

The Asylums' Committee the mentally defective of all grades and ages.

The Pensions Committee the aged to whom pensions are awarded.

If preferable, the several committees are to be empowered to give domiciliary treatment conjoined with a money grant instead of institutional treatment.

As regards the great question of the care of the feeble-minded, and the apparent encouragement under present conditions of the birth of illegitimate children, the Minority speak with no uncertain voice. "Alike in the prevention of the continued procreation of the feeble-minded, in the rescue of girl-mothers from a life of immorality . . . the destitution authorities, in spite of their great expenditure, are to-day effecting no useful results. . . . If the State had desired to minimise both feeble-minded procreation and birth out of wedlock there could not have been suggested a more apt device than . . . general mixed workhouses, organised as they now are, to serve as unconditional maternity hospitals," while "the respectable married woman, however necessitous she may be, can with difficulty take advantage of the free food, shelter, and medical attendance provided at great expense . . . for maternity cases."

As regards out-door relief, the present system is utterly condemned on account of the utter lack of any principle upon which doles, grants, and allowances are made, and also on account of its general insufficiency. "The dole of Poor-Law relief, upon which thousands of old people, sick children, and even widows with young children, are steadily degenerating, is a starvation pittance."

Among other suggestions to lighten the lot of many among the recipients of out-door relief is one that the Pensions Committee of the local authority should be empowered to grant out of the local rates pensions to persons "not less than sixty years of age, who are not eligible for a national pension," and it is also suggested that the pensionable age be altered to "sixty-five, if not sixty," at the earliest possible date.

Again, it is recommended that "all mothers having the charge of young children, and in receipt themselves, or their husbands, of any form of public assistance, should receive enough for the full maintenance of the family," it being a condition that the mother should "devote herself to the care of her children," and not seek other work.

Mothers in distress, or widows having the care of young children, "residing in homes not below the national minimum of sanitation should be granted adequate home aliment provided they spend all their time and energy in taking care of the children, and the childless wives of able-bodied men at a training establishment are to be given "adequate home aliment conditional on their devoting their time to further training in domestic economy."

It is estimated that the evils of unemployment can but be met by the institution of a Minister for Labour at the head of a State Department, including a National Labour Exchange, Trade Insurance Division, Maintenance and Training Divi-

sion, Industrial Regulation Division, Emigration and Immigration Division, and a Statistical Division.

In order to decrease casual labour in the future generation, it is recommended that "no child be employed at all under the age of 15," and no one under 18 years for more than 30 hours per week, these young persons also attending "suitable trade schools" for 30 hours per week. It is considered by the Minority that these regulations, together with one to reduce the working hours of railway, tramway, and omnibus workers, and the Public Assistance to be given to prevent mothers appearing in the labour market, will at once greatly lessen the ranks of the unemployed.

HELEN TODD.

## Our Foreign Letter.

### UNDER THE SYRIAN SUN.



The longer one lives in this country the more one loves it! There is a subtle charm in the East which simply permeates one's whole being. What is it, I wonder? Is it the Syrian sun that has such a potent influence over all who come to work out here, or is it just the people with their winsome smiles and charming manners who twine themselves round our hearts, making them and their country inexpressibly dear to us? An English doctor whose work lies in the slums of London was staying here some time ago and was astonished at the rapid convalescence of many of our patients; he asked me how we managed it, and what I considered the best tonic; he talked of nux vomica, gentian, etc. "All very good," I replied, "but you would find a dose of Syrian sunshine pick your patients up in half the time." "If it were only possible!" he added, thinking of the London fogs. "Oh! ces brouillards qui ressemblent à une soupe aux petits pois! Les oublierai-je jamais?" It is an April morning of which I am writing. I have risen very early to be ready for a young Syrian girl who comes at six o'clock to give me my Arabic lesson, which I take on the balcony. It is only 5.30, so I have time to sit and watch all the beauty by which I am surrounded. I saw the birth of this lovely morning, for I was up before the dawn, which is scarcely perceptible in this country. So different from the long and dreary time in England, where the dawn seems as sad as the parting of two friends who linger over a last good-bye. Here there is practically no dawn, as Night disappears, she does not say "Good-bye," but greets the Day with joy, and has only time, as it were, to smile and say "Bonjour, au revoir!" And so a new day is born! A sweet tender mist lay over all the scene, as if an angel had spread a soft sheet of filmy gossamer every-

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