea she found, I think, 16 infants, each placed out singly, and placed out more or less with friends or neighbours, being kept for hire. In none of those cases were the infants placed out by any machinery of which we could possibly have cognizance; that is to say, they were placed out often through friends, sometimes through relatives, sometimes through local shopkeepers, but in no case through any agency with which a public authority could come into touch; and I confess that I feel it would be impossible for any local authority, in a place at any rate like London, or any of the other large cities, to keep in touch with the keeping of one infant. And therefore, on that ground alone, I ask the Committee to consider whether it would not be better to omit the single child. On the other hand, I think that there is a reasonable chance, a strong initial probability, I may put it, of our being able to ascertain where anything like a trade is carried on, where two or more infants are taken.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH leaves the CHAIR, and the LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER takes the CHAIR.

Witness.] One of the points that has been brought very prominently before the notice of the Committee over and over again by the witnesses representing organizations of some kind or other, is the desirability of exempting the infants boarded out by those organizations; and that proposition has my fullest sympathy. But I think that if you limit the application of the Bill to two or more infants, any special exemption of that sort will not be necessary; because I do not think that a single case has come before you where the institution was not careful only to board out one infant at a time. But should you think it necessary to provide a special exemption for such cases, then I venture to suggest that the proposal which has been thrown out by members of the Committee is a very workable one, viz., that the society itself should be registered by the Local Government Board; that, having been registered, it should issue certificates to the persons with whom it boards out infants, and that those certificates should exempt those houses from the operation of the Act. I think the Committee may find that an exemption of that kind may not be necessary; but should it be necessary, I see no objection to its taking that form.

Chairman.

3074. If the Bill were limited to the keeping of two or more infants under five years of age, what proportion of nurse infants would it bring in, and what proportion would it (0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

leave out?—Taking the year 1894-95 I find that during that year a total of 497 infants were found at unregistered houses in London; that of that number 234 infants were boarded out singly, and therefore would not come under the extended Act if the single cases were exempted; but that 263 were infants that were kept at houses where two or more were taken, and which would come under the operation of the extended Act. Of course I realise quite well that the 234 single infant cases do not represent probably a tithe of the actual cases which exist, and as to which we have no means of ascertaining any particulars, but taking those cases that we are brought into contact with, that is, the cases where infants are advertised for, where there is more or less a trade, as it were, done in those infants, I say that of that total number of 497 rather more than one-half would come under the Act if you raised the age from one year to five years, without extending it to one infant. I have also thought it desirable to consult the inspectors as to their experience of the treatment of infants at unregistered houses where two or more are taken, and at unregistered houses where they have only found one, and their experience is that the treatment of the single cases is almost invariably better than where two or more are taken; and their opinion is that on the whole it may be said that the single infant receives as much care and attention as the average of the children of the

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

the poor; and that view coincides with the view put before you by other witnesses. I am very glad to be able to give that amount of official confirmation to those views. The inspectors state that they have rarely found a single infant case improperly treated or neglected, but that that neglect and ill-treatment had been frequently found where there were several infants kept. I do not mean that that neglect or ill-treatment amounted to criminal neglect and ill-treatment, I refer to cases where the neglect and ill-treatment fell short of that.

3075. Have you any suggestion to make as to the enforcement of the Act specially in districts outside the metropolis?—I have carefully considered that question and I have found it probably, on the whole, the most difficult question in connection with this rather difficult subject. I have come to the conclusion that probably the only authority that could reasonably be expected to enforce an extended Act would be the authority under the present Act, the district councils. I believe that it will be found, or at any rate can be made, an effective authority. It must be remembered that the change from the police and the justices in petty sessions to district councils was made as recently as the Local Government Act of 1894, and the change has, practically, been in operation only a little over a year, and the district councils have really hardly had time yet to ascertain and put into force their full powers in all directions. District councils immediately in the neighbourhood of London, with whom we have come most into contact, are in three cases, I know, taking active steps, though I think I may say that the local authorities generally rather despair of doing any effective work under what they believe to be a very limited and defective Act. In London we have been in touch with various authorities in connection with this Act, that is to say, we have been in touch with the police, we have been in touch with the registrars of births and deaths, we have been in touch with the Poor Law organisation, and we have been in touch with the sanitary authorities; and, on the whole, we are disposed to think that the sanitary organisation is the one likely to be brought more directly in contact with cases under the Act than any other organisation, and I think it is the fact that in the rural districts and wherever district councils have authority, they have a sanitary organisation which could be utilised and could be made effective for putting an extended Act into force. I have heard with the very greatest interest the evidence of the valuable work that is being done by voluntary societies, and not only in Manchester and in London, but in other places. The evidence before your Lordships is conclusive that an immense amount of such work is being done, and it appears to me that it would be well if the fullest advantage could be taken of the voluntary organisations that exist in almost every direction; and therefore I venture to suggest that there should be some permissive power to the local authorities under the Act, to delegate some portion of

Chairman—continued.

their duties under the Act to voluntary societies, and to make payments or contributions to these societies somewhat on the system that is in vogue in Manchester. I believe that something of the sort is already done, with a certain amount of success under other Acts. I believe it to be a fact that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are to a certain extent subsidised by some local authorities.

Viscount Llandaff.

3076. You must have some special provisions for the control of expenditure out of public money?—If you are going to make any use of voluntary agencies, you must in your Bill make some provision to delegate the work of inspection, but not of registration, as that should be reserved in the hands of local authorities. Some system of delegating to voluntary associations the work of inquiry and inspection arising under the Act might be usefully adopted in some districts. The point arises whether, if you do anything of that sort, it would not be desirable to place some central supervision in the hands of the Local Government Board. I have already suggested that societies the houses of which are exempted from the operation of the Act, should be registered by the Local Government Board; and in that case the same organisation might be utilised for giving a power of supervision and sanction to any arrangement between local authorities and voluntary societies. You may think it desirable to only give assent to the payment of public money to voluntary agencies when the arrangement has received some sort of central sanction.

Chairman.

3077. Then with regard to giving notice of death to the coroner, have you any suggestions to make?—Section 8 of the present Act provides that the registered person shall give notice to the coroner of the district within 24 hours of the death of an infant "so retained or received." I think that provision is valuable and should be retained; but the Infant Life Protection Act, which is in force in Victoria, Australia, goes further than that, as it is stated to provide that an ordinary medical certificate of death shall not apply to an illegitimate child living apart from its mother, and to require that before any such infant under three years can be buried a coroner's certificate must be produced. The registered person is compelled to report the death of any of her charges within 24 hours at the nearest police station, and an inquest is held on the body in every case. I do not suggest anything so stringent as that, as I think a discretionary power should be given to the coroner, as we have found that in the great majority of cases in London the coroner has been satisfied that an inquest is unnecessary. The Committee may, however, consider it desirable that notice should be given to the coroner of the deaths of all illegitimate infants apart from their mothers, as that might afford some safeguard.

3078. And

15 May 1896.]

Mr. SPENCER.

[Continued.]

Chairman—continued.

3078. And has your attention also been called to the provisions in the Australian Act with regard to the registration of the births of illegitimate children?—Yes; the occupier of every house or place in which an illegitimate child is born is obliged to give notice in writing to the registrar of births within three days of the birth. Such a provision might prove valuable, especially with regard to lying-in houses, but it might be difficult in case of failure to prove that the occupier knew that the child was illegitimate.

Chairman—continued.

3079. How far does the Australian Act cover institutions; have you noticed that?—The Act provides that the Chief Secretary may exempt a public institution for the reception of infants or exempt any special case where he deems it advisable. In this country institutions are exempt, but it might be desirable to give power to the Local Government Board to exempt infants boarded out by an institution where satisfied that such infants receive proper supervision.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned.

Die Mercurii, 19 Junii, 1896.

LORDS PRESENT:

Earl of DENBIGH.
Earl of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.
Viscount LLANDAFF.

Lord Bishop of WINCHESTER.
Lord BELPER.
Lord THRING.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH IN THE CHAIR.

Mrs. ABRAHAMS is called in ; and Examined, as follows :

Chairman.

3080. You have taken a very active interest, I believe, in some Roman Catholic rescue homes, known as St. Pelagia's Homes?—Yes.

3081. And are you, practically, the founder of them?—The Lord Cardinal Manning was the founder of them.

3082. And you have managed the homes, and had the general supervision?—Yes, ever since they began.

3083. Will you tell me where the homes are situated?—The first home is at Church-row, Limehouse; the second one was started at Stepney Green, and is now at Highgate; the third one, which is to correspond with that, and take off the little children, is at 68¹/₂, High-road, Tottenham; and the fourth is in the other diocese, across the water, at Rotherhithe.

3084. I believe each home is under the care of some nuns?—Yes.

3085. About how many?—There are nine at Limehouse, seven at Highgate, three at Tottenham, and four at Rotherhithe.

3086. At how many of these homes do you take children in?—At two, at Highgate and Tottenham.

3087. Do you keep the children there with the mothers?—Yes.

3088. Up till what age?—At Highgate till one or two years of age. We oblige them to stay for one year, but many of them stay for two years, and at two years old the children are drafted from Highgate down to Tottenham.

3089. And you find situations for the mothers?—Yes.

3090. For the first two years, I believe, no payment is made at all?—No, not any; it is a charity.

3091. So that it would not come under the definition of children being taken in for hire or reward?—No.

3092. But after two years, I believe, the mothers pay a certain amount?—Yes, a little out of their wages; that is just to prevent pauperism.

3093. About how much do they pay?—If they have 20*l.* a year then they pay 5*s.* a week, and if they have only 12*l.* a year they pay 12*s.* a month. Of course they cannot afford much.

(0.95.)

Chairman—continued.

3094. Your Tottenham Home is really the only one of your homes in which children are kept apart from the parents?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3095. The mothers stay with them at Highgate?—And so they do at Tottenham, a few of them.

3096. And do they pay while in the house?—No, they do not pay anything at all while in the homes. There is no payment till the girls go out to service, and then a small charge is made from their wages.

Lord Thring.

3097. I think you told us the homes were free for two years?—Yes. The mothers sometimes do not go out till the children are two years old.

3098. Is it free to the mothers and children?—Yes, completely free.

3099. You keep the mother and her child for two years?—Yes, most of them for two years; one year certain, but mostly for two years.

3100. For nothing?—For nothing.

3101. Does the mother do anything?—She does the work of the home, to support it.

Lord Bishop of Winchester.

3102. They earn the money by washing, I see?—Yes.

Lord Thring.

3103. They work for the society?—They really work for themselves; of course the houses must be supported somehow.

3104. What I mean is, that while these mothers are in the house they work for the benefit of the house?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3105. And earn money for the house?—Yes.

Chairman.

3106. The homes at your Limehouse branch have only been going for eight years, I think?—Eleven years. The Limehouse has just completed its eleventh year now, at the end of May.

3107. I see the Limehouse branch earned in 1886, 6*l.* 17*s.*, and in 1894 it earned 1,643*l.*?—And last year 1,875*l.*

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3108. How

19 June 1896.]

Mrs. ABRAHAMS.

[Continued.]

Lord Thring.

3108. How do they earn it?—We have a large laundry.

3109. And that laundry is worked at a profit?—For their profit, yes.

3110. I am not wishing at all to derogate from the charity; I only wish to know how it works. You keep a large laundry in which the women in your house work, and thereby earn this money?—Yes.

3111. And practically they earn their living?—Yes, at Limehouse they do quite earn it. They do not at the others.

Viscount Llandaff.

3112. You have no children at Limehouse?—No, not at Limehouse.

Chairman.

3113. Tottenham is the only house in which any of the children are kept apart from their parents?—Yes.

3114. And after the age of one or two years the parents contribute a small sum towards their maintenance?—Yes, when they go into service.

3115. And therefore these children would come under the definition of children taken in for hire or reward?—Yes; but not under the late Act. At Highgate, where the children are, they do not earn anything like what they spend.

3116. The children at Tottenham are not taught in the home, are they?—No, they go to the Mission School; 23 of them are going now.

3117. Have you ever considered the question of registration?—No, because there has been no need.

3118. But have you ever considered whether it would be disagreeable to you to be registered or not; you have no desire to be registered?—I do not think it would matter one way or the other really.

3119. You do not put any children out with their parents, I believe?—No, not any.

3120. But you keep them in the Tottenham Home until they are of a certain age?—We have not made any plans yet, because they are all so young; the home itself is young; the children are only seven or eight, the oldest of them.

3121. And you have not yet made arrangements about putting them out?—No.

Lord Thring.

3122. What is the minimum age of the children in your home?—A fortnight old.

3123. You take them a fortnight old and keep them till eight or nine?—We shall keep them

Lord Thring—continued.

later than that, I think; but we have not had time to decide yet; they have not grown.

3124. Do you take them older?—Yes.

3125. What is the maximum age you take them at?—The oldest child we ever took was, I think, six when she came to us; but the children are mostly from the Highgate Home, which was started first, and this was a sort of home to help the other, to take the children when they grew older.

Viscount Llandaff.

3126. The Highgate Home, I understand, is chiefly a rescue home?—Yes.

Chairman.

3127. These homes are not managed by a committee in any sense?—No. You see the religious have charge of them, and they have their own management.

3128. Therefore each house is practically under the sole control of the reverend mother?—Yes, except for visits that we make ourselves every week.

Viscount Llandaff.

3129. Whom do you mean by ourselves?—My husband and myself. My husband is, however, too much occupied to go every week. We have managed the accounting part ever since the homes have been started; we go for that chiefly, and to watch over them and see them.

3130. You represent the bishop, I suppose?—We have been appointed managers of the homes by the late Cardinal. Anything that happens outside the work that the religious can do we do for them.

Lord Thring.

3131. Whom are you responsible to?—To the Cardinal.

3132. The Cardinal is the real head?—Yes.

Chairman.

3133. The accounts are audited and published every year?—Yes.

Viscount Llandaff.

3134. You said you would not object to registration; do you think your sisters would like inspection?—I do not think they would mind it. I do not see anything to be gained by it. They are institutions, but if there were to be any point made of it I do not think they would make any objection at all.

The Witness is directed to withdraw.

Ordered, That this Committee be adjourned.

A P P E N D I X.
