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industrial classes, dwelling with emphasis on the impulse given by Mr. S. van Houten's law in 1874, relating to the employment of children. The two most urgent reforms needed at present were the increase of inspectors for the adequate administration of the law, and the appointment of women inspectors for industries in which women are exclusively or predominantly employed. The number of inspectors in Holland, though recently increased to twelve, has not grown in proportion to the growth of the industrial community. There are at present 23,600 factories and workshops liable to inspection. The women inspectors should be organised as a separate department, under the direction of a chief inspector. The arrangements for administration of the Factory Acts in other countries were briefly sketched. With regard to England, the speaker regretted the difference in the examinations of men and women candidates for factory inspectors. It was stated that a course for the training of women factory inspectors would take place this winter in Amsterdam.

Training for religious work, for the education of the deaf and dumb, for women dentists, for horticulture and apiculture, formed the subject of subsequent discussions. The need for further opportunities of training in all these various occupations was urged, Germany being in this respect far ahead.

MARGRIETA VAN DER VEEN

THE WAGES OF LONDON VESTRY EMPLOYEES.

MR. BOOTH'S volumes on *Life and Labour in London* contained a section dealing with the wages of Municipal employees in 1895. The movement towards enforcing model conditions of employment on public bodies had then been in progress since 1888, and the results achieved, so far as the portion of labour with which Mr. Booth dealt was concerned, appeared to be considerable. It was, however, evident on glancing through the table of wages which he gave, that great variations existed in the wages paid by different Vestries for the same kind of work, and that, perhaps to a less degree, the difference in hours was also marked. It might naturally have been supposed that, in the years which have passed since 1895, the progression might continue, and that while the foremost Vestries remained stationary, there would be a tendency for the backward ones to bring themselves into line, and approach the average condition as to wages and hours. A return made in the Autumn of 1897, supplemented by information collected since then, offers a means of comparison of the wages paid in 1895 with those which the Vestries now pay. Together with earlier returns, relating to 1886 and 1893, it offers an opportunity to estimate the changes in the rates of wages in those occupations of Vestry employees with which Mr. Booth did not deal.

It must be remembered that employment by public bodies is still, to a large extent, indirect, through the agency of a contractor. There

seems to be no general consensus of opinion on the subject of contract labour and direct employment. The large number of Vestries and District Boards which have begun or extended the use of the latter method during the last ten years might be regarded as a proof of its advantages. But these do not seem to be considered obvious, apart from the fact that the Vestry has, under this system, complete control over the wages and hours of its own employees. Some Vestries regard direct employment as more expensive than the method of contract, others as less so, and on both sides figures are adduced to prove the case. The opinion is often expressed that the surveyor cannot get as much work out of the men as the contractor does, at the same time it is allowed that the men work "hard enough," and fairly earn their wages. The purchase of the necessary plant, as for example that required for asphalt paving, seems to be often the most serious bar to the extension of direct employment.

In considering the rates of wages obtained by the employees of public bodies, a distinction must of course be made between different grades of labour. The best division appears to be threefold, into—

(a) Skilled artisans and mechanics belonging to highly organised industrial groups, who have fixed a normal rate of wages, and a normal working day, which they endeavour to enforce. A model employer for this class may fairly be regarded as one who conforms to the customs of the trades.

(b) Quasi-skilled labour, which though not efficiently organised, might easily become so. These men do not strictly belong to the Trade Union Class, and they have not the definite trade regulations of the former class. It is more difficult in this case to state the obligations of the model employer. But it may be assumed that these men should not be paid much less than the class of skilled labourers on whose margin they are, and that their hours should be the same.

(c) Unskilled labour.

The three distinct questions as to the treatment of these classes have been answered in different ways. And the returns enumerated show, in some degree, the extent to which London Vestries and District Boards consider the problem solved, and how far it is still in process of solution.

The Trade Unions, particularly the Compositors' Society and the Operative Bricklayers' Society, have been largely responsible for the spread of the doctrine that public employers should be model employers of labour. Since 1888 they have not ceased, directly or indirectly, to press this question in Parliament, County and Town Councils and other public bodies to which they have had access. Comparatively few members of this class are in the direct employment of the London Vestries. They still work chiefly under contractors for these bodies. Hence, the first step towards securing fair conditions of work for them was the introduction of the "fair wages clause" into contracts. This clause still varies very much in form. Sometimes it

merely states that the contractor must pay to the workmen employed in performing the contract "such wages as are considered fair in the trade." There is a wide margin for interpretation in such a clause, and wherever possible the supporters of the Trade Unions introduce the less ambiguous phrase that the contractor shall pay the Trade Union rate of wages and observe the Trade Union hours and conditions of work.

In one form or another the clause seems to have been adopted by almost all the London Vestries and District Boards between 1891 and 1896. Latterly, complaints have been made that some Vestries set aside the clause in some of their contracts. And the strictest supervision is necessary in order that the contracts, undertaken under the clause, shall be properly carried out. Cases are continually brought up before the Vestries where either the wages, hours or conditions do not conform to the Trade regulations. The County Council contract form (adopted by several of the Vestries) contains an agreement binding the contractor to pay a certain sum "as liquidated damages" for any breach of the contract conditions. Perhaps the most effective instrument is the disposition to refuse to employ contractors again who have once violated the terms of the contract.

A few Vestries have extended the resolution relating to payment of the Trade Union rate of wages to persons in the direct employ of the Vestry as well as to those working under contractors. A return was made in January of this year of the number of Vestries which had passed such a resolution. Of the forty Vestries and District Boards to which the question was put, five replied that they had adopted the resolution, twenty-seven that they had not, and eight did not reply. The eight who did not reply included two who had accepted the resolution, giving a total of seven of these bodies in and near London who had resolved to pay the Trade Union rate of wages to their own employees. This does not, however, prevent a much larger proportion from actually paying their men at this rate, and the table which follows shows that the wages of skilled mechanics have risen considerably since 1891, and that their wages are now, on the average, almost equal to the Trade Union rate.

	Carpenters.	Painters.	Steam-roller Drivers.	Smiths.	Farriers.
Maximum and minimum limits of wages in 1891	6 <i>d.</i> to 9½ <i>d.</i> per hour.	6 <i>d.</i> to 9½ <i>d.</i> per hour.	24 <i>s.</i> to 38 <i>s.</i> per week.		
Maximum and minimum limits of wages in 1897	8 <i>d.</i> to 10 <i>d.</i> per hour.	4½ <i>d.</i> to 10 <i>d.</i> per hour.	8 <i>d.</i> to 9 <i>d.</i> per hour.	8 <i>d.</i> to 10 <i>d.</i> per hour.	8 <i>d.</i> to 10 <i>d.</i> per hour.
Average wage in 1897 T. U. rate.....	9 <i>d.</i> 9½ <i>d.</i>	8½ <i>d.</i> 8½ <i>d.</i> lab. 6½ <i>d.</i>	8 <i>d.</i> 8 <i>d.</i>	8½ <i>d.</i> to 9 <i>d.</i> 9 <i>d.</i> to 10 <i>d.</i>	8½ <i>d.</i> to 9 <i>d.</i> Piecework.

These men are now most usually paid by the hour, the number engaged at a fixed weekly wage is much less than in 1891. Where daily or weekly wages are still paid they often represent the lowest rate, *e.g.*, a painter earning 21s. a week of $56\frac{1}{2}$ hours is paid far less than the wages of a painter's labourer. In only one case do the hours exceed $56\frac{1}{2}$ per week, they are on the average slightly below this.

This small class of skilled artisans in the direct employ of the Vestries may be regarded as receiving their Trade Union rates of wages. The causes which have prevented adoption of the Trade Union resolution in their case appear to be, in addition to their small numbers, they are able without it to obtain Trade Union rates, and that slightly lower rates than the Trade Union prescribes yield a higher weekly income, when regular work is certain. That the last cause is a real consideration is shown by some Vestries paying a higher rate to men employed casually than to men on the regular staff.

The second class of labourers has, as has been noted, no definite rate of wages or hours of labour. Together with the unskilled labourers it has been organised, since 1889, in the National Municipal Labour Union, which consists of all employees of public bodies who are without a separate trade organisation. But, though this Union has drawn up a Schedule of wages for the different grades of labour represented by its members, this has not been accepted by any public body. It must be regarded rather as an aspiration than as a regulation. It is obvious that labour of this kind, under contractors, would receive no benefit from the fair wages clause, and it was to meet this difficulty that the London County Council drew up a schedule of wages for contracts fixing the minimum rate where there was no trade limit. The best comparison that can be made, as regards the wages of this class will be, therefore, with those prescribed by the London County Council. The table below exhibits the rates paid in 1897, the rates paid in 1895 (from Mr. Booth's table) and the London County Council rate.

	Masons.	Paviors.	Masons' and Paviors' Labourers.	Sewer Flushers.	Hammermen.	Pickers.
Minimum and maximum wages in 1895	35s. to 46s.	26s. to 42s. 5d.	21s. to 33s.	24s. to 36s.	21s. to 35s.	20s. to 30s.
Minimum and maximum wages in 1897	31s. to 46s.	31s. to 43s.	22s. 6d. to 32s. 6d.	26s. to 37s. 6d.	24s. to 33s.	20s. to 30s.
Average in 1897.....	40s. 2d.	38s. 4d.	27s. 6d.	31s. 4d.	32s.	26s. 8d.
L.C.C. rate	9½d. per hour, 38s. for 48 hrs.	9d. per hour, 36s. for 48 hrs.	6½d. per hour, 26s.	30s. for 42 hrs.	27s. 1d. to 24s. 1½d.	27s. 1d. to 24s. 1½d.
Maximum and minimum hours in 1895	$56\frac{1}{2}$ & $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 50\frac{1}{2} \\ 48 \end{array} \right.$	56 & $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 50\frac{1}{2} \\ 48 \end{array} \right.$	$56\frac{1}{2}$ & $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 50\frac{1}{2} \\ 48 \end{array} \right.$	$56\frac{1}{2}$ & 34	$58\frac{1}{2}$ & 48	$58\frac{1}{2}$ & 48
Maximum and minimum hours in 1897	$56\frac{1}{2}$ & 48	$56\frac{1}{2}$ & 48	$56\frac{1}{2}$ & 48	$56\frac{1}{2}$ & 34	$58\frac{1}{2}$ & 48	$56\frac{1}{2}$ & 48

This table shows :—

(1) That wages, for this class, have remained almost stationary since 1895, the maximum and minimum limits remain nearly the same, and though it is not possible to give the average wages for 1895, a comparison of all the rates paid in both years leads to the conclusion that it has not varied much.

(2) That these wages are in practical agreement with the L.C.C. rates.

(3) That these men do not work extremely long hours in any case. The minimum limit has gone down in three cases, as Battersea has substituted a 48 hours day, summer and winter, for the 50½ hours, summer, and 48 in winter, which the masons and paviors then worked.

The slightness in the changes which have been made since 1895 seems to point to the conclusion that public bodies regard the reforms in this department as complete.

The National Municipal Union aims at a uniform 48 hours day, and wages on the scale of

Masons and paviors	...	42s. per week.
Hammermen	33s. ,,
Flushers	36s. ,,
Pickers	30s. ,,

No Vestry complies with these suggestions.

Turning to the third class of labour—the unskilled—one arrives at the most serious problem. For this class is numerically the most important of all, and there is the great difficulty that raising the wages of this kind of work tends not so much to raise the standard of those who are employed upon it, as to alter the class of men which will apply for it.

The usual method has been to fix a minimum rate of wages, the Vestry agreeing not to pay less than this wage to any able bodied man. Several Vestries have adopted 6*d.* per hour as the minimum rate. One has under consideration a resolution not to pay any able bodied man in its employ less than 25*s.* 6*d.* per week. In many cases where no resolution on the subject has been passed, the wages are not allowed to fall below 24*s.* per week.

These changes in the wages of unskilled labour had in most cases taken place before 1895. The following table shows that the limits of wages have scarcely altered since then, though there has been a tendency for the maximum limit of hours to fall slightly. They still stand much higher for this class than for any other.

	Sweepers.	Dustmen.	Slopmen.
Minimum and maximum wages in 1895	18s. to 30s.	21s. to 36s.	20s. to 32s.
Minimum and maximum wages in 1897	18s. to 30s.	21s. to 31s. 6d.	24s. to 31s. 6d.
Average wages in 1897	24s. 2d.	27s. 1d.	27s.
Minimum and maximum hours in 1895	48 to 60	48 to 71½	48 to 71½
Minimum and maximum hours in 1897	48 to 60	48 to 69	48 to 68

For some branches of unskilled labour Mr. Booth gave no statistics. A comparison of the wages and hours of watchmen, horsemen, and stablemen, &c., in 1897 and 1886, shows that they have varied very little. General labourers are the only class who seem to have received a substantial increase in wages. They are now generally paid about the same wages as masons' labourers, but work longer hours.

	Horsemen and Stablemen.	Watchmen.	General Labourers.	Flagmen (for Steam-rollers).
Average wages in 1886	27s. 6d.	22s. 3d.	22s. 6d.	21s. 3d.
Average wages in 1897	28s.	22s. 6d.	26s. 10d.	23s. 8d.
Hours in 1886.....	Indefinite.	84 (7 watches).	56 to 60	56 to 60
Hours in 1897.....	80 to 48	91½ to 48	48 to 65	48 to 58½

Turning from the question of wages to the indirect advantages of public employment, one finds that these are regularity of work, sick and accident pay, and holidays.

The work is regular, for the Vestries now employ as little casual labour as possible, regarding their men as weekly servants, though their wages are often calculated on the rate per hour. Mr. Booth estimates that in irregular employments, to which a large part of the labour employed by Vestries would naturally belong, a deduction of 18 per cent. should be made from the normal wage to obtain the average weekly wage. This 18 per cent. then measures the actual money value of regularity of occupation. Plainly, however, it does not estimate the full worth of it. The men, too, are rarely dismissed from employment. They have always an appeal to the Vestry, and though this is said not to work well in some cases, and even to lead to the retention of men who are not very competent, or who do not exert themselves to the full, it is plainly an advantage to the average workman.

The sick and accident pay given by the Vestries has increased and been made more regular since 1893. In 1893, many made no reply to the question, 'Is sick or accident benefit given?' and it seems probable

that most of these either gave no benefit, or considered each case on its merits. It is now most usual to find a definite regulation under which the employee knows exactly how he will benefit.

Vestries Allowing:—	Sickness.		Accident.	
	No. in 1893.	No. in 1897.	No. in 1893.	No. in 1897.
No pay.....	3	1	4	—
Sick club benefit	3	5	4	5
Quarter pay for limited time or Vestry's pleasure	1	—	—	—
Third pay for limited time or Vestry's pleasure	—	2	—	1
Half pay for limited time or Vestry's pleasure	10	11	—	5
Full pay for limited time or Vestry's pleasure	3	2	2	10
6s., 10s. or 12s. per week according to service	2	2	2	2
Payment at Vestry's discretion	5	3	4	2

The number of holidays, also, allowed to the men and paid for, shows a marked increase since 1893, but the change since 1895 is slight.

	1893.	1897.
Number of Vestries allowing no holidays	3	—
Number of Vestries allowing six days or less	19	8
Number of Vestries allowing all Bank Holidays and one week in summer.....	3	18
Number of Vestries allowing all Bank Holidays and three days in summer.....	—	3

The great difficulty with which the Vestries have to deal is the treatment of aged servants. They have no power of pensioning them when they are no longer fit for work, they retain them therefore in their services, and pay for what is sometimes labour only in name. These old men form, in many cases, the class B. of sweepers who are paid at a lower rate of wages than the rest, and they are often employed as watchmen. The burden of providing for employees in old age has led several vestries to adopt a resolution against taking into their service any men who are not able-bodied, and who are not below a certain limit of age¹ (usually 35 to 45 years). The immediate effect of this policy and that of paying higher rate of wages has been to change the occupation of a sweeper from a "halting ground on the road

¹ Battersea, on the contrary, decided in 1896 not to engage as a sweeper any man under forty years of age. It retains this comparatively easy and well-paid employment (the men receive 27s. per week of 48 hours) for the older men, often its own old servants.

to the workhouse" into a trade by which young and able-bodied men earn a living. As a result the work seems to be more efficiently done, and to cost more than it did.

BEATRICE HEWART

OBITUARY.

MR. STEPHEN DOWELL, who died last June, will be remembered by economists as the author of one of the best books on taxation, the *History of Taxation and Taxes in England*. The double title corresponds to two-fold classification of the subject matter. In the first portion of the book (vols. I and II), the history of taxation is traced, in connection with the course of political events, from the age of *danegeld* and *fumage*, down to the "zenith of taxation," as the period 1815-1842 is termed, and on from this culmination to the reforms of the present age. The author knows how to relieve the severity of his subject by digressions into piquant details; as, when referring to the extortions of the Norman kings, he records among the fiscal curiosities found in the Rolls of the Exchequer, the following: "The Bishop of Winchester owes a tonell of good wine for not reminding the King [John] about a girdle for the Countess of Albemarle; and Robert de Vaun fines in five of the best palfreys that the same King would hold his tongue about the wife of Henry Pinel. . . . Ralph Bardolph fines in five marks for leave to arise from his infirmity." In the second portion of the work (vols. III and IV), the facts are considered, not in the order of time, but under the heads usual with writers on fiscal subjects, direct taxes, taxes on articles of consumption, and so forth. The same curious felicity in the description of interesting details enlivens these volumes. The useful is seldom in economic literature so well combined with the entertaining as in this history of taxation and taxes. The two ingredients appear uncombined in Mr. Dowell's other writings: on the one hand a series of technical treatises on the law of taxation, *The Stamp Laws*, *The Acts relating to the House-Tax*, *The Income-Tax Laws*; on the other hand, *Thoughts and Words*, a collection of extracts from elegant literature, which the author first compiled for his own amusement, then circulated privately, and at length, just before his fatal illness, published. Some of the Thoughts and Words which are echoed in the History—for instance, the chapter on "the smoking-room" in the one work compared with the book on the "taxation of tobacco" in the other—very happily illustrate the benefit which the economist may derive from a taste for literature. Mr. Dowell was also qualified as a writer on taxation by his practical connection with the work of Somerset House. He held the office of Assistant Solicitor to the Board of Inland Revenue from 1863 to 1896. He was born in 1833. He never married.