CHARITY IN NEW SOUTH WALES 1850-1914:
A STUDY IN PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND STATE
PROVISIONS
FOR
THE POOR

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CHAPTER 7
CARE FOR THE POOR, 1875-1914

In the period between the two charities commissions facilities for the amelioration of the sufferings of the poor were extended and given greater precision. Unlike children, the poor in general did not become the direct responsibility of the state. They were not generally regarded as entitled to assistance. Certain groups, however, already recognised as requiring specific care, did receive more particular attention. Institutions for the care of women, be they destitute, pregnant or ill, were improved and extended. The depression of the 1890s showed that even the able bodied worker could be forced against his will into poverty. Much short term assistance was given, and a great deal of attention focused on the problem. Beyond that, little of permanent significance was immediately achieved. But even more pitiful than unemployment could be the fate of aged, infirm people, especially in a depression. It was possible to admit them to the government asylums, and many were. The population of the asylums rose nearly four times between 1876 and 1900. But many who were admitted required, not boiled mutton and tobacco, but increasingly complex medical treatment: the asylums perforce supplied it. Many others desperately wished to avoid being admitted to the asylums at all. The solution occasionally employed by the Benevolent Society of making weekly cash payments to such people was taken up, in the mid 1890s, by several social reformers. The result was the old age pension: it was a
statutory payment available to all who fulfilled certain minimum requirements.

Like aged pensioners, deserted or widowed mothers with families received the support of cash payments. This was achieved in the 1896 amendments to the State Children's Relief Act. It was an extension of the boarding out system. Officially the payment was on account of the children in the family who thus came under the protection of the State Children's Relief Department. The practical effect was to secure family life and at least a minimum of independence to a large group of destitute people. At first the size of the group was restricted by the careful application of the qualifying standards. The provision also had a cumulative social effect. Families so helped, like aged pensioners, were less likely to lose the capacity to care for themselves and thus less likely to become a permanent charge on the community.

By 1914 this reliance on statutory cash benefits had been extended even further. With the introduction of an increased range of medical and other services provided by the government, largely initiated during the period of the Labour government of 1910-6, the community had accepted a wider responsibility for the poor. There was still much charitable effort. But alongside it, and steadily replacing it in some areas, was a wide range of government social services. Most of these still had restrictions placed on their availability, but the criteria were usually statutory not moral; public not subjective. It must not be said that the dynamism of
charity had been weakened. But the community's willingness to see social justice done for the underprivileged had been largely extended. The community was less based on a hierarchic structure where 'the poor' were part of a suffering underworld visited occasionally by charitable lady bountifuls. It was much more one shaped by the pressures of urbanisation and industrialisation. The state, the law, community concern, working class interests had all become important determinants of the care provided for the poor by 1914.

1. General poor relief

The societies already committed to poor relief continued their work. The Windeyer Commission had a little to say about the dangers of imposition at the Benevolent Society, and somewhat more extended suggestions for improving the administration of the Society. But they did not amount to much. The Society's Annual Report for 1875 spoke with quiet pride of the addition of a stone portico to the front of the building, the connection to main sewerage, the planting of trees and the installation of some water closets. The quarterly average numbers of outdoor relief for the year were 814, 715, 820 and 693. The Society was pressing on.

With the death of George Allen, who had so completely represented the Society, changes were introduced. As we have seen, provision was explicitly

1 Shown in Plate II.
made in the revised rules for a lying-in hospital. Outdoor relief was still listed as the first 'object'. But the phrases which had expressed the hope that such assistance would 'discountenance mendicity' and 'encourage industrious habits', and that it would be accompanied by religious counsel, were deleted.¹ The confidence of the previous generation in therapy and social reform through charity was being replaced by a sense of the need for aid defined simply in terms of need.

Through the 1880s the Society continued its outdoor relief. As far as the figures allow accurate assessment, the Society gave aid to a steadily rising number of cases until the mid 1890s.² In 1875 3,042 cases were dealt with, by 1885 the total was 4,564, and in 1900, 1,680. The groups receiving assistance remained largely the same as before: a widow of 70 allowed 1/6 and two and two;³ Mrs Lightly, who supported five orphaned grandchildren by carting firewood, was granted ten shillings towards the replacement of her horse;⁴ Mr McDonagh, another aged pensioner, having been reprimanded for taking drink, was allowed provisions again 'as he had signed a pledge'.⁵ On 30 April 1889 the House Committee

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¹ B.S., G.C. minutes, 14 March 1878.
² Table 6.
³ B.S., H.C. minutes, 7 April 1885, p. 456.
⁴ Ibid.
⁵ Ibid., 26 June 1888, p. 451.
handled 31 cases in person, and another 50 by inspector's report. Of the 31, only one was refused. There were four cases of single aged and destitute people, and one couple; four cases deriving from sickness and accident; four families who received special aid other than rations (e.g. boots); three families where the husband had deserted; six where he was unemployed; two cases of destitute widows; one case admitted to the asylum and four in which 'other action' was taken.¹

There was an increasing resort to cash payments as rent allowances, in amounts of one to three shillings weekly. £101 was expended for this purpose in 1879.² Cash benefits now seem the obvious and humane technique for most forms of social welfare assistance, with their anonymity, their flexibility as far as the recipient is concerned, and now of course, their regularity. But when the Benevolent Society first began to grant them in volume, controversy focused on them. It was an important shift in method, and above all was a loosening of the control the Society had over the recipients of its outdoor relief.

In May 1882 an attempt was made at the Society's Board meeting to raise the maximum weekly rental allowance to five shillings. Though the matter had the support of the President, the Board was evenly divided

¹ House Committee minutes 1889-91, p.21. Compare the frontispiece.
² Insp. of P.C., Report 1879; L.C., J. vol.30 (1879-80), part ii, p.1031.
and the matter stood over.¹ The case for granting increased monetary relief had been strengthened by the passing of the State Children's Relief Act (1881). This provided for the boarding out of children from such state institutions as the orphan schools to foster parents, who received a payment of five shillings a week towards their support. If the emphasis was to be so strongly on family life for destitute children, then what better family than their own if at all possible? If the mother could be given a sufficient grant towards rent by the Benevolent Society, or perhaps even the state, then the family might be kept together.² This was the argument, and within the limits of the Society's funds it became their practice. In 1884 the Benevolent Society sought an increase in their government subsidy, predicting a deficit of £1,500 as a result of increasing outdoor relief. They did not fail to point out to the Colonial Secretary that they were keeping families together who otherwise would become charges on the State Children's Relief Department.³ The Society's report for 1886 was an important defence of their outdoor work, especially from this point of view. It noted that there were many reduced to poverty during a year of 'unusual depression and hardship'. Many of these had received aid from the Society, but only those who were deserving; meanwhile wealthy colonists, the

¹ B.S., Board minutes, 10 May 1882.
² D.T. 13 October 1882 (ed.).
³ B.S., Board minutes, 8 July 1884.
report charged, remained indifferent, and gave little or nothing to the Society, for whom it was 'a fact patent to all that the poor must be afforded assistance'. The report was careful to emphasise that most of the aid was going to widows with young children, to families whose breadwinners were sick, imprisoned, or otherwise disabled, and to some old people. It reported the efforts to get more money from the government and its counter-proposal that the directors should liquidate some of the Society's investments. To the Society, rent allowances were an important instrument in keeping families together, and its Board remained convinced that the government should come to their aid, despite these refusals. £2,121 was spent for this purpose in 1885. Even during the depression these money payments were continued, though on a reduced scale. Reluctantly they were discontinued in 1899, but by then an old age pension, the charities vote and 'section ten' were all operating or in the offing. Monetary benefits had come to stay.

With the appointment of Edward Maxted as their manager in 1884 the Benevolent Society became more vigorous in advertisement. Articles on the Society

2 A.R. 1885.
3 'Section Ten' is explained below. The discontinuation of rent allowances is noted in the Benevolent Society's Charities Gazette, 25 February 1899 (ed).
appeared in the Daily Telegraph. Fund-raising pamphlets with selected cases described and illustrated were distributed before Christmas and winter. The first, published in 1888, was a small volume with a long title - The Outdoor Relief Department: its benefits to the distressed and deserving poor. By 1891 the title was Help for the Poor and Afflicted. The copy sent to the Colonial Secretary was in full leather with a satin inset title. Another effort was launched in 1896, the Charities Gazette, which was the instrument for soliciting contributions as well as publicising the work of charitable societies. With Maxted's retirement in 1901 it rapidly deteriorated into a collection of heart-rending stories and was soon discontinued. To these literary efforts must be added the labours of collectors on commission, and special efforts such as Mrs Astidown's fancy dress ball, meetings in the Town Hall and

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1 For example, a series in D.T. on the history of the B.S., 26 March 1887, 9, 25, 30 April, 7, 14 May 1887.
2 These and others are in the B.S. MSS M.L.
3 B.S., Board minutes, 12 May 1896, p.143.
4 The only series of it is held by the B.S. at their head office at Paddington.
rental from the hoardings on the Pitt Street frontage. Government support was still essential to the life of the Society, while subscriptions proper continued to fade. Income from business arrangements and special efforts were to become increasingly important to the Society. The quality of its work as charity had been, in this very practical way, almost completely eroded. Certainly to the recipients of aid it was charity. But the support of the community was expressed largely through government grants.

Other established poor relief societies continued their work. Some, like the Home Visiting and Relief Society, obscurely, for little or no trace of its work survives in these years. The City Night Refuge and Soup

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B.S., H.C. minutes, 14 May 1895, p.50. The Annual Report for 1896 listed receipts in detail:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
<td>£1238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Appeal</td>
<td>1361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen Refuse</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwifery Fees</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundries</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Maintenance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circus</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Aid</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection Box</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacies</td>
<td>905</td>
</tr>
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<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for maintenance</td>
<td>4634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outdoor relief</td>
<td>5199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unemployed</td>
<td>3749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>general exp.</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of clock</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charities Gazette</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisements</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoarding Rent</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Fines</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly Societies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals Sunday</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Charities Fete</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent, Coffee and Fruit Stall</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total £19,533.

Expenditure was given as £18,155, over £10,000 being spent on food.
Kitchen was a bleak place when the Hill sisters visited it with 'mere empty rooms without any furniture'. Its operations occasionally extended to arranging employment or succouring women and children. But it endured considerable criticism in the early 1880s: as the Telegraph put it 'It is doubtful whether the institution commands the sympathy of those who are charitably disposed. There is an opinion prevalent that none but the idle, the drunken or the improvident seek relief from such sources....' Maybe this was true, yet its directors were unwilling to deny even these people a meal and a bed. They agreed that better premises were required, especially after a critical write up in the Telegraph which spoke of stinking atmosphere and 25 inches sleeping accommodation a man. In October 1887 new buildings were opened - they are still in use. It settled down to an average of 70 inmates a night and perhaps twice that number of meals provided daily.

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2 A.R. 1876.
3 5 August 1880.
4 6 May 1884.
5 D.T. 3 October 1887.
6 A.R. 1892-3, S.M.H. 3 August 1893.
Some new societies for poor relief were established in the prosperous years around 1880. The Charity Organisation Society was set up in 1878 in imitation of the organisation of the same name in London, but it never amounted to much. Its report for 1889 showed an income of £1,082 and aid to about 3,000 cases during the year, which could scarcely have gone very far. The concept of controlling imposition by the use of tickets was a useful technique for protection against street beggars. But the Society never became even the shadow of a central clearing house for information, as the C.O.S. in London had hoped to be.

A specialised organisation set up in these years was the National Shipwreck Relief Society of New South Wales, later to become the Royal Shipwreck Relief and Humane Society of New South Wales. F.H. Dangar and J. Paxton were the dominant figures in its early life. The inaugural meeting was held on 29 September 1877. Its objects included the provision of relief on a short and long term basis to dependants of seamen of the state lost at sea, or of others lost off the N.S.W. coast. It also granted medals for acts of heroism. Its membership provided both for charitable donors (£5) and subscribing members (seamen at 1/- per month). It rapidly became a form of mutual insurance, assisted by gifts from commercial and maritime organisations, by which seamen could make some provision for their families in the case of death at sea. Its activities, ostensibly charitable, were very much based on the principle of self help and the firm lead of social superiors who dispensed assistance occasionally, medals and prizes from time to time, and refusals often to those whose maritime breadwinners had failed to subscribe to the Society. Its minute books are in M.L.
The Benevolent Society had been too long in the field in Sydney. The work, moreover, was not nearly so complex and overwhelming in its volume as in London.  

Other societies derived from a much more specifically religious motivation. The Society of St Vincent de Paul established its first conference in Sydney in July 1881. This society stressed the importance of visiting the poor in their own homes and so assessing the individual case discreetly and sympathetically. It was, and remains, a society of Roman Catholic laymen, spreading from parish to parish, aimed at involving church members regularly and directly in the duty of caring for the poor. The movement had begun in France. In Sydney it followed overseas models faithfully. The annual reports were headed with the words of St Vincent - 'The title of the poor to our commiseration is their poverty itself. We are not to inquire to what party or sect they belong'. Nevertheless, much of their work must have been among Roman Catholics. The statistics of the activities of the Society are particularly full, and are shown in condensed form in table 7. Like so many other charitable societies their work expanded rapidly in the depression, but apart from that increase, it is noticeable that the volume of the work varied more with

2 A.R. 1881-4. For these years income was shown as £1,004.
the number of affiliated conferences than with increasing demand. The emphasis this society gave to home visitation, as had the Home Visiting and Relief Society, was important. Once again the move was away from the queue at the Ration Store of the Benevolent Society. Efforts were being made to fit the aid given more closely to the needs of the family concerned. Moreover, utilisation of the existing parish structure and of male voluntary workers was an immediate and effective solution to the problem of shifting population which faced the older, more institutionalised societies. Where the Roman Catholic Church went, so could conferences of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

The protestant churches became increasingly involved in social questions in the 1890s. Some of this was a continuation of the work already being done. Other endeavours were responses to new streams of thought reaching Australia about the range of responsibility christians should have towards the poor. The 1890s were, too, a time of social crisis sufficient to draw more people into the work of charity and social reform. Operating against these pressures was the growing disjunction between active religious commitment among the middle classes, increasingly located in the suburbs to the west and south of Sydney, and the 'pagan' working classes of the city and inner suburbs. Ways in which the churches could maintain rapport with the poorer sections of the community and continue to minister to them were often debated, and frequently the technique
chosen was some form or other of social work on behalf of the poor.¹

However, it would be a complete misinterpretation of protestant christians to argue that they were inactive in charitable work until the depression. The signs of quickening social conscience yielding important institutional fruit can be found most readily, not in the days of depression, but in the days of prosperity, when prostitutes flaunted their wares on King Street,² gang murders made sensational news,³ and the contrasts of wealth began to prick many consciences.

Protestant zeal for evangelism, coupled with the confidence that social reform would inevitably follow in its wake, had been the mainspring in the establishment of the Sydney City Mission in 1862. It began to note income for charitable purposes on its annual reports in the 1880s, and to explain how its missionaries frequently had to turn to social rescue before they dared think of broaching spiritual matters. Visits to the sick, cases

¹ These are the central themes of the important and stimulating thesis by J.D. Bollen, 'The Protestant Churches and the Social Reform Movement in N.S.W., 1890-1910', Ph.D., Sydney University, 1965.
² See three colorful articles in D.T. 7, 19, 26 January 1880.
³ 'Bourke St Tragedy', various articles in D.T. in September 1883; 'Mt Carmel Outrage', D.T. 27 December 1883; 'Mt Rennie Outrage', D.T. 29 November 1886 (reporting Judge Windeyer's remarks on sentencing 9 youths to death).
of 'pecuniary' and medical aid began to be listed. Since it claimed to be essentially an evangelistic agency, this work needed defence and explanation. The analysis was still in the established protestant idiom, at least in their annual reports: the work of sin expressed in the craving for drink and the spirit of materialistic worldliness was the great enemy against which the Society battled. If outdoor relief was given, it was only intended to be an act of mercy in an emergency, until proper provision could be made through the normal charitable institutions. On the other hand, its reports often placed the emphasis of their advertising appeal on the value of rescuing the depraved outcasts of society from the evils of their ways. It is undeniable, in other words, that evangelism and social concern were already closely linked.

In 1883 the Salvation Army appeared in Sydney. At this stage its concern like that of the City Mission was essentially to evangelise the working classes. But to attempt even this meant involvement in the social needs and sufferings of the poor. It is not surprising that, by the early 1890s, the local organisation was reflecting faithfully the shift introduced by General Booth in 1890 to social work among the submerged tenth, i.e. those below the working classes, who needed a bath, a bed, and a bowl of soup before any talk of the gospel

1 A.R. 1879-80, D.T. 18 May 1880.
2 D.T. 12 February 1884. The Salvation Army has been omitted by Bollen from his thesis.
of Christ could be attempted. Much of the initiative for the Salvation Army's work in Australia came from Melbourne. Nevertheless, the Army's 'social wing' made important contributions to charitable work in the city. Its annual report for 1890-1, Social Conquests listed a rescue home, which had helped 267 women in the year, and a prison gate home for men, which had handled 383 cases in the year. £2,229 was spent on 'social wing' work in N.S.W., while about £5,500 was spent in Victoria in the same period, where the work was much more extensive. The rationale for the Army's endeavours was double edged and ambiguous, as so much of General Booth's work has appeared to be to commentators. The argument ran, in their report for 1892:

The age is in many respects an intensely practical one, and yet, in others, it is not half practical enough, inasmuch as it fails to recognise as a general principle that the Christianity of Christ, which is in itself the religion of humanity, affords the truest safeguard of the national peace and the national conscience...we assuredly find that poverty, want, crime and destitution are the fruitful offspring of that sin which has been the curse of mankind since the days of Adam....If all men were true...just...honest...Christian, the most difficult of existing problems would vanish before the true life of Christianity....

But the Millennium remains in the still distant future, and meanwhile men's troubles multiply just in proportion as they decline to be guided by, and ignore, God's laws, hence the

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necessity for the Social Wing of the Salvation Army, the especial mission of which is to raise the fallen and comfort with a new hope the sorrowful heart of mankind.¹

The willingness of the Sydney City Mission to reach out into poor relief, and the establishment of the Salvation Army, were not the only signs of a sharpening conscience among protestant churchmen about social problems. Of course the temperance movement still represented a major institutional effort, and reflected an important facet of their social analysis. Again, many of the supporters of the general institutions did so from christian principle. But others felt driven to active intervention in the social needs of the community. G.E. Ardill began as a vigorous supporter of the Blue Ribbon Army and the Sydney City Mission. Then he launched out with a few supporters, establishing a string of institutions for the care of the poor, all suffused with the hope of doing evangelistic work. The 'Home of Hope' was established in Newtown in 1884 as a refuge for destitute women, for pregnant women, and for penitent women. In 1885 an 'open all night refuge' was opened in Sussex Street: perhaps prostitutes used it from time to time, but more importantly it provided immediate shelter for destitute women in the city. Later other institutions were added. Ardill operated with exiguous accounting and the minimum of funds, controlling the various institutions himself. These methods drew

criticism from time to time, but his basic reply was that if he had not acted, nothing at all would have been done.\(^1\) By 1891 the group of societies he had created were organised into the Sydney Rescue Work Society.\(^2\)

The work of the city-based societies was steadily eased by the establishment of local benevolent societies, created out of local concern in such suburbs as Balmain\(^3\) and Paddington\(^4\) in the 1870s and then during the depression, out among the more distant suburbs. More and more such societies were established in country towns. Here, the evidence of who supported them and for what reasons is thin or non-existent. One can only presume that local civic pride required the creation of such ladies benevolent societies in the face of poverty wherever it was manifested in an urban setting. The

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\(^1\) Ardill to D.T. 15 November 1884, published 17th.

\(^2\) A.R. 1891–2. A full, if critical, account of the work of his various societies is given in R.C.P.C. 1897–9, Third Report, p.viiiiff. A defence of the work was prepared in answer to this report, and signed by Bruce Smith, the Rev. J.D. Langley, E. Reading, Thomas Roseby and E. Vickery. A printed copy is enclosed in C.S.I.L. 99/13128, S.B. 'Papers from Mr Brunker's Room, 1894–99', 4/935.2.

It is believed that Ardill's papers still exist. Attempts to locate and consult them have not so far succeeded. When they become available it should be possible to document what can only be hinted at here - the dynamism and earnest commitment of the man; the complexity of the social and institutional functions which focused on him; the personalities who made up an important part of the non-conformist protestant establishment in Sydney.

\(^3\) S.M.H. 20 May 1892, the nineteenth annual meeting.

\(^4\) S.M.H. 7 February 1877, annual meeting.
Statistical Register barely noticed them in 1875, listing four.1 By 1889 11 were listed.2 By 1899 22 suburban and 48 country societies were listed, with a total expenditure of £7,514.3 The same list also includes small instrumentalities such as the Hebrew Ladies Dorcas Society, the French, Swiss and German Benevolent Societies and the Firemen's Widows and Orphans' Fund – all of which speak for themselves. Charitable relief was becoming, if not fashionable, at least a recognised local civic duty. A local benevolent society, once established, patronised or presided over by the mayor or local member of parliament, could apply for government pound for pound subsidy and distribute it to the poor of the district. Perhaps this was an inefficient mode of operation. Perhaps it reeked of local status seeking, social conformity and middle class condescension. Yet these societies reached out to where the poor were: there was no point in expecting such people to go to the Pitt St Asylum if they lived at Kogarah or Granville. Moreover, those who participated in such local societies could be expected to have at least some facilities for learning the truth of claims made by people who could often be neighbours, or who were at least only a short sulky ride away.

1 S.R. 1875, table 13.
2 S.R. 1889, table 47.
3 S.R. 1899, table 48.
2. **Care for women**

Prostitutes and pregnant women were both, by their very situation, inclined to be reduced to poverty - the former when ill or old, the latter if unmarried or deserted. The older refuges continued their work, seeking to bring prostitutes off the streets and to reform them. The Roman Catholic Church opened its Magdalene Retreat at Tempe in 1887.\(^1\) Ardill's Home of Hope was an addition, so was the Salvation Army's Rescued Sisters' Home. There can be no doubt that prostitution was a big business in the 1880s. The focal point of the trade was King Street. It was a disturbing, challenging phenomenon which these institutions tried to combat.\(^2\) Some preached against it, seeking to arouse public opinion, and to force consideration of the vice in the context of social needs.

Decrease of ignorance, more equable distribution of property, and the reduction of pauperism will do more for the effecting a cure than the most perfect system of regulating vice, which, in giving a transparent legality to it, certifies that there are forms and conditions of licentiousness in strict accordance with the law.\(^3\)

Others pressed for legislation 'for the better protection of females' which would attack procuring, give the right

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1 D.T. 10 October 1887.
3 Jackson, op. cit. The address was given to the Social Purity Society on 9 July 1883.
of search to reputed brothels, raise the age of consent to 18 years, make public soliciting illegal and provide for the supervision of brothels. \(^1\) Parkes at least made it plain that he was not interested. The Social Purity Society's efforts continued spasmodically for a few years, then faded away. Charity continued to be baffled by this perplexing social evil. It was not with the trade in general, but with its discarded or penitent members, that there was a continuing ministry.

When it came to more ordinary destitution, again women were particularly vulnerable. The Benevolent Society had always found that families, often large, where the breadwinner was sick, dead, absconded, imprisoned or insane, presented a large task for their relief work. No doubt the other societies were likewise concerned for this family care problem. During the 1870s, not only was there a reaction against committing the children of such families to institutions, leading to the passing of the State Children's Relief Act, but as we have seen, the Benevolent Society sought to make cash grants available to maintain family unity as long as possible. Edward Maxted wrote several reports for the Society which argued the case and described some examples, for the benefit both of the Board and the public. \(^2\)

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1 Deputation, Social Purity Society to Col. Sec., 12 August 1887; D.T. 13th.
2 D.T. 11 August 1886; S.M.H. 9 March 1892, 22 July 1892.
The problems of desertion and affiliation were particularly irritating to the Society. The law governing desertion proceedings was of little use if the husband went to another colony: or indeed if once he were apprehended, for he could be imprisoned, but this yielded nothing to the unfortunate wife. Many wives refused to prosecute, preferring to try living with the erring husband again, usually only to endure another period of coarse brutality and neglect culminating in a fresh desertion. Occasionally the violence meted out came to the notice of police and press. Murder and suicide were not uncommon. Family income was often squandered on drink, and passions vented in brutal beatings. The victims of these outbursts were the women who came as a last resort, in utter humiliation, to the doors of the Benevolent Asylum. There Maxted and his workers sought to care for the children, give the mother a chance to recover her health and consider the future. The Society sought for improved legislation to control deserting or brutal husbands. One presumes that such cases as those reported by Maxted (he estimated 600 in 1891) contributed to the campaign for divorce law reform so persistently led by Sir Alfred Stephen.  

1 Manager, B.S. to Board, S.M.H. 9 March 1892.  
2 M. Rutledge, 'Sir Alfred Stephen and Divorce Law Reform in N.S.W., 1886-1892', M.A. A.N.U., 1966. This thesis presents a wealth of detail on the marital sufferings of women in N.S.W. in the 1870s and 1880s, which influenced such leading figures as Stephen and Windeyer to lead a large scale and finally successful campaign for the liberalisation of the divorce law.
When it came to unmarried mothers the law was equally unsatisfactory. Affiliation proceedings could only be launched after birth, and under fairly restricted circumstances. All too often the charitable institutions found the mothers preferred to be silent about the fathers, and enjoy the charity extended to them. Sometimes they could not face the humiliation of entering a lying-in hospital, and sought less honorable alternatives: children were left, newly born, all over the city; sometimes they were murdered; sometimes they were farmed out; occasionally the mothers climaxed it all by suicide. Pinned to calico wrapped around the body of a newly born infant found in Belmore Gardens was the following note:

The mother of this unfortunate child and also the father are members of the Protestant faith, and attendants at St Andrew's Cathedral. To avoid the shame that hangs over every woman who stoops to folly, this night my intentions are to go to North Shore, and from there to dive into eternity. When, by my kind friends and dear relations I am missed, everyone will be surprised to know who it is; and my seducer I leave to God to punish. No useless curse will I leave upon him, but when my body is found in the harbour, let him remember the last conversation we had, and then his conscience will be a sufficient curse whilst on this wicked world. And as I forgive him, so I pray God will.

29 February 1874.

1 The problem was frequently noted by the B.S., e.g., H.C. minutes, 11 June 1878.
2 E. Maxted, 'Illegitemacy', a paper presented to a Conference for the Promotion of Public Morality, S.M.H. 22 July 1892.
3 Empire 6 March 1874.
Efforts at tighter legislation were promoted. A meeting for 'The Promotion of Public Morality', lasting an afternoon and evening, was held in July 1892. Not only did they hear a long paper on illegitimacy from Edward Maxted, but they decided to urge on the government the necessity for legislation raising the age of consent (currently before parliament), strengthening the desertion laws, and for suppressing vice generally. It was a festival of reformist protestantism in full consciousness of the tradition of such efforts reaching back through the Anglican Social Purity Society of the 1870s and the Blue Ribbon Army to the first temperance meetings and indeed the original formation of the Benevolent Society.

Other ways in which the tone of the efforts, especially for women, can be illustrated are provided by the collection, in 1889, of a fund of £16,000 to commemorate the Queen's jubilee, under the patronage of the governor's wife, Lady Carrington. Its aim was, avoiding 'regular doles', to aid women to earn their own living by purchase of such items as mangles and sewing machines. Loyalty and chivalry aided charity in this small work which made funds available each year. Or again we can listen to the appeal contained in Ardill's Sydney Rescue Work Society Annual Report for 1893, with all its Victorian dramatic overstatement:

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1 S.M.H. 22 July 1892.  
2 It handled 250 cases and spent £841 in its first year. A.R. 1889.
Do you hear that mother's wail of anguish and distress? That once happy home has been almost shattered by the effects of the terrible scourge of impurity. What wonder if the fond but broken-hearted parent weep? Do you ask why that way worn, sin-bespattered and forlorn creature knocks with trembling hand at the door of yonder hospitable Home? Help is needed, and at once. If she be refused admittance then, perhaps the dreadful solace of the river will be sought, and the once blossoming life will forever close, only to meet an even worse doom....

One successful piece of legislative change which had far reaching implications for the support of the poor, especially women, was included in the amendments to the State Children's Relief Act in 1896. The key amendment (section ten) allowed the payment of allowances to widows and deserted wives, whose children could thus now be boarded out to them instead of to foster parents. Without saying so in the debates, the promoters of the amendment, notably Sir Arthur Renwick, were seeking to provide a more satisfactory mode of caring for one particular group of the poor who had been savagely treated by the rigours of the depression. The original proponents of the boarding out system, Lady Windeyer and Mrs Garran, both argued that this amendment would saddle the community with expenses the individual should bear. What had begun as a measure for the better care of children in asylums wholly or in part supported by the state would

1 Social Derelicts, A.R. of the Sydney Rescue Work Society 1893, p.3.
2 60 Vic., no.9.
become, they believed, a vast extension of outdoor relief.\(^1\) Probably they were right. 'Section Ten' was to become a system of aid that brought comfort to thousands of homes. It meant a swift extension of the state's activities in social welfare, so that soon as many women of these categories as the original foster parents were receiving payments from the department. It was a milestone in social relief, and deserves a great deal of emphasis. If any one thing is to be pointed to as the beginning of coherent social welfare in N.S.W., it is this act, above any other legislative or administrative change in the busy 1890s.\(^2\)

3. **Care for the aged**

Care for the aged poor had two main aspects: the relief in rations and allowances given by societies to old people in their own homes and the institutional care provided by the government asylums, to which so many were sent when their capacity to care for themselves had

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1 Lady Windeyer, MS of letter to S.M.H. 5 May 1896. Mrs A. Garran, unpub. MSS dated 1907. Both in M.L.

2 S.C.R. Board, A.R. 1896-7; V. & P. 1897, vol.3, p.929. E.g. the case of Mrs Hawkless, first reported on by an Inspector of the Department on 20 May 1896. She had 11 children, the eldest aged 20, and was a widow. She earned 2s. 6d. a week laundering, two daughters brought in 10s., a son 18, 7s. when working, while the B.S. gave 2s. The S.C.R. Department awarded 12s. a week 27 March 1897, which was reduced to 6s. a week on 7 December 1897. C.S.I.L. S.B. 4/935.2. In 1900 1,492 mothers were receiving a total of £17,823 for the boarding out to them of 3,257 of their own children.
declined beyond a tolerable point. Since the relief
given in the homes of old people was part of the regular
work of the Benevolent Society and the rest, it would be
repetitious to examine it further. What must be noted
however, is that the strain on the societies of caring
for these people, accompanied by the obvious virtue of
helping them to remain active members of the community
for as long as possible, were positive pressures assisting
the arguments for the granting of government pensions to
the aged. That story, however, must wait until the
depression of the 1890s has been considered.

It must be noted, in turning to the institutional
care provided for the aged, that although the government
asylums dominated the scene, a few minor institutions
continued the earlier tradition of local responsibility
for this task. Such asylums existed, in 1875, at
Parramatta, Singleton and Maitland, with total admissions
of 96 for the year. In 1899 there was the Home for the
Aged Poor at Randwick, conducted by the Little Sisters of
the Poor, as well as benevolent societies providing indoor
relief to 217 at Armidale, Bathurst, Glen Innes, Grafton,
Maitland, Mudgee, Newcastle and Tamworth.¹

While the population of the government asylums did
not grow in the same proportion as the hospital admissions
between 1875 and 1900, an increase from 1140 on 31 December
1874 to 4,125 at the end of December 1900 is substantial.
It represents a continuing demand for the facilities

¹ S.R. 1875, p.8; 1899, p.810.
provided by the asylums, and implies very considerable efforts to house the increased number of inmates involved. Within that general growth there was the development of the medical responsibilities of the asylums which found about 1,600 bed patients among the inmates by 1896, a process which has already been considered within the context of provisions for the sick poor.

Dr Alleyne had described to the Charities Commission in 1873 the sort of people who were admitted to the Asylums:

...if a person from ill health, no matter what his age is, is unable to gain a livelihood, and is not likely to be able to work, he is always taken in; or if he is unable to work, from extreme old age... [also those] not quite recovered from recent illness, or who may have had a leg amputated... and not got sufficiently well.¹

The report was not particularly critical of the asylums, with the exception of the Hyde Park institution. In general it accepted the concept of caring for these old people by providing large buildings, rigid timetables and dull food where they largely cared for themselves. So did Frederic King, long Secretary to the Board of Management, and in 1876 appointed Manager in succession to that Board.² His reports tell of the numbers admitted and the average costs per head, showing how careful he was to keep a sharp watch on accounts, seeking always to

¹ R.C.P.C. 1873-4, First Report, Evidence, q.4400, 27 May 1873.
² C.S.M. 76/492, 14 February 1876; Government Gazette, 22 February 1876.
reduce expenditure. There is not a breath of concern in these reports for the welfare of the inmates as individuals, no sense of their personality: only a deadening emphasis on costs and numbers. It is the very essence of conducting such asylums that the facilities of normal life be available and enjoyed by the inmates for as long as possible, and that medical care be specific and efficient. Such an outlook was completely beyond the administration of the asylums in the 1880s.

They were, however, increasingly popular as receptacles for the aged and infirm in the community. As railways extended country authorities were able to despatch more readily those whom they came to regard as improper subjects for attention in their improved hospitals. Handling their admission became an important part of the Manager's duties, as did the additional asylum in Macquarie Street, Parramatta which fell to his use after its occupation as an Erysipelas Hospital in 1875-6.

As numbers increased, the Inspector of Public Charities expressed concern in his annual reports at the danger of pauperisation in the community which this rise represented. The Manager denied this explanation: to him

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2 C.S.M. 1784, 8 June 1878.
3 See plate IV. Note that the inmates appear to be wearing a uniform. This is the only reference to such a practice I have found.
Inmates at the Maquarie Street Asylum, Parramatta.
the increased population of the asylums was caused by the work placed upon them by the Infirmary and country hospitals in sending convalescent patients. It was a touchy point of doctrine and social practice that was being considered. Numbers were rising in nearly all the charitable institutions of the colony. Talk of pauperisation was being more frequently bandied about, as the foundation of the Sydney Charity Organisation Society in 1878 showed.

The pressure of numbers and the manifest inadequacy of the Hyde Park Asylum combined to push the government into purchasing a new site in 1881: the former Blaxland

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2 A.R. 1878.
residence 'Newington' on the Parramatta River. However, the original plan to move men there from Parramatta did not succeed, so a longer programme of building was undertaken, with a view to moving the women from Hyde Park.

1 The site is just east of Silverwater Bridge. The Great Public School 'Newington' began here. The purchase of the site by the Government after it moved out is mentioned by Manager, Government Asylums, Report, 1881. V. & P. 1882, vol.2, pp.1135-40. See plate V.

I visited the site in October 1964. The Blaxland house was still there, well worn but solid; it is set in a fine garden; the river is down over the bluff. The wards were empty. The old ladies had been moved to Garrawarra State Hospital, which began its life as the Waterfall Hospital for Consumptives. F Ward stood derelict: the tin style pioneered by Dr Ashburton Thompson was finally the cause of its closure during the second World War for fear of blast from the naval magazine next door. Beyond F Block stood a much more solid group, the wards and 'flats' erected early in the twentieth century. Down the bluff beside the house were the first wards, built in such a hurry in the 1880s. For all the haste they were built solidly, and look ready for many years service: probably they will be pulled down soon anyway. But in their prime they were fine examples of construction in accordance with the sanitary idea. The ceilings are high, the windows are double and open in a cantilevered manner, and the wards are nothing if not 'airy'. Away to the east some hundreds of yards, past the Blaxland family chapel (A.D. 1835), were the quarters built and occupied by the men who lived at this asylum. They too were forlorn and derelict. The whole place was empty, tired and sad. A hospital, a home was being dismantled as I watched. All that is to remain is the house, in the care of the National Trust.
a. F Ward: verandahs, clerestory windows and corrugated iron.

b. Ward for refractory and V.D. inmates.

NEWINGTON ASYLUM 1964
to Newington. But since the George Street, Parramatta site was full to overflowing the old five storey woollen mill opposite was purchased in 1884. It was another austere and dangerous makeshift with narrow stairs, and floors which exuded grease in hot weather. But it had to do for paupers. The dormitory blocks at Newington agreed to by Stuart were occupied early 1886, amid cries from King that Newington was not ready and a crescendo of criticisms of the old barracks from which the women fled. Matters gradually were put right, and far more satisfactory and spacious quarters were erected, first in heavy brick and stucco, then in wood and corrugated iron to a design repeated at the Coast, at Rookwood, and probably in several country hospitals, and then, around 1900, with brick and timber in solid 'Queen

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3 Inquiry Board...q.5097ff, 10 November 1886 (King).

4 J. Ashburton Thompson, A District Hospital: Its Construction and Cost, Sydney, 1890, discusses the plans he had drawn up for the Kiama Hospital, and which he recommended to other hospital boards. Personal examination of the buildings at Rookwood (i.e. Lidcombe State Hospital) and Newington, and a consideration of photographs of the Coast Hospital in comparison with the plans in Ashburton Thompson's pamphlet, are the basis for the judgement in the text. See plate Va.
Anne's style: 313 women were there in September 1886.\(^1\)
On 31 December 1894 there were 612 women and 27 men.\(^2\)

The move to Newington created a fuss in the Legislative Assembly and elsewhere, drawing attention also to claims by inmates and others that this asylum and the two at Parramatta were being run in ways scarcely favourable to their inmates. The upshot was the appointment of a Board of Inquiry into the Government Asylums. T.K. Abbott, a stipendiary magistrate was appointed chairman, with Dr Ashburton Thompson (Chief Medical Officer) and Hugh Robison as the other member.\(^3\) The report was critical of the administration of King, Robison, the Parramatta medical

\(^3\) The Board is cited above, p.308, note 1. Robison wrote his own report in January 1887 on the plea that his duties demanded attention. Dibbs, annoyed - since evidence had already been presented critical of Robison - sent it straight to Abbott, who extracted an apology from Robison. The latter did not sign the final report, May 1887.
officer and two of the heads of the Asylums. All of them were retired or dismissed soon after.¹

Much detail, some of it nauseating, about conditions of life in the asylums emerged from this inquiry. Abbott, a trained magistrate in petty criminal affairs, sought to draw the old men out, and if anything was predisposed to believe them. Obviously accusations and counter accusations by matrons in danger of losing their posts and by talkative, broken old men are difficult to assess. Abbott generally accepted the criticisms, notably of Mrs Hicks at Newington, of Dr Rowling, Government Medical Officer at Parramatta, and of Mrs Cunynghame at Macquarie Street.

The wardsmen in most cases were 'trusties', inmates in receipt of a gratuity for their services. They revealed all too often the vindictive passions of such petty authorities, and a complete failure to understand the difficulties and challenges of the ageing men and women they had to work with. The revenge taken by the chief wardsman at Macquarie Street for the incontinence of bedridden patients was brutal, degrading, and in one (? or more) case probably fatal. Control over liquor, accounts and food by Mrs Hicks (at Newington) were all criticised. The dietary scale was slated for its

¹ Not, however, without much correspondence, appealing and public comment. Parkes appointed J.J. Teece as Royal Commissioner to investigate it all, C.S.M. 19427, 30 May 1887, but he died before he could take up his task. At that point the business quietened down.
reliance on cheap liquor and boiled mutton. The lack of specialised medical facilities (for eye, lock, cancer, phthisis cases) was underlined. The diet at Newington was found by the Board to be inadequate and boring, served at irregular hours and sometimes without implements. Bed linen was left unchanged for long periods. The matron there was exercising 'absolute irresponsibility', a piece of Victorian melodrama in the face of obvious suffering.

The main problems noted at George Street were structural: indecent passageways and the origins of the 'Mill building' with its wool-greasy floors, for example. But an inhuman medical officer aggravated matters. At Macquarie Street the Board castigated the failure to control the lower staff, to secure drugs, to provide extras for sick patients. Possibly one inmate's death was hastened by the violent treatment he received, while the superintendent and medical officer took care not to hear of it. The Board characterised their attitude as 'irregular, careless, perfunctory, and devoid of responsible kindness'.

The expanding problems confronting the Manager of the Asylums were, the Board believed, quite beyond him. He had been denied staff. He lacked the medical knowledge he needed. He had failed to penetrate beyond the files and ledgers of his office. His concern for

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2 Ibid., p. 421ff.
annual reductions in the average cost per inmate had blinded him to 'abuses of the gravest character', while he had 'relied too much upon the honesty of matrons and has taken no steps to ensure honesty by making the detection of a dishonest act a matter of certainty'.

The whole sordid story shows how the custodial system, the 'barrack system', could be abused by sheer routine, by a comfortable development of administrative practices aimed at economy and apparently therefore efficiency, without attention to the needs of the inmates. That these criticisms could be voiced and Henry Parkes take action - to the extent of agreeing to the appointment of trained nurses, retiring King and Robison, dismissing two matrons and creating a strengthened, reorganised department, all practices in which he rarely if ever indulged - suggest that the community was becoming more sensitive of the welfare of these old people.

Conditions of life for them were no longer found to be tolerable in comparison with what the rest of society enjoyed. The developing humanity and civilisation of the community was one pressure, expressed in editorials, questions in parliament and the horror of the Inquiry Board. The other was the transformation in the nature of the inmates. For them exiguous nursing by fellow

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1 Ibid., p.426.
inmates was no longer acceptable. Nor could grog be the only medication. Treatment, nursing, special dietary, classification were all urgently required. It was a pitiful commentary on life in the asylums that, at the close of an entertainment provided for the old women at Newington by Quong Tart and attended by 100 social worthies, when Hugh Taylor, the local M.P., announced that not only should the asylum be under new management, but that they were to have butter to go with their bread, a reading room, honey and treacle, milk and sugar for their tea - this, and no more, should be met 'with prolonged and shrill cheers'.

The new regime, headed by Sydney Maxted as Director of the Government Asylums, Boarding-out Officer to the State Children's Relief Department, and over all head of the Department of Charitable Institutions, inaugurated further improvements in life at the asylums, most of them focused on the improvement of medical care. In addition, an effort was made to provide an alternative to the asylums in the form of 11 cottages at Parramatta. In these, selected aged couples could live with dignity. It was an enlightened step, made obsolete in the near future by the introduction of pensions, and yet three generations later the height of geriatric fashion.

Maxted argued for extended finance for the welfare of the inmates of the asylums in terms which show how

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1 D.T. 14 October 1888.
some at least were coming to a different view of these people to that current in the 1850s:

The Legislature has never hesitated to make very generous provision for the mentally afflicted, the criminals, and other dependent classes in this country. A corresponding generosity might well be extended, under altered conditions of life, to the class now inhabiting the Asylums for the Infirm and Destitute, in which suffering humanity at its most painful form seeks relief, and where there are many respectable old colonists whose decline is due to illness or misfortune rather than to vice or crime.1

It was this improved sense of the worth and dignity of the inmates which justified the more generous dietary providing, *mirabile dictu*, for Irish stew, roast beef, haricot, curry, as well as boiled and minced beef, and fresh bread from a bakery at the Macquarie Street Asylum. Reading rooms, magazines, newspapers and books were all provided, more vegetables, the produce of a dairy and piggeries, invalid chairs, and an ambulance service based on Parramatta all made available.2 A more coherent policy for admissions was established. Applicants had to be infirm and destitute, without relatives willing to support them, fit to travel, not cases for the local hospital, and certified eligible for admission to a Government Asylum by the Government Medical Officer at the Hospital Admissions Depot unless urgency or special circumstances indicated direct application to the Director.3

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1 Ibid., p.205.
2 Ibid., p.216.
3 Ibid., pp.224-6.
The next few years saw consolidation of these administrative improvements and continued efforts by the Director to get the funds for an entirely new establishment in which to house the old people, a campaign which, typically enough, worked itself out in administrative makeshift and compromise, instead of in the large rebuilding project which Maxted had hoped for.

To reduce the overall drain on public and government benevolence Maxted and the Colonial Secretary prepared a bill in 1896 for parliament that provided for the compulsory support of the aged by their families. The defaulting family was a bugbear of Maxted's administration—unmarried mothers, unnamed fathers, well to do children leaving aged relatives in the hands of the state, husbands who deserted wives and children. At the least such a measure would save the state money. At best it would help to empty the 'yard' divisions of his asylums.¹ It was intended to apply to the relatives not only of the inmates of the asylums for the aged, but also of State children. Justices in petty session were to have power to order relatives to pay the costs of maintenance if sufficient evidence could be proved. Similar legislation had been introduced in England a few years earlier.²

² T. Kewley, Social Security, p.16 and n.48.
Before the Select Committee on Pensions, Maxted ascribed the bill to Brunker. However, he had suggested it himself in 1890. In calling for more generous treatment for the aged he was not willing to extend it to them as a right, irrespective of the capacity of their family to pay. This was to be a controversial issue in the next few years.

There was another stream of thought with respect to the aged in the 1890s: not merely the call of humanity to improve conditions, nor the request of the administrators that the family bear its 'responsibilities', but a demand that the aged be treated as individuals each possessing the right to a pension from the state - theirs by right as citizens, labourers in the creation of the community. As we shall see, this recommendation was strengthened from a number of sides. But among them was the image of the 'barracks', so easily criticised, so open to sentimental evocation, so readily identified with the poor houses of England. Renwick had resisted the Rookwood scheme before the Public Works Committee in 1896 from this point of view. Neild, in his two attempts to pass a resolution in favour of old age pensions, based his arguments on this same hostility to the 'barracks'.

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1 Select Committee on State Insurance or Old Age and Invalidity Pensions. Evidence, q.76, 1 July 1896. V. & P. 1896, vol.5, p.831ff.
3 Below, p.337.
Even Sydney Maxted was willing to support the idea of a pension from the point of view of an experiment in taking some inmates out of the asylums. He still saw a general offer of a pension as an act of pauperisation by the state, and yet he was well aware of the inherent inhumanity of the barrack system. He was clearly confused about the problem.

But it was not to be from the careful administrator, but from a bold, flamboyant simplifier that a politically attractive solution was to come, enshrined in the glowing words of E.W. O'Sullivan's report as chairman on behalf of the Select Committee on Old Age Pensions.

In the meantime the facilities of the asylums were assessed critically once more before the old century was out and the pensions scheme put into operation. In 1898, at the request of the Public Service Board, Dr W.C. Williamson, Superintendent of the Gladesville Hospital for the Insane, carried out a full inquiry into the Government Asylum Department. This inquiry, though by delegation, was part of the Public Service Board's total coverage of the public service, searching for areas of inefficiency. Williamson was critical of the antiquated, makeshift structures in use. He was particularly

1 Select Committee on Pensions, q.85.
2 Ibid., qq.132-6.
3 This inquiry saved the Royal Commission on Public Charities from the necessity of carrying out a separate investigation as a part of its efforts. R.C.P.C. 1897-9, minutes 9 September 1899; V. & P. 1899, vol.5, p.473.
concerned with the failure of the government to come to grips, since the two committees of 1896, with the needs of the hospital patients in the asylums. He called for a central infirmary of 600 beds, a separate site for consumptives, the closing of the George Street and Macquarie Street Asylums and the full development of Rookwood. He called for a coherent medical supervision of all asylums, and (like Maxted) legislation to compel families to support their aged members. The plight of the ordinary inmates peeps through in Dr Violette's remark on the George Street Asylum:

I consider George Street Asylum absolutely the most objectionable place I have ever been in, and its maintenance a discredit to civilisation...[they] are housed in dormitories three or four stories high.... From their condition they are unable to get down into the recreation ground and are compelled to spend their days in virtual imprisonment. No steps seem to have been taken to ameliorate their lot, which is inexpressibly sad, if not inhuman.¹

and in Williamson's comment:

To get an insight into the character of the place [the George Street Asylum] it should, however, be seen at night, when the inmates are in bed; or in wet or cold weather, when the overcrowding, hopelessness and misery of the surroundings are fully apparent.²

¹ Evidence, 29 November 1898.
² Report, p.12. It is a departmental MS. The covering letter is dated 21 November 1898. Its provisional location is Public Service Board files, 99/7141/417, 1899 box 1 (State Archives).
Deliberately this section ends with this miserable picture. Just how much did the community care for these aged and decrepit people?

4. The depression

Charity in the 1890s found a new and perplexing focus: relief for able-bodied unemployed. The harsher economic conditions noted by the Benevolent Society in 1884 and 1886 intensified over the next ten years. It was a heart-rending and confusing phenomenon for contemporaries, after so long a period of sustained economic growth. Even Parkes, so convinced of the automatic workings of the economy for the benefit of all was compelled:

...to acknowledge that in my sober judgement there is a great deal of distress among honest working men. I believe there are many decent people anxious to obtain employment who, for the time being, cannot obtain it.¹

Unemployment became a major factor in the expansion of poor relief, despite the nervousness of all concerned at the effects this would have on the moral and economic fibre of the community. Temporary government measures in 1884 and 1886 of providing blankets, food, a place to sleep and then land clearing at the site of the proposed

¹ N.S.W.P.D. vol.25, p.871, 20 April 1887.
boys reformatory at Rookwood, \(^1\) were replaced by more extensive efforts under Parkes in 1888, when conditions again worsened. Even the most fervent Manchester liberals were being pressed to admit that the government in N.S.W. had long been committed to an active role in the economic growth of the community. When economic dislocations threw men out of work most politicians and pamphleteers agreed that the government should take the lead in re-establishing the capacity of the unemployed to earn a wage, just as Cowper had argued in 1858. So the Casual Labour Board was set up. It was a little more coherently organised for providing employment than the hurried methods adopted in 1884 and

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\(^1\) See the several articles in \(D.T.\) May 1884, on 'The Unemployed'. Alexander Stuart, as Colonial Secretary responsible for such matters, sought to gain information on the incidence of unemployment and the possible places in the colony where employment was still available. (C.S.M. 18747 and enclosures, May 1884.) In June work was begun at Rookwood. (C.S.M. 18808.) Replies came from country areas showing that little or no normal employment was available outside Sydney. (These are filed in C.S.I.L. S.B. 'Municipal, re unemployment, 1884', 769.) In 1886, when a similar situation developed in March, George Dibbs was Colonial Secretary. He noted that the cabinet had decided to provide government work under the supervision of the staff of the Immigration Office, available because of the decision to cease immigration. (C.S.M. 19158, 8 March 1886.) By the end of April the government had again learnt that country districts could not absorb labour. (C.S.I.L. S.B. 'Reports on the availability of employment in country districts, 1884-6', 800.) Once again Rookwood became the venue of relief works, but it was emphasised that drunks and miscreants were not to be employed, and that the work was not permanent. (C.S.M. 19169.)
1886. Perhaps Parkes hoped to keep this subject, like the railways, 'out of politics' by setting up an independent board. Unfortunately the work the board provided was at best inefficient timber thinning in Sydney's outer suburbs. It was said to be a waste of public resources by its critics in and out of parliament. It had the appearance of a 'job' for its chairman, the Honourable John Davies CMG, long a leader of the orange and temperance interests and frequently a supporter of Parkes. Worse still, the board came under grave suspicion of financial dishonesty which was more confirmed than denied by the royal commission appointed to investigate its affairs. These incidents in the affairs of unemployed relief gave a bad odour to the whole idea of direct government assistance to such men. It encouraged the more intransigent supporters of laissez faire in their opposition to even emergency measures by the government in times of crisis. As was to be expected, when Dibbs succeeded Parkes as premier in 1891 the Casual Labour Board was shut down completely.

But the problem of sustained unemployment remained through 1891 and into 1892. An enterprising effort by one of the churches to meet the crisis without succumbing to the condemnation of pauperisation was the Church Labour

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Home in Ultimo established by the Reverend J.D. Langley. At the opening on 7 August 1891, W.H. Sharp, President of the Trades and Labour Council, spoke brave words about the home not being a charitable institution, as long as the inmates worked for their wages. The work offered was simple – notably box making and mat weaving. The scale of operations was never large, perhaps 30 men being accommodated at a time. Moreover, it never succeeded in becoming economically self sufficient, and always relied to some extent on charitable support in cash and kind.

Meanwhile economic conditions worsened in early 1892. It was noted that at the Church Labour Home the week 9 to 16 January saw an 'exceptional number of highly respectable and intelligent persons' applying for admission. The Herald warned, however, that it was essential to put an end to the idea that:

...there is a claim on the State, or on the great body of the industrious and thrifty and saving, to exercise a providential care over those who are not so, and to find employment for those who cannot find employment for themselves.

In the Legislative Assembly labour members clamoured for government action, suggesting relief works, a labour

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1 S.M.H. 7 August 1891.
2 S.M.H. 11 January 1892.
3 S.M.H. 25 January 1892.
4 S.M.H. 5 February 1892.
bureau, or even village settlements. By the winter of 1892 the colony was in the grip of a savage, dulling depression that put thousands of men out of work, and made a mockery of the optimism of those who talked of temporary difficulties. But many voices urged caution in giving help to the able-bodied. The fiasco of the Casual Labour Board was lesson enough for most. Dibbs did nothing more than set up a Government Labour Bureau. This organisation was seen in contemporary eyes as the solution, by providing better communications to put the employers in touch with labour. Registrations were made, railway tickets to country districts provided. Ironically, in the end the Bureau was used by the Dibbs' government to provide relief works such as sand shifting at Centennial Park and reclamations at Shea's Creek.

Private citizens were not passive in the crisis months of the winter of 1892. The Benevolent Society's average number of cases rose steeply, as did that of the St Vincent de Paul Society. The Sydney City Mission's workers, while still insisting that their main work was

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1 N.S.W.P.D. vol.56, p.4977ff, Adjournment Debate 9 February 1892. There was almost no reference in this or subsequent debates to schemes of social insurance for unemployment, either on voluntary (English) or compulsory (German) lines. It is not clear why.
2 Cf. Dibbs' remarks in ibid., p.4999.
4 Table 6.
5 Table 7.
evangelistic, did not hesitate to arrange temporary aid for the poor. F. Smith, the Mission's representative in the Paddington and Woollahra districts reported:

The Government have begun to relieve cases I had. Privation among widows and other women who live by washing and charing. I have been able to get some of them work. Widow with three children to provide for, little work, fears to be turned out for rent. Another widow, six to provide for, not strong, work scarce, but for the Queen's Fund relief, would have been in a terrible state.¹

A citizen's relief fund was established to carry on the ad hoc efforts of those who were gathering food and clothing in carts for the unemployed.² A group of M.L.A.s set up another committee.³ The Charity Organisation Society took on a new lease of life.⁴ Church congregations distributed money to the charitable societies.⁵ The unemployed themselves took up collections at their meetings at the Queen's Statue.⁶ The Labour Bureau moved from a disused stable to the Exhibition

¹ S.M.H. 11 June 1892.
² S.M.H. 11 April 1892, 17 July 1892.
³ S.M.H. 13 June 1892.
⁴ S.M.H. 9 March 1892.
⁵ S.M.H. 14 July 1892, Anglican ministers meeting; 19 July, Woollahra Presbyterian Church contributed £21 for the poor, half of it to be sent to the B.S., and half to the Charity Organisation Society. Local Ministers' committee, Ashfield: £12.19. ⁴ collected at the meeting, ibid.
⁶ S.M.H. 11 June 1892. £8.16. ³ yielded 360 meals.
Building in Prince Alfred Park, where much of the relief in kind gathered in these various ways was made available, and where several hundred of the single men dossed down. ¹ The Night Refuge gave 60,000 meals and 25,300 beds in 1892-3, averaging 165 meals and 70 beds a night. ² A number of city cafes donated meals. ³ Several suburban benevolent societies were organised, in recognition of the existence of poverty outside its old traditional locations in the city proper. ⁴

But all these efforts were found to be insufficient. As the City Mission worker revealed, the government had begun to relieve cases. The Director of Government Charities and the Director of the Labour Bureau were authorised to distribute monetary aid after investigation by the inspectors of the Charities Department. They made recommendations to the Colonial Secretary for money to be spent from the 'Pauper Vote', the name long used in the Estimates for the appropriation for the maintenance of state children and aged destitute being sent to government institutions, which had now, in the press of

¹ S.M.H. 1 April 1892.
² S.M.H. 3 August 1892.
³ S.M.H. 1 April 1892.
⁴ Petersham-Marrickville, 14 July 1893; St George's, 17 July 1893; Paddington, 21 July 1893; Parramatta Clothing Society, ibid.; St Peters, 6 June 1895, all S.M.H.
crisis, been put to a new use. These were practical steps by the government to provide in what the Director of Charities called 'a broader, more humane, and more liberal sense for the requirements of the poor in the community'. Pressure meanwhile was put on the government to commence large scale construction works, but it was repeatedly refused. The voices of caution were strong. The Herald warned against any right being established for the able-bodied to claim aid from the government and only justified the work of the Labour Bureau as action:

...in a time of emergency in which a special obligation of assistance to the weak and needy is imposed upon us all...a humane and christian people [coming] to the help of the distressed and destitute.

There were many in these years who made more positive recommendations. Labour members of parliament,

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1 S.M.H. 26 May 1892; Director of Charities, Report 1892; V. & P. 1892-3, vol.2, p.676.
2 Ibid., 1894; L.C., J. vol.55 (1896), part i, p.669. E.g., Director of Charitable Institutions to Col. Sec., 20 March 1894, recommending that five shillings per week be granted to Charlotte O'Brien from the Pauper Vote, for 12 months. Her relatives could not support her, and her personal habits made her unfit for the Newington Asylum. C.S.I.L. 94/3716.
3 Deputation to E. Barton, Acting Premier, 18 July 1892, S.M.H. 19th.
4 5 February 1892; 13 March 1892; 8 June 1892 (eds.).
5 23 July 1892.
radical pamphleteers, some thoughtful churchmen, the unemployed themselves, all opened up new veins of social and economic thinking. The role of the state was usually a central concern in this discussions.\(^1\) At the less exalted level of administrative practice the Pauper Vote remained an important part of the work of the Charities Department, however casually it had been introduced.\(^2\) Labour Farms or Village Settlements were discussed and attempted, but without much long term success. Permissive legislation was pushed through parliament in 1893 and 1894.\(^3\) One such village settlement was sponsored by the government, another by the Church of England, a third by the Salvation Army. As permanent agricultural undertakings they all failed within a few years; as

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\(^1\) Exposition of the economic thinking stimulated by the depression is a study in itself. For the Protestant Churches we now have the valuable study of J.D. Bollen, op. cit., ch.2, 'Debating the Churches Social Duty, 1890-1894'. A different group of outlooks is examined in P. Ford, Cardinal Moran and the A.L.P. A Study in the encounter between Moran and Socialism, 1890-1907: its effects upon the Australian Labor Party: the foundations of Catholic social thought and action in modern Australia, Melbourne, 1966. The title of this work is a good summary of its argument. The author is probably too facile sometimes in his identification of socialists.\(^ 2\)

\(^2\) The Pauper Vote cost £10,000 in 1896, helping 6-800 people. R.C.P.C. 1897-9, Third Report, p.xliii; V. & P. 1899 (2nd Session), vol.1, p.191ff.

\(^3\) 56 Vic., no.34 and 57 Vic., no.27.
centres for the protection and rehabilitation of run-down, desperate unemployed men they fulfilled a much more valuable role.¹

In the crisis years of the early 1890s social values and social practices were undergoing profound changes. It was 'the uncertain fumbling of a community in the process of reforming itself'.² In doctrine and administration alike, men were achieving new distinctions of analysis, evolving new modes of action, becoming bolder in their criticisms of the established social and economic structure. Some of these changes were directly focused on the problem of poor relief. Others were in the realms of land laws, industrial and health regulation, and the franchise. There were men who were willing to speak out, learning that social policy could be consciously planned and executed, rather than left to the forces of the market or the consciences of men of Christian good will. B.R. Wise,³ and E.W. O'Sullivan,⁴

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⁴ Mansfield, op. cit.
J.C. Watson and the other labour men, the Reverend F.B. Boyce, Cardinal Moran, even George Reid, participated in and were swept along by these changes.

From the point of view of the practical relief of poverty, the fruits of the depression of the 1890s must not be overstated. As economic conditions improved, the work of the charitable societies seemed to return to normal, the Herald's emphasis on an emergency was probably accepted as sufficient justification, while the churches turned their attention to other issues. If any lesson had been learnt more permanently than the rest, it was that moral condemnation of the able-bodied who were poor because out of work, was no longer valid. Poverty had struck the most skilled and respectable of artisans, the most careful and self-improving of men had gone down through no fault of their own. Poverty was being (however haltingly) redefined in terms that placed less emphasis on immorality, fecklessness and drink, and more on economic circumstances, housing and other special needs. Even the Herald could remark:

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2 For the Protestant Churches see Bollen, op. cit., who also has some acute observations on Reid's position in this process of change.

3 Ford, op. cit.

4 Bollen, op. cit., ch.6.
...it is known that many who formerly occupied positions of competence have during the period of the depression been so long and so continuously unable to obtain employment, slowly exhausting their resources...that their life has been in many cases a lingering agony.¹

But it would be wrong to leave the story of outdoor aid in the 1890s at this point. The work of the charitable societies continued and expanded. The Salvation Army not only established a farm home at Manly accommodating 24 men in 1896, but also, in 1898, opened their Peoples' Palace providing cheap lodging for men and women (3d. to 9d. for a bed, and food from ½d. a dish, with facilities to earn the price on the premises). The Newcastle and Northumberland Benevolent Society occupied its new asylum for aged and destitute, and also for confinement cases, in the same year. The government had contributed £5,000. This society had been conducting a work similar to that of the Sydney Benevolent Society, but unlike that society, had retained responsibility for indoor aid, as well as a wide flung system of outdoor relief on the district visitor plan.² The St Vincent de Paul Society noted 2,000 families helped in 1897.³

The 1898 Royal Commission on Public Charities also noted such nasty inefficient organisations as the Men's Refuge

¹ 14 June 1894. On unemployment relief in the 1890s, see also Kewley, Social Security, pp.19-25.
² See R.C.P.C. 1897-9, Third Report for the details in this paragraph.
³ Table 7.
in Woolloomooloo, which offered a floor and a rug for the night, and tea and dry bread for breakfast. The vice-president of the Benevolent Society summed up the attitudes of all of those who laboured for the poor when he said to the Commission: 'We never turn anyone away except imposters. We sin on the right side rather than send people away to starve'.

This general willingness to care for the poor wherever they were, though commendable, had produced a proliferation of institutions and societies by the mid 1890s, as well as growing government expenditure and the demand for even more, on pensions for the aged. As we shall see, the attitude George Reid took towards pensions for the aged was, to say the least, the equivocal approach of a wary politician. But this is not to suggest that Reid was completely without interest in provision for the poor. It was directly under his sponsorship that the Metropolitan Charity Organisation Society was set up during 1897. It was yet another imitation of the London Charity Organisation Society, and was the last effort to concert charitable action in this field with minimum government involvement. Conceivably it was intended by Reid as one immediate answer to critics who claimed that his government was backward in social reform; possibly it was a deliberate experiment which, if successful, might avoid the necessity of a pension scheme; it was certainly related to the advice which Maxted had been tendering.

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1 R.C.P.C. 1897-9, Third Report, Evidence, q.208, 11 July 1898.
over a number of years that a more coherent effort should be made to control government charitable aid.\(^1\) This new organisation was in the idiom of middle class charitable action and sensible liberalism. It suggests that Reid was not yet ready to accept the more extensive view of state responsibility outlined in the Report of the Select Committee on Pensions. The new organisation was intended to provide for inquiry rather than relief, to discourage the professional beggar by maintaining centralised records, to quicken local effort by enlisting the aid of the charitably minded as district visitors, and thus to discover some of the more discreet poor. But it did not amount to much. Its local committees found difficulty in establishing themselves, for they were seen as competitors to established work.\(^2\) The Benevolent Society had long been cool to organisation societies, and

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1  Director, Charitable Institutions to Premier, 7 September 1896. C.S.I.L. S.B. 4/935.2, quoted in full below, Appendix, no.5. Reid first spoke publicly about the idea at the Ragged Schools Annual Meeting, 21 September, S.M.H. 22nd; see also editorial, ibid.

2  Circular, Premier to all Charitable Societies in Sydney, 28 September 1897, C.S.I.L. S.B. 4/935.2. The meeting was reported in full and supported by an article on 'Mendicancy in Sydney' in S.M.H. 2 October 1897. This drew some letters, e.g. 4 October, 5 October. The first committee meeting of the new Society was held on 8 October, with Reid in the chair. (S.M.H. 9th.)
virtually ignored this one. The concept of centralised information about people receiving aid was unworkable in 1898. In 1900 the Director of Charitable Institutions reported unfavourably on it for using most of its £1,000 subsidy to pay staff salaries. Only £87 was subscribed to it, and perhaps £300 of its income went in aid to the poor. He argued that since only two thirds of the societies in the metropolitan area corresponded with it in any way, it could do little to prevent overlapping. He urged the cessation of government aid to it. With its sponsor now only leader of the opposition, the society soon died, starved of support and funds.

5. The old age pension

But while the government found itself increasingly involved in the care of the destitute, while ad hoc committees came and went, while the benevolent societies continued their good works, an entirely different approach to the problem of the poor and their welfare emerged. The new approach, leaving aside the idea of benevolent

1 Renwick at Committee Meeting of the Metropolitan Charity Organisation Society, 8 October 1897. He argued the new organisation would disturb other societies; that the supervision idea had failed in other parts of the world; that people prefer to subscribe to a specific charity; that the plans must be kept simple.

2 The Council was composed of about 20 leaders in charitable affairs. They were supposed to represent the interests of about 75 societies, S.M.H. 1 March 1898.

workers\(^1\) or government co-ordination, concentrated on the needs of the aged poor. In 1895 agitation begun in two separate streams by J.C. Neild and the Reverend F.B. Boyce raised the question of state pensions for the aged as their right from the community after years of faithful labour in helping to create it.\(^2\) As was to be expected, consideration of such ideas began with the schemes current in England in the early 1890s. Chamberlain's 1892 scheme was frequently mentioned, but there was never much enthusiasm in the colony for any sort of contributory and voluntary scheme.

J.C. Neild first raised the matter in the Legislative Assembly on 17 September 1895. He moved that:

1. That in the opinion of this House, asylums for the aged and infirm should be replaced by a system of Old Age Pensions.
2. That the House requests the Government to introduce during the present session a bill to give effect to the foregoing resolution.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) As expounded most fully by Renwick at B.S. annual meeting, 20 January 1891, A.R. 1890.

\(^2\) The account given of the movement culminating in pensions for the aged has been greatly helped by the 1947 article by T. Kewley and the more detailed analysis presented by him in Social Security, ch.2. It is presented here from the original sources, not because it is claimed that this is the first time these sources have been examined, but as an organic development of the account of poor relief already given. Set in this context moreover, the influences culminating in the Old Age Pensions Act can be more readily understood.

\(^3\) N.S.W.P.D. vol.79, p.858.
In the few minutes allowed him, it is plain that Neild directed attention to the necessity of emptying the asylums for the aged in order that these 'penal-like' establishments might be replaced by more rational, more humane treatment. It was the anti-barrack theme again. There was no hint in his speech of rights, and little of how the pension might be financed, or by whom.

In January 1896 'State Pensions for the Old Aged and Infirm' became the seventeenth point of the labour party's platform.¹ Some of the witnesses before the Standing Committee on Public Works inquiry into the scheme for building a centralised system of asylums for the aged at Rookwood in February and March 1896 supported the idea of pensions. The Director of Charities saw pensions as an experiment using a few of the inmates from his asylums.² In April 1896 a public meeting was convened in the Town Hall by Boyce (Rector of St Paul's, Redfern) to urge pensions on the government. He was able to get a leading layman of the Redfern Congregational Church, Arthur Renwick, to preside. (His own Sunday School superintendent, J.S.T. McGowen, was leader of the parliamentary labour party.) As a result of this meeting a 'League for Providing Pensions for

¹ Worker 1 February 1896.
² Standing Committee on Public Works, Report on... proposed...buildings at Rookwood. Evidence, 5 March 1896, qq.2415, 2419.
Old Age' was established.\(^1\) Its manifesto, drawn up by Renwick\(^2\) argued that:

...in view of the history of the administration of relief to the poor up to the present time in this country the practical experience already obtained, and the very satisfactory condition of the present state of charitable aid, an opportunity now presents itself for dealing with this branch of the question...

It called for pensions for inmates of the government asylums, 'and those in special need outside the asylums'. The manifesto avoided the fundamental questions of right and need, and simply assumed that now was the time to empty the asylums.\(^3\) Since the manifesto was written by the President of the Benevolent Society and the State Children's Relief Board, it was unlikely to contain criticism of the work of these institutions. Still, Renwick's public complacency at 'the present state of charitable aid' is surely open to criticism. What Renwick was hoping for was the removal of the aged pensioners from the books of the Benevolent Society.

Now that the matter was being commented on favourably by leaders in charitable action (Renwick), social justice (Neild), and Christian social effort (Boyce), the Legislative Assembly was more favourably...

\(^1\) D.T. 21 April 1896.
\(^2\) Select Committee on Pensions, Evidence q.1123, 12 August 1896 (F.B. Boyce).
\(^3\) Manifesto quoted by Sir Arthur Renwick, ibid., q.160, 8 July 1896.
disposed to consider the matter. Neild moved resolutions in the Legislative Assembly on 16 June 1896, calling for 'old age pensions or outdoor relief' to replace 'the asylum system'. He was still thinking in terms of the inmates of the barracks at Liverpool and Parramatta, or at least cast his appeal in these terms. In his speech he expressed his support for a contributory scheme and proposed the boarding out of inmates from Parramatta at 7s. a week along the lines of the work of the State Children's Relief Board. He rejected the idea that age alone could qualify a person for a state pension. Other speakers were more realistic about the capacity of asylum inmates to take pensions, and argued that a pension scheme was necessary, not for these people, but for a wider group of aged and destitute in the community. E.W. O'Sullivan pressed this view and successfully amended Neild's resolutions to have a Select Committee appointed.

The hearings of the Committee were held through June, July and August 1896. Sydney Maxted and Arthur Renwick were the chief witnesses. Both rejected insurance schemes, and accepted the idea of pensions as an additional means of caring for the aged destitute, especially for those on the books of the various benevolent societies, who would be able to make their aid to other cases of

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1 N.S.W.P.D. vol.82, p.820ff.
2 Ibid., p.831ff.
The coverage of benevolent action had extended enormously in the past few years. The suburbs of Sydney and most country towns now possessed a benevolent society. Some of them had emerged during the depression; others were the product of the government distribution of blankets and Christmas cheer from time to time. Maxted estimated that approximately 5,900 people and another 2,000 families had received outdoor aid, while 222 people had received indoor aid from these societies during 1895. He was not able to say how many of these were eligible for any sort of pension. The Committee's report, written in bold, assertive terms by O'Sullivan, was presented to the Assembly in September. It was a tremendous advance on anything previously advocated, if only because it was the first coherent scheme for a state pension that had been advocated in Australia. The proposal was for an annual pension of £26 for all over 60 years of age who had been resident in New South Wales for more than 15 years, and who had an annual income not greater than £50. Added to this basic proposal were suggestions for boarding out some of the inmates of the asylums, and for special taxes to finance the proposals. Perhaps the most significant part of the report was the statement that:

...the old age pension was to go as a free gift from the State...[to those] who have for a fair period assisted to create our civilisation, aided in the

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1 Select Committee on Pensions, Evidence, Maxted, 25 June and 1 July 1896. Renwick, loc. cit.
development of the resources of the country, and helped to bear the public burdens of the community by the payment of taxes.¹

Here was the basic formulation of principle. It survived, almost word for word, in the 1900 Act and in the Commonwealth Old Age Pensions Act of 1908, together with the qualifications that made it a practical possibility. Such a proposition as the one contained in this report outbid the limited schemes so far put forward. It escaped from a narrow concentration on the task of 'emptying the Asylums' and yet avoided the danger of appearing to be nothing more than another socialist scheme. Practical liberals - even Reid - and charitable leaders could approve the hedging qualifications that were clearly in line with existing traditions of emphasis on worth and moral character. Despite the fact that underneath these restrictions the report implied that these people had a clear claim on the community to be supported in a dignified and independent way, it was only on the restricted, practical basis that most politicians were willing to support the scheme. The debate on the tabling of the report gave O'Sullivan a chance to underline the 'humane and beneficent' quality of the movement in support of pensions, an attitude completely in tune with the rest of this man's career.² It was this

¹ Ibid., p.835-7.
² The remarks of Mansfield, Australian Democrat, pp.163, 241-3 and of Kewley, Social Security, p.31, on O'Sullivan's significance both as innovator and as formulator of the spirit of the age are valuable and perceptive.
aspect of the agitation which carried most weight: instead of chancy charity and pauper doles, here was an opportunity to regularise aid to the aged poor on a consistent, statutory basis. However, since the adoption of a report by a leading member of the opposition would have been interpreted as a capitulation by Reid, it was only received, on 4 May 1897.¹

Meanwhile one further and very extensive piece of propaganda carried the discussion on pensions forward. This was J.C. Neild's Report on Pension Schemes in England and the Continent.² He had been appointed while overseas privately in 1897 by Reid as Commissioner to bring back a report on European schemes of pensions, charitable relief and insurance. That he should attempt to postpone matters by seeking such a report was another expression of Reid's cautious practical liberalism. It was made public late in 1898. So was the fact that Reid had paid Neild out-of-pocket expenses without parliamentary sanction. It was this latter action that was chosen by William Lyne as the one on which to challenge Reid for the premiership. Leaving aside the tangled politics that surround this episode, the Report was a major exposition of the concept of pensions as a responsibility of the community towards its elder members. It is not clear, behind the exigencies of a political battle to the death, whether Reid accepted

¹ N.S.W.P.D. vol.87, p.174ff.
² Its full title was Report on Old Age Pensions, Charitable Relief and State Insurance in England and on the Continent of Europe, Sydney, 1898.
these arguments about social responsibility, though it seems unlikely. Neild was now speaking in the idiom of right and duty. He rejected insurance schemes, which was a reversal of his 1895-6 position, and one which he was careful to suppress in the later discussions on the paternity of the scheme. To his original hostility to the government asylums was now added a massive plea for a full-scale pension scheme, based on the idea of the state as head of the family and responsible for its aged members, and on the necessity for an objective, generous and civilised system of aid. In this way the somewhat furtive work of the Charities Department, said to pauperise as much as it helped, could be done away with.

Discussion of alternatives faded. Lyne's Protectionists came into office having promised the labour party that a pensions bill would be passed that session. In discussing the bill at the second reading, Lyne emphasised his government's hope that it would enable the closure of the asylums. This criticism of the 'barracks' was an obeisance to received doctrine and an easy way to establish rapport with the reformers. How much Lyne actually knew about the asylums is not clear. Certainly their population in the years after the passing of the bill varied just as Sydney Maxted had predicted in 1896. First there was a rush of departures, then a corresponding inward flow which gradually levelled off, and finally a long term fall in the rate of admissions as the pension made it increasingly unlikely that old people should decline to that level of destitution which made their admission to a Government Asylum necessary. In the ensuing
administration of the Act, as Kewley suggests, a common-sense approach to aiding the aged was applied. Nevertheless, it was allied with an objective, statutory declaration of right. It was a substantial and permanent step forward in one field of care for the poor.

6. The poor, 1900-14

The picture of poor relief in 1900 was far from bright, even to contemporaries. Important developments had taken place. Ration day at the Benevolent Asylum continued as before. But the numbers who trudged to the outdoor relief department, now in Thomas Street, did not grow at the same rate as the population. For one thing, many other societies were sharing the load. Perhaps, too, the Benevolent Society was right in arguing, in their annual report for 1899, that there was 'a marked decrease in poverty'. Business conditions had begun to improve, local societies were proliferating, the State Children's Relief Department was busy especially under 'section ten', and above all care for the aged had suddenly been transformed. At last old people declining into destitution and chronic incapacity could look forward to something other than the barracks. The pension, for all its limitations, was available to them as a right. It was a charity. But it was from the state. It was far more

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1 Social Security, ch.3, which contains a careful and detailed account of the attempts to extend or restrict the act up to the passing of the Commonwealth Act in 1908, together with figures showing the cost of the scheme.
anonymous, and above all it allowed them to retain independence and to continue living in accustomed haunts and among accustomed cronies. For those whose health and welfare could not be supported adequately by the pension, the government asylums were still available, far more competent by contrast with 1875, to handle the physical problems of old age. But they were still unattractive, still run on the tightest budget, still for the destitute aged in the truest sense of the word.

Endeavours at social reform deriving from charitable effort continued. Rescue work was carried on by devoted people who responded to the call 'by all means save some'. Women and children, like old people, had a much more secure, if still austere, future. The grants available from the state made life endurable for many who had once been faced with the struggle of existing solely on the charity of benevolent societies.

Indeed, the most notable feature of charitable relief in 1900 was the range of cash grants that were being made available. Unemployment was still being treated as a matter for emergency action as, mysteriously, the economy threw thousands out of work. But for many, money was available without the stigmas of pauperism, money given by the community through the government's administrative network. It was money given as an expression of community concern for community problems. It was meagre and the administrative system governing its distribution difficult for the recipients to endure. But the degree to which the community at large, through society or government, was committed to the amelioration
of poverty and its concomitants, had grown out of all possible imagination of the generation of the 1870s.

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With old age pensions available from 1901 a considerable strain was taken off the charitable societies and institutions. There was little new in the work of poor relief in the years from 1900 to 1914. Attention was focused in other places. The drought of 1902-3, with its repercussions on the State's rate of growth, produced some arch editorials from the Herald and agonized interviews with O'Sullivan and See. The former, always eager to see men at work and the State improved, found instead he could only offer the much criticised old substitutes: sand shifting, rock breaking, rabbiting and the rest. It was miserable and discouraging.

1 E.g. S.M.H. 14 March 1902 (ed.):
The workers must accustom themselves to face them [these arguments], and to realize for themselves that the natural and unescapable consequences of attracting thousands of the floating population to Sydney by the prospect of 'relief' works at a higher wage than casual labour is paid elsewhere can have no other effect than that of glutting the local labour market and calling into existence a standing army of the unemployed.

2 E.g. S.M.H. 12 April 1902; 11 March 1903. At the latter interview the workers argued: 'But the question of the unemployed is a very urgent one. It is the duty of the Government to find work for everyone'. Sir John See replied: 'It is not. The Government cannot find work for everyone'.

The societies found it so too:—

Never before in its history however has the Society been called upon to face so much distress among the sick and helpless, and coupled with the serious advanced price of most comestibles... the position which your directors had to face was the alternative of turning helpless poverty from its doors unaided or unsufficiently assisted... or else behold with practical compassion the appeal of genuine distress at the expense of its finances.¹

The Old Age Pension was not the only way in which the state was involved in poor relief.² 'Christmas cheer' and blankets in winter time were regularly disbursed, usually through local M.P.s or benevolent societies.³ The 'Pauper Vote' was continued, at least up till 1906. The Department of Charitable Institutions continued to send its inspectors, or, in country districts, the police,

¹ B.S., A.R. 1903. P. Macarthy, in reviewing Ian Turner, Industrial Labour and Politics in Labour History no.10 (May 1966), emphasises the high unemployment rates after 1900. 'Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the Australian Economy for this whole period is the great trough of unemployment stretching right through from the end of 1891 to 1906 and beyond for the unskilled, save only for the ephemeral recovery in 1899-1901', p.67. He is preparing a Ph.D. on wage rates in Australia, 1891-1920. See also, for fuller discussion, his article in A.J.P.H. vol.13, no.1 (April 1967). I must acknowledge Mr Macarthy's generosity in supplying me with a copy of this paper and permitting me to cite it in advance of its publication.

² Discussion of efforts to amend the act and the problems of administering it is in Kewley, Social Security, pp.50-9. It has not, therefore, been traversed in this thesis.

³ See e.g. C.S.I.L. S.B. 'Christmas Relief Expenditure, 1903-4', 4/961.2; 'Christmas Cheer Grants to Benevolent Societies, 1911', 5234; G. Burgess to Col. Sec. 2 January 1907, C.S.I.L. 07/15385.
to investigate pleas for assistance. The aid granted from the pauper vote now went especially to invalids, and to those who were aged and destitute and yet unable to qualify for the Old Age Pension especially on the grounds of residence. It was rarely if ever more than half the ten shillings weekly granted by the pension. It was granted on a four monthly basis. It required much

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1 Examples of these inquiries can be found in C.S.I.L. 07/20402, 20405, 20279. Joseph Eyles of Ballina was reported on as 'respectable enough, but scarcely deserving', hawking fruit in the district, but frequently seen in hotels and with two brothers who ought to support him. Request refused 07/20402. William Ambrose Mappin of Lower Hawkesbury lived in 'a comfortable home' with his daughter. Two sons were willing to support him. But he wanted to return to Sydney, for, he claimed, the bush was too quiet. Refused 07/20405. Elizabeth Wilson of Wentworth, a widow who 'eked out a miserable existence for a number of years', now bedridden with rheumatism. Her daughter was also a semi-invalid. Her husband was out of work. 7s. 6d. a week granted, 1902 and renewed till she became eligible for the pension, 1 July 1907. 07/20279. The report on Anthony Kerrigan is reproduced in full below, Appendix, no.6.
persistence by friends and local members to maintain the continued payment of the grant.  

Administering the government's subsidies to local charitable societies also took on a more efficient bureaucratic air. The dodges of country societies that credited the proceeds of raffles, the donations of staff, as well as refunds and services in kind to their claim for government pound for pound subsidy were steadily identified and dealt with.  

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1 Sarah Appleford was first visited by an inspector 27 January 1903, after the sudden death of her husband. She refused to enter Newington Asylum, and very quickly exhausted the capacity of local societies to support her. Nor could her family help. A grant was made of 5s. a week for four months. Regularly the M.L.A. for Redfern wrote to the Charities Dept to remind them of her need, often including a certificate from a doctor or other testimonials. Regularly the inspectors would report on the case. Regularly the payment was renewed, sometimes 4s., sometimes for 5s., until from 1 July 1907 she became eligible for a pension of 10s. a week. The file contains at least 46 items, 1903-7, including the remark by Latimer (M.L.A.) 'that this poor old lady is being slowly starved to death on 4s. per week while others in the community no better entitled to it than she is [are] being allowed 5s. per week'. C.S.I.L. 07/20272.

2 An example of the form requiring itemised information about these matters is in C.S.I.L. 07/1631, when the Braidwood Ladies Benevolent Society sought their usual subsidy, 13 February 1907. They were informed of the further requirement that they must accept responsibility for all local cases of distress, as outlined in the Colonial Secretary's Circular of 14 March 1906, and as a result were refused further subsidy.
In 1906, as part of Carruthers' promised economy drive, and as a result of the survey he and the Colonial Secretary had called for into the administration of government charity, local societies were informed that they must in future take responsibility for 'all local cases of distress'. Failing such willingness they would be deprived of their annual subsidy.¹ The effect of this decision was to transfer to them financial and administrative responsibility for the cases previously handled by the Charities Department and paid for out of the Pauper Vote.

The administration of government charitable funds was improved in other ways. The Public Service Board conducted an inquiry into the work of the Liverpool Asylum in 1908² and found further evidence of weak and inefficient administration there. G. Brodie, as Director of Charitable Institutions, then Inspector General of Charities, had come from a senior post in the Treasury,³ obviously with instructions to bring the somewhat loosely controlled expenditure of the department under more rigorous administrative control. It was Brodie who

¹ Ibid., circular 14 March 1906.
carried out the survey in 1904-5 arranged by Carruthers.\footnote{The inquiry was announced by the Chief Secretary (Hogue) in the Legislative Assembly in reply to a question, on 25 October 1904, \textit{N.S.W.P.D.} (2nd series) vol.16, p.1010. S.M.H. commented on it 19 March 1906.}

In 1908, arising out of its assessment of the difficulties surrounding supervision of the government asylums, the Public Service Board arranged for the appointment of Dr Paton\footnote{Previously Government Medical Officer of Health for Sydney.} to succeed this treasury official, with the new title of Medical Inspector of Charities.\footnote{Public Service Board to Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Dept, 7 October 1908, C.S.I.L. 08/3702 with 11/4623.} This change was the forerunner of the much larger reorganisation of public medical services accomplished by Paton under the Labour government in 1912-3.

As an offset against the somewhat demanding requirements upon local benevolence of a government politically and ideologically committed to economy and local independence, the Invalid Pension Act of 1908\footnote{Kewley, \textit{Social Security}, pp.84-95 for the next three paragraphs.} provided for those who were permanently incapacitated, while the Friendly Societies Subvention Act\footnote{Ibid., pp.89-90.} helped to ease the strain of such long term cases who were members of these societies. Legislation for invalid pensions had
been slower in coming than those for old age even though the 1896 committee had urged both. While criticism of the 'barracks' for people who were nothing more than aged, and of 'indiscriminate charity' helped to strengthen the arguments for a statutory old age pension, the medical services provided by the government asylums for the permanently incapacitated were much less open to criticism on moral grounds. Incapacitated people could not hope to live in quiet dignity - for them the barracks were necessary. Others argued that invalidity should remain a matter for individual insurance. The expenses of the old age pension scheme after its introduction in 1900 and the following years of financial stringency made successive cabinets wary of placing a further expanding burden on the State's revenue.

But reformist pressure was strong. Boyce's voice was a powerful one among the groups who supported Carruthers at the elections. The premier was probably in favour of the idea of invalid pensions, even if he hedged it about with qualifications. He sensed political advantage in 1907 and promised the scheme advocated in the election of that year. It was a sign of the further acceptance by the community of the principle of fixed monetary payments on the basis of minimum legal qualifications that this astute and assiduously righteous politician should commit his party to the measure.

In the bill as first introduced there was a characteristic piece of middle class conservatism, a product of Victorian social dogma - that the first charge for the support of invalids be laid on near relatives and
not on the state. Many members, especially in the labour party, rejected the idea of compelling such support. It was to them a community, not a family, responsibility. The clause was altered to require that the relatives declare they did not, rather than could not, adequately maintain the invalid. In other requirements the new act followed the Old Age Pensions Act in laying down fairly stringent qualifications for eligibility. These limits were consistent with the liberalism of the Carruthers-Wade governments and the middle class ethos of moral worth and self improvement they represented. Only the most clear-cut cases of invalidity were to be accepted. Residence (but not moral character) was to be established. Yet the concession of principle was a significant long term gain.

Thus, while busy with much environmental\(^1\) and developmental legislation which undoubtedly improved the lot of the poor, these liberals were unwilling to commit themselves to a coherent philosophy of legislative responsibility for social welfare. Though pushed and pulled into this important and unique, though piecemeal, legislation they remained committed to Victorian social doctrines.

Benevolent societies continued to appear in suburban and country centres.\(^2\) Other community aid societies,

\(^1\) This is discussed briefly in ch.9.

\(^2\) Cp. the tables of operations of Charitable Institutions and Charitable Societies in successive S.R.s.
notably for supplying medical aid and advice, were created. Indeed the period was one in which poverty was attacked largely through medical and environmental improvements - along with the cash benefits of the age and invalid pension scheme. The older societies - Soup Kitchen, Sydney Benevolent Society, Salvation Army, the St Vincent de Paul Society - continued their work. But at the Benevolent Society's Thomas St depot demand was falling off to a few hundred cases a year by 1913.¹

The societies' financial situation improved after about 1905, a trend which lasted to the war, and which seems to have matched the needs of the societies involved. Thus the Benevolent Society noted a rise in subscriptions of £1,146 to £3,882 in 1906.² By 1911 the figure was £6,011.³ The United Charities Fund was begun in 1909. It was a one day of the year collection which was distributed among a wide group of charitable societies. £1,232 was collected in 1909, £2,645 in 1914.⁴ In 1914 the total income of all charitable societies and

¹ A.R. 1913 reported 833 outdoor relief cases, apparently for the whole year. In 1900 791 cases were being handled weekly, on average. Table 6.
² A.R. 1906.
³ A.R. 1911.
⁴ S.R. 1913, p.586.
institutions (government and private) from all sources was about £400,000.\(^1\) To this should be added expenditure on old age and invalid pensions, though by 1914 these were the responsibility of the federal government. In the last year of operations by the State government (1909), these had cost £625,363 in providing for 25,711 people.\(^2\) In 1914 the N.S.W. component of the federal government's expenditure on the two pensions was £976,527 for 39,073 pensions.\(^3\)

The special aspect of poor relief which had come to be identified as 'the unemployed' reached critical levels in 1902-3. Thereafter, as acts for sewerage, water works, and railways were passed at a steady annual pace, the problem receded and agitation disappeared. Industrialization also helped to absorb workers and ensure more permanent employment. The most notable development was the commencement of B.H.P.'s steelworks at Newcastle in 1913. The conservatives' call for reproductive works and the radicals' demand for work in a richly endowed country were both being fulfilled again, as they had been in the 1870s. At the height of the 1903 recession Sir John See had angrily denied that

\(^1\) This excludes £24,000 spent on aborigines, and includes the H.S.F. and the United Charities Fund. It also includes £232,038 from the State, of which £66,217 was spent on the State Hospitals and Asylums. Ibid., 1914-5, pp.480-7.

\(^2\) Kewley, Social Security, p.60.

it was the responsibility of the government to find work for everyone.\(^1\) But this was in a period of scarce capital. As soon as possible his and succeeding governments reverted to the traditional Australian vision of development. The Labour government's emphasis on state owned enterprises was only a special variant on a well established theme. True, employment was by no means 'full' in the modern sense of that term. But when Royal Commissions could report on 'The Alleged shortage of Labour', the conditions of work of female and juvenile labour, and a third on the decline of apprenticeship, all in the same session of 1911, then it is plain that this aspect of caring for the poor was changing rapidly.\(^2\)

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Wages Boards and Arbitration Courts also helped to improve the lot of the 'sub-labourer'.\(^1\) Their wages in the 1880s and 1890s had sunk to perhaps a half or even a third of those of the straight forward heavy manual labourer. These stackers, sweepers, messengers, these 'other general workers', had been living in a world of near subsistence wages which had frequently driven their

\(^1\)\hspace{1em}11 March 1903. Quoted above, p.344, n.2.


\(^3\)\hspace{1em}The phrase is P. Macarthy's. The data and argument to support the assertions made here about this group will be published by him in an article in Historical Studies.
wives to the Benevolent Society. Now they began to be
granted, by court order, wages that started to approach
those of the labourer who received the 'Harvester
Equivalent' of 42s. a week. The gap remained till about
1920, but the margin was being narrowed. As the income
of this group grew the ranks of the poor thinned
appreciably: the group whom Seebohm Rowntree might have
classified as enduring secondary poverty was being
permanently reduced in size.

Nonetheless, there were still those who were
undeniably poor, those who still needed the help of the
charitable. Warnings of the dangers of pauperising
society were still voiced, albeit by the more
conservative. The old prejudices against indiscriminate
charity remained. Probably this generation from 1900 to
1914, for all its self-conscious, energetic, reforming
effort, was realistic enough to recognise these
limitations and to reject the visionary claim that
poverty would soon be abolished. They achieved
appreciable success in dealing with some of the more
acute aspects of poverty. But the poor remained, the
products of temporary or structural, personal or communal
weaknesses. Though more closely tied to the rest of the
community through the enlarged range of services and
controls provided for their assistance, they were a
difficult and exasperating social problem. Too often
their needs continued to be ignored. Slums remained.
Grants were tiny. Legislation was not passed. Requests
were refused. The poor never managed to disappear.
I agreed to hold this office of President for one year, and I expressed my intention of resigning at the end of a year, but before that time elapsed it was apparent to me that the potentialities of the State Children Relief Department in connection with the care of neglected children and waifs of the streets had extended far beyond the mere giving of alms. I withheld my resignation and devoted my energies to extending the functions of the State Children Relief Board and of the Department by means of legislative enactment.


By 1900 a more flexible system of child care and protection had been developed. At the centre was the State Children's Relief Department. It had powers to board children out, and to support needy widows and deserted wives. It controlled several homes and refuges. There were other government institutions and a range of private organisations. Some important regulative legislation had been passed. The social principle that the community had the right and capacity to intervene to protect the welfare of children had received significant recognition.

The period between 1900 and 1914 saw major advances in the care of children. Legislation was passed regulating lying-in homes, all institutions caring for children under the age of seven, the sale of tobacco to

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1 In evidence to Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the State Children's Relief Board, q.603, 31 July 1916; N.S.W.P.P. 1916, vol.2, p.1050.
children, the age of consent, and truancy. Above all, an act establishing Children's Courts was passed in 1905. This act reorganised the whole system governing state children. Legal proceedings concerning children were to be removed from the ordinary jurisdictions. Legal protection was made more readily available to children and parents. Boarding out was extended by the introduction of the system of probation. Virtually all the state's child-control powers and activities were concentrated under the State Children's Relief Department. Its administrative structure grew rapidly. Its new president, Charles Mackellar, undertook a major project aimed at re-educating the community in its attitude towards destitute children. He argued persistently and persuasively that these children needed a coherent but flexible administrative system of help, rather than the implied or actual condemnation of legal proceedings before the local bench of magistrates. That administrative system came to include, not only the children's courts, but also medical examinations for all school children, special medical care for the children of the inner suburbs, and government baby clinics and hospitals for babies. In 1914 the Department was administering five acts, all drafted or amended by Mackellar. Its expenditure for 1914-5 was £134,446. There were 11,492 children under its control, 18 cottage homes, and 129 salaried officers in the Department. Reliance, in caring for children, on the services of public or private

charitable societies had been greatly reduced. Child care was, by 1914, more complex, more technical, more sophisticated, less based on assumptions of moral worth, recognisably modern.

1. Reform through legislation

'A strange apathy has prevailed in this State regarding our waifs and strays, notwithstanding that the need of legislation has been so often and so earnestly urged....'¹

The century began with the passage of Neild's long delayed amendment to the Children's Protection Act. As with the original act, its administration was to be by the State Children's Relief Department. Its inspectors could licence lying-in homes and bring cases of assault of children to the notice of the courts; the State Children's Relief Board was now named as an institution to which children could be committed directly; it could also register privately arranged fostering agreements under more precise controls.²

Two minor but persistent examples of the willingness to legislate for the protection of children were the Juvenile Smoking Suppression Bill and the Crimes (Girls Protection) Bill. Dr Ross introduced the smoking bill in 1900, 1901 and in 1903. Some members repeatedly refused to make children criminals for smoking. Finally

² Act no.52 of 1900, passed in the consolidating legislation of 1902, along with the earlier acts, as no.47 of 1902.
the act as passed provided penalties only for the tobacconists who sold such goods to children under 14. Perhaps it gave the police as well as the Legislative Assembly a little light entertainment. It was not a great act.\(^1\) We first hear of Mackellar's Girls Protection Bill to raise the age of consent from 14 to 17, and to provide more precisely for situations where such consent was proven, in 1903.\(^2\) It was passed, after repeated introductions, in 1910.\(^3\)

A much more significant and self-conscious endeavour was B.R. Wise's State Children's Bill of 1902.\(^4\) As usual with Wise, his second reading speech expounding the bill was thoughtful and informative, emphasising the problems of social administration being faced, the weaknesses in existing law, and the intentions of the bill. The most notable feature of the bill was the provision for a children's court to deal with all children's cases, including criminal offences, paternity cases, assault and neglect, destitution, and power to commit to the State Children's Relief Board. The Board

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1 No.11 of 1903.
3 1905, 1909; 1 Geo. V, no.2.
4 The resolution providing for its introduction described it as one to make better provision for the protection, control, education, and reformation of neglected or uncontrollable children and juvenile offenders; to constitute children's courts; and to provide for the licensing of children offering things for sale. N.S.W.P.D. (2nd series) vol.7, p.2930, 24 September 1902.
in turn was to be given power to transfer all state children to that institution or other form of control thought most suitable for each child. The definition of 'neglected child' was broad, and backed by the provision of a receiving depot to be conducted by the Board to which children could be taken by the police, and from which they were to be brought before the court, within 48 hours. Wise argued that the bill was not particularly unusual, but rather the product of the experience of the State Children's Relief Department and the Prisons Department, who both had frequently urged a centralised, coherent mode of control for the many groups of children already within the cognizance of the law, as well as those who needed to be covered by legislation. Surprisingly, he expressed a preference for the 'family system' over boarding out as well as over 'barracks'. He was able to point to the successful cottages conducted by the State Children's Relief Department at Mittagong. Equally a matter of comment was his stated determination to activate the clauses of the Industrial Schools Act allowing state children to be committed to private (e.g. religious) organisations, while still supported by the state.  

It was a bold assault on a complex social problem, touching on illegitimacy, the support of widows and deserted wives, street trading, and state aid for religion, as well as the more central issues of child care. Wise correctly argued that legislation covering all he

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1 Ibid., p.3353, 15 October 1902.
proposed was already in operation in other colonies, in Great Britain, or (especially with regard to Children's Courts), in certain American States. The bill was worked over carefully in the Council. It was long and complex, and the members were well aware that Wise was introducing a major piece of social regulation. Their progress through its parts was not hasty, and in the end, though it passed the third reading in the Council, it did not progress further than the first reading in the Assembly before the session ended.\(^1\) The issues which drew most fire were perhaps peripheral to Wise's main intentions: the explicit intention to commit state children to private organisations, and his doubts about support for widows and deserted wives by the State Children's Relief Board. MacLaurin and several others opposed the former proposal vigorously, being hostile to 'State Aid' in any form however disguised.\(^2\) Mackellar made it plain, however, that a few children were already being so disposed each year, though without any payment being made for them.\(^3\) In the end sectarian furor made it necessary to withdraw the clause.\(^4\)

On boarding out children to their own mothers Wise fought a losing battle. He wanted to end the practice and leave them to private charity. Others resisted this.

\(^1\) Ibid., vol.8, p.4438, 12 November 1902.
\(^2\) Ibid., p.3654, 22 October 1902.
\(^3\) Ibid., p.3643.
\(^4\) Ibid., pp.3660-5.
The labour members claimed it as a right.\(^1\) MacLaurin and Mackellar supported it on the basis of justice and humanity.\(^2\) To Wise it was:

...saddling the country with the stigma of the poor law. We [the government] do not hold that every person in this country...has a right to go to the Government for support, because he or she is without means. We hold, on the other hand, that it is the duty of the state to supply the wants of those who are honestly in distress, without any fault of their own, and without any power of their own to alleviate it; but we do not hold that merely because a person chooses to say that he or she is in distress it is an insult...to ask them to prove the statement... the greater the facilities you offer indiscriminate charity, the more you will weaken those springs of self respect and enterprise, the encouragement of which is essential to the well being of a nation.\(^3\)

Was this the nephew of G.F. Wise, the son of Judge Wise, echoing the judgements of an earlier generation? If such conservatives as MacLaurin and Mackellar could take the interventionist view, perhaps we have evidence enough to suggest that in this matter at least, Wise was not in sympathy with current social doctrine.

The situation which Renwick recalled, so truly a description of Parkes' methods -

In past times it was not the custom to encourage the dealing with questions of this nature. There being no particular influence attaching to the passing of a measure of this character, the

\(^{1}\) Ibid., p.4374, 12 November 1902.
\(^{2}\) Ibid., p.3670, 22 October 1902.
\(^{3}\) Ibid., p.4376, 12 November 1902.
Government...let these bills pass in a haphazard sort of way.\textsuperscript{1}

- was no longer the case. C.K. Mackellar moved forward with a series of bills for the care of children. The first was the Infant Protection Bill of 1902.\textsuperscript{2} It was, he argued, essential to protect the lives of illegitimate children. He proposed granting the State Children's Relief Board parental powers where children were without support, and the courts power to compel parents to pay for the support of their children, legitimate or not. He subjected the house to a highly alarming analysis of the rate of death in the first year: 287 per 1,000 among illegitimates and 89 among legitimates.\textsuperscript{3} Perhaps he was unwise to introduce such actuarial notions into the Council. Renwick and others professed confusion and doubt, rather than the hoped-for horror. Some claimed that the bill countenanced immorality. It was argued that, like the State Children's Bill, it introduced a degree of state regulation unnecessary for the community.\textsuperscript{4} The bill got no further than the second reading. Mackellar did not hesitate to advocate it outside parliament in his annual reports,\textsuperscript{5} by

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., p.3649, 22 October 1902.
\textsuperscript{2} He had certainly contributed to Wise's bill, but it was not his in the same way as this and several others were.
\textsuperscript{3} N.S.W.P.D. (2nd series) vol.9, p.5081, 4 December 1902.
\textsuperscript{4} Especially Renwick, ibid., p.5348, 11 December 1902.
public addresses and pamphlets,\(^1\) and by deputation to the cabinet.\(^2\) The bill returned to the Council in 1903 and again in 1904. The 1903 bill did not get to the Assembly. That in 1904, this time sponsored by the government, did, and became law. It provided for paternity cases to be initiated before birth by single women, and gave power to the State Children's Relief Board to license and regulate all places where infants were received. It also envisaged the creation of Children's Courts.\(^3\)

This last provision was also contained in the State Children's Bill which was taken up in September 1903, by the Assembly. Despite Carruthers' protests at the 'desire to pass hysterical legislation in regard to child life'\(^4\) this bill got through the second reading. The most telling point made in its favour was Fegan's argument that 'though not punishable by law, it [is] a crime to be poor'.\(^5\) Committal of children in need should no longer be a matter of criminal proceedings, and those to enjoy

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\(^1\) E.g. to the Women's Progress Association, 20 April 1903, then published as a pamphlet, Sydney, 1903; 'Child Life in Sydney', to the Christian Social Union, 19 June 1903, also published, Sydney, 1903.

\(^2\) 27 April 1903, report published with former of pamphlets referred to in previous note.

\(^3\) No.27 of 1904.

\(^4\) N.S.W.P.D. (2nd series) vol.12, p.2390, 15 September 1903.

\(^5\) Ibid., p.2384. Fegan was in charge of the bill in the Assembly.
this protection were still widely defined. But again
time in the house ran out and soon a new government
was in power.

As part of his agitation, and as ammunition to
support the bills he so persistently introduced, Mackellar
was able to cite the report of the Royal Commission into
the Decline of the Birth Rate and the Mortality of
Infants. He had been chairman of the Commission, which
was appointed 13 August 1903.¹ Not only did the
Commission present overwhelming evidence to show that
the birth rate had taken a sharp downward turn between
1886 and 1892, but it argued that this was the product
of moral rather than demographic factors. They pointed
to an increased use of contraceptives and abortions. They
cried out against ill-supervised lying-in homes and infant
care institutions. They criticised public ignorance on
child care and feeding. They wanted an improved
standard of midwifery. They called for a much more
rigorous form of registration for births and deaths,
especially of illegitimate children. They pointed to the
depressing impact of certain literature. They urged the

¹ Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth Rate and the
Mortality of Infants in New South Wales. Report,
N.S.W.P.P. 1904 (2nd session), vol.4, pp.791-957. Other
members of the Commission were Sir Normand MacLaurin, O.
C. Beale (President of the N.S.W. Chamber of Manufacturers),
G.S. Littlejohn (President of the Sydney Chamber of
Commerce), T.A. Coghlan (Government Statistician), Dr J.
Foreman, E.W. Knox (of C.S.R.), T. Hughes (Lord Mayor of
Sydney), W.A. Holman, Dr J. Nash (M.L.C.), Dr R. Paton
(M.O.H. for Sydney), Dr T. Fiaschi, and Edmund Fosbery.
The second volume of the report was not published.
churches to crusade against this as well as against the habit of family limitation. They wanted gastro-enteritis to be a notifiable disease. They called for legislation to strengthen affiliation provisions. They urged that the State Children's Relief Board have power to board both mother and infant. They concluded with a flourish: 'the people - led astray by false and pernicious doctrine... - have neglected...their true duty...bent on gratifying their selfish desires....' They could only see the dissolution of the parental bond and the undermining of the morality of the people, which was to be met by a call to the people to do their patriotic duty.

On the basis of this Report and the addresses Mackellar\(^1\) gave to publicise what he believed to be essential legislative needs, a bill was introduced in the 1904 session similar to the 1903 Infant Protection bill, and this time it was passed with little complaint. Paternity proceedings could now be commenced before birth, and the State Children's Relief Department was made responsible for the inspection and licensing of all places used for the reception of infants. Moreover, the act envisaged the creation of children's courts. Soon after, new regulations under the Children's Protection Act of 1902 were gazetted which extended the executive powers of the State Children's Relief Department (at the expense of the minister) with respect to taking neglected children into custody, and now required the district

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\(^1\) E.g. 'Parental Right and Parental Duty', to the teachers conference, 26 June 1905; Sydney, 1905.
registrars to record all illegitimate births. As Mackellar put it in his address to the Teachers' Conference in June 1905:

Parental right is undoubtedly a sacred thing...but it is limited by...an equally Divine law...that the parent shall be responsible for the protection, maintenance and...education of his child...[the State has the right] to demand that the child shall not, through culpable neglect of the parent or guardian, become a menace to the well-being of the community. 

These were strong words, the arguments of an interventionist, perhaps a Tory, but certainly casting new light on the whole problem of child care once so narrowly defined as charity.

Finally, under the new Carruthers government, and perhaps surprisingly under the direct care of Attorney General Wade, whose later record in matters of social administration have been viewed so darkly, the Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Bill was introduced and passed. It was the direct descendant of Wise's State Children's bill, less ambitious in some respects, more skilfully drawn in others. It met with the support of both Fegan and Mackellar, and was if anything, stronger when passed than when it began. The act defined the

1 S.M.H. 21 February 1905.
2 p.2.
powers of the Children's Court, and provided that children who were neglected and uncontrollable, juvenile offenders, or charged with indictable offences, could all be dealt with by it. It envisaged a wide range of children coming within these three categories, especially through association with vicious and immoral people (e.g. in opium dens). The State Children's Relief Department was given the sole right to seek court action to protect neglected children - a right which was to entail an enormous increase in the department's duties in the next few years. The Children's Courts were able to employ probation as a form of committal under the act - another fruitful concept which quickly expanded, and given general discretion as to the institutions, including the State Children's Relief Board to which they sent the children. The act provided for maintenance payments from near relatives, and for licensing and regulation of children engaged in street selling more precisely than the 1902 Children's Protection Act. The courts were to be as discreet and private as possible, and in every way possible avoid the stigma of police courts and petty sessions. The scheme was one, not of moral condemnation and punishment, but of reformation and protection. There were clauses which emphasised parental responsibility, and enabled the court to enforce it, which answered those critics who believed the act would encourage child desertion and the creation of even more barracks. But when parents failed, the state
now determined that their duties could be enforced or provided for in other ways.¹

It was a strong and comprehensive act, the climax of several years of agitation. It created a new legal jurisdiction and provided for a large increase in the administrative responsibilities of the State Children's Relief Department. It was conceived as legislation not to meet a special and immediate crisis, but to develop a framework of humane, reformative care for a wide range of the community. In the first two months of operation, 55 cases of neglected or uncontrollable children, 213 juvenile offenders and 64 indictable offenses were dealt with, as well as 75 affiliation cases, 12 cases of assault against children and 4 of neglect.² Nonetheless, Mackellar did not hesitate to argue that it needed amendment, along with the other three acts. He listed his proposals in his report for 1907–8.³ The experience of working the four acts was the major dynamic in these proposals. A deliberate administrative review of their working had been undertaken in 1907, which showed that a marked decrease in child trading had been achieved, that children under five were not covered by the act, and that only senior

¹ No.16 of 1905.
² 1 October - 31 December 1905; S.M.H. 18 January 1906.
³ N.S.W.P.P. 1908 (second session), vol.2, pp.731-4.
constables and above could take action under it. But the political situation had clouded. Carruthers' strong lead had gone. Industrial strife dominated Wade's attention in 1908-9. The Labour government which followed had but a precarious hold on power in 1910-11. These were not the years to attempt such legislation as Mackellar hoped for. We shall see how administrative endeavour helped to fill this void, especially through the work of the honorary probation officers and the cottage homes.

Nonetheless Mackellar pressed on in the legislature. This time it was the Private Hospitals bill, introduced in 1906, 1907 and 1908. The aim, finally achieved, was to close the gaps in the law covering lying-in hospitals by requiring medical superintendents and certificated nurses in all such institutions. Abortionists were being beaten back into the darker shades of the community. Some of the more stringent regulations requiring registration of miscarriages and stillbirths were deleted, and the minister was given power to exempt an institution from the act: sops perhaps to the large powerful organisations well established in this field. But the

1 Attorney General and Justice Department, S.B. 'Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act 1905. Workings of and proposed Amendments, 1905-1912', N.S.W. Archives.

2 See especially the 1908 debate in the Legislative Council, N.S.W.P.D. (2nd series) vol.30, p.423ff, 6 August 1908.
regulations imposed by the act were of permanent value in regulating the dark fringes of the medical profession.\footnote{Act no.14 of 1908.}

One final piece of legislation needs notice before we turn to the parallel administrative effort and a further consideration of Mackellar's work. This was the amendment to the Deserted Wives and Children's Act passed in 1913,\footnote{No.9 of 1913.} which - at last - provided that a portion of the earnings of men imprisoned for desertion could be paid towards the upkeep of their families. It was a change that had been long in coming and much talked about. It was only possible when prison methods made it feasible for men to do work for which the government was both able and willing to pay.

The war marks the end of this study, although the problems of caring for the needy in the community were of course not abolished by it. Alongside the endeavours for legislative improvement were the labours of the State Children's Relief Board and its Department, so important in developing the case for those amendments, possessing a wide range of administrative powers which made them a creative force in the field; and filling the gaps left when political fluidity and economic uncertainty made legislation impossible, yet when social change made it both feasible and imperative.
2. The State Children's Relief Board: Administrative application and development of the law

There were spectacular examples of expansion in the State Children's Relief Department between 1900 and 1914 — in the number of children in its care, in the number of institutions conducted, the annual expenditure, the size of staff. How is this growth to be explained? What part was the Department playing in the field of child care? These are the twin questions that require attention.

Already the Board and Department were established as the government's contribution to charitable care for needy children. Together, they were a going concern by 1900, with a recognised capacity for taking on new, if related, responsibilities as the administration of the 1892 Children's Protection Act had shown. This established position is itself an important explanation of the continuing expansion of its work. Children were committed to its care in increasing numbers each year as a simple reflex of the increasing population. But behind this easy statement lies 20 years of successful work. The concept of boarding out, involving community co-operation (of foster parents and volunteer inspectors) with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1915</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>7,101</td>
<td>15,081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>£62,615</td>
<td>£134,446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

government finance and supervision had been proved a workable compromise. It had already proved sufficiently flexible to allow the creation of several cottage homes at Mittagong as well as the girls shelter in Ormond House, all of which attracted extravagant praise. The department's officers, through their association under Maxted with the Department of Charitable Institutions, were responsible for administering 'section ten'. Even by 1900, of the total number of children in the care of the Department and supported by it (3,910), 1,044 were boarded out to their own mothers, while in April 1915, there were 6,612 such children of a total of 11,492.¹ From time to time the President or the Boarding Out Officer expressed concern at what they regarded as sheer outdoor relief. Mackellar argued in his 1903 Report that this support 'has gone far to pauperise a considerable section of the community'.² Under the 1910-6 Labour government this work was expanded by ministerial direction. Such mothers were to receive the maximum weekly allowance, with less restrictions on their eligibility. Mackellar quite frankly revealed in this last annual report that this doubling of the department's expenditure had been heavily criticised by the government.

¹ S.C.R. Board, Report 1900-1, p. 24; V. & P. 1901, vol.3, p.1239ff; and Report, 1914-5 above. The variation between A.W. Green's 15,081 children and the 11,492 is to be explained by the fact that the larger figure included all children the Department supervised; the latter only those it provided financial support for.
His defence was simply that it was the product of a change of policy imposed on his Board and Department by that government. This expansion, though made possible by variation in regulations, was the product of a political decision in response to known social needs.

Throughout this same period of Mackellar's leadership there was a tension in the attitude taken by the department towards its charitable work. Mackellar from time to time was doubtful of the social value of the aid given to widows and deserted wives. He and his department were even less happy at being required to continue to administer the pauper vote, which was even more clearly poor relief. When he took over in 1902, Mackellar had only seen the department as fulfilling these 'eleemosynary' duties, towards which he was little attracted. Yet evidence can be found in his reports to show that the department was conscious of the wide range of social care they dispensed, under whatever limitations and restrictions. It was difficult and frustrating, and yet worthy of all they could do.

The other facet of the dynamic expansion of the work of the department lay explicitly in the re-interpretation of its role which Mackellar developed. Not only did he maintain a vigorous program of legislative action, but he confidently inserted clauses in these bills placing the administrative responsibility for them in the hands of his department. The Board's

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duties, with the passing of the Infant Protection Act of 1904 and the Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act of 1905 became as much reformative and educational as charitable. It was to this work that Mackellar surrendered himself so willingly.\(^1\) In the preservation of infant life and in the protection and reformation of youthful careers he was convinced that the community was benefiting from the work of the State Children's Relief Board. The Department of Public Instruction had charged the inspectors of the State Children's Relief Department\(^2\) with the regulation of truancy. The Neglected Children's Act gave the inspectors powers of regulation and inspection wherever it was believed children were being improperly treated. Probation became a key instrument in the work of the Children's Courts, so that even the

\(^1\) Ibid., p.15. 'Whereas, at the inception of the Department in 1881, the powers of the Board were solely applied in eleemosynary relief, they are at the present time merely an incident compared with the reformative functions exercised...with the expansion of the Board's functions, in educative and reformative functions....I surrendered myself to devoting as much attention as the importance of this social work warranted....'

\(^2\) After 1905, the S.C.R. Department was under the control of the Department of Public Instruction, by the terms of the Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act.
expedient of boarding out could be avoided. With the support of such religious organisations as the St Vincent de Paul Society and many private individuals, there were 1,184 children on probation, and in no way supported by the State in 1915 under the supervision of 300 honorary probation officers.

The instructions given to these officers, and the context of administrative facility within which they worked, is worth closer examination. We can see the reformist foundation of the work, as well as the flexible administrative framework which had been developed. Deriving from the review of the Neglected Children's Act conducted in 1907 came, not only Mackellar's detailed proposals for legislative amendment in his annual report for that year, but a circular to all magistrates outlining the facilities available and the types of children to be sent to them. At Mittagong were several farm homes to which neglected children could

1 Regulations under the Act were published in the Government Gazette 20 October 1905, concerning probation, the industrial schools, street trading, children's shelters, and boarding out of children with their own mothers. Probation differed from boarding out in that the child was released on probation by order of the court, and that the duties of those into whose care such children were committed were legally enforceable. These duties included providing food, clothing, bedding, recreation, school and church attendance and medical care. Nor was there any reference to payment in these regulations on probation.

2 Members of the Society as Honorary Probation Officers were supervising 2,424 boys in 1914. A.R. 1914.

be sent if they needed special medical or other care before being boarded out, and also one for male offenders under 13 needing brief detention. Boys over 13 who had not yet shown criminal tendencies could be sent to the Sobroan. Brush Farm was for longer term committals where criminal behaviour was identifiable. The Industrial School for Girls at Parramatta was for similar girls. The State Children's Relief Board was to receive all state children. ¹ About the same time the 'Instructions to Honorary Probation Officers' were published by the State Children's Relief Board. ² These named the 18 full-time Inspectors and then went on to outline explicitly the philosophy underlying the concept of probation.

...children are not to be treated as criminals and sent to gaol or an institution...but are,...to be regarded rather as the victims of an unfortunate environment and susceptible to kindly and sympathetic interest in their welfare...[It is the aim] to improve home surroundings and home conditions (as the primary cause of children lapsing into crime or vice) - without in the first instance removing the child from the family circle.

The booklet went on from this humane and yet interventionist basis to the facilities available - the probation officers, the Children's Courts (at Paddington, Burwood and Parramatta and at certain country centres),

¹ Circular to all Stipendiary Magistrates, 7 September 1909, in A.G. & J. S.B. 'Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act....'
² As a pamphlet, Sydney, 1909. Copy in ibid.
the shelters for the reception of children in 12
different locations - and the powers of those who could
initiate proceedings under the act for the protection of
children. The child's case could be heard in the
presence of the parents or without them, at the discretion
of the Children's Court. The parents had several legal
duties, for example, maintenance, which the Court could
order and the State Children's Relief Department
enforce. The Court could also direct that various
special conditions be fulfilled, such as membership of
a club, the provision of country employment, the hours of
recreation or of work and so on. Not only were there
the government institutions to which children could be
sent, but other, private organisations were now explicitly
named. It had been Mackellar's view, despite the
secularists' cry, that religion played a significant role
in the reclamation of these children. Wise's similar
declaration had killed the 1901 bill. The State Children's
Relief Board had informally arranged a few committals to
such institutions as the St Vincents Home at Westmead.

1 Thus an officer of the S.C.R. Department or of the
Department of Public Instruction could lay an information
before a J.P., who could issue a summons in respect of
children 5-15 years; senior police constables and above
could apprehend children without warrant, arrange for
their admission to a shelter and for the laying of an
information; parents could apply for orders for their
children to be declared uncontrollable.

Now the practice was publicly recommended, despite the passions it might arouse in political circles.¹

Finally, the pamphlet provided some 'General Facts' and 'Directions'. These emphasised that

...it is not the intention of the Act to commit the child to an institution if there is a practicable alternative....
(2) the reformation of the child is aimed at through the parent - not apart from the parent....
(5) A child should always feel that he is being trusted by the probation officer. If he understands that he is being merely watched very little good will result to him. "Probation" is not "ticket of leave".

It was this organisational pattern through which child care was conducted for the next generation.

Other fields in which the State Children's Relief Department had expanded its duties now included licensing and supervision of street trading and theatre performances by children, duties imposed by the Children's Protection Act and the Neglected Children's Act, as well as the supervision of all children under seven years of age in private or denominational institutions under the Infant's Protection Act. In both cases the social regulation envisaged by Mackellar was

¹ Named were
Church Rescue Home,                  Glebe,
Magdalen Refuge,                        Tempe,
Good Samaritan Refuge,                   Redfern,
Ardill's Rescue Homes,                  Rockdale and Camden,
St Vincent de Paul School,               Westmead,
certain Salvation Army Homes and Roman Catholic convents.
potentially inquisitorial, and in practice yielded to the department that legal oversight Renwick had hoped for.¹

A further area of administrative growth was in extended provision of medical care. Sydney Maxted had found a few mentally defective children living with the old men at the George Street, Parramatta Asylum in 1890.² He had justified the establishment of the Mittagong homes as providing, among other things, the healthy country environment so essential to building up the health of many neglected children. Mackellar carried these themes forward. It was not enough to legislate against maltreatment and neglect of illegitimate infants, or even to raise the standards of medical care in private hospitals by detailed regulation. Positive, educative steps had to be taken. Facilities had to be provided. The Newcastle Asylum for Idiots was recognised by reformers as far from sufficient.³ Accommodation at a farm home at Pennant Hills was provided for such children committed to the care of the State Children's Relief Board in 1906.⁴ Two 'Nursing Children's

³ S.M.H. 8 February 1902, ed., commentary on Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science paper on 'The Education of Weak Minded Children'.
Homes' were also being operated by the department by this time.\textsuperscript{1} The positive work of reformation was developed at Brush Farm, Eastwood, where by 1903 carpentering, tailoring and bootmaking were all being taught as real trades and not merely as profit-raising ventures.\textsuperscript{2} In his report for 1909-10 Mackellar called for a home for children needing ophthalmic care close to the medical care available only in Sydney.\textsuperscript{3} About this time organised visiting of mothers and newborn infants was taken up by the State Children's Relief Department. The Government Medical Officer of Health for Sydney, had begun such a home visitation and education scheme in 1904. The Department provided two additional trained women visitors to extend the scheme into the inner suburbs. These devoted women brought advice and medical care, distributing such pamphlets as 'Baby's First Three Months' or arranging for special facilities where required. This service was further extended in 1913 under the supervision of the Minister and the Director General of Public Health.\textsuperscript{4}

In the Birth Rate Royal Commission report Mackellar had called for steps to protect infants from

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid.
\item C.K. Mackellar, 'Address on State Children's Bill', 20 April 1903.
\item N.S.W.P.P. 1910 (2nd session), vol.1, p.309ff.
\item See also p.421; Director General of Public Health, Report 1913; N.S.W.P.P. 1914-5, vol.4, p.184ff.
\end{enumerate}
gastro-enteritis. By 1912 such protection was a reality. Indeed the department was conducting, with the aid of the Department of Public Health, three homes for mothers with babies,\(^1\) while the Department of Public Health was also conducting the Lady Edeline Hospital for Babies, where medical care was provided, especially for gastro-enteritis.\(^2\)

Part of a concept of total care for the community's needs was being provided largely on the initiative of the administrators involved. To them 'mere charity' was futile. The problem had to be attacked with regulation and publicity, with knowledge and specialised care, with supervision and devotion. All these qualities the State Children's Relief Department under C.K. Mackellar seems to have possessed in large quantity.

Mackellar's long Royal Commission report of 1913 on the treatment of neglected, delinquent and mentally deficient children focused attention on yet another aspect of the problem of child care. The homes at Pennant Hills were one way of doing a little. By 1915 the department also provided mental examination (as well as physical) for all children passing through its shelters. Mackellar's 1913 Royal Commission Report was one of a series of publications produced as pamphlets or

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\(^1\) 'Hillside' at Randwick, 'Shaftesbury' at South Head, 'Cicada' at Croydon. S.C.R. Board, Report 1913-4.
\(^2\) Director General of Public Health, op. cit.
books publicising the task of child care and educating the public in the significance of child care both medical and social.¹

Even at the level of administrative endeavour this expanding, socially conscious work was far from easily achieved. Mackellar frequently made it plain that on the one hand his department had the full support of the Department of the Attorney General and Justice in preparing bills and following them through parliament: on the other, the Department of Public Instruction seemed frequently to have been at loggerheads with this eager, expanding department. Mackellar openly regretted the transfer of his department to Public Instruction under the Neglected Children's Act.² His department were little pleased at being made responsible for truancy regulation.³ Mackellar defended the concept of a Board against control by a political minister and a rigid departmental head, with some degree of independence.⁴ The Public Instruction Department resisted the establishment of the various special cottage homes.⁵

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¹ S.C.R. Board, Report 1914-5, p.61, which also lists these pamphlets.
⁴ The Child, the Law and the State, Sydney, 1907, p.63.
The Public Instruction Department proposed a bill for the abolition of the State Children's Relief Board which got as far as the labour caucus, in 1912.\(^1\) The opening narrative of Mackellar's last report,\(^2\) and the appendix to Green's first\(^3\) show this hostility quite plainly. A select committee of the Legislative Council in 1916 drew even more evidence of this hostility, which ran to secret reports and administrative intractability, despite the discreet denials of Peter Board.\(^4\) Mackellar believed that the Public Instruction Department, already concerned with the conduct of a vast administrative machine, had no capacity to encourage and foster the reformative vision which suffused the State Children's Relief Department. All they did was to resist his proposals or even suggest the creation of State Boarding Schools for thousands of children, that is to develop

\(^1\) N.S.W. Parliamentary Labor Party, Minutes, 12 July 1912. M.L. (Molesworth MSS).
\(^2\) 1913-4.
\(^3\) 1914-5, pp.60-2.
once again the convenience of a large administrative system lacking any heart and humanity.\(^1\)

It is not the intention of this thesis to follow this departmental struggle.\(^2\) What can be noticed is yet another example of the conflict between administrative caution and rationalisation on the one hand and expansive reformers on the other. Not till the establishment of the ministerial Department of Social and Child Welfare in the 1960s could it be said that a new and realistic assessment of child care was again being applied, after a generation of fumbling.

**The role of Sir Charles Kinnaird Mackellar**

The story of child care in this period clearly revolved around C.K. Mackellar. We have noted his explicit determination to develop the potential of the State Children's Relief Board and Department, and set the whole range of child care problems in a framework of coherent legislation. Perhaps he did have a passion for hysterical legislation, as Carruthers suggested, but from motives that were then, and are still, irreproachable. His experience as a doctor, his deep humanitarian concern,

\(^1\) q.q.623ff, 660, 31 July 1916. See also the remarks of Mackellar to L.F. Heydon, Chairman of the Committee, quoted by I. Campbell-Browne, 'Child Welfare in New South Wales, 1881-1925'. Typescript, Department of Social Studies Library, University of Sydney, 1944, pp.23-8. This author appears to quote primary material, but cites no sources. The views quoted are entirely consistent with Mackellar's other statements.

\(^2\) Discussed by Campbell-Browne.
his conservative upper-middle class sense of social service, his political affiliations with men who had never committed themselves to a doctrinaire, if colonial, laissez faire approach to society, these are identifiable pressures leading him more and more deeply into the field. The powers and functioning of the Board and its department were themselves full of potential, if driven and exploited as Mackellar was to show. Indeed it was through the working of the department that he discovered the task and was drawn into the struggle. His obvious administrative capacities, already proven in the fields of medicine and banking, were now devoted to this field of social care till he retired in 1914.

Like Renwick before him, Mackellar appreciated the importance of propaganda. The bills he introduced in parliament were as much educative as remedial, drawing public attention to evils only half known before - be they inefficient midwifery, parental neglect and assault of their children, or the high death rate of illegitimate infants. His annual reports as President continued the tradition of public statement Renwick established, together with a more forceful approach to the political, social and administrative opposition to his recommendations than ever Dr Renwick had attempted. Then there were frequent public addresses, especially in 1903-5, which were published in pamphlet form. To these should be added the pamphlets published by the Board, which by 1915 included 'Probation', 'Delinquent Children' and 'Parental Control', 'Directions to Honorary Probation Officers', 'Juvenile Delinquency' and a series of papers presented to the Inter-State Congress of Social Workers
held at Adelaide in 1909 on 'Child Desertion', 'Boarding Out in New South Wales', and 'Juvenile Delinquency'. Finally, Mackellar was chairman of the 1904 Royal Commission on the Decline in the Birth Rate, and Royal Commissioner on the Treatment of Neglected and Delinquent Children in 1913. Probably there were other occasions on which he put forward his views, but these are enough to establish his industry and his exploitation of the written word.

The views on child care which he put forward have already been illustrated to some degree in the legislative proposals he supported so vigorously. To him the environment in which children were born and reared was the fundamental factor affecting their character and welfare. That environment, moreover, was a malleable complex of familial and social behaviour which could be regulated and improved in many ways. Again and again he criticised the assumption of inherited or inherent criminality in children. They could be reformed, even where mental retardation aggravated bad living conditions. One sort of baleful environment against which he set his face was the large institution where individuality was suppressed and artificial

1 'The Child, the Law and the State' ran to 80 pages, the 1904 Royal Commission report to 55 pages, the 1913 report to 267 pages.
2 'The Child, the Law and the State', p.13.
3 'Parental Right and Parental Responsibility....' especially.
uniformity created. With the exception of the suggested 'State Boarding Schools', the battle against the 'barracks' was largely over. At the legislative level he sought laws to restructure the environment in which many children were reared, and so supported or introduced strong regulative legislation against careless, vicious and deserting parents. He sought supervision of illegitimate births as a specially crucial problem. He gained regulation of lying-in homes, private hospitals, and all private institutions caring for children under the age of seven, as well as increasingly stringent regulations governing the employment of children.

Consistent with his emphasis on a remade environment, at the administrative level he persistently fought for the state to develop the capacity for a wide and flexible range of responses to the needs of deprived children, in order that the appropriate environment be provided for each of them. If they were not inherently criminal, then they should not be punished, but helped and protected. Each child's needs could be met in different ways. For some, probationary oversight was sufficient. For others, boarding out with foster parents, especially in the country - for the therapeutic value of which context he frequently expressed a high regard -
was appropriate. The Children's Courts, the keystone of the administrative system, were to be conducted with this same desire to help and reform uppermost. The child's interest was primary. The role of the family as the true social unit was frequently emphasised. The state, however, had to insist that parental duties be fulfilled. Sometimes, then, children were taken from their parents. Mackellar emphasised the significance of religious training in the upbringing of these children, and did not hesitate to use the facilities of institutions conducted by religious organisations, informally if in no other way. Other children needed the more specialised provisions of cottage homes, medical and hospital care, or in extreme cases, the reformatory farms. For these last there were the

1 'Far removed from the glare and glamour of city life with its thousand and one temptations, its nerve-ruining attractions, its evil associations, its unhealthy excitements, its unsettling influences - all tending to a ruinous precocity in youth all too ready to succumb to them - we place the lads down in the healthy tranquility of rural life;...systematically endeavouring in such wise to eradicate the smartness and cunning and general precocity which town life so quickly imparts, - which colour the lads whole actions in later life and render him so easy a prey to sinister influences; and to substitute for it a gradual healthy moral tone, and a habit of useful and reproductive work, which rural surroundings under proper supervision alone can give....' 'The Child, the Law and the State', p.40. The emphasis on the reformatory power of the country had pervaded the S.C.R. Board's work from the very beginning. Its affinity with R. Ward's 'Australian Legend' is obvious.

2 Most fully expounded in 'Parental Right and Parental Responsibility....'
Parramatta Industrial School and the Carpentarian Reformatory at Eastwood, and the Sobroan, succeeded in 1911 by the State Farm home near Gosford. He urged experimentation with other forms of control, for example, the 'borstal' system. But whatever system was chosen it must meet a precisely defined need. Nor in any of them could reform be hoped for without the exercise of constructive liberty.¹ This meant that even the reformatories were places of useful training.

In other ways his scientific bent showed out. He urged in his 1913 Royal Commission Report and in his final Annual Report that a Children's Council replace the State Children's Relief Board, to be made up of three men and three women, and to include a neurologist and a pediatrician, the two magistrates of the Children's Court, two women, and the Chief Officer of the Department as chairman and responsible to the minister. The magistrates should have psychological and sociological advice available to them. Feeble minded children should be recognised as such, and treated with due regard to their medical state.² The Birth Rate Commission was equally well informed as to demographic, chemical and physical, as well as moral factors in the decline noted.

He sought then, not only administrative flexibility, but the best professional advice. He combined an acute

¹ Ibid.
awareness of the evils in the social habits of the community with both a deep desire to legislate and regulate for their abolition and an equally deep awareness of the significance of the family group and of religious experience as fundamental to any reformative endeavours. Here at last was the voice of an innovator, many sided in his competence and well placed in his power. Here was the interpreter of overseas experience and the critic of local shortcomings. Here was the leader and formulator of social opinion, articulating an approach to the problems of child care on which a generation and more of fruitful labour was to be based.

3. Non-government care for children

The period between 1900 and 1914 was not in any way remarkable for innovations in this field. The work of what could now almost be termed 'old fashioned' charitable institutions continued largely as before. The Children's Protection Act and the Infant's Protection Act brought their activities within the surveillance and regulation of the State Children's Relief Board, which could lay down minimum standards of care and take legal action in cases of mistreatment. This overall supervision by the department represented an important regularisation in a field where public and private institutions continued to proliferate.

During this period, too, the Department of Public Instruction took on new vigour under Peter Board. Compulsory elementary education became a reality. This provided another significant framework within which these
private institutions had to work. It removed one long-standing justification and motive for the provision of charity for children. For example, the 'ragged schools' rapidly became an anomaly, and their sponsors had to seek a new rationale in the 'Boys' Brigade' movement.

The extension of a fully equipped state educational structure represented the development of the bonds of society out into a field where piecemeal charity had reigned supreme for so long. If charity was still to be extended to children, it would have to be for much more specific reasons, and with a much more realistic and significant relationship to community needs - as well as conforming to the newer fashions of care that condemned 'barracks' and praised the family.

We can note briefly that the Roman Catholic Church listed ten institutions in 1900 which cared for infants, children, and teenage girls or boys. There were 588 inmates.¹ In 1914 there were 1,353 in 21 institutions.² The preference of that church for its own institutions, already defined by Archbishop Vaughan and Cardinal Moran, was confirmed and developed. With the spread of religious houses, primary schools with orphanages as the next addition were provided in most, if not all dioceses. From time to time Cardinal Moran called for state aid for these institutions, drawing unfavourable parallels with

¹ S.R. 1900. The figures include those for 1901 for St Anne's Orphans' and Home for Female Blind, Ryde, where the two groups were not distinguished; and from whence no figures were submitted in 1900.
² Including all the inmates of St Anne's Home, Ryde.
the provision made in other states for capitation payments from the government for orphans and other state wards.¹ His cries were ignored. The political price of 'state aid' was too high in this decade.

The other churches also entered the field, a tendency already noticed. They were all actively encouraged by Mackellar, even if he could not finance their work. By 1914 an additional seven institutions were listed in the Statistical Register, caring in that year for a further 237 children. The most ambitious of them were the Presbyterian Burnside Homes for Orphan Children at Parramatta, where 83 children were living at the end of 1914. This project had been financed largely by a gift from Colonel J.B. Burns. It was conducted on the 'cottage home' principle now so much part of doctrinal orthodoxy in child care. The children attended the local public school, as the Department of Public Instruction preferred.² To these we can add both the earlier religious institutions such as the Destitute Children's Asylum and the Ashfield Infants Home. These sheltered another 650 children at the end of 1914 in 10 institutions.³

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¹ E.g. S.M.H. 31 March 1907.
² A.R. 1911.
³ Excluding the Benevolent Asylum, but including the Salvation Army's 'Little Girl's Home' from the Social Workers Guide, 1915.
The Destitute Children's Asylum, privately financed and directed since 1886, was frequently the subject of envious glances from government officials in search of an additional institution to house such projects as a teachers college or a consumptives hospital. In 1904 it was critically reviewed by the Boarding Out Officer and the head of the Department of Charitable Institutions, and bills were drafted for the consideration of cabinet providing for a government takeover. The proposals, resisted by the Society, were dropped during 1906 at Carruthers' direction. The narrative of its last few years of life, with less than 200 children inhabiting its cavernous structure, was dominated by the Superintendent, Coulter. Outings were arranged, Church was attended, school conducted, confirmations held at St Judes, the All Blacks vs. New South Wales Rugby match watched, the dentist greeted to pull 126 teeth on one visit and so on. Occasionally there were ministerial visits with subsequent rumours of expropriation. The end came with the War. On 11 August

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1 The 1904 report is in N.S.W.P.P. 1904 (2nd session), vol. 1, p.173ff, dated 25 November 1904. Carruthers' minute on it, dated 26 May 1906, is with the original papers in C.S.I.L. S.B. 'Randwick Asylum for Destitute Children, 1901-1908'. 5529.

2 Destitute Children's Asylum, 'Daily Register of Events 1907-1916'. Volume in care of Vice Chancellor, University of N.S.W.

3 July 1909, ibid., p.144; Beeby announced the takeover of the building for the Teachers' College, S.M.H. 8 April 1911; in 1914 the T.B. Advisory Board visited the site to report on its potential as a Sanatorium, 'Register', p.495-6, 9 July 1914.
1914 the Society offered part of its buildings to the federal government as a hospital for convalescent soldiers. Over the next 15 months these masters of procrastinating negotiation proceeded their tortuous way - as the 'Register' shows - until finally the State government took over the whole site, funds and all. The labour party, never favourable to the sort of charity provided by the Society, had come to the end of its patience. By the end of 1915 soldiers were training in its paddocks or recuperating in its buildings. The present fruit of that takeover is the Prince of Wales Hospital, still housed in the original stone buildings. So a labour of charity almost exactly spanning the period of this thesis was brought to a close. It had been conceived in the idiom and categories of social action of the 1850s. Its role had been radically redefined in the 1880s, and from then on it had increasingly become a fossil of the charity of an earlier age, propped up by the skill and influence of its Board and the devotion of its Superintendent, as well as the continued willingness of some members of the community to send children to it.

With the opening of its Royal Hospital for Women at Paddington the Benevolent Society was able to redeploy its down-town resources to improve the facilities it provided for the temporary protection of mothers and children, as well as for the outdoor aid it dispensed.  

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1 A.R. 1904.
It continued to act in close co-operation with the State Children's Relief Board, forwarding deserted children to the department at regular intervals. The Thomas Street Home for mothers and children rapidly developed into a hospital for sick children, and for mothers and children. In 1905 376 mothers and 393 children were admitted.\(^1\) Head, night and probationary nurses soon made their appearance.\(^2\) In 1910 the Thomas Street building was developed even further. An asylum for women and children was separated from the 'Renwick Hospital for Infants', the latter being specifically conducted as a hospital.\(^3\) In due course the amalgamation of function implied in the title of this hospital and that of the Ashfield children's home was to be carried out, and another generation of proud and faithful labour conducted by a society which had worked long and energetically for the welfare of the community. Usually, too, it can be said that its methods and concepts were in keeping with the demands of the time, limited as always by the difficulty of existing buildings and its close financial relationship with the government.

\(^1\) A.R. 1905.
\(^2\) B.S. Board minutes, 8 May 1906.
\(^3\) A.R. 1911. It admitted 224 in-patients and 154 outpatients in 1911. The Asylum admitted 370 women and 420 children in the same period.
CHAPTER 9

THE SICK POOR AND PUBLIC HEALTH, 1900-14

This was a critical period for the provision of medical and health services in New South Wales. Problems of need and responsibility were now being identified and discussed, not only in board rooms but also at political meetings, not only in the clubs but also in the labour movement. A wider group of people in the community came to have decided opinions on matters of public health and medicine. When, for nearly ten years, little positive action and much obstruction was the government contribution in these matters, the pent-up, urgent sense of mission about the health of the community possessing some labour men, especially Fred Flowers, begins to make sense. It was, too, a period of rapid technical change. Old methods were being made obsolete more quickly, equipment being discarded or required more frequently. These innovations helped to increase the pressures for change and to assist in the process of redefining need and responsibility. The shifts of opinion and practice, taken together, helped to put a limit on the persistence of decisions made on the basis of sheer political expediency. The idea that medical services were a plaything of political influence became more widely disliked. The growing competence of the government's own medical administrators pointed in the same direction and strengthened that dislike. Health was ceasing to be a matter of individual morality, charitable good will or opportunity for politicking.
By 1914 the whole field of medical care, though not nationalised (and this suggestion was widely canvassed), was dominated by the government. The requirements it made of the hospitals before subsidy, the disposition of its special grants, the wide range of specific services it provided, the environmental regulation it administered in the community, the initiative it took, especially under the leadership of Fred Flowers - all these showed that the health of the community had emerged from the shadow of pauperism. Community, rather than class, standards increasingly came to dominate the decisions of politicians, philanthropists and directors alike. A watershed in social attitudes was being crossed. At different rates and in varying order, yet decisively and significantly, the charitable labours of the nineteenth century for the sick poor became aspects of social concern for the health of the community in the twentieth century.

1. The struggle to provide hospital services, 1900-10

An important development in the provision of medical services for the sick poor came in 1901 when the government informed the hospitals receiving a capitation fee for government patients, that payments would be frozen at a figure equivalent to the current total amount being paid.¹ In 1907 this capitation payment was converted into a fixed figure of £35 per annum on a

¹ Sydney Hospital, A.R. 1901.
stated number of beds. Once the pauper capitation was frozen, and then further transformed into a non-variable bed subsidy, the whole question of government responsibility for finance came to a head. Absolute government support was now not only calculable, but visibly a declining proportion of annual income – in the context of continued public demand for hospital services. The hospitals turned to techniques and expedients by which they could be assured of a larger annual payment from the government. This might be by committing the government to pay for some capital development program, or straight-out pressure for an increase on the annual payment, or variations in the terms of the payment. Or it might be a complicated scheme offering further services in kind, i.e. beds, at a higher rate.

All these techniques were used. The period is a confusing one, full of complicated financial negotiations. Hospitals scrambled for money, and cabinets appeared to make grudging concessions and short term arrangements. In the initial decision of 1901 to refuse to underwrite further unchecked hospital expansion lay the key to the whole subsequent structure of ratios, proportions and totals. Once that ever-elastic annual payment for services rendered was replaced

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Memo by Chairman, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Board, 14 June 1907, reporting meeting, Under Secretary, Dept. of Finance and Trade and Secretary, Prince Alfred Hospital; with 07/18662 in C.S.I.L. S.B. 'Extensions to Prince Alfred Hospital and Financial Subsidies, 1899-1913', 5260.
by a fixed payment, the public hospitals were faced with
the cold realities of hospital finance and hospital
expansion. The role of the government was brought starkly
into the open, and by 1914 largely redefined.

The sheer weight of numbers is a useful guide to
the proportions which the problem of the 'sick poor'
had now taken on. While the number of beds increased by
two thirds, the gross number of patients increased more
sharply: until a rate of 37.9 patients per 1,000 of the
population was reached, as this table¹ shows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of beds</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Patients</th>
<th>Patients per 1000 of pop'n</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>3,391</td>
<td>£182,727</td>
<td>£176,118</td>
<td>33,012</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>4,969</td>
<td>314,348</td>
<td>304,313</td>
<td>54,683</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>5,674</td>
<td>475,197</td>
<td>510,554</td>
<td>60,154</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sydney Hospital

Sydney Hospital managed to operate under the new
scheme of government subsidy with less acute problems than
Prince Alfred Hospital. Like the latter, the older
hospital ran up a growing overdraft. Nonetheless, its
historian could describe the situation in 1910-11, the
product of 15 years development in the new building, in
measured terms of satisfaction:

The entire provisions created for the treatment of
the sick poor have been placed on a solid and
rational foundation, the staff, medical, nursing and
lay, have been increased and fully developed, the

¹ Source: J.B. Trivett, Official Year Book of N.S.W., 1911, p.658; ibid., 1915, pp.476-8.
internal economy in the main has been organised with care, and the general status of the institution has become entirely satisfactory with the exception of the question of financial upkeep, which undoubtedly at the time of writing is the burning problem requiring solution.¹

The sting was in the tail. Still, the pathological department was opened in 1898, an X-ray department was established in 1900, a resident skiagraphist appointed in 1907 and a department of special therapeutics was set up in 1909.² The Nightingale Wing was reorganised in 1895, and extensively rebuilt in 1901 with government finance. The 1857 South Wing was renovated in 1895, as was Moorcliff in 1896 and 1902. The pathological department was housed in a building of its own, paid for by the government. A dispensary was opened at Paddington in 1902, financed out of the income from the shops rented out on the same block. An observation ward was added to the casualty department in 1903. Then another major effort was commenced in 1905 - the demolition of the 1857 South Wing to be replaced by the 'Renwick Pavilion' opened in 1907. The government contributed £14,791 of £24,291 of the first costs.³

Although the hospital's board certainly complained about deficits on recurrent expenditure, and sought

¹ J.F. Watson, op. cit., p.172.
² Ibid., pp.181-2. 'Skiagraphy' was a term used for X-rays.
³ Ibid., pp.173-6.
government aid to offset their overdraft\footnote{E.g., that reported in \textit{A.M.G.} vol.28 (1909); p.56 of December 1908. cf \textit{S.M.H.} 8 January 1909 (ed).} this continuing government capital support, and the integrated fully worked organisation of the hospital which was achieved with these improvements, left the Sydney Hospital board in a less difficult financial and medical position than Prince Alfred Hospital.

The Royal Prince Alfred and Coast Hospitals

The long drawn out story of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital's efforts to get increased government support is fully documented in the Colonial Secretary's In Letters Special Bundle referred to above.\footnote{P.399.} It is the best example available of the type of negotiations conducted, and of the attitudes of the hospital boards and of the government. The latter was no monolith: the Public Service Board, the Department of Works, the Chief Medical Officer, as well as successive cabinets all had different views on hospital finance and government responsibility. The variety of this advice and the persistence of Professor T.P. Anderson Stuart, Chairman of the Prince Alfred Board, assisted by its Secretary, William Epps, meant that negotiations were spun out over more than a decade.

These negotiations began with the hospital's desire to complete its original and very ambitious building plans,
which provided for two further large pavilions to be added to the first series. The See government brought the matter forward, in that period of expansive optimism when E.W. O'Sullivan was Minister for Public Works. After a short series of hearings before the Parliamentary Public Works Committee in 1901, the government agreed to provide the major share of the cost of erecting what were to be called the Queen Victoria Memorial Pavilions.\footnote{1} When these pavilions were completed, the hospital's potential capacity was raised to over 400 beds. Not all were occupied by patients immediately. Some were used to house the nurses to service some of the other new beds, for the original provision of nurses' quarters was now inadequate. Some beds remained empty for want of finance and staff.\footnote{2}

It was a galling situation, especially when the beds currently in use were being used to capacity. In this setting Sir James Graham, a member of the hospital's Board, suggested in March 1905 that 'certain patients'

\footnote{1} Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Report on Extensions to Prince Alfred Hospital. V. & P. 1901, vol.3, p.1345ff. It was on this project that O'Sullivan challenged the master builders to a test of the comparative efficiency of contract and day labour, one pavilion each to be built on the two conflicting principles. After the master builders refused to accept the challenge, the whole project was completed with day labour supervised by the Department of Public Works. B. Mansfield, Australian Democrat, p.195 and 'The State as an Employer: An Early Twentieth Century Discussion', A.J.P.H. vol.3 (1957-8), pp.183-92; also W. Epps 'History of Prince Alfred Hospital', Prince Alfred Hospital Gazette December 1918, p.24.

\footnote{2} Epps, op. cit., p.30.
from the Coast Hospital could be transferred to Prince Alfred - 200 in fact - to fill the empty wards opened the previous year.\(^1\) True, the Coast Hospital was 20-25 years old, and showing signs of its original hasty construction.\(^2\) But Graham's proposal was too closely linked in time to the financial welfare of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital to be seen simply as a piece of charitable goodwill towards the government. Once the proposal was formally made, it became the subject of much discussion and negotiation till the end of 1907.

Ashburton Thompson urged instead transfer of the eye patients at Moorcliff to Prince Alfred, as well as the female venereal patients from Sydney Hospital's old South Wing. This latter proposal was carried out.\(^3\) But to close the Coast Hospital was another matter. Carruthers and his Minister of Public Works (Lee) baulked at a rising repair bill there, and called for a full report from the Public Service Board.\(^4\) The Chief Medical Officer argued, in his submissions to the Board, not only that the Coast was an efficient hospital, but that it was providing medical services just as necessary

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2. Chief Medical Officer, Report on the Coast Hospital, 1903, P.P. 1904 (second session), pp.61-3.
as those at Prince Alfred. He also pointed to the desire of the Prince Alfred Board that the 200 beds to be occupied by patients from the Coast be subsidised, not at the government's proposed figure of £35 a bed, but at £50 a bed. He could not believe that £50 would be a total provision for the cost of maintaining such beds. He predicted that further costs would fall on the government as the hospital found it impossible to conduct its business on this basis. He went on, in the several papers he wrote on the subject, to emphasise that the Coast Hospital was at the complete disposal of the government. There was no need at the Coast for negotiation with honoraries and an independent hospital board. The admission of patients was simple. The government, in closing the Coast Hospital, would be unnecessarily restricting its capacity to fulfil that responsibility towards the sick poor of the community which had been established over the previous 20 years.¹

Epps and Anderson Stuart at Prince Alfred continued to treat the matter as a financial one. Epps scoffed at Ashburton Thompson's warnings about Prince Alfred's financial incapacity - prematurely.² Despite Carruthers' minute on the Public Service Board's report that it 'may

¹ C.M.O. to Public Service Board 13 September 1905; C.M.O., 'Professor Anderson Stuart's Strictures on the Performance of Surgical Operations at the Coast', 25 October 1905, ibid.
² Secretary, Prince Alfred Hospital to Public Service Board, 13 December 1905, ibid.
be carried out as far as practicable, nothing was done. One reason for this inaction was that Carruthers plainly took care not to follow up this ambiguous minute too far. The report on which he minuted contained proposals largely focused on rebuilding at the Coast. But it was scarcely an executive document despite Carruthers' later attempts to make it appear so. He claimed in April 1907 that he had ordered the implementation of the Prince Alfred takeover scheme and regretted the Board had not been informed. Ashburton Thompson was more realistic when he wrote to the Chief Secretary urging that cabinet decide clearly on the Public Service Board proposals, or alternatively, raise the subsidy to Prince Alfred and at Sydney Hospital to £10,500 thus retaining for them that independence which was so important. When the local councils near the Coast Hospital joined forces with those near Prince Alfred to call public meetings of protest against the

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1 11 January 1907, ibid.
2 Public Service Board, Report on Coast Hospital, 10 January 1907, with C.S.I.L. 07/18661, ibid.
3 At the Prince Alfred A.G.M., 17 April 1907, in Prince Alfred Hospital Gazette 28 August 1907.
4 M.A.G. to Chief Secretary, 19 April 1907, C.S.I.L. S.B. 5260.
proposal to close beds at the Coast and transfer patients to Prince Alfred, the scheme was just about dead. ¹

The Prince Alfred authorities tried to keep the matter alive with new proposals ² but Wood, Chief Secretary in the Wade government, minuted that 'I am unable to see the advantages to the government claimed by this proposed transfer [of patients] - on the contrary, the disturbance of the Little Bay Institution suggests serious disadvantages. Inform proposal cannot be entertained'. ³

So the Coast Hospital was to remain, patched up for a few more years, until a firm bold proposal for modernisation was developed. The two city hospitals continued, chronically short of working funds, in their

¹ Botany Council to Dept of Finance and Trade, 7 June 1907; Redfern Council to Premier 16 August 1907; Botany Council to Premier 27 August 1907; all in ibid. Meeting of Botany residents D.T. 28 August 1907:- 'Mr Epps...had not been long speaking [in defence of his hospital's proposal] when he came into conflict with Alderman W.D. Stephen, and at a later stage with Alderman Isaacs (Redfern)...and for several minutes there was great uproar. Finally it was decided to make the question an election cry, and to insist upon a reply from the Premier prior to polling day'.

² Secretary, Prince Alfred Hospital to Premier, 28 June 1907 in C.S.I.L. S.B. 5260; Anderson Stuart in S.M.H. 7 August 1907 (interview); Epps to S.M.H. 14 August 1907; Editorial in Prince Alfred Hospital Gazette 23 August 1907; Secretary, Prince Alfred Hospital to Chief Secretary, 10 October 1907 in C.S.I.L. S.B. 5260.

³ Minute of 3 December 1907 on C.S.I.L. 07/18661, ibid.
efforts to manoeuvre the government into granting them more money. In response to these pressures Wood announced that the limit on subsidy had been raised from £10,500 to £15,000 for both hospitals. He also pointed out that the government would be paying over £33,000 to the two hospitals in 1908-9, compared with the two hospitals' total expenditure of about £50,000 in 1909. To him the inference was that the community, not the government, should give more. The Telegraph, the Evening News and Sir Joseph Carruthers all disagreed, calling on the government to give more. The Herald supported Wood's case for greater charitable effort. The Australasian Medical Gazette rightly pointed to the crucial issues of this long discussion of hospital finance. The government would have to face up to increased costs in the conduct of the hospitals in the light of scientific and social changes. The editor could have had in mind pathology labs, X-ray machines, improved laundries, as well as successful pressure for

1 Secretary, Prince Alfred Hospital to Chief Secretary, 9 December 1907, C.S.I.L. 07/8673, ibid.; Epps and Graham interview with Chief Secretary, 7 May 1908, ibid., Deputation Sydney Hospital to Chief Secretary, December 1908, reported in A.M.G. vol.28 (1909), p.56.
2 S.M.H. 15 January 1909.
increased wages from the newly formed hospital unions, and the rising numbers of nurses (along with the necessary accommodation) which were now required. Growth and improvement were becoming recognised as built-in factors forcing regular increases in expenditure. The argument over the Coast Hospital proposal was a long drawn out attempt by the government to ignore this problem. Absolute limits increasingly made little sense, and only stored up difficulty for the future.

The other critical issue to which the A.M.G. pointed was the absence of the philanthropic public. Where were they? Had such squabbles over funds deterred them from giving? Were the continued warnings of hospital abuse drying up the wells of charity? Was government aid being accepted as an alternative, absolving the private donor of responsibility? Perhaps the A.M.G. had missed the significance of the emphasis on growth. Regular philanthropy certainly had not declined in any dramatic absolute sense. But it was rapidly being left behind by rising costs. Special efforts to tap new sources of income were made. Prince Alfred's 'All Nations Fair' at the Sydney Town Hall in April 1911 raised £7,000.1 But the concept of the public hospitals being financed by public donations backed by government subscriptions was made untenable as much by the changing scientific and social setting as by any form of 'hospital abuse'.

Until a generous and immediate government response was made, and beyond that, until closer regular support

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1 Epps, op. cit., p.30.
for the hospitals was devised, the larger public hospitals continued to exist in a chronic state of financial strain and editorial thunder. The Herald argued that 'no government has yet seen fit to give systematic attention to the hospital question, although the payment of subsidies aggregate a very considerable sum annually' while Epps wrote dramatically to the Chief Secretary on the same day that '....the whole Institution is in a state of tension which is not only highly detrimental to the patients, and seriously impairing the health of the nursing and resident medical staffs, but is rapidly affecting the morale and discipline of the Institution....'

2. Supporting services and controls

If the financing of the two public hospitals occupied the centre of the stage, there were none the less other ways in which care for the sick poor received detailed and in some respects, fruitful, attention.

There was a continuing and still diversifying record of medical good works, reaching from the work of country hospitals to the establishment of 'baby cliniques'.

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1 S.M.H. 9 February 1910, 7 April 1910, editorials commenting on the annual meetings of the two public hospitals, at both of which deficits were announced.
2 20 June 1910.
Secondly there was a considerable amount of public discussion and some legislation in areas of environmental health. Although this field has not been a central focus of this thesis, its relationship to the needs of the sick poor became important in this period. Public discussion was conducted not only with the aim or making the state a nicer place to live in for the upper middle class merchants and professional people; it was also aimed at improving the standard of life of the less fortunate members of the community. While improving the environment for all, the reformers were particularly concerned with the welfare of those whose resources were so meagre as to expose them to the worst effects of an unregulated milieu.

Medical good works

In country towns, the work focused on the local hospital. In Sydney more specialised societies could develop, some of which reached out to country centres. The persistent themes of economy and of government support remained. This was not a specially adventuresome period, and yet several new organisations were created. Special efforts for special needs still attracted attention. The government was still only a silent subscriber, or organiser of one or two special functions. Generalised community wide provisions were slow in coming: the old age pension was the first step.

The labours of country hospital boards largely centred on getting money, especially from the government. The local member was still an important instrument in
this work, for that lack of administrative principle so long lamented, only meant that politicians continued to believe that political advantage could be wrung from the distribution of funds to the country hospitals. Sometimes the exchanges were in public:

Richard Sleath (Broken Hill): ...The Colonial Secretary has told us that a sum of £4,000 was voted for the erection of a hospital at Maitland. Why is not the same treatment extended to every other town in the colony.

John See (Premier): So it is as far as I know.

Sleath: It is not.

See: I gave my hon. friend a vote for his hospital.

Sleath: The hon. gentleman did nothing of the sort. When a hospital was required in the district I have the honour to represent he told me that all the district could receive was a subsidy pound for pound.

See: There was a sum of £750....

Sleath: I admit there have been from time to time small amounts granted to different hospitals.

See: I believe there is a special grant on the estimates now for the hon. gentleman's hospital....

Sleath: What I want to know is, how much am I going to get of that £9,000.

See: ....£500.

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R.C.P.C. 1897-9, Third Report, p.481: 'In the absence of any complete system of local government, the maintenance and care of the sick poor fall directly on the State, and hitherto the Government of New South Wales has not dealt with this question on any definite principle'.
Sleath: I want a bit more than that.

See: The best thing I can suggest is that hon. members should divide it among themselves.¹

The Chief Medical Officer continued to seek tighter control of these funds.² The requirements for subsidy listed in 1903 were that the matron must be registered by the Australasian Trained Nurses Association, other nurses to be approved by the Chief Medical Officer, details of dietary, finances, number and size of wards, employees, and patients treated to be forwarded annually.³ Dr Ashburton Thompson was well aware that these requirements could be avoided.⁴ He hoped for the establishment of a statutory limit on the annual hospital vote and the creation of a board of hospital commissioners to control its annual size and distribution, and to exercise full supervision over plans for extensions, new buildings, admission policy, recognition of hospitals

¹ Debate on second reading of Maitland Hospital Enabling bill, 10 October 1901, N.S.W.P.D. (second series), vol.3, pp.2272-3. In 1902-3 Broken Hill Hospital gained £1,000 of £6,000 special grants to country hospitals. The remaining £5,000 was divided among 53 other institutions. V. & P. 1903, vol.4, p.1159.

² Circular, Colonial Secretary to all hospitals, 14 May 1901, based on C.M.O. to P.U.S., 22 April 1901. It required evidence that nurses, matrons and wardsmen were all trained in recognised training hospitals as a condition of government subsidy. Department of Public Health Book of Forms and Precedents, p.58; Archives Shelf List no.5852.

³ Circular 9 December 1903, ibid., p.69.

⁴ President, Board of Health to Col. Sec., 19 July 1905, ibid., p.78.
for subsidy, and the requirements for the appointment of staff. This was a predictable suggestion from an administrator eager to take health out of politics, and less concerned than the politicians for local advantage and amour propre. The Hospital Commission of N.S.W., clothed with these powers and more, was not established till 1948.1

The friendly societies were beginning to branch out into dispensary work. This not only involved them in continuing argument with the medical profession, but illustrated the short term, political quality of the government's financial support to them. Thus the United Friendly Societies could report 7,087 members in 1899, with dispensaries at Sydney, Redfern and in the Eastern suburbs.2 The doctors continued to protest at sweating which they claimed was being exploited by 'the most highly placed in the community'.3 A £200 wage limit was proposed. There was much correspondence in the A.M.G. in following months. Of course the work of the Sydney Hospital's Redfern and Paddington dispensaries was not criticised by the doctors. These were allowed to be charities. There was no danger of competition with

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1 The debate continues: compare the even more radical and yet entirely historical proposals of the Starr Committee in 1965; Report of the Hospital Services Committee, N.S.W.P.P. 1965 (second session), no.41.

2 S.M.H. 30 January 1900.

3 'General Meeting of the Medical Profession', (P. Sydney Jones chairman), 31 August 1900. A.M.G. vol.19 (1900), pp.391-2.
their private practices from the people who went there. But with 'the clubs' the doctors remained at daggers drawn. The A.M.G. reported the highlights from time to time as 'The Battle of the Clubs'. Like so many other issues it was to reach some degree of finality under the Labour government.

In another direction the dispensary movement found difficulties. Capital to erect their premises was a heavy drain on their funds. Naturally the societies turned to the government. From 1900 to 1909 £9,300 was granted for this purpose, in sums from £300 to £2,000. The struggle to get a share of this money was essentially a political one, with deputations, correspondence, and

1 Repeatedly in issues for 1904.
procrastination the instruments. Carruthers was particularly interested in showing support to these symbols of self help and righteousness.

Another way in which the government chose to share the burden of medical care in the community with the friendly societies was by means of subventions for

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See generally, C.S.I.L. S.B. 'Grants for Friendly Society Dispensaries, 1902-6'. 5350.2. As an illustration, compare the experience of the Marrickville United Friendly Society. It had the local M.L.A. seek £500, 25 October 1906. A deputation of three M.L.As. met the Premier 1 March 1907. £750 went on the estimates, 19 August 1907. It was voted on 22 August 1907. Another deputation sought funds on 10 March 1908. A request for £500 was made by a deputation on 31 May 1910, and another on 7 December 1910 (to the new government). The Chief Secretary's reply on 31 May 1910 is a masterpiece of conciliation and evasion.

he heartily sympathised with the good work...of friendly societies generally...[it was] a difficult [request]...in view of the...£750 [already given]. In dealing with their position he had to have regard for what had been done and what was possible in the case of kindred societies that also required assistance and whose representatives would be found ready to criticise his action in regard to Marrickville...he had no doubt he would be able to advise his colleagues to put on a further grant for them - somewhere about £500. If it was possible for him to do that he would be glad to do it. He had every sympathy with friendly societies' members because they were at least doing something towards helping themselves and stood in quite a different category from those people who refused to join friendly societies and were always grumbling that the government should be doing something for them.
payments on account of long term illnesses of members. Promised as an offset to the critics of the Invalid Pensions Act of 1907 (who claimed these pensions undermined individual morality and pride), it emerged as an act closely linked with this larger measure. It cost the government £14,787 in 1909-10 for payments to the societies in respect of 1,645 invalid members. It ensured that the friendly societies would possess a long term vested interest in supporting a state backed system of voluntary medical insurance. The differences in style between this unique act and the current (1966) Commonwealth system are those of size and technique, rather than basic assumption. In the immediate future the system of co-operation with the societies was to receive a searching examination.

Alongside earlier specialised efforts at medical charity such as the Surgical Aid Society (founded in 1898) others could now be discerned. The Sydney Medical Mission was begun by Dr and Mrs Hugh Dixson in 1900. Taking its name and concept from similar endeavours at evangelism and social service in England, the Mission's

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2 Below, pp.451-3.
clinic struggled on as a ray of light in the Surry Hills district, at least till the war.¹

Then there was the District Nursing Association, which similarly derived from the current theological emphasis on the social gospel. It was originally the Church of England District Nursing Association, begun by the Church Social Union.² Nurse Mann was appointed to the Redfern and Alexandria districts in September 1899. Her task was to provide nursing for the sick poor in their own homes. She reported 437 visits in her first year's work.³ The General Committee attracted the support of senior anglican clergy, leading social figures,⁴ and many doctors.⁵ The specifically anglican title had disappeared by the second annual report. By 1907 it boasted five nurses, working in such 'poorer districts' as Redfern, Alexandria, Chippendale, Waterloo, Ultimo, Woolloomooloo, Surry Hills, Miller's Point and Newtown.⁶

² For which, in its context, see J.D. Bollen, 'Protestant Churches and the Social Reform Movement in N.S.W.', ch.7, 'Towards a social Christianity, 1900-10'.
³ A.R., 22 November 1900.
⁴ E.g. Lady Darley, Lady Lyne, Lady Harris.
⁵ E.g. Camac Wilkinson, Bickerton Blackburn, Rundle, Mary Booth, Agnes Bennet.
⁶ District Nursing Association, Souvenir [?1907].
The ambulance brigades - St John's and Civil - both founded in the previous decade, worked out a modus vivendi, by which the ambulance work was conducted by the 'Civil Ambulance and Transport Corps of the St John Ambulance Brigade'.\(^1\) In 1903 2,473 cases were attended, of whom 1,936 were conveyed to hospitals. They were not listed as receiving government subsidy in that year, nor did they till £100 was paid in 1914.\(^2\)

Another auxiliary medical charity was the Bush Nursing Association. The movement was developed in Victoria in 1910 as a memorial to Edward VII. Lady Dudley, wife of the Governor General, sought to introduce the movement into N.S.W. It was slow to catch public attention, despite the vigorous support of the newspapers. Commonwealth and State government support was sought for a comprehensive scheme to provide nursing aid all over the state. In the upshot a much less ambitious scheme was launched in 1911. Four nurses were appointed and £2,554 raised in the year.\(^3\) It was to be the guide for a wider, government supported, scheme under the Department of Public Health. This was probably its most important function.

\(^1\) S.R. 1903, p.890.
\(^2\) In that year £2,115 was received in subscriptions, £1,449 in fees, and 3,704 cases were attended to. S.R. 1914, 484.
\(^3\) S.R. 1911, p.541. See also C.S.I.L. 13/1130 and enclosures.
The list of specialised medical charities had long since included the children's hospital and the lying-in hospital which the Benevolent Society operated. Consistent with the efforts at social and technical improvement which we have noted in these early years of the new century were the construction of new, and still occupied (1966), hospital buildings for both organisations. The children's hospital moved to its present Camperdown site, changed its name to the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, and by 1915 had raised its capacity to 151 beds.\(^1\) Similarly, the long process of replacing the old lying-in hospital was climaxed with the opening of the Royal Hospital for Women, Paddington, in 1903. There was never any doubt that it was a hospital, with full medical and surgical facilities. The care of women had at last emerged — at least in Sydney, if not all over the State — from the field of general poor relief, to that of specialised medical care. Like other hospital boards, the Benevolent Society's struggled to get the fullest subsidy support from the government while keeping pace with technical change and social growth.\(^2\) There were 245 maternity admissions in 1902.\(^3\) By 1914 the

\(^{1}\) S.R. 1915, p.286.

\(^{2}\) E.g. Board minutes 30 March 1914. The capital for the erection of the new hospital came largely from the compensation granted to the Society by the government for resuming the old Pitt Street asylum as part of the site of the Sydney Railway Station.

\(^{3}\) A.R. 1902.
volume of activity had risen sharply. By 1905 the hospital was offering outdoor consultation facilities for mothers and babies. The scheme proved very popular. Appointments of fully trained nursing sisters and nurses were also made to staff the hospital's departments. The task of conducting this large hospital quickly came to dominate the work of the Society. What had begun as an embarrassing and unwanted addition to the task of caring for the poor had, by 1914, taken pride of place in its activities.

Another source of medical aid was supplied, from 1904 onwards, by the Sydney Medical Officer of Health, Dr Armstrong. Based on his offices at the Town Hall, a woman sanitary inspector visited mothers in the City of Sydney, with advice on feeding and care of their children. Another inspector was appointed for the suburbs in 1909 and a third in 1912. It was a pioneering venture, the stimulus for the Benevolent Society's 'consultations', and for the Department of Health's 'baby creches'. It is properly regarded as the beginning of Baby Health Centres in N.S.W.

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<td>Indoor admissions:</td>
<td>2,697 women, 1,282 children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home obstetric cases:</td>
<td>426 (and 433 children)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor gynaecological cases:</td>
<td>1,419</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor pre-maternity cases:</td>
<td>583</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 E.g. Board minutes, 8 May 1906.
Sad but socially necessary institutions developed in the decade were the St Vincent's Hospice for the Dying, an addendum to the hospital opened in 1901\(^1\) and the N.S.W. Home for Incurables at Ryde. The latter, in its establishment (1905), gathered in the 'Commonwealth Home for Destitute Invalids Redfern'.\(^2\) The Home was in operation by 1908,\(^3\) having received possession of Henry Moses' property at Ryde for half its valuation of £6,900.\(^4\) The establishment of these institutions reflects willingness in the community to provide facilities other than the government asylums for such people. Perhaps their inmates were drawn, as is certainly the case two generations later, from less destitute sections of the community unwilling to be associated with the government asylums. Like the asylums, they provided a further small easing of the demands made on the public hospitals.

The government asylums themselves saw little change in the decade 1900-10. Rookwood was developed as an alternative to the Parramatta asylums which, however,

\(^1\) S.M.H. 25 October 1901.
\(^2\) Which made its first appearance in S.R. in 1903, p.884, with a total of 16 patients.
\(^3\) S.R. 1908, p.917.
\(^4\) S.M.H. 21 June 1906.
remained in operation for more healthy patients. Criticisms of conditions by the member for Parramatta (Kelly) in the Legislative Assembly drew an inquiry in 1903 which pointed to an acute shortage of trained staff, and, as always, evidence of tactless, insensitive

1 G.H. Reid visited the George Street Asylum as Premier in 1899, and ordered more pavilions be built at Rookwood. S.M.H. 6 July 1899 (ed). As with Newington, I visited Lidcombe State Hospital in 1964. The attendants were wearing neat jackets and blue trousers. Ambulances moved quietly about the roads. The whole area was full of busy activity. There was little sense of decline in this institution. The original complex was readily identified on either side of the bowling green: wards with monogrammed glass doors 'RBR', i.e. Rookwood Boys Reformatory, the matron's house (now her office), the kitchens (now derelict), the dining room (much extended). As in any home for the aged there were old people sitting about in dressing gowns or cardigans talking, playing or resting in lonely silence. Trucks from Commonwealth Industrial Gases and from the local council added to the scene. There are 1,500 or 1,600 inmates now, about 800 bedridden. There are specialists in psychiatry. Normal surgery on 700 cases annually is carried out. Twenty two honoraries are on the staff. There is an institute of medical pathology and medical research (the descendant of Dr Tidswell's Microbiological Department). The Government Analyst has recently moved to the site. So has the Department of Industrial Medicine. There are wards for the chronically ill, for T.B. sufferers and for acute cases. There are protected workshops and a fine therapeutic rehabilitation centre with staff of 15. There is a day hospital unit and an active group seeking to cure alcoholics. The Superintendent rightly calls it a medical township. He aims to give all who desire it interesting and remunerative employment. Workhouse, poorhouse it might still be to some: but at last with a new look, a new assessment of the worth and capacity of the men living there.
orderlies, as well as certain structural defects. ¹ Sir John See made it plain in the debate on the tabling of the report arising from this inquiry that he was unwilling to accept the proposition that the old people were entitled to anything more than 'the necessaries of life'. ² It was an understandable defence from a government hard pressed for funds, and evidence of the continuing strength of that morally structured laissez faire approach to poverty and old age which had been dominant for most of the nineteenth century, even if now it was being called into question.

But continued criticisms of the provision made at Liverpool for one specially helpless group, consumptives, notably by the executive of the Queen Victoria Homes for Consumptives, pushed the Carruthers government into positive commitment. It was decided in 1906 to erect an asylum specifically to care for these cases at Waterfall. ³

Yet another inquiry, ⁴ this time into the administration of the Liverpool Asylum, while it vindicated the staff there, highlighted weaknesses in the

¹ N.S.W.P.D. (second series), vol.10, p.871, 21 July 1903; vol.18, pp.3541ff, 22 October 1903.
² Ibid., p.3546 (22 October).
⁴ In 1908, by the Public Service Board, C.S.I.L. S.B. 'Liverpool Asylum Investigation, 1908', 4/970-2, for the evidence, and Public Service Board files, box B 21, for the report, which carries the C.S.I.L. registration no. 08/4052.
Charities Department. As a result the government agreed to the Public Service Board's proposal that a doctor control the department. Brodie was transferred to the Treasury and Dr Paton appointed in his place, as Medical Inspector of Charities. It cost more, but community opinion required that the government devote more expert resources to the supervision of its Charitable Institutions.

As for the population of the asylums, it was, as Sydney Maxted had correctly predicted, not affected dramatically by the granting of old age pensions. In 1908 the Inspector General of Charities could note that after the first exodus of inmates eager to enjoy the freedom the pension promised, many returned 'who stated they were more comfortable in the Asylums, where they could obtain medical attention when sick, and also small cash gratuities when they worked'. It was cheaper for the government, too. It only cost £18 per annum for each inmate in the asylums. Pensions cost £26 per annum. But the long term effect was different: 2,448 inmates in 1890, 4,125 in 1900, 4,428 in 1905, 3,750 in 1908.

Fewer purely destitute old people were entering them as the pension came to provide a secure income which, however small, protected them from the final collapse into poverty and sickness which had forced the issue for so many of their predecessors.

1 Ibid., report and enclosures.
2 Inspector General of Charities to Chief Secretary, 18 March 1908, C.S.I.L. 08/3903, in S.B. 4/970.
Foremost of the themes of this sort receiving attention was the regulation and control of tuberculosis. The Queen Victoria Fund expanded its operations with the purchase of land for another home, at Wentworth Falls, in 1901.\(^1\) The government's failure to provide hospital facilities for T.B. sufferers was criticised by Nash and MacLaurin in the Legislative Council in August 1901.\(^2\) An association led by doctors to combat the disease was established at a large meeting in the Town Hall in September 1901.\(^3\) Pressure was put on the government to provide, in particular, a hospital for advanced sufferers, and to make the disease notifiable.\(^4\) Its officers were reported to be investigating sites west of Sydney in 1905\(^6\) and to the south a year later.\(^7\) As has just been noted, the result was the establishment of the State Hospital for Consumptives at Waterfall, which at last allowed the removal of these cases from Liverpool and Rookwood Asylums and Sydney Hospital. By 1911 209

\(^1\) S.M.H. 28 September 1901 (A.G.M.).
\(^2\) N.S.W.P.D. (second series), vol.1, p.887, 29 August 1901.
\(^3\) S.M.H. 1 October 1901.
\(^4\) S.M.H. 17 May 1902, deputation to Treasurer.
\(^5\) Board of Health, minutes 25 October 1904.
\(^6\) S.M.H. 8 June 1905.
\(^7\) S.M.H. 30 June 1906.
No. 36 Owen Street (rear), The Rocks, 1900.
hospital and 63 convalescent cases were being cared for there.\textsuperscript{1} It could at least be said that there was reasonable hospital accommodation for these sufferers. A bill to make notification of the disease to local government authorities compulsory was introduced in the Legislative Council late in the 1910 session.\textsuperscript{2} It remained, another social problem to be dealt with by the next government.

In the same way attempts were made from time to time to regulate venereal disease. The Admiral on the Sydney Station complained in 1906 of its effects on his command. Bills were prepared in 1906, 1907 and 1908. The matter was raised again by C.K. Mackellar in 1911 in the Legislative Council\textsuperscript{3} but he achieved little. It was referred to a Select Committee in 1916 and then a Federal Government Royal Commission, when allegations about returning soldiers began to be bandied about.\textsuperscript{4} It was a problem of social health and social morality which remained unsolved throughout the whole period of this study.

The Board of Health, the Department of Health and the Medical Adviser to the Government had already

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} Inspector General of Metropolitan Hospitals and Charities to Chief Secretary, 27 December 1911, C.S.I.L. 11/5503.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} N.S.W.P.D. (second series), vol.37, p.925, 20 July 1910.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} Ibid., vol.41, p.1328, 6 June 1911.
  \item \textsuperscript{4} C.S.I.L. S.B. "Control and Prevention of Venereal Disease, 1906-16", 5300.
\end{itemize}
accumulated useful powers of inspection and regulation. The work of the Metropolitan Combined Health District Medical Officer of Health, first appointed in 1899, became increasingly important in providing objective information on the health hazards of the city and suburbs. The Water, Sewer and Drainage Board moved forward in its main sewer schemes, and in maintaining standards of purity in the water. The plague outbreak of 1900–1 pushed Lyne's government to most energetic steps: resumption, cleansing, destruction, quarantine, research. The community was learning that not only was a greater vigour needed, but that it was possible. The slum areas of Ultimo, Chippendale, The Rocks and the Riley Estate, for instance, were drastically altered by resumption and rebuilding. The Medical Officer of Health for the Metropolitan Combined District called attention to the Ultimo area in 1900:

1 Various specific public works acts were passed authorising extensions of this kind, re Wollongong (1900), Manly (1902), Newcastle (1902), Parramatta (1905), Sydney Conduit (1905), Country Towns (1905), Hunter River (1906), Illawarra (1906), Drummoyne (1906), Wallsend (1906), Broken Hill (1906), Lithgow (1909), Grafton and eight others (1910).

2 C.M.O., Report on...the Plague in Sydney 1900, V. & P. 1900, vol.3, p.1235ff; M.O.H. Metropolitan Combined District, A.R. 1900. Plate VI is of a house in the Rocks area, most of which was resumed during this crisis. The photo is from a collection of 500 taken of the process of cleansing the area, and illustrates the worst (?) surviving housing in 1900.
The dwellings were generally ill constructed, and many of them in a dilapidated and even ruinous condition, without proper ventilation, and often very damp from constructive defects and the want of repairs... Old fashioned sewers discharging into the waters of Blackwattle Bay served and still serve the district... Cesspool gullies and untrapped yards were common. A few houses were unconnected with the sewer at all, and were served by filthy cesspits. Finally, much of the area is liable to flooding in heavy rainstorms.¹

Housing as a social and medical problem received increasing attention: The Rocks resumption was the most dramatic example, costing £2,500,000.²

The City Health Officer's staff grew, as did his reports on inadequate houses. Parts of Ultimo and the Wexford Street area were resumed in 1905 at a cost of £250,000.³ The highest hopes for a better city found their expression in the 1908 Royal Commission on the Improvement of the City of Sydney and Suburbs, which proved to be more visionary than practicable.⁴ Slum clearance and building improvement had become a matter of public concern and action. The dirtiest parts of the city were removed. The long process of continuous environmental improvement had received a very considerable impetus.

¹ A.R. 1900.
² S.M.H. 7 May 1900 (ed).
³ Act no. 39 of 1905. The Wexford Street area is now Wentworth Avenue and its surrounds.
Other aspects of social medicine to receive legislative and administrative attention were the removal of the Abattoirs from Glebe Island, the health of children, the regulation of private hospitals, and the licensing of nurses. We have already noticed C.K. Mackellar's persistent efforts to have nurses licensed and private hospitals registered as part of his campaign for the protection of children. He finally prevailed over his laissez faire opponents in 1908. The powers of regulation and inspection granted to the Board of Health over private hospitals were extensive and important, for they represented the inclusion of a field of medical service within the overall supervision

1 The abattoir story moved forward a little when a proposal was referred to the Public Works Committee in 1900, V. & P. 1902, vol.2, p.1123ff. In 1903 a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly was appointed, V. & P. 1903, vol.3, p.665ff. A bill - providing for closure of the Glebe Island Abattoirs, erection of abattoirs at Homebush, inspection of all meat killed within, brought into, or exported from the metropolitan area, abolition of private slaughtering, erection of cold stores and markets - was prepared by the Board of Health in 1904 (minute 17 January 1905) and considered by the City Council (ibid., 2 May 1905). A Sydney Abattoir Construction bill was introduced late in the 1906 session (second reading 15 December 1906, N.S.W.P.D. (second series), vol.25, p.4955). It was passed as no. 58 of 1906. After another Select Committee in 1911, N.S.W.P.P. 1911-12, vol.1, p.359ff, the abattoirs and cold stores opened in 1912, under the control of the Meat Industry and Abattoirs Board, whose first report (1912-13) appeared in N.S.W.P.P. 1913, vol.1, p.211ff.

2 See ch.8.
of the government. It was the closure of an important gap in the regulation of community activity, another recognition of its interdependence.\(^1\)

The most complex of these regulatory acts was the Pure Foods Act of 1908.\(^2\) The Board of Health had several times suggested a comprehensive measure.\(^3\) In 1907 a Pure Foods bill was introduced into the Assembly, but not proceeded with. After further revision by the Board of Health\(^4\) it was introduced again in 1908.\(^5\) The act provided for an advisory committee chaired by the Chief Medical Officer with representatives of consumers and manufacturers. The Board of Health was given statutory powers to determine on the advice of this committee standards to be reached in both ordinary and proprietary foods. Advertising was to be controlled, and the public statement of contents required in certain cases. The attitude held by H.C. Dangar that 'If people are fools enough to buy these things, where is the harm? Why should not people be allowed to sell them?'\(^6\) was in retreat. In its place came the Advisory

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1. No.14, 1908.
2. No.31, 1908, replacing the provisions on adulteration of food in the Public Health Act of 1902.
3. E.g. minutes 5 June 1906.
4. Minutes 5 May 1908.
6. Ibid., vol.32, p.2962, 1 December 1908 (Council).
Committee and the Board of Health, convening the interests concerned certainly, but producing a steady flow of regulations, taking changed techniques and formulas in their stride and achieving a marked improvement in the standard of foods sold in the state.¹

Behind these regulatory efforts, the Board of Health and its chairman the Chief Medical Officer pushed forward the improvement of the health of the community. With wide discretionary powers and an expanding field and administrative staff, they had become important forces to be reckoned with. The constant process of chyvying local authorities, enforcing the provisions of the dairies, the diseased animals and cattle slaughtering and other acts went along with a creative vigour to complete the legislative and administrative processes already begun. As in other fields of social experience, so in that of health, there was a palpable tightening of the social bonds accomplished by bureaucratic supervision, which brought light and freshness into dark places and recognised community responsibility with a universality never before achieved.

¹ The minutes of the Advisory Committee 1908-14 are in N.S.W. State Archives. E.g., 25 May 1909 regulations for preservatives and coloring, and for sugar, honey, jams, confections, spices, olive oil and pickles were decided on. On 26 November 1912 the Board of Health formally resolved to recommend to the Governor in Council the prohibition of the advertising and sale of 'Featherstone's Pharmaceutical Preparation or Featherstone's Infallible Remedy for the care of typhoid fever and dysentery' as injurious to life (minutes of the Board). Archives shelf list no. 5868.
3. The ongoing argument

Viewing the story of hospital work, the development of ancillary medical services, and the rising tide of environmental regulation over these ten years, certain judgements can be made.

The constant recourse to government sources of funds was the most persistent theme, as it had been in the previous half century. Opportunities for political advantage were necessarily taken. Limitations of governmental solvency also help to explain certain changes in willingness. The supply of charitable donations was not, meanwhile, keeping pace with expanding need. In part this was the product of the rising cost of the medical services required. The pace of social and technical change was quickening. So much had to be renewed. So many more people desired the services available. These services required more and costlier labour to provide them. In part the slackening in the pace of philanthropy was nothing more than a redeployment of resources, and perhaps even a widening of the sources of charitable support. New institutions implied new subscribers. Probably they began at the cost of established organisations. The economic story of these ten years was hardly encouraging, especially during the 1902-3 drought. More money might have been available towards 1910, but to offset this, it must be remembered that costs were rising.

The community was even more willing to seek the services of medical charities than ever before. Numbers in hospitals rose steeply. This quickened once again
the discussion of principles. Who was entitled to help? Why should help be given? Was it adequate? By what standards should it be assessed?

In the first few years of the century these issues were debated largely round the part contributory funds could play in assuring working men medical attention at little or no cost. The hospitals resisted strenuously when the Hospital Saturday Fund sought, on behalf of its industrial subscribers, the right to nominate patients for treatment.¹ The Herald supported the hospitals condemning the H.S.F. as selfish.² The B.M.A., sought to resist the same sort of organised pressure from the friendly societies. In both cases the older, individualist, system tended to prevail, though probably at the cost of much good will.

As numbers and overdrafts rose, and as the labour party came to pay closer attention to the hospital problem, the discussion took a different focus. There was talk of 'nationalising' the hospitals. More concretely the Political Labour League Platform Committee in 1908 committed the Labour party to the support of hospitals from local rates, the election of boards by adult suffrage, the provision of free medical services by government medical officers where a hospital was unavailable, equal

¹ Secretary, Prince Alfred Hospital to Hospital Saturday Fund, 19 August 1901, S.M.H. 20th.
² 22 August 1901 (ed).
rights for women staff, maternity wards, for all hospitals, the provision of home nursing treatment and 44 hours a week for nurses. The A.M.G. called all this 'not only impracticable but unnecessary', and 'out of the range of practical politics'. It would be reasonable to argue that the decision of the conference represented the feelings and the demands of a wide section of the working classes who were eager to enjoy medical services, but who found them increasingly difficult to obtain because of the scarcity of these services. District nursing and maternity wards would be the best examples of this desire for special services.

Others commented on the problem from different points of view. Suggestions were made in the columns of the A.M.G. in 1908 and 1909 for the creation of 'intermediate hospitals' where payment could be made, and the staff would not be honorary. A concerted effort was made by the doctors at the Australasian Medical Congress in October 1908 to put their case. Dr Worrall was the leading speaker. After a spirited discussion, motions were passed virtually unanimously that no payment be expected from patients, and that all patients (except emergency cases) sign a declaration of inability to pay and present another from their doctor. For others than paupers they were convinced that 'hospital accommodation would extend naturally to the inclusion of all...those

1 Worker 6 and 13 February 1908.
able to pay for medical treatment'. It was a bold, if
naive, statement of confidence in the operations of a
free market and of the right of a socially defined class
to receive charitable aid.

This confidence in evolution was not enough in the
immediate crisis of crowded hospitals and growing
overdrafts, for example in January 1909, when the Prince
Alfred story came to a head again. The government was
called upon to act not only by the newspapers, but by
the hospital board itself. The Chief Secretary refused
to be stampeded, and made only minor adjustments in the
government's provisions. As a result the existing
charitable system was not successfully challenged. But
by April 1909 even the Herald was willing to give guarded
support to the idea of the government taking over the
city hospitals as the only way in which its heavy
hospital expenditure could be properly administered.
Though willing to go as far as this, the editorial also
called for stringent limitations on the eligibility of
patients, perhaps hoping the government could succeed
where the hospitals boards (including the Coast) had not.
A year later its editorials on the hospital annual
meetings were less radical, retreating into vague
generalities about campaigning for more subscriptions and

1 Australasian Medical Congress, 1908: Proceedings I, p.38ff.
3 S.M.H. 23 April 1909; cf also 27 May 1909.
the difficulties of innovations.\textsuperscript{1} When Sir James Graham proposed the establishment of a competent, expert body to investigate the metropolitan hospital system,\textsuperscript{2} the government found little virtue in the idea. The premier (Wade) went out of his way to emphasise that his cabinet did not propose to disturb local hospital boards from their control, even if government inspection was extended.\textsuperscript{3} The President of the Sydney Hospital resisted another aspect of Graham's proposal - that the existing metropolitan hospitals develop separate specialities. He preferred to emphasise the traditional problem of the abuse of hospitals by those not truly eligible.\textsuperscript{4} The stage was set for decisive action once the 1910 state elections were over.

\textbf{4. The Labour government and medical services: 1910-14}

When the Labour party came to power in 1910 there was talk of a wide range of measures of important social reform. Among them, adequate provision of hospital and medical care had been attracting the attention of the party's annual conference for some years. As soon as the cabinet was announced, the secretary of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital wrote to the new Chief Secretary recapitulating that hospital's request for £40 (instead

\textsuperscript{1} S.M.H. 9 February 1910, 7 April 1910.
\textsuperscript{2} S.M.H. 20 June 1910.
\textsuperscript{3} S.M.H. 23 June 1910.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid.
of £35) per bed as subsidy on the 100 further beds it had recently opened, and warning him that the hospital was running at a deficit while facilities and staff were at full stretch.¹

A full report from the Inspector General of Metropolitan Hospitals and Charities (Dr Paton) prepared the following year showed that the hospital was £7,000 in debt on its current account, that it was treating patients to a cost in excess of its income, and that as a result of public demand for its services it had increased its beds from 286 to 391 in the last three years. Since the Board could not hope to increase its charitable income in the same proportion, and since its costs per bed of £77 were extremely favourable in comparison with other big hospitals in Australia (Sydney £99, Melbourne Hospital £95), Dr Paton recommended an immediate government grant towards the hospital's running expenses, tighter government control of the hospital's further expansion and the location of all infectious cases at the Coast Hospital. The documents attached to this report show that over the next two years (1912-13) the government was generous in its aid to the hospital, providing an immediate £8,000 grant, and another £12,000 towards the new nurses home. Additional government members were also appointed to the Board.²

¹ 8 November 1910 C.S.I.L. 10/14331 in S.B. 5260.
² Inspector General of Metropolitan Hospitals and Charities to Chief Secretary, 19 September 1911, ibid.
Early in 1911 a deputation from the recently concluded annual conference of the Labour party waited on the Chief Secretary (MacDonnell), to urge the creation of a Department of Public Health, the extension of the work of local Government Medical Officers, and the development by the government of such specialised medical services and institutions as radium banks, neuropathic hospitals, consumption bureaus, bush nursing, maternity and child care services.

The Herald had reversed its earlier attitude on the role of the state. Noting that Sydney Hospital now had a deficit of £13,000, its editorial remarked 'on the face of it, nationalisation is an easy solution'. But to the Herald, the problem of paying for the cost of hospital treatment was beyond the state's capacity. Honoraries would withdraw, and private subscriptions would disappear overnight. Frustratingly, everyone wanted treatment. Who was to provide it?

There were three main problems in the field of medical and health services in 1910. First, who was to be entitled to medical services at the expense of others? Second, where was the philanthropic public when it came to supporting public hospitals; if they were a dying race, how much more responsibility should the state take on? Finally, what other ways of providing medical services in the community were there, and what further services should be introduced?

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1 S.M.H. 15 February 1911.
2 22 February 1911 (ed).
Although MacDonnell was Chief Secretary, it was to be Fred Flowers (1864-1928) who handled the development and execution of the Labour government's policy on health and medical services. He was Vice President of the Executive Council, being the Government's representative in the Legislative Council, and associated with the Chief Secretary's Department as 'Assistant Chief Secretary'. With MacDonnell ill for most of 1911, ending with his death early in 1912, Flowers became Acting Chief Secretary. In April 1914 the Executive Council appointed him Minister for Public Health, in charge of the newly reorganised department. He retained this task, among other responsibilities, until he was appointed to succeed Sir Francis Suttor as President of the Legislative Council in 1915.

In the 1890s he held various offices in the labour movement, notably President of the annual conferences of 1895 and 1896. In 1892 he led a temperance mission in Newtown.\(^1\) He was chairman of the Political Labour League's executive which, in its annual report to the conference of 1897 argued that: 'Not until the State - the people - undertakes the control and organisation of industry will the unemployed disappear and the community as a whole benefit by the wealth they produce'.\(^2\)

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1 S.M.H. 19 July 1892.
In McGowen's government, whether by choice or direction, he led the efforts to improve the medical services available in the community. In an area which was dominated by a prestigious and conservative profession he revealed energy and knowledge in meeting their arguments, and considerable organisational flair in the administrative arrangements he backed. He was clearly well advised. Dr Ashburton Thompson was the Chief Medical Officer and Chairman of the Board of Health till 1912. He had served the government since the 1880s, prepared the Public Health Act of 1896 and the scientifically distinguished report on the bubonic plague outbreak in Sydney in 1900-1. His successor, Dr R.T. Paton was, like Thompson, a holder of the Cambridge Diploma in Public Health. He had been a Government Medical Officer and then head of the Asylums for the Infirm and Destitute. The third of Flowers' advisers was G.H.S. King, who came to prominence as secretary to the Board of Health and who organised the establishment of the new Department of Health as its first Under Secretary before moving to the Chief Secretary's Department to fill a similar appointment. They proved to be a dynamic and fruitful team.

'Questions to Raise'

From the very beginning of his association with the questions of medical and health services, Flowers made public statements which showed that he and the Labour party had no intention of following the drifting and old-fashioned views of their predecessors in office. On the occasion of a visit to the South Sydney Hospital site
in March 1911 he made an announcement which set the scene for all his efforts in the following three years.

Any idea that they [hospitals] are to be regarded as charitable institutions is altogether erroneous. Hospitals are a necessity of civilisation, and the Government should see to their upkeep and control. Hospitals should be as free as the Art Gallery or Public Library... and there should be no taint of pauperism.¹

At Newcastle in June 1911, he was even more critical of the existing system of hospital finances:

Most of the State's hospitals had not kept pace with the general development of the country.... He believed that the responsibility for maintaining the hospitals rested with the Government itself. It was not right that people should have to go into the streets box in hand and collect from the casual passers-by money for the maintenance of an institution which was an absolute necessity in the community.²

With this awareness of the shifting balance of capacity to finance hospitals went an assessment of the changing attitudes in the community affecting the use of hospitals:

Moreover, the reluctance that existed years ago on the part of a large number of people to enter the hospitals appears to have been removed... the hospitals offer advantages that cannot be got even by the wealthy in their private homes... [and] the chances of recovery are recognised as being much greater in the hospitals.³

¹ S.M.H. 11 March 1911.
³ S.M.H. 14 June 1911 (also at Newcastle).
This change in community attitudes towards the hospitals was the basic conditioning factor that coloured all the efforts of the governing bodies of these institutions to raise funds and to provide satisfactory services.

Following up these public remarks, Flowers prepared for his own guidance two memorandums on the hospital question in July 1911. These two papers testify to the energy Flowers had been devoting to the problem, and the importance he attached to it. He envisaged a major inquiry, perhaps a royal commission, to investigate it. He noted that the laws governing the regulation of hospitals were out of date. He went on to point out that the process of distributing the government's hospital vote was difficult and exhausting, that people generally were unaware of the importance of the hospital question, and that voluntary support was falling far behind the needs of the hospitals. Either this support would have to be spurred on dramatically, or the government would have to find the money. From this general survey he went on to note 'questions to raise'. He noted the need for maternity homes, and these not just for the indigent; for district care of maternity cases unwilling or unable to enter lying-in hospitals; for the establishment of infant hospitals and babies homes; for

1 They are typed, undated and unsigned, being found in the C.S.I.L. S.B. 'Proposed Reform of Hospital Administration, 1911-2', 5244. That Flowers is their author is argued from the authoritative outlook and tone of the papers, their presence alongside other signed papers of his, and from the wording of an interview Flowers had with D.T. 17 July 1911, which reproduces them verbatim in part.
an expanded legislative and administrative assault on consumption; facilities for the treatment of industrial diseases, the creation of district hospitals, casualty wards, ambulance facilities, and hospitals for specific diseases were all to receive attention. He also listed the need for convalescent hospitals and homes to relieve the pressure on the general hospitals, the task of improving outdoor patient services, of reorganising the Charities and Health Departments, and of controlling and financing the public hospitals without destroying voluntary effort nor placing the whole burden on the taxpayer. It was a long list. Many of the proposals, discussed at annual party conferences over the previous few years and now formulated, were to be given reality in a short burst of energy that was to close with the outbreak of the war. Those lying within the administrative compass of the Chief Secretary's Department were to receive vigorous and successful treatment. Those requiring legislation were the most intractable. The larger issues were still receiving attention in 1967.

Dialogue

When Flowers raised these questions in cabinet in August 1911 he did not find them easy to solve. There were many forces that continued to restrict effective action. The Labour party possessed the narrowest of majorities in the Legislative Assembly. The opposition, incensed by the election of Henry Willis as Speaker, took every opportunity to challenge his authority and disrupt
the Assembly's business.\(^1\) When the opposition was not quarrelling with him, the government often was. The Legislative Council was a conservative body hostile to many of the Labour party's schemes for social reform. It is clear that Holman made a major tactical error in refusing to make any appointments to the Council in 1913-15. It was the death warrant of much legislation.\(^2\)

The caucus minutes of 1911-14 show clearly that McGowen and Holman had a most difficult time maintaining efficiency and unity. Contentious matters were repeatedly postponed for fear of disruption; elections disturbed the confidence and willingness of the caucus to push on with major legislative proposals that could be an embarrassment; there were signs of hostility and impatience among some of the militants at the deliberate pace which McGowen, Holman and their cabinet employed.\(^3\) All this absorbed time and energy which might have been better used in pushing legislation forward. Related to these political necessities were the restraints of finance which limited the government's capacity to establish new hospitals or dispensaries out of its own funds. Despite the cessation of the benefits of the Braddon Clause after 1910, the government continued an expansive spending program through 1911-12. Late in 1912 however, J.H. Cann,


\(^2\) Ibid., pp.206-32.

\(^3\) Minutes of N.S.W. Parliamentary Labour Party, 1911-14, Molesworth Papers, M.L.
succeeding McGowen as Treasurer, and much more competent than his predecessor, forced a major series of reductions in the government's expenditure. Since the party's alternative proposals for increased revenue - heavier land and income taxes - were never employed in their full form, there was not enough money to finance great schemes of social welfare. Instead the government was forced to co-operate with the existing organisations, the hospitals, the friendly societies, the doctors and the rest.

As Flowers unfolded his plans, and as others confronted the problems of the 'hospital question', there were not lacking outbursts hostile to 'nationalisation' or for that matter to any proposal at all emanating from the Acting Chief Secretary. At first the newspapers repeated their guarded support for the idea of extended state subsidy, and increased government control. But others were not so friendly. Wood, in the Assembly, wanted to be told more about the 'many highly coloured statements' made by Flowers. The Shires Association called for legislation to hand over the control of country hospitals to the shire councils, with power to raise rates for their support. The Liberal and Reform Association adopted a similar resolution at their instigation. In an attempt to meet the hostile response

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1 S.M.H. 11 July 1911.
3 S.M.H. 7 July 1911.
4 S.M.H. 4 July 1911.
of many doctors and others to his remarks, Flowers took pains to clarify his adumbrations of extended government control. He argued that the government should aim, not at completely taking over the hospitals, but at relieving their directors of financial responsibility in order to allow them time to concentrate on management. Since he was never forced to produce a fully worked out scheme for hospital control, the extent to which Flowers, let alone any of his colleagues, really intended to take over the hospitals cannot be finally established. The Labour party's platform was certainly interpreted by many inside and outside the party to mean nationalisation and the onslaught of socialism. It is clear that many people in the labour movement objected, as Flowers did, to the idea of hospital care as a charity, and to the weakness of government supervision of the money spent by the hospitals. Since the government had moved into several industrial fields directly, as a producer competing with private enterprise, the idea of nationalising the hospitals was current, and popularly understood to be Flowers' ultimate objective, despite the deliberately vague remarks he frequently made on the subject.

It was the doctors who were most critical of what they took to be Flowers' intentions. At the Australasian Medical Congress in September 1911, they again affirmed the traditional doctrines of charitable effort and independent control using the 1908 resolutions verbatim. The most they could envisage was to call for the creation

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1 D.T. 27 July 1911.
of joint representative boards to administer grants, classify hospitals, prevent overlapping of function, protect against imposition, enforce uniform accounts, prevent the creation of unnecessary hospitals and arrange the transfer of patients. In support of these resolutions, their author, Dr Worrall, insisted that the public hospitals were for the poor. He ridiculed the idea of the government of New South Wales being able to pay £500,000 for the services given without charge to the public hospitals by the honoraries. To him a national health system left the doctors without fees and was to be condemned outright. Yet this restatement of the traditional relationships had already been found wanting, as Flowers pointed out in an interview with the Sydney Morning Herald published the next day. In the light of the complexity of modern treatment, could it be expected that the wage earning or professional classes would be able to afford private hospital treatment, as the doctors hoped? Did the doctors imply that all but the pauper was to be denied the services of the public hospital? Surely, Flowers went on, the basis of entry must now be the need of treatment, and not pauperism, for all lives in the State, rich and poor, were valuable.

1 D.T. 9 September 1911.
2 D.T. 19 September 1911.
3 S.M.H. 20 September 1911.
4 This was a comment on the financial formula adopted by the Federal Government for payments to the states to be based on a population basis, under the Surplus Revenue Act, 1910.
If there were to be any comment on Flowers' remarks, it would be to point out - once more - that the basis of honorary service of leading medical practitioners in the public hospitals was that these institutions served those who were unable to pay for medical treatment as private patients. The trouble was that the doctors were unwilling to recognise that many more people were now unable to afford the benefits of institutional medicine, and that in turn many more of the doctors' potential clients were seeking free treatment in the public hospitals. By so doing they were upsetting the existing economic balance, by which the fees of the rich helped pay for the care of the poor, and by which those who cared for the poor as honoraries attracted the invitations of the rich for their medical services. Ignoring the changing social processes that were affecting the provision of medical care, the doctors were determined to defend the existing order.

Another entrenched group were the directors of the hospitals, many of whom were themsevles doctors. The evidence of the special bundles on hospital claims in the Colonial Secretary's files is clear. The directors virtually ignored Flowers' talk of taking over complete control of the hospitals, and continued the well established processes of extracting further funds from the Treasury, by letter, deputation and well timed publicity. The Directors of the Sydney Hospital had little to say in public about the possible future control of hospitals in their annual report for 1910:
It would appear that the benevolent public is not disposed to contribute on any largely increased scale towards the upkeep of hospitals - and this is due no doubt to the growing opinion that the financing of hospitals is a matter which should be taken in hand by the Government. The Board is not able to suggest any satisfactory solution to the finance difficulty...[but would be willing to participate in a metropolitan hospitals conference].  

To them the government was simply a source of more money. There was no dynamic vision of public service or social welfare here: nor were they as willing in practice as the doctors were in theory to turn away all but the paupers from their doors. For fear of public scenes, and aware that their institutions provided services not available elsewhere, the large hospitals accepted virtually all who applied, with little or no question as to their ability to pay.

The beginnings of action

The most immediate progress in the government's efforts towards the end of 1911 was in co-operation with the hospitals. Inquiries into the finances of Sydney and Prince Alfred Hospitals having been completed extended subsidies and then grants for capital works were promised to them. The Newcastle Hospital was also

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3 A nurse's home for Prince Alfred, and a new wing for Sydney. The larger scheme at Sydney, involving extensions into the Domain, was finally refused in 1916.
promised £10,000 on the 1911-12 estimates. ¹ The South Sydney Hospital was likewise promised a grant to allow it to be completed and opened. ² Country hospitals had to be content with their annual pound for pound subsidies and a scramble for a share of the vote for special grants to them. ³

In the autumn of 1912 Flowers made his next important proposal, this time addressed to the problem of the overworked outpatient departments of the public hospitals, where the poorer people of the inner suburbs of Sydney sought aid for minor sicknesses and injury. He asked the friendly societies for permission for the government to use their dispensaries at certain times of the week. It was proposed that doctors should give their services without charge, and that this service would be available to those unable or ineligible to join the friendly societies. ⁴ The B.M.A. refused to support the scheme. The August business meeting resolved that:

a. in view of the fact that medical attendance can be made available for all classes of the community through the agency of public hospitals,

¹ S.M.H. 13 July 1911.
² D.T. 20 July 1911.
³ The 'Special Grants for Hospitals, 1910-11' was £3,000, divided among 21 hospitals in amounts from £400 to £15. C.S.I.L. 11/22375. C.S.I.L. S.Bs. 'Hospital Claims, 1915-6', 5306-10 and 'Broken Hill Hospital - Special Grants, 1912-6', 5302, contain much illustrative material on these annual struggles.
⁴ D.T. 28 May 1912.
friendly societies, and medical practitioners in their private practice. It is unnecessary and inadvisable to establish free general dispensaries.

b. that no member shall accept a position as hon. medical officer to any free general dispensary under Government control.¹

Once again the doctors were seeking to protect their livelihood and maintain the status quo. The Pharmaceutical Society of N.S.W. was equally hostile, claiming that ordinary chemists already dispensed free to the poor.² Flowers then invited representatives of the friendly societies to confer with him on the matter.³ These conferences, held in July and August 1912, considered both the government's proposed scheme, and other matters of concern to the friendly societies, including their disagreements with the B.M.A. over the terms and conditions on which doctors contracted with the lodges to act as medical officers.⁴ After Flowers had explained the dispensary proposal in detail the societies were asked to indicate if they were willing to hire out their

¹ A.M.G. 31 August 1912, vol.13, p.226-8, reporting meeting of 21 August 1912. The Council of the B.M.A. had submitted such a motion in June, ibid., vol.12, p.663.

² To Chief Secretary, 5 July 1912, C.S.I.L. 12/60178 encl. with 12/60163, in S.B. 'Conferences Between Chief Secretary, B.M.A. and Friendly Societies re Establishment of State Dispensaries, 1912-13'. 5270.

³ Circular 25 July 1912, ibid.

⁴ Report of Proceedings of the Conference between...F. Flowers and...the Friendly Societies...N.S.W.P.P. 1912, vol.4, pp.1015-76.
premises to the government. McGowen announced the result of this inquiry to the Legislative Assembly in October. Seven societies were agreeable (including one conditional acceptance), four refused and three were silent.¹ There is no evidence to suggest that the scheme ever got under way.

To sound public opinion a pamphlet on 'The Hospital System in N.S.W.' was published over Flowers' name by the State Government in August 1912. In it Flowers carefully surveyed the existing provision for health and medicine in the State. Already, he pointed out, hospitals were heavily supported by the state, and required its approval for any major construction program. Their total income in 1911 had been £153,000 from the government, £120,000 from subscriptions, £39,000 from patients and £16,000 from miscellaneous sources. He

¹
S.M.H. 4 October 1912. C.S.I.L. S.B. 5270 names them as - yes:
Ashfield and District United Friendly Societies Dispensary
Parramatta and District UFS Dispensary
Auburn and Rookwood UFS
Canterbury and District UFS
Marrickville UFS
Hurstville and District UFS
- conditionally yes:
Leichhardt and Petersham UFS
- no:
Balmain UFS
Sydney UFS
G.U.O.O.O.F.
Newtown UFS
- silent:
North Sydney UFS
Manchester United
Burwood UFS
reminded the friendly societies that they too relied heavily on government aid in this field. Their dispensary facilities were largely built with government funds. He still hoped that they would make these buildings available in order that a complete scheme of medical attention could be provided. On hospital control Flowers could see no difference between the medical and educational services. He objected to the high prices doctors expected the middle classes to pay for medical care, and suggested that 'the only cure is for the state to undertake the conduct of the Hospital system as a matter of business and public convenience'.

To this deliberate and public challenge the B.M.A's. mouthpiece, the Australasian Medical Gazette, replied tartly in an editorial of 28 September titled 'The Parting of the Ways'. The assertion that Flowers made that hospitals could be run by the state 'as a matter of business' was anathema to the doctors. The editor argued the proposals were made

...with the distinct object of uprooting all our cherished ideals, which fling back in our faces all our charitable hospital and private work, which would insist upon doing away with that spirit of benevolence and humanity which has always been the glory of the profession, and reduce Medicine to the level of a trade.¹

Doctors would not tolerate the intervention of any third party between themselves and their patients, either in hospitals or consultation practice. They sought

¹A.M.G. vol.32 (1912), pp.329-30.
independence, from the government as much as from the friendly societies. They wanted no help from 'politicians and socialists' in managing their affairs. On this other argument, with the societies, the negotiations dragged on for another 18 months. Flowers had managed to get both sides together in September 1912, and the draft form of an agreement was settled by the delegates. Nevertheless, the doctors' chief spokesman, Dr Maitland, could still insist

We do not want to pauperise anybody. I do not know whether the delegates think that the medical profession are out for the grab, but I have endeavoured to show that they are not....A man gives up half his life in a public hospital working for nothing. We do our part and our duty, and we expect the Friendly Societies to do their portion.... It [the wage limit] is the vital principle of the whole of our professional existence, and that wage limit we must absolutely adhere to.¹

During 1913, when some friendly societies sought to resist the proposals of the 1912 conference, the organised strength of the doctors became apparent, and their

monetary demands more specific.\(^1\) By January 1914, after the B.M.A. withdrew all doctors from lodge practices, the friendly societies throughout the state finally yielded. Though Flowers and Holman regretted the extreme measures employed in the controversy, they were more concerned to see continued provision of medical services and to avoid a further confrontation with the doctors, despite the wide degree of working class, and presumably Labour voters', participation in the societies.\(^2\) Nevertheless such conflicts, if not directly involving the government, certainly maintained public agitation of the hospital and medical questions.

In October 1912 the electoral campaign was opened. No one, not even Flowers, was willing to make an election issue of his proposals for increased government control of the hospitals. His pamphlet remained, more a statement of achievement and hope than a declaration of

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1 D.T. reported the situation on 9 August 1913 as

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual capitation payment for:</th>
<th>current</th>
<th>F.S. Offer</th>
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<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>16/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>19/-</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Smaller country</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>24/-</td>
<td>26/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>town</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single girl</td>
<td></td>
<td>18/- &amp; 19/-</td>
<td>as males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allowance, day</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>after 3 miles 3/6</td>
<td>5/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>night</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>5/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>7/6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Deputation of Newcastle miners to Premier, S.M.H. 20 January 1914.
war against free trade in medicine. It was to be in other, more administrative, fields that successes were to be gained. Thus, the Homebush Abattoirs plan, long maturing, was brought to fruition in 1912 when the abattoirs were opened and the Meat Industry and Abattoirs Board was set up. Two royal commissions in the broader field of public health were appointed in 1912: one on food supplies and prices, the other on housing for the working classes as provided in Europe.¹ Both provided publicity and ideas for better community living conditions. A related issue was the campaign against consumption. A number of doctors had been publicising this issue for several years. With Flowers' backing they were able, as the N.S.W. National Association for the Prevention and Cure of Consumption, to open their first clinic for indigent persons at Hay and Park Streets Sydney on 16 September 1912.² During 1912-3 four more clinics in the inner suburbs, including one at North Sydney, were opened, all with government financial aid.³ The government also co-operated with the Association in the provision of institutional care, both by maintaining its own consumption hospital at Waterfall, and by subsidising those at Thirlmere and Wentworth Falls, which the Association conducted.⁴ The Waterfall hospital now

² A.R. 1914.
⁴ Ibid.
had 400 beds for the treatment of consumption, with two resident doctors and a staff of nurses and attendants.¹ To give further impetus to the campaign, Flowers appointed a T.B. Advisory Board in July 1912.² Finally the disease was made notifiable in the amended Public Health Act of 1915.³

Administrative changes

Under Paton's vigorous leadership, first as Medical Inspector of Charities, then Inspector General of Metropolitan Hospitals and Charities, and finally as the first Director General of Public Health (the latter two appointments created by the Labour government), the government Asylums for the Infirm and Destitute were improved. The worst parts of the two Parramatta asylums were emptied and closed. The Rookwood State Hospital and Asylum (as it was now officially called) was extended and a panel of specialist honoraries was appointed. It had become an important hospital centre, caring for patients who required a full range of medical services, with an emphasis on provision for aged and chronic cases. There were now 375 beds, about the same as at Prince Alfred or Sydney.⁴ At Newington and Liverpool

² Ibid.
³ No.7, 1915.
⁴ Medical Inspector of Charities to Chief Secretary, 22 February 1911, C.S.I.L. 11/5346 and 27 December 1911, 11/5503.
similar improvements in medical and administrative standards were achieved, for example by the appointment of a Board of Women Visitors at Newington, where there were now 341 bed patients and 411 other inmates. To these older institutions Flowers and Paton added others, all important to the minister's desire to provide medical care for the whole community. Two convalescent homes were established, one for men at 'Denistone', Ryde, and the other for women at 'Currarong', Rose Bay. As with other new institutions, these two homes were intended to ease the pressure for beds at the public hospitals. Their creation showed that the government had no qualms about making direct institutional provision for hospital care if they could obtain the premises without too great an expense. 'Currarong' was part of the harbour resumptions in which the government was engaged.  

In the same way the Coast Hospital was improved in standard, and extended in capacity. Honoraries were appointed and new equipment installed. A whole new range of wards was planned and built, 1914-18. The style, in keeping with the Coast's economical traditions, was severely utilitarian, employing the output of the nearby government sand brick works.  

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1 Ibid., and C.S.I.L. 12/4952.  
3 Boughton, Coast Chronicle ch.5, (with photographs).
resultant hospital was the largest in the state, with 786 beds available in 1929. It was under government control, and represented the solution which Flowers and Paton believed proper to the acute crisis in bed supply and the uncontrolled plans for expansion at Sydney and Royal Prince Alfred. There could be no complaints about extravagance on the part of the board, no arguments about admitting only paupers, no annual manoeuvres to inflate subsidy claims with the proceeds of raffles, returns from suppliers or rebates on the salaries of the staff. In thus securing a substantial addition to the supply of general beds in Sydney, the Labour government must be given credit for taking the initiative in confronting the 'hospital question' which had been bedevilling discussions for so many years.

Another home, the 'Lady Edeline Home for Babies', was part of Flowers' frequently expressed concern for the State's children. Opened in November 1913, the home had beds for 30 children, and was conducted by the Department of Health. Earlier in the same year, three homes for mothers and babies had been established by the State Children's Relief Department. Other ways in which Flowers sought to protect infant life included authorising the publication of several pamphlets, such as 'Before the Baby is Born' and 'Baby's First Three Months', which were distributed free of charge. He also arranged for the extension of organised visiting of mothers and

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newborn infants in the inner suburbs of Sydney by providing more nurses as well as these pamphlets. During 1914 a similar service was provided in the Hunter Valley health district. These services were in addition to the maternity scheme Flowers had inaugurated in September 1912 (in fulfilment of a plank of the 1908 Labour conference). This was to provide skilled attendance at all childbirths. The federal government's maternity allowance, first announced to the press in June 1912 and then to federal parliament on 26 September 1912, was not considered enough by the N.S.W. government. Flowers hoped that in most cases childbirth would be in the protective context of maternity wards of public hospitals, which would receive special grants to build such wards where necessary. To the family would come free medical advice, paid for by the government. The friendly societies' funds would thus be relieved of a large part of their accouchement payments. By making it a universal service Flowers insisted there could be no taint of pauperism. It was a positive and permanent gain for the welfare of the community.

Another provision, consciously related to this maternity care scheme, was the extension of the bush nursing arrangements. Hospitals were advised in mid 1912 that they could spend money in support of this work

1 S.M.H. 29 April 1914.
3 S.M.H. 16 September 1912.
which made nursing sisters available in the outreaches of the state. Then in May 1913 Flowers announced that in areas where hospitals could not be built the government would be willing to provide a pound for pound subsidy to support a doctor, provide a dispensary and a room for one patient. This was later clarified to be a guaranteed income up to a certain limit in centres more than 20 miles from a hospital, and accommodation for two patients. Failing this, the government was willing to subsidise the provision of a bush nurse. In somewhat larger centres Flowers envisaged extensive government support for the building of cottage, or later district, hospitals. He emphasised that all this was quite distinct from nationalisation. To Flowers it was only just that if the government made such large provisions for the metropolitan and big country centres, then it 'ought' to provide similar assistance 'in country centres where medical attention cannot be secured, or at any rate under great difficulty'. A further extension of the Bush Nursing Association's work came with increased government subsidy, the reorganisation of the service and the appointment of a government representative to its Board.

1 F. Flowers, The Hospital System in N.S.W.
2 S.M.H. 13 May 1913.
3 S.M.H. 18 June 1914.
4 S.M.H. 13 May 1913.
5 Flowers, Report...pp.163-4.
Another way in which the Labour government sought to extend the benefits of medical care into the community was through the school health service. Begun early in 1912 in a limited way, it was extended to country districts in 1913. It provided free medical examinations for children in state schools. Instead of using local practitioners on a part-time basis, the Department of Public Instruction set up its own Medical Service, with a staff of doctors and nurses who travelled the state, bringing lectures and treatment wherever they went.¹

At the administrative level the Department of Public Health was reorganised on the retirement of Dr Ashburton Thompson and Dr Tidswell in 1912. Dr Paton not only was made Director General of Public Health and permanent head of the department, but he was also given control of the Microbiological Laboratory and the Department of Charities (which also controlled the Asylums for the Infirm and Destitute, now renamed State Hospitals and Asylums). The expanded department was given ministerial status. It was also made responsible for a wide range of preventive and inspectoral services - quarantine, infectious diseases, sanitation, pure food, dairy supervision, cattle slaughtering, meat export - which had been controlled by the Board of Health, as well as the institutional activities already mentioned.

¹ S.M.H. 12 June 1913. It is to be noted that Flowers was Minister of Public Instruction from 27 November 1911 till 29 February 1912. It is not known if this scheme can be attributed to him.
Excluding the hospital staffs, the Department mustered 103 members, including nine doctors. Naturally enough, Flowers was the responsible minister, at first as Acting Chief Secretary and then formally as Minister of Public Health.¹ In his interim Report after one year of specific responsibility as Minister of Public Health, Flowers foreshadowed a major series of amendments to the Public Health Act of 1902. J.H. Cann (now Chief Secretary) introduced the amending bill in the Assembly on 22 July 1914 during the long 1914-15 session. As he emphasised in his second reading speech, it was the product of the experience of the department.² They had been finding, for instance, that again and again the public had not been protected against insanitary premises, phthisical workers in food preparation, or active pulmonary consumption cases. Local authorities were failing to fulfil their various responsibilities. Thus the bill provided for compulsory notification of pulmonary consumption, strengthened the powers of the Board of Health over the local authorities, and over infectious diseases generally. Certainly no world shattering event, but the Act as passed can nevertheless stand as Fred Flowers' final achievement in the protection and encouragement of the health of the people

¹ 21 June 1913 to 22 April 1914 in the former position; appointed by the Executive Council as Minister of Public Health 22 April 1914. Report..., p.163.
of New South Wales. It was his contribution to bring positive leadership to a field of social administration calling out for energetic attention by the government for over a decade. Moreover, as he insisted repeatedly, the problem of medical care was not to be seen in the narrow context of charity, but rather in the broad sense of a community necessity. It was Flowers who succeeded in establishing in the public consciousness this new, broad interpretation of the problem and who ensured its continuing attention by the government through the creation of a powerful department. He sought a comprehensive solution to the problem, and naturally turned to the idiom of nationalisation and community control. He did not despair when it became obvious that such a large scale shift in method would be rejected by most of the other interested parties. He was able to convince his cabinet colleagues of the necessity of financing a wide variety of special services, which taken together with their willingness to find increased finance for hospital construction, meant a vast improvement in the quality, range and availability of the medical services of which the people of New South Wales could take advantage, in the country as well as the city. The earnestness of a humane man who was plainly a conscientious and efficient organiser was surely rewarded.

*       *       *       *       *
On the surface provisions for the sick in 1914 were charitable in conception. But the role of the government had expanded dramatically. However, the services provided as a result of this enlarged government activity cannot be called the emergence of a welfare state, despite the frequent invocations of the 'socialist tiger' in these years. In so far as medical charity was more efficiently organised, some credit can go to the improvements in science and in the conduct of their affairs by hospital boards. Some credit too must go to the efforts of the Chief Medical Officer, the Board of Health and the new Department of Health. Greatly increased powers of regulation were energetically employed to improve the conditions of life in the community. With growing experience and confidence these officials sought to influence the general provision of medical services. There is no evidence that Ashburton Thompson wished all hospitals to be controlled by the government, although his scheme of July 1905 would certainly have given very extensive regulatory powers to his department under the proposed Commissioners of Hospitals. Under the Labour government his department was the major instrument of change, actively encouraged by Fred Flowers, in making more services available and in administering others more generously. Care of the sick poor had ceased to be a matter of charity in practice: it had become a public responsibility, a public service.

1 Notably by George Reid; cp. Ford, Cardinal Moran and the A.L.P., ch.34.
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

In 1856 the colony's nineteen charitable institutions received nearly £19,000 in income, and aided 3,600 people, other than those who received outdoor relief. In 1914 about 170 charitable societies and institutions were listed in the Statistical Register.¹ Their combined income was about £875,000. They gave indoor aid to 47,000 people. The hospitals gave outpatient care to another 153,000.² In addition the federal government expended £977,000 in N.S.W. on 39,000 pensions to aged and invalid people.³

These are the bare statistics of the growth of charity in N.S.W. over sixty five years to 1914. What was charity like in 1914? What changes deserve notice?

First, it can be said that in many ways charity had not changed except in extent. Charity meant giving assistance for the needs of other people, usually through the channels of public societies. Charity remained an active component in the life of the community. The necessity of bringing assistance to people in need remained. Many people continued to

¹ Counting separate institutions run by the same society has made the tally approximate.
² Pp.480-8. Unfortunately, outdoor relief by charities other than hospitals does not record the numbers assisted.
³ Above, p.353.
respond to those needs with the same generosity their grandparents had shown. Charity was still often an act of conservation rather than reformation. Limits on the scope of the aid given often remained: applicants for pensions might only have to qualify, but the qualifications were restricting nonetheless. Money for charity was still made to go as far as possible, at the cost of the spirit and dignity of those being assisted.

Second, some charitable institutions now provided services enjoyed by people who were far from the mid-nineteenth century idea of those who were acceptable as the objects of charity. The criteria were changing. Charity had in some important areas become something other than assistance to deserving cases. Blaming a man for being poor had come to be too simple a judgement which was seen to turn attention away from the real difficulties. Criticisms were being made, not of the fickleness of the poor, but of the effect on their lives of the housing they lived in, the working conditions they endured, the wages they received. Behaviour which might have once led to curt refusal of an application at the Benevolent Asylum was being looked on, in this larger context, with greater tolerance. Again, the importance of some types of assistance, notably in times of sickness, had come to be seen in a new light when it was realised what could be done in these erstwhile places of last resort. People once sent away empty handed were now helped. Others the like of whom in earlier generations had never sought or received charity were now assisted.
Third, the government had expanded its responsibilities. The financial contribution of the state government to social services in 1914-15 was £871,000, or £586,000 if expenditure on the Lunacy Department and on aborigines be subtracted.\(^1\) In 1855 it had been approximately £20,000.\(^2\) Some charitable activities were now conducted by government instrumentalities. Furthermore, a wide range of services were provided as replacements for charity. Through legislation and administrative action the state had stepped into many areas once the responsibility of charitable societies. Not only were these services being provided by the state, but through its intervention the environment was being positively affected in order to prevent the occurrence of those conditions of life which had made so much charity necessary. The goals of social action, as well as the means by which they were being achieved, had changed. Not only was the state being employed as the agency of social aid, but its powers were now being used in a broad effort to improve the conditions of life of the whole community.

Whether it be called charity or social security, the provisions made for the poor in 1914 were based on a better knowledge of the causes of poverty. They were more effectively related to the needs of the people involved. The methods of assistance which were used more readily acknowledged the dignity of the people being helped.

\(^1\) S.R. 1914-15, p.421.
\(^2\) Auditor General's returns in S.R. 1855.
Better informed, more efficient, more humane: what can these simple warm-hearted judgements mean? Changes had taken place. Things were different. Surely they were also better. To fulfil the duties of love more adequately, to succeed more completely in caring for the poor, to present a social face which was more civilised, better organised, more self-aware, more mutually interdependent - these were gains in the life of the community of real human significance.
1. Population of N.S.W., 1851-1914.
3. Hospitals: income, 1858-1914.
7. St Vincent de Paul Society: operations, 1884-1914.
8. Industrial Schools and Reformatory for Children: numbers at 31 December annually, 1867-1914.
### TABLE 1

Population of N.S.W., 1851-1914 (as at 31 December)

<table>
<thead>
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Sources: 1851-1891, N.S.W. Census Report, 1891, p.120; 1901-1914, Bureau of Census and Statistics, Demography Bulletin no.67, p.158.

Since the boundary of the area included varied from time to time these figures may differ from those quoted elsewhere. Neither the Census Report nor the Demography Bulletin states whether these figures include migratory population (e.g. shipping).
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Source: Compiled from Statistical Registers. Amounts rounded to the £100.
**TABLE 4**

Hospitals: Admissions, 1858-1914

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Source: Compiled from Statistical Registers.
TABLE 5

Government Asylums for the Infirm and Destitute:
inmates at 31 December annually

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<th>Year</th>
<th>no.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>no.</th>
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<td>1896</td>
<td>3,540</td>
<td>1913</td>
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</table>

**TABLE 6**

Benevolent Society: numbers receiving outdoor relief, 1850-1914

Note: Compilation of this table has been difficult. The figures given in the Society's A.R.s have varying titles and seem to understate the volume of the aid being given. Those shown here for 1850-61 are from a table of operations 1818-61 submitted by the secretary as an enclosure to a letter to the Colonial Secretary 15 May 1862. It was published in *Correspondence between the Colonial Government and the Benevolent Society, V. & P.* 1862, vol.4, p.23ff.

The two categories families and individual appear to be exclusive. The Society usually reckoned on five members per family.

The figures 1862-1905 are from the *Statistical Register* and those 1906-1914 from the A.R.s of the Society.

Those for 1862-8 are labelled 'average weekly number of families'. From 1869-1905, the figure is consistently labelled 'annual number of different cases'. There is no way of telling how many of these were individual cases and how many were families. The question of fresh applications from the same family in one year is not considered either. The possibility of presenting an estimate of the number who received aid in a given week is now very small.
### TABLE 6

**Benevolent Society: numbers receiving outdoor relief, 1850-1914**

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<td>1,560</td>
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<td>498</td>
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<td>1854</td>
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<td>354</td>
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<td>2,808</td>
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<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>462</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cases</th>
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<td>1,250</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>511</td>
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**TABLE 7**

St Vincent de Paul Society: Operations, 1884-1914

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<th>lodging clothing</th>
<th>employment</th>
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<td>490</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Notes: 1. The table has been complied from A.R.s of the Society.

2. The categories used in this table are a simplification of those used in the A.R.s.

3. Up to 1903, the figures are for the branches of the Sydney conference; in 1904 details from conferences at Goulburn, Bathurst, Wagga and Liverpool were also included; in 1905 details from Parramatta and Penrith were added; in 1906 from Katoomba, Newcastle and Broken Hill. From 1907 onwards the list stabilised to include 12 conferences.

4. In 1911 the S.C.R. Dept arranged for the Society to supervise the welfare of all Roman Catholic boys in its care, both those boarded-out and those on probation. 5,020 boys were listed in 1911, 2,645 in 1912, 2,984 in 1913 and 2,613 in 1914.
TABLE 8

Industrial Schools and Reformatories for Children:
numbers at 31 December annually, 1867-1914

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<th>Boys Reformatory</th>
<th>Girls Industrial School</th>
<th>Girls Reformatory</th>
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<tr>
<td>1868</td>
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<td></td>
<td>80</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>135</td>
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<td>135</td>
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</tr>
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<td>15</td>
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### TABLE 8 (contd.)

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Source: Statistical Registers

The Boys Industrial School was located on the Vernon 1867-91, on the Sobroan 1891-1910; from 1912 boys were sent either to the Reformatory near Gosford or to the State Children's Relief Board.

The Boys Reformatory was located at 'Brush Farm', Eastwood, and named the Carpentarian Reformatory, for Mary Carpenter. It was opened in 1894. In 1912-13 the reformatory was moved to its present location near Gosford (Mt Penang).

The Girls Industrial School was housed in a disused military barracks in Newcastle 1867-9; on Cockatoo Island (Biloela) 1869-87; then at Parramatta, in the premises till then occupied by the Roman Catholic Orphan School. The buildings are still in use, as one of the Child Welfare Department's Training Schools for 'wayward and problem children'.
TABLE 8 (contd.)

The Girls Reformatory was located with the Industrial School, first at Newcastle and then at Biloela, until 1879, when it was removed to specially constructed buildings at South Head. It was named the Shaftesbury Reformatory.
* In the 1890s it also served as a receiving centre for girls in the care of the S.C.R. Department. From 1904 the girls were sent to the training school at Parramatta.
APPENDIX

Some Documents

1. President, Sydney Infirmary to Colonial Secretary, 21 February 1878.

2. Minute by Colonial Secretary, 13 August 1883, on Industrial Schools and Reformatories for Girls.

3. Minute by Colonial Secretary, 13 August 1883, on Industrial Schools and Reformatories for Boys.

4. Minute by Colonial Secretary, 2 September 1885, on the Position of Government with respect to the Hospitals and the maintenance of patients therein.

5. Paper by the Director of Charitable Institutions, 7 September 1896, on Charity Organisation.


Comment

All these documents have been referred to in the text. As far as is known, none of them have been published. All but one are by officials and the other is very formal. This means that the selection omits less formal, less official aspects of charity, for example the proceedings of the Acting Committee of the Benevolent Society. Nos. 1 and 4 are on the hospital question. No. 1 is an example of the continuing negotiations between the government and the hospitals. No. 4 surveys the problem from the government point of view. Nos. 2 and 3 are on the care of children, again minutes by Alexander Stuart as premier and Colonial Secretary. He was the exception among ministers in the nineteenth century in writing careful minutes for his own guidance. No. 6 is an administrative report which hints at the growth of the government process,
as well as showing the relationship between the Pauper Vote, the charitable societies and the old age pension. No. 5, written for the Colonial Secretary and the premier (Brunker and Reid), by the senior government official concerned with charity, is one of the few extended discussions of the proper scope and method of charitable efforts. It is given in full, as are all the other documents. All are from the C.S.I.L. files in the N.S.W. Archives. Permission from the N.S.W. Archives Authority to publish them in this thesis is gratefully acknowledged.
from President, Sydney Infirmary

to Colonial Secretary

21 February 1878.

C.S.I.L. 78/1764
in S.B. 4/818.4

Submitting result of deliberations of Board of Directors made at the suggestion of the Colonial Secretary.

Sir,

I have been requested by the Board of Directors of the Sydney Infirmary and Dispensary to communicate to you the result of their deliberations in the suggestion which you made on Tuesday 12th February 1878 to a Deputation from the Board who waited on you by appointment to obtain authority to pull down the old Hospital Building fronting Macquarie Street, and to obtain aid from the Government to erect a central metropolitan Hospital on its site.

The Board desire in the first place to recapitulate the principal matters which occurred at the meeting. The Deputation, it may be remembered, after giving a summary of the history of the question up to the present time, referred more particularly to the last two deputations from the Board who waited on Mr Robertson and Mr Parkes respectively and the replies which these gentlemen had made to the Directors, the former offering to give pound for pound assistance towards the objects of the Deputation, and the latter expressing himself to the following effect: "I have no hesitation in saying the sooner the old building is removed, the better, and as far as I am myself concerned, I should be in favour of a hospital at the place and so on."

The Deputation then explained the views of the Board as to the whole amount of Hospital accommodation required at the present time, and shewed how far short of the requisite amount was that provided by the buildings at present available for the purpose. They then presented evidence from the statements of Miss Osburn, Mr Alfred Roberts, Medical Staff and others made to the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly
on 22nd April 1870 and ordered to be printed, that the Macquarie Street site was the most central, healthy, and in every other respect, eligible situation for an hospital to supply the wants of the city. They explained that although at different times the Board had under consideration the desirability of altering or removing the front main building, the absence of a deed of grant of the land had hampered them in all their proceedings, and they produced evidence that a Select Committee had recommended such grant (22nd April 1870) and that by vote of the Assembly (20th Sept 1870) the grant was ordered, but that it had never been made. They suggested also, that in regard to the erection of any new structure, it was desirable to provide accommodation for mechanics and others who were in a position to pay certain sums for medical treatment in the hospital, but who at present are placed in most unfortunate circumstances by the want of such accommodation. And they explained, that their action in the management of the institution was fettered on all hands by the unsettled state of the question, instancing as the latest example, the fact that although a Subcommittee of the Board had recommended the establishment of an Ophthalmic department as a crying want in the Colony, a few Directors from the very unsettled state of the Institution were unwilling to enter into the consideration of the question. Further, the Deputation stated that the medical gentlemen who freely gave their valuable services to the Institution had no fair opportunity in the present temporary wards, of obtaining proper results for their labour, and necessarily the patients were also placed in most disadvantageous circumstances. The Deputation therefore pressed on the Honorable the Colonial Secretary the extreme urgency of the matter, and in conclusion the Deputation asked permission to remove the old buildings, which had been condemned by the medical profession, the general public, the press, and by the Legislative Assembly, and to erect in their room a Hospital for acute cases of diseases.

For the latter purposes the Deputation offered to provide from £16 to 20,000 and they asked the Government to sanction the grant of £15,000 per annum for two or three years, till the new buildings were completed.
The Hon. Mr Fitzpatrick in substance replied to the Deputation as follows: He agreed with the Deputation that no site could be found so suitable for an Hospital as the Macquarie St site, but he and his colleagues were of opinion, that it was not desirable to have a large general hospital so placed, but that the necessity for a receiving house for casualties was not denied, and the proximity of the present site to the wharves was a strong reason why such a structure should be placed on it. In order to bring matters to a proper issue, as he did not wish that meeting and the time in the present instance to be thrown away, he would remit to them the following question for solution; what building of a permanent character on the present site would be necessary as a sort of receiving house or hospital for acute cases? If the Government were assured that a building could be erected in Macquarie Street that would supply the wants of the city in the limited degree he had referred to, he did not think there would be much difficulty about the grant of the site, because faith had never been broken by the Government with regard to sites. And further the Government did not object to the present building being knocked down, nor did they object to give money for the sort of building he had indicated. He would submit the matter to his colleagues when the Directors had again placed their memorandum before him, and if the deputation did as he desired, then the Government would seek the authority of Parliament, for pulling down the building in question.

Such being the state of the question the Board of Directors of the Sydney Infirmary deem it only fair to represent to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, that the subjects thus referred back to them have been for many past years their most serious study, both with regard to the present and future hospital requirements. The various members of the Board have thus had opportunities of considering the subject which no other body of persons could have; and some of their members have enjoyed special advantages in this respect, both from their experience in this city, and in the hospitals of the mother country, and the continent of Europe.

The Board would state in the first place that the records of the arrangements made many years ago with the Home and Colonial Governments prior to the
introduction of responsible Government in the Colony, and at different times since, culminating on the recommendation of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly made to the House on 22nd April 1870, and the vote passed by the House 20th September 1870 confirming the recommendation that a grant of the land in Macquarie Street to the Trustees for the use of the Institution are sufficient to prove, that a most extraordinary breach of faith would indeed be occasioned by refusal to issue to Trustees the grant of present site of the Macquarie Street Hospital.

As regards to the present old buildings facing Macquarie St, whatever structure may be erected hereafter, the removal of these buildings is an immediate and imperative necessity, and the Board are glad to know, that on this point the opinion of the Government is similar to their own.

But the question of paramount importance and most urgent character has reference to the nature of the permanent building to be erected on the site of the old building just referred to.

The Board have most carefully considered this question in all its bearings, as well as in regard to the Pavilions required as the administrative buildings, the kitchen, mortuary and laundry necessary, and as the result of their experience and investigation they recommend that provision be made for 120 beds at the least.

The Board believe that such provision is the smallest possible for the wants of the community and [?] that it will only be sufficient for the limited purposes of an hospital for accidents and urgent cases of acute disease, and from its wards all cases of infectious and contagious disease and all cases of chronic disease must be excluded.

With this building the Infirmary will be sufficient only for the wants of the northern half of the city, the shipping and the harbour and suburbs. And the Government in no short time from the natural increase of population will find it necessary to provide further accommodation for acute cases and accidents etc, either by the extension of the buildings now being
erected on the Prince Alfred Hospital site - if that site will hereafter on mature consideration be found to allow of more extension - or by the erection of other Hospital accommodation elsewhere.

Towards the cost of erecting the buildings referred to the Board can furnish funds to the amount of £16,000 and they are in a position to state that about £4,000 in addition will be raised by private subscription. They estimate the total cost at about £45,000 and they request the Government to obtain parliamentary sanction for the difference, as well as for the necessary authority for the removal of the old building.

In submitting these proposals to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, the Board would again revert to the urgency of the matter, affecting as it does the lives and best interests of the patients and the sick poor of the City and of the Colony, and in no small degree interfering with the successful management of the institution.

The Board need scarcely assure the Honourable the Colonial Secretary that the deep interest they feel in the subject is occasioned solely by their desire to have proper and adequate provision made for the hospital wants of the City and Colony. And they respectfully request that they may be favoured with as speedy a reply as the circumstances of the case will permit.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

E. Deas-Thomson

President
Subject Industrial Schools and Reformatories for girls.

Our present system appears to me to be extremely defective for the proper treatment of girls of depraved habits and it may be even to some extent criminal - or who, by reason of the neglect and criminality of their parents are in danger of becoming so, unless taken in hand and rescued from their companions and surrounded with influences for good.

A radical defect seems to me to exist in giving to the Reformatory an entirely prison aspect. It should be removed from the Prison Department and should be under the same controlling management as the Industrial Schools so that there should be a passage from one to the other - upward from the Reformatory to the Industrial School in the case of those children who have conducted themselves well during a probationary period in the former and downward from the Industrial School to the Reformatory in the case of refractory and incorrigible children. The effect of such a system would I think be that the Industrial School would be the path by which youthful criminals - as yet unhardened by repeated offences might find a way back into society which they can hardly do direct from the Reformatory with its prison taint: while by making it an object of ambition the Industrial School children would be saved from undue contamination by these admitted from the Reformatory who would be filled with a wholesome dread of being sent back for improper behaviour. In some degree also it would act as a deterrent to the ordinary Industrial School children if they knew that their superintendent had the power of ordering them for a certain number of days to the greater rigour of the Reformatory. For these reasons and in order that there might be a distinction in discipline and comfort it would I think
be desirable that they should be under one general control and in comparatively close proximity - not too close so as to be able to ? and interrupt each other as formerly at Biloela and yet sufficiently near to facilitate removal from one to the other as occasion may require.

The girls "Reformatory and Industrial School" ? ? it be named should be not in Biloela, but on the mainland, out of town a little - the elder girls should be taught thoroughly various industrial occupations such as all sorts of housework, washing and other kinds of laundry work - cooking - baking - milking and other acts of dairying and generally whatever may tend to train them in the way of being useful servants either in town or country. The best behaved girls might be entrusted with messages to town occasionally so as to teach them self reliance. In many ways efforts should be made to make them feel self respect and when that is once firmly established the great step is taken towards making them good members of society.

The school teaching of course is an essential part of the system but it is only a part and I think that as the maintenance and general discipline is the larger part it would be better that they be replaced in the Colonial Secretary's Department and that the Education Department work be limited to their school inspection.
Subject Industrial Schools and Reformatories for Boys.

Much of what I have written in a minute of this date on similar institutions for girls is applicable to those of boys. The Vernon has done good work in its way, especially under its present management.

I am convinced however that altho the great lesson of discipline is well learned aboard that ship, ? boys, except such as have a taste for sea life, could learn much more that would fit them for ordinary service if part of their time were spent on a well managed farm - such farm if well situated might be to a certain extent self sustaining by supplying the other asylums with milk, butter, fruit and vegetables.

I think that all the boys who are sent to Reformatory or Industrial School should pass a certain portion of their time on the 'Vernon' for I do not know that we could devise anything better for that discipline which is so necessary a part of their learning, but from that ship they should be drafted when old enough. -

1. Those who choose a sea-faring life to the Wolverene.

2. Those who do not like a sea-faring life to the Industrial farm.

There they should be taught under experienced men all sorts of farm, dairy and stock work while a certain amount of school teaching should be given to them and thus they be fitted to take their place in country life when old enough to leave the Institution.

I would have, as with the girls, a Reformatory under the same control as the Industrial School with an interchange by way of promotions in the one direction or of punishment in the other. Where children are found to be incorrigible at home I would allow them to
be sent (parents paying for them) to the Industrial School so as to avoid that which is now necessary viz that they must pass thro the Police Court to obtain the benefit of the Industrial School.

I have had several parents with tears in their eyes begging that their sons may be taken to the Vernon without the necessity of causing them to become criminals and I have been impressed with the view that it would be well to have a means of admitting them before they reached that stage.

As to the position best suited for Industrial Agricultural school I think that 1,000 to 1,200 acres should be taken from the Field of Mars common which understood was to be sold to recoup the cost of the bridges across Parramatta and Lane Cove.
Minute by the Colonial Secretary,
Alexander Stuart, 2 September 1885

in C.S.I.L. S.B.4/896.1

Subject  Position of Government with respect to the Hospitals and the maintenance of patient therein.

Some time ago I was waited upon by a deputation from the Prince Alfred Hospital, who informed me that they could no longer keep what are called "Government patients" at the rate heretofore allowed, viz., 2s. 3d. per diem, as it was wholly insufficient; and asked me that the rate be increased. Since then I have received a letter from the Sydney Hospital authorities to the same effect, and accounts have now come in for the month of July, from both Hospitals, at the rate of 3s. 8d. per diem. The consideration of this subject involves the whole question of the relations which should exist between the Government and these Institutions.

These Hospitals were established, and, for a long time, were generally supported by subscriptions, as places where accidents can be promptly treated, and where the poor and improvident can, in case of sickness, be provided with medical and surgical skill, and kind and careful nursing.

The Government, many years ago, in order to foster and encourage this benevolent action, gave, from the Consolidated Revenue, £ for £ of the subscriptions of the general public; and became entitled to the same privilege which was given to subscribers of nominating patients for admission, and, under an arrangement made many years ago, the Government has been charged 2s. 3d. per diem for the cost of the maintenance of its nominations.

Of late years, however, an abuse of these relations has obtained. The line has gradually become obliterated between the patients for which the Hospital was by public benefaction intended to relieve and those which the Government nominated, and now all
There remains, however, the important and difficult position of these two Hospitals, each having the same object, each appealing to the same public for its liberality, and each maintained by the Government bonus upon those subscriptions. They form in reality two rival Institutions, competing in the same field for both public and Government favour.

I acknowledge that there are difficulties and prejudices of no mean order in the way; but neither Institution is now in a satisfactory condition, - both are unable to complete their buildings without Government aid, and that to a very large extent; and even if completed, at a cost of probably £350,000, viz., £250,000 for Sydney, and £100,000 for Prince Alfred, they would not be really of the most suitable character for requirements of this daily extending city or suburbs.

The time has arrived when District Cottage Hospitals of about twenty beds each should be erected, in the suburbs especially, for prompt treatment of accident cases and sudden acute ailments, while several Special Hospitals are urgently needed. The Government cannot, however, undertake to provide all these and also provide funds to finish the two large Hospitals. It would be well if the governing bodies of the two Hospitals should meet and agree to some plan for the general benefit, even if it should have the effect of absorbing one of these Institutions in its former sphere of action, but only to shine forth with redoubled usefulness for the public interest under another form.

I would suggest the following as a plan for basis of operations:

1. That a general Hospital Board be formed, which might be taken from the representatives of the present two Hospital Boards, with such additions as the Government might think desirable - such Board to have the general control, but not to interfere other than by general by-laws with the internal economy of each Hospital.
indigent cases are refused admission except as
Government patients; and so a very large number of
cases - often more than half the Hospital
accommodation - is filled with these so-called
Government patients, and the healthy relations which
formerly existed between the well-to-do portion of
the general public and its weaker members has been to
a great extent crushed out, and a system of
pauperization is induced. This does not apply to
accident cases, which, if taken immediately, are at
once received into the Hospitals, and meet with
prompt attention.

The desirable condition to be kept in view as
the object to be attained is, that sick persons able
to pay either in whole or in part of their maintenance
should be aided by the subscriptions obtained,
doubled as these are by the Government grant of £ for
£; and that persons whose small houses are insufficient
for the quiet and comfort of home nursing in sickness,
should be encouraged to subscribe while in health,
and be entitled thereby to a place in time of sickness.

The ministering to such cases and to accidents
should be the duty of the Hospitals, and it is highly
desirable that the liberality of the Public should be
stimulated in every possible way for so desirable an
end. The institution amongst the Churches known as
Hospital Sunday has been found in England and in
neighbouring Colonies to be a valuable aid; and I see
no objection to this and patients' payments being
included in the claim for Government bonus, within
certain limits, because such encourages the managers
to collect all they can from legitimate sources,
whereas, under the present system, the Government
being relied on for the support of patients creates
an indifference both on the part of the managers and
of the General Public, and the springs of benevolence
are thus dried up. There is, however, one class of
payments by patients which cannot be admitted, viz.,
the payment for special private wards. Prince Alfred
Hospital has several of these wards, and very
valuable adjuncts they are; but as they combine many
of the comforts of a luxurious home or first-class
hotel I must decline to sanction them as coming under
the claim for Government grants in aid, and desire
that the Prince Alfred's claim be amended by their
omission.
It is asserted by both Hospitals that the daily rate of 2s. 3d. for maintenance is quite insufficient; that owing to the high cost of provisions and nursing as compared with former years it now costs from 3s. 6d. to 4s. I think there is some mistake here, and that, considering the large aid given by the Government as bonus, the demand for this excessive rate should not have been made.

The Government, I find, maintains a considerable number of cases in the Little Bay Hospital under very disadvantageous circumstances, owing to its distance from town and the isolated nature of its buildings; but I find that, notwithstanding these disadvantages, the rate is not much, if anything, in excess of the rate thus deemed so insufficient in the two large Hospitals.

With the view of checking in some degree what appeared to me the reckless admission as Government patients of persons without inquiry into their circumstances and ability to pay or not, I caused about a year ago the Inspector of Charities to open rooms in Pitt-street, where applications for Government admissions could be made and the applicants be examined by a medical officer. The result of twelve months has been that 2,749 applications have been made; that out of these 104 acknowledged that they were perfectly able to pay in full, and were therefore referred to the Hospitals without Government orders; that 35 were able to pay something towards their maintenance, and that to them orders were given whereby the Government agreed to pay the difference between their partial payments and the rates charged by the Hospitals; that 736 applicants were found not to be in a state requiring admission, and that to them orders were given whereby the Government agreed to pay the difference between their partial payments and the rates charged by the Hospitals; that 736 applicants were found not to be in a state requiring admission, but were recommended to the Hospitals as out-patients and were received as such; while 740 were found to be chronic cases requiring admission to the Government Asylums, and not to the Hospitals at all. Out of the remaining 1,134, admission orders were given to -

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In addition to these, there have been admitted into Prince Alfred Hospital 235, and into Sydney Hospital 196, under the plea of urgent cases, for those that are of such character the Government did not feel justified in requiring to be sent to the Pitt-street rooms, but have to the present time authorized their immediate admittance; but, like the accident cases, these urgent medical cases should really be met by the ordinary funds of the Hospital, aided by the Government bonus.

I propose that in future all cases of extreme indigence should be sent to a Hospital in connection with the Government Asylums, as soon as the necessary steps can be taken. Such a Hospital could be erected in Sydney, with 120 beds; and by being worked in connection with a Convalescent Hospital, situated at one of the Government country Asylums, I am sure that the cost of maintenance would not exceed the 2s. 3d. per diem.

The relief, by the withdrawal from the two large Hospitals of these patients, whom their authorities deem so unprofitable, would doubtless be a great benefit to them; while all who were not in the position of paupers, but who preferred contributing in whole or in part towards their own support, would naturally prefer going into those Hospitals, to which they would be admitted on, I presume, the authority of their medical attendants, and be no longer found as hangers-on for Government admissions.

For the Government Asylum Hospital, the site on Flagstaff Hill, alluded to in a minute by me two years ago, would be suitable; and attached to that could be the office of the Manager of the Asylums, who would be able to make arrangements for the removal of convalescents to the Convalescent Hospital. The cost of maintenance at a Convalescent Hospital being much less than at a general Hospital, the effect would be to reduce the average cost, and practically double the accommodation at the General Hospital by the shorter time of detention there. This would entirely provide for the present complaint of the two large Hospitals as to being compelled to take unprofitable patients sent by Government to the exclusion or injury of their own proper work.
2. That the Government complete the Prince Alfred Hospital, which would have the effect of materially lessening the cost of maintenance, by making full use of the very complete administrative block.

3. That the Sydney Hospital sell to the Government, at a valuation, their present site and buildings.

4. That with such valuation, and such other amount as may be necessary, there be built various District Cottage Hospitals, and a Convalescent Hospital in a cheerful and salubrious aspect, and a Fever Hospital in some locality conveniently near, and yet sufficiently removed from, centres of population, and that all these should be managed by the Sydney Hospital Corporation.

5. That the General Board should decide to which Hospital patients should be sent and removed.

With some such union of aim, and freed from the entirely pauper patients, a strong appeal could be made successfully to the benevolence of the Public; which, being aided by Government bonus, the greatest possible good might be expected to result.

I feel sure that if those interested in both Hospitals would cease to look to the interests of their own Hospital only, and freeing themselves from all prejudices consider the best interests of the whole community, some such plan as I have sketched out could be arrived at without any loss of prestige to either Hospital, but with the greatest possible benefit to the public. Without some such cordial co-operation I see only a long continuance of the present extremely unsatisfactory condition - two large Hospitals, each unfinished, each unable to support itself, while the city languishes for -
District Accident Hospitals,
A Fever Hospital,
A Convalescent Hospital, for the benefit of the patients themselves, and of the Hospitals by the reduction of the necessary expenditure per bed,
An Ophthalmic Hospital,
And a Lock Hospital.

The Protestant Orphan School at Parramatta, now no longer needed for its original purpose, seems to me to be admirably suited for the purpose of a Convalescent Hospital; and although at one time I thought of it as a Convalescent Hospital for the Government patients, yet arrangements might be made whereby it could be rendered suitable for all, either by a wing being specially reserved for the Government, or by an arrangement whereby the Government might have a right to send a certain number of patients.

The value of this Institution could be set against part of the value of the Sydney Hospital site.

The time has arrived when I hope the Trustees or Managers of these two Institutions will recognize that they have been by the Government and the public placed in the position of Trustees principally, and in greatest degree, to direct in the most efficient manner the great object of relief to the sick poor and the disabled of this vast city and its surroundings, and only in a secondary degree and to the extent of its usefulness of the particular land or buildings placed under their care.

Closely allied to or interwoven with this is the relation of the Benevolent Asylum. It is only a question of time, and that a very short time, until the present site of that Institution must be resumed by Government.

This Institution has undergone various changes since its foundation, and was long ago relieved of its permanent adult inmates by the establishment of the Government Asylums for old men and old women in indigent circumstances, and latterly of its children, by their being placed under the control of the Boarding-out Society. It remains chiefly as a Lying-in
or Maternity Hospital, and like the other Institutions, the cost of maintenance is defrayed chiefly by the Government.

This Institution differs from the others by being possessed of considerable funds and lands.

Its usefulness has no doubt been great, but change of circumstance involve fresh features of development, which require to be watched, and at times varied, in the public interest.

It appears to me that a Maternity Hospital should be built in such position (I believe there is a suitable piece of ground not far from the University) as would make it a valuable adjunct to the medical side of the University, by affording a field for clinical lectures, study, and practice - so necessary in the curriculum of our medical students.

That in connection with this there should be a Home on the ground at Randwick belonging to the Society, into which women could be received prior to their lying-in - except in cases of urgency - and to which they could be removed from the Lying-in Hospital when they are convalescent, and from which they can emerge again to their ordinary avocations when fit for them.

A most useful part of the Benevolent Society is the out-door relief, but a convenient site can easily be obtained for that part of the work, and a suitable building erected.

It will thus be seen by the plan I have sketched out that many details have yet to be supplied, though my object is so far accomplished if I can lead the managing authorities of these various Institutions to see that there is a way by which their usefulness can be greatly extended for the common weal, and that that usefulness is not necessarily bound up with particular sites or buildings, even though such may have run a useful career in times past.
As to the matter with which I started, the rate to be allowed the Hospitals for maintenance of the so-called Government patients, I am willing to allow say three shillings per diem until these patients can be entirely removed, as I have suggested, to a Government Asylum Hospital, and I am willing that, up to a similar rate, payments by patients, certified to by the Inspector of Charities, shall form a claim on the Government £ for £ bonus.

ALEX. STUART.

Sydney, 2 September, 1885.
Charity Organisation

1. Its Principles and Progress

A short history of the aims & methods of Charity Organisation -- by which is meant the systematic cooperation of Societies & individuals to relieve the wants of the poor - will be a useful guide to those who may be called upon to initiate this important measure of social reform in this Colony. The movement is still regarded in England as a comparatively new one.

Although the first Charity Organisation Society was established in London as far back as 1869, the Secretary to the Association which now has its branches established throughout England & Scotland on a very extensive scale, wrote recently that even after the lapse of so many years it seemed to be too soon to sum up its efforts & results. That it has done a great work, however, in organising charity, in preventing philanthropy from running riot, & in ensuring that the public benevolence is diverted into proper channels, & as far as possible bestowed only upon worthy objects, is apparent from the official records of its progress; & it is now founded on a system which is so far perfected that it may well be accepted as a model for all future movements of the same kind where similar conditions of life exist. The causes which led social reformers of all classes in England more than a quarter of a century ago to seriously consider how the problems of poverty could be more successfully grappled with were precisely those which exist, in a much more limited degree of course, in New South Wales, & indeed, in the other Australian Colonies at the present time. It was found that throughout the United Kingdom relief to the poor was not being distributed so as to prevent pauperism, nor, as it was pointed out, in a way to
help the poor to become self-dependent & competent citizens; but that "in regard to pauperism in general, in regard to able bodied paupers, & particularly to out-door relief" enormous sums of money were being spent indiscriminately by often irresponsible agencies which were entirely independent of each other, in ways that tended to make permanent, the very evils they were intended to suppress; that, despite all the unorganised efforts of the various charitable societies "pauperism seemed to be growing apace"; & that while "relief was abundant misery & destitution seemed to increase in spite of it- seemed almost to feed & multiply upon it." An idea of the extent to which this condition of things prevailed, may be gained from the statement that when the population of London was 3,040,000, the number of indoor & outdoor paupers in the city was 168,899, or about 55 paupers, legally so classed, to every 1,000 persons of the general population; & that upwards of four millions sterling was being expended annually upon their relief by the various recognised public charitable agencies irrespective of the large sums given direct by individuals, & of the extensive relief administered in connection with Trade, Benevolent, & Friendly Societies, both of which could not be estimated. It was at that time that Mr. Goschen, President of the English Local Government Board, which controlled the major portion of the relief in connection with the poor-law, expressed the opinion that Charity Organisation had become indispensable, & issued his famous "Minute on Co-operation between the Poor-Law & Charity," which primarily led to the establishment of the first Charity Organisation in London. The field to be covered was so extensive, & the abuses to be remedied were so deep-rooted, that the movement necessarily advanced slowly, & hence its supporters have held that its fullest possibilities of success have not yet been realised. The following statistics of four decades, however, - which are particularly recommended to the consideration of administrators of the various charities in this Colony, - indicate how far it has succeeded in attaining its objects; & although the quotation of figures, is always tedious, yet in this matter they point such a moral that no excuse is necessary for presenting them as an argument in favour of Charity Organisation on the lines suggested later on. In the year 1857, there were in
receipt of relief 48 paupers in every 1000 of the population in England & Wales; in 1867 the proportion was 47 per 1000. Two years later the new movement began. In 1877 the proportion of paupers to the general population in England & Wales had fallen to 28 per 1000, & in 1887 it was 27 per 1000. In 1857 the proportion of paupers to the population of London only was 46 per 1000; in 1867 it was 55 per 1000. In 1877, after the new movement had operated eight years, the proportion had fallen to 24 per 1000. These figures are eloquent enough, & the latest reports show that the ratio of decrease has been fully maintained. The system on which the English Charity Organisation Societies are founded may be fully explained here, because, as I have pointed out, it must, in order to ensure success, form the basis of any similar measure of reform in this Colony. It should be stated, however, that such Societies are altogether distinct from Investigation & Relief Societies. That fact does not appear to be understood in several of the Colonies, where so-called Charity Organisation Societies exist solely for the distribution of relief. The English policy is best described in the words of Mr. Loch, B.A., the eminent Secretary to the London Society, which are the outcome of a very long practical experience, as they will prove of more value, & certainly be entitled to greater respect than the suggestions which do not possess the advantage of experience in a Colony where Charity Organisation in its literal sense has not yet been attempted. The details of the scheme may have to be modified to meet the circumstances of a younger community, where unduly liberal ideas not unnaturally prevail in regard to the treatment of the poor, - probably because the cost of their maintenance has not yet had to be realised through the medium of a special poor rate, which means that the stress of poverty has been so generously met by contributions from the State, that it is not yet understood how heavy such a burden may become, if it has to be borne individually by the tax-payers. The principle of the English system is undoubtedly sound. The statistics already quoted indicate that its application in a country where all the conditions of living among the poorer classes are indescribably harder than they ought ever to become here, resulted since 1869 in a reduction of nearly fifty per cent in the proportions of pauperism to population, while in
this Colony, where no organised precautions have been taken to direct the stream of public charity into proper channels, the cost of administering relief in regard to all classes of dependents, with the exception of State children, has more than doubled during the past ten years.

It is stated in the Manual of the London Charity Organisation Society that its main object is the improvement of the condition of the poor:-
(1) By bringing about co-operation between the Charities & the Poor-law & amongst the Charities (in New South Wales this would mean co-operation between the Charities & the Government & among the various organisations distributing poor relief);
(2) by securing due investigation & fitting action in all cases; and
(3) by repressing mendicity.

In London there are forty district Committees, & the Society is a federation of these Committees, each of which, in order to be in union with it, must act on certain general principles, & must appoint representatives on the general Council. Certain Officers of the Committee are ex-officio members of the Council. The Council & its Committees conduct the general business of the Society. Although relief is not actually administered by this organisation, all applications for relief are received by it, & after due inquiry are referred to the distributing bodies. Of course, provision is made for giving immediate relief in cases of emergency, but the genius of the system is that the one organisation practically controls every individual case. There are forty district Committees attached to the Society in London alone, & these employ officers, who are appointed by the Council, to "develop organisation in districts in which it has not made progress, ensuring good casework, promoting co-operation, & enlisting volunteers."
Mr. Loch states that those who are appointed are educated men & women, who are trained for the work, & have a special interest in it, & are ready for a comparatively small salary to give up their whole time & thought to it. The office expenses thus incurred in organising according to the latest figures was about £9,500 annually, which is not a very large sum, when it is remembered that the expenditure upon various
forms of charity every year exceeded four millions sterling. The organising expenditure was incurred upon printing, officers & rent. It is found that "to deal properly with a large number of cases, to hear in private the tales of those in distress, to provide accommodation for volunteers who help in the work, by seeing applicants, arranging about relief, writing letters & so forth, several rooms are necessary, including a Committee Room, & one that serves as a waiting room.... But the main condition which governs the question of accommodation is the necessity of hearing facts of each case in a private room, & without undue delay."

The Officers in charge of the work in most districts are honorary Secretaries—men & women who give a great deal of time to the work, & treating it in many instances, as the business of their lives. And the work of these honorary officers is checked by independent paid agents & inquiry Officers. There is thus co-operation between the paid & the voluntary agents, who serve as a check upon each other, so that local influences shall not succeed in continuously obtaining relief for undeserving cases. In most districts, members of the local Boards of Guardians whose positions in England are analogous to those of Directors of Benevolent Asylums & other cognate Societies in this Colony, are on the Charity Organisation Committee, & there is thus close co-operation with them, & working-men also serve on the Committees. The Council of the London Society has formed for its executive work an administrative Committee which is elected by the Council out of members of Council nominated by District Committees. One of its sub-committees supervises the work of District Committees, & subject to the approval of the Administrative Committee, passes the Estimates of annual expenditure which each Committee is required to furnish, & makes grants for the maintenance Committees in the poorer districts. Another sub-committee makes arrangements for co-operation with hospitals, & for assisting district committees in obtaining suitable convalescent & surgical aid with promptitude. A third sub-committee deals with emigration.
Another branch of the Council's work, & a very important one, consists in publishing periodically a "Charities Register & Digest of Charities" & benevolent Institutions, by whose aid cases from the metropolis may be dealt with; in furnishing to inquirers legitimately interested reports in regard to appeals, more particularly appeals from Charitable Institutions, & in registering cases of fraud & imposture, & as far as possible, warning the public against them. Besides these branches of work, it is stated that "the Council by means of special Committees deals with many questions of special importance connected with Charity Organisations, such as charity & cheap food, soup kitchens, the dwellings of the poor, the training of the blind, the education & care of idiots, imbeciles & harmless lunatics, voting charities for medical relief, the employment of Italian children for mendicant or immoral purposes etc."

Briefly summed up the following points come within the scope of the London Charity Organisation Society: Inquiry; almonership; relief; co-operation; & general methods of improving the general condition of the people; & from what has been written it must be apparent that the methods under which these functions are fulfilled, are pretty well as perfect as any human agency can be, & can be made applicable in a greater or lesser degree to the conditions of poverty existing in any country. I have dealt thus at length with the English system of Charity Organisation more particularly, because it governs the social life of many thousands of our own people; but the American system is founded on much the same lines; & the German methods are not altogether dissimilar. The same principle underlies them all, namely, that there shall be individual inquiry into the claims of the poor. In America, the Societies have developed a system of friendly visiting, & a plan of central registration of all cases of distress. A clause in the list of objects of the British Associated Charities reads thus: "To send to each poor family, under the advice of a district conference, a friendly visitor."

In Germany, unpaid citizens undertake the inquiry in connection with the administration of
relief in small manageable districts, dealing with only a few cases each, & these official but unpaid almoners are "appointed to the most important civic & honorary offices, the worthy performance of which requires a large amount of active charity; & a firm sense of justice; charity to listen to the requests of the poor with kindliness of heart & friendliness; firmness in order to refuse unjustifiable claims, to ascertain, after careful scrutiny the amount of assistance necessary, & to prevent idleness & immorality being assisted & promoted by relief."

Before leaving this branch of the subject it will be interesting to note how curiously alike, both in regard to Societies & individuals, are the cases of imposition dealt with under the English system of Charity Organisation, & our comparatively unorganised methods in this Colony.

For example, one English report states: - "Of adventurers there are many; some establish Charities, & make fine profits out of the venture." Cases of this character have not been unknown in Sydney, & they could not have succeeded under a system of organised inquiry. Not very long ago, the Charities Department had to deal with one case which for successful scientific swindling, carried on for several years, has probably not been exceeded in ingenuity anywhere. The promoters had succeeded in obtaining a Government subsidy for two years without inquiry, when under a new method of dealing with these subsidies, an investigation was directed. The inquiry was considered necessary in connection with a demand for nearly £200 of Government endowment upon subscriptions alleged to have been collected. The investigation disclosed that the "Committee" consisted of four persons, two of them being relatives of the "Manager", while the "Secretary" was his grand-daughter, & the housekeeper was his wife. All these officials received salaries. The cost of working this place was £400 a year, & it was discovered that the only relief given during the year, for which subsidy was last claimed, had been sleeping accommodation to as many as sometimes three inmate, whilst frequently there were not any inmates at all. It had cost £51 in commission to
collect £190, & there was strong suspicion that many of the collections were from bogus subscribers, & had been presented in order to make up a claim for Government subsidy, as addresses could not be furnished, a number of names were not in the directory, & bank books had not been kept. Under this exposure the Home disappeared from the list of subsidised Charities, & was broken up. Several other minor cases of this description might be quoted. As far as individual instances of imposition are concerned, the following extract from the English reports might almost have been copied from the official records of some of the Charitable bodies in this Colony:—"It is frequently very amusing how the threads of discovery (of deceit) unravel themselves. Sometimes a workman's basket on a table, which is said to have belonged to a husband who had been dead twelve years; a hat behind a door, or a stray coat on a sofa; a man washing himself in the pantry, who was a perfect stranger, & had just called in & asked if he might avail himself of this privilege; a pipe on the mantelpiece, which evidently had been in use a few minutes before, but which is said to belong to a child aged five years, who is fond of playing with such articles, or frequently the person is said to be a brother or cousin, or some distant relative, that has just called in to see them. These, & other things, lead to detection under a system of surprise visits by experts, & thus may many names disappear from the Pauper roll."

THE CHARITIES OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Having thus shown what has been accomplished elsewhere, in the direction of reducing & controlling pauperism under a sound system of Charity Organisation, I proceed to deal with the various Charitable Institutions of this Colony, & particularly with those within the Metropolitan area, which probably distribute three-fourths of the whole relief given; pointing out in a spirit of kindly criticism & advice some of the faults which undoubtedly exist in the principles of their administration, which it should not be difficult to remedy under the methods already described. It should, however, be stated
that this subject is not now dealt with for the first

 time. In the year 1891, a Conference on Charities

 of a very important character was held at Melbourne.
 An Official Delegate was sent to it by the N.S.Wales
 Government, & it was also attended by thirteen
 representatives from the Charitable Institutions of
 this Colony. The Conference was presided over by
 the Governor & by Professor Morris of the Melbourne
 University, its deliberations extended over a week,
 & all the Colonies were largely represented, no less
 than 203 delegates being appointed to be present.
 The Government delegate from N.S.W. read a paper
 which attracted so much attention in consequence of
 the entirely new policy that it formulated, that a
 successful effort was made by the Conference to have
 it printed in the leading Melbourne newspaper, & a
 day was set apart for its discussion. That paper
 dealt comprehensively with the whole matter of
 Charity Organisation in regard to several large
 departments of the State outside the Department of
 Charities. As I am of opinion that many of the
 suggestions it contains may be considered of service
 with reference to possible future legislation I
 forward it for consideration in connection with the
 suggestions contained in this paper, which purposes
 to limit the application of the principles of Charity
 Organisation to the treatment of the poor.

 The Charitable Institutions of this Colony are
 divided into three classes, namely:-

 (1). Asylums wholly maintained by the State.

 (2). Institutions supported by the Government
 and private subscriptions jointly.

 (3). Institutions supported by private Charity
 wholly.

 In dealing with the various methods of poor
 relief adopted in this Colony the N.S.W. Government
 delegate wrote in 1891:- "Two points which should
 be borne in mind in connection with the N.S.W.
 Charities are the enormous disproportion of the
 Government assistance to the voluntary contributions;
 & the lack of direct interest manifested by the
 public in the principal institutions of the country
& the welfare of the inmates." This statement may be emphasised after the lapse of five years, & it probably goes to the root of the evil which sound charity organisation can remedy. It has hitherto been so easy to obtain money from the State, that individual efforts have been warped, & there has been little need for the dispensers of Charity to go carefully into the question of ways & means.

First among the Institutions included among Class I are the Government Asylums for Infirm & Destitute. The voluntary element is altogether excluded from these Asylums, either in the form of friendly visiting or advisory Committees, or public contributions, or endowments. There is no reason why this should be so, &, therefore, any scheme of Charity Organisation might be extended to them. It is difficult to believe that if these establishments had been thrown open to voluntary help they would not have participated in some of the beneficent bequests which have been bestowed by rich solonists in other directions which were certainly not deserving of such help. There would too be contingent advantages under such a system in connection with management & the individual interest brought to bear upon the requirements of the poor which are so obvious that it is not necessary to refer to them in detail. Fifteen years ago, Parliament adopted boarding-out as the national policy of dealing with the dependent children of the country, but did not make any provision for voluntary contributions towards their support, although numbers of the children were boarded out from institutions which had previously been supported by Government subsidies & public subscriptions jointly. All the State children are consequently now included in Class I; & although their maintenance costs the Government a very much smaller sum per head, annually then when they were trained in the public institutions, there is also no reason why the new system should be excluded from voluntary financial aid. On grounds of equity the large sums invested for the maintenance of these children by the authorities from whom they were removed ought to have been transferred with them to Government control, & made the nucleus of a fund which would doubtless since have been largely endowed by private charity,
if it had not been generally known that the whole of the burden of supporting such children was borne by the State. One large Institution which formerly controlled these waifs, is certainly not now required. Yet it is still carried on; & retains for that purpose upwards of £40,000 of invested funds; collects a considerable amount annually in public subscriptions; & holds possession of property on which the State has expended upwards of £60,000 besides a large area of land that might be sold in allotments for a very large sum of money. These two departments—that is dependent adults & boarded-out children—cost the country for maintenance alone, in round figures about £100,000 a year. The Reformatory & Industrial Schools are not included in this estimate, because being semi-penal establishments they do not properly come within the scope of this paper.

Class II includes Hospitals, the Sydney Benevolent Society, & other cognate Institutions, which have been established from time to time in large centres of population, as well as in many country districts. The aim of all these Societies is praiseworthy enough. They are carried on by associations of citizens who bestow much time & earnest labour upon their management, & who conscientiously endeavour to perform for the benefit of the poor & afflicted very onerous & unpleasant duties. It cannot be denied, however that the multiplicity of these Charities, particularly within the Metropolitan area, is becoming a serious evil; & that their methods now constitute an education in pauperism. Their comparative statistics at the beginning & end of the last decade disclose a really startling state of things. I have selected ten of the principal of these Societies as examples. They are located within three or four miles of each other; a number of them are doing the same kind of work, each operating independently & with a necessarily imperfect kind of supervision over the distribution of relief, which makes it impossible to provide against imposition if the recipients choose to resort to it. Indeed, that they do so— that numbers of them are making a regular industry of begging—is fully proved by the departmental checks & reports which have recently been obtained for the purpose of ascertaining the results of the present unorganised methods of helping the poor. Take, as an instance, the great
Central Society which is conscientiously relieving a large amount of distress in the best manner possible under the existing system. Ten years ago its outdoor relief expenditure apart from the cost of the unemployed was £94.11.0 weekly, & the "cases"—that is separate families—relieved, numbered 422. Today its outdoor relief expenditure is at the rate of £213.1.5 a week, & its total number of "cases" is 1069. Its zealous Board of Directors & Sub-committees have interviews with the applicants at the head office, but there is no voluntary visitation at the Homes. This duty is performed by four paid inspectors, (two to visit 800 unemployed, & two to look after 1100 cases) who, because of the numbers to be dealt with, & for other reasons, cannot possibly keep sufficient control over the "cases" to make them sure that continued relief is necessary to the majority of the recipients, or that many of them do not pass from district to district & receive the same kind of relief from several sources. The greater portion of the funds distributed by this Society is supplied from the Consolidated Revenue. This reference to it should not be regarded as invidious; it is made solely with the object of illustrating the defects of the present system; & it applies equally to many similar organisations. Indeed, the information obtained in connection with a number of them clearly shows that they were affording charity to applicants who were already obtaining it from several such agencies. The general Hospitals are included in this section; they are all largely supported from Government funds, which in the metropolitan district constitute their principal source of income in the shape of contributions. The help which these Institutions afford the sick poor must be prompt to be effective, & it is, therefore, obvious that in the indoor division it would be dangerous to delay treatment in order that it might first be ascertained if patients could pay for it. But a recent inquiry made it apparent that wholesale imposition was being practised in connection with the out-door division of at least one great Institution, which could not have existed under a proper system of Charity Organisation. As no proper record of the out-door work was kept at this Institution, two Inspectors from the Dept. of Charities attended on several days, & collected information from the recipients of advice & medicine
who presented themselves as Paupers. 184 test "cases" were taken. Of these 86 were reported as being destitute; 27 were unknown; 30 were able to pay 6d. a week to the funds of the Institution; 15 could pay a shilling a week; 6 were able to pay 1/6 a week; 6 were in a position to pay 2/-; & 14 could pay 2½/- weekly. Apart from these 184 cases, 15 per cent of 400 applicants who attended on one day, furnished fictitious addresses. They could neither be found nor heard of in the homes in which they represented themselves to reside. The result of this inquiry showed that under a proper system of distributing this form of relief it was only reasonable to believe that on the basis of the figures quoted the funds of the Institution would have been augmented to the extent of £2,400 a year by fees from persons who were treated as paupers, but who could well afford to pay. It is not possible to say without the same careful individual inquiry, whether or not similar imposition is practised by the so-called pauper patients in the in-door division of the great metropolitan hospitals, whose maintenance costs the State annually in direct payments for their treatment £11,880.8.0, in addition to £7,948.17.0 paid by the Government as subsidies on collections; but it is quite safe to assert that with the existing defective machinery for testing cases the authorities cannot be aware whether imposition exists or not. That it does exist, in view of the facts already stated, is certainly more than probable.

The Institutions in Class 3 do not draw State subsidies, but are supported by private subscriptions, & also in some cases, interest from endowments. They include Randwick Asylum, Church of England Home for fallen Women, St. Vincent's Hospital, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, & a few other Metropolitan, country & sectarian Benevolent Societies which are all doing good work in their respective departments. All these agencies for the relief of the poor would doubtless fall in with any policy of co-operation that would enable them to carry on their work so that their charitable efforts should be above the suspicion of affording encouragement to pauperism. Indeed, I know that several of them have already adopted the principle of Charity Organisation in connection with their methods of administering relief. Of course, in their
case participation in any general scheme would have to be purely voluntary, as the Government is not in a position to bring friendly pressure to bear upon them, seeing that it does not contribute to their funds.

It is certainly obvious that from a simple comparison of two sets of figures it is imperative that the Government should insist upon this matter of pauper relief being placed upon a scientific basis without further delay. The official records of 1886 show that in that year the State contributed £103,123 from the Consolidated Revenue for Charitable purposes, (exclusive of the Insane) or at the rate of 2s.1d. per head of the whole population of the Colony, while the private subscriptions amounted to less than 6d. per head. In the Official year ending June, 1896, the Government contribution under the same heading was £162,364, or in the proportion of 2s.6½d. per head of the general population, whilst the proportion of the voluntary contribution had not increased to any appreciable extent. These statistics relate to maintenance only, & do not include grants for building and other special purposes, as the figures are merely used to show the abnormal increase in the general administration of pauper relief, without any apparent legitimate cause. As the general population of the Colony in 1886 was 989,340, & in 1896 1,277,870 its increase in round numbers was 29 per cent, whilst there was an increase of 57½ per cent in the Government expenditure upon the maintenance of the poor, or actually a disproportionate increase in their cost as compared with the advance in population of nearly 100 per cent. There do not appear to be unusual factors of poverty in the community at the present time, as compared with the conditions existing 10 years ago; & unless it can be shown that this assumption is wrong it is only reasonable to infer that the abnormal expenditure has arisen more from defective methods of granting charity, than from the actual necessities of the poor.

3. RELIEF TO THE DESTITUTE UNEMPLOYED

One of the most important problems that a Charity Organisation Society should be called upon to deal with at once is the question of relief to & employment of
the class which has now almost become a recognised division of State dependents under the title of "destitute unemployed." It is of comparatively recent growth, & its existence at all under the present method of dealing with it, is discreditable to the community. It should be pointed out here that thus far the "destitute unemployed" who are now supported by the State, at a weekly cost of £230 or nearly £12,000 a year for rations, have not been included in any comparative statements, as it would not be fair to load the Society which deals with them with a class for which it is not in any way responsible. It is somewhat significant that this form of relief is confined almost wholly to the metropolis. The reports from many country Societies show that the demands upon their resources from unemployed able-bodies men are very limited. The steady increase in the number of this class during the past 5½ years is so serious a matter that it is necessary to refer to it somewhat fully. At present there are 867 able-bodied men with families receiving out-door relief from the Sydney Benevolent Asylum. The Government provides all the money, & the recipients of it do not make any return whatever for the help they receive. The majority of these men probably possess all the rights of citizenship; yet they seem to be drifting with the stream of pauperism into a condition of permanent idleness that must eventually have a very bad effect in many ways. There is not, as far as can be ascertained from the Society's records, anything to justify a statement that there is one imposter among them. The authorities who deal with them state that inquiry is made into every case, & that the pressure of poverty is very great. It doubtless is, but until 3 years ago, the members of this particular class were mainly relieved by the Department of Charities; & they were then frequently under the observation of its officials. That the majority would then gladly have preferred work instead of charity was apparent, but that they preferred to remain in the city in the hope of getting it rather than go elsewhere to seek it was obviously evident also. I have attached as an appendix a short extract headed "Relief to the unemployed" from the official report on Public Charities of 1890, which will be of interest as showing how necessary it was at that time to make careful inquiry into the antecedents
of able-bodied applicants for relief. It will be observed from this extract that of 217 who were relieved on one day in that year only 25 belonged to N.S.W. (of whom 20 were recognised by the police as habitual park loafers) the remainder having recently come from other colonies, & abroad. It is stated by the authorities at the Benevolent Asylum that very few of the men now being provided with rations have not resided in this colony more than twelve months, but there does not appear to be any reliable test of the accuracy of this statement, & in view of the figures of five years ago it is not unreasonable to doubt it, in regard to many applicants. Certainly the great majority of men now supplied with rations, are obviously of a much better class than those who were on the relief list in 1890; still I am aware from inquiries at the Labour Bureau that a number had succeeded in obtaining help after refusing work. Of course relief to them was dis-continued as soon as this discovery was made.

When giving evidence before a Parliamentary Select Committee recently I was questioned in regard to this matter; & I then stated that, in my opinion, the present system of help must demoralise these men & their families; that it was frequently noticed that when they, or their wives, first came for aid they appeared to be thoroughly ashamed; the second time the sentiment was sensibly blunted; & after two or three applications they asked for relief as a matter of course; & were full of objections if it was not fully up to their conception of what it ought to be. It was further stated "that this was the experience of every observant official who had dealt with this form of relief, & the worst of it was that not only were the fathers & mothers affected, but the children who know how food & raiment were obtained were being trained by observation to believe that it was easier to beg than to work."

I may point out that it was not intended in these remarks to brand the unemployed as a class, as imposters. On the contrary, it is desired in what has been written to save respectable workmen who are in need, & who would doubtless perform any kind of honest labour rather than accept charitable doles, from the stigma of pauperism that must attach to them under the
existing system of relief, & particularly from the compulsion which is upon them to mix indiscriminately with the undeserving, & have their poverty openly paraded every week in the most thickly populated part of the city.

The problem of the unemployed is of course much more difficult to solve than the question of ordinary charitable relief. There are two ways of dealing with it, namely, to adopt the plan which existed until a comparatively recent period of ignoring it altogether, & leaving the men & their families to take their chance amidst the ordinary vicissitudes of the labour market, or to apply a labour test & make them work out the value of any help they receive. The former method should not be entertained for the sake of the women & children, on the grounds of humanity; & the latter, though not easy to carry out, is still practicable, & appears to be the only solution of the difficulty. It has been applied in connection with the Government Asylums for Infirm & Destitute, at Parramatta, Rookwood & Newington, with satisfactory results. In these districts there are a number of able-bodied men with families. They were unable to obtain work. A number of them applied for relief in the shape of rations, & in some cases bed-clothes, for their wives & children, from the local Government Asylum. It was granted to them, conditionally on their "working it out." A standard wage was fixed, & the men were allowed to obtain a certain allowance of provisions weekly at contract prices, & work up to the value of it, until they could obtain regular employment elsewhere. They were not provided with full employment, but merely enough to supply their families with sufficient food to save them from hunger. In a few instances, the men did not fall in with this arrangement & they were consequently not helped, but on the whole they preferred to work for what they received rather than to be treated as paupers.

The Rev. Mr. Langley's Labour Home at Ultimo affords an example worthy of emulation in this particular. It was established in 1891 with this object in view:- "It removes the pauperising effect of giving relief to able-bodied men; it weeds out the imposter, who pretends he wants employment when he does not; & it enables the respectable working-man to pass through times of depression without any loss of self-respect."
Unfortunately it can only deal with single men. The number of inmates is usually 33. They must reside on the premises. They do not receive money, but merely food & clothing, and their residence period is seldom more than three months. They are expected to take employment whenever they can get it outside, & make room for others inside who are not so fortunate. This home is a hive of industry. The inmates are employed in cutting up wood for sale, making fruit cases, & at other simple industries. The profits on the work done last year were £419.14.0, & this all went to pay the expenses of the Home. Since the Home was opened in 1894, 1042 men have been accommodated of whom employment was found for about 600 outside.

These details are presented in order to show what might be accomplished among the equally respectable class of working-men who are now treated as paupers. All the Officials who have dealt with them feel very strongly on this subject; & their opinion is unanimous that the labour test should be applied in every instance of relief to the able-bodied. It is doubtless not properly within the scope of this paper to discuss the details of any proposals with this object in view, but there should be little difficulty in arranging to set apart some central area where deserving married men out of work could, until they were able to obtain employment, earn bare rations for their families by preparing "ballast" or cutting wood for the railways, or breaking street metal for the corporations, or in similar work under conditions so unattractive that they would seek other employment as soon as possible, & not be considered to be in competition with the ordinary labour market.

4. SUGGESTED REMEDIES

The first experience of the promoters of Charity Organisation in England was a determined opposition to the movement really, although not ostensibly, on the ground that it would destroy existing powers of control over the various Institutions, & take away patronage. The proposed reform appeared to be too radical in character to inspire a general confidence, & there was a "fixed suspicion" in the minds of many
that co-operation was not advantageous—they did not believe in the responsibilities of personal charity, or in its power combined with organisation to promote any great social change." The same sentiment will doubtless have to be battled with in connection with any new movement of a general character in this colony with the object of reorganising the Public Charities; but there ought not really to be much difficulty in securing co-operation necessary to ensure success if right methods are resorted to. It should be understood that charity organisation will not in any sense affect the status of existing Institutions, or interfere with the powers or privileges of their managers. The system is doubtless so well understood from the first division of this paper that it is hardly necessary to enter very fully into details with reference to it.

Indeed, the various charitable agencies, whether they be public or private, sectarian or secular, should earnestly take up the movement, because it can only have the effect of enlarging their spheres of usefulness, & making their operations more secure. There are two methods of appointing a Charity Organisation Society. One is to elect a body entirely independent of existing Societies, & confer upon it powers somewhat similar to those possessed by the London Society, which have been already described. The other is to constitute the Society from duly elected representatives of the various Charities. This latter method is more likely to be successful, & is better on every ground, because it would inspire confidence among the Societies who would have a direct concern in the movement, & it would also secure the great advantage of having trained minds to deal with a very important measure of social reform. In order to carry out this proposal effectually in the first instance, a meeting of all the Committees of the Metropolitan & Suburban Charitable Institutions should be called to fully discuss it, & adopt a plan of campaign. A Charity Organisation Society could be at once formed from the representatives present, & a sub-committee appointed to draw up a constitution, for consideration at a future meeting. The Society should, if possible, consist of representatives from every Department of Charitable relief. The constitution should set forth its objects, & in clear terms define its functions. These should not be to interfere with details of
management, but to exercise general supervision over
the administration of relief, & take care that it is
not given needlessly. The system of friendly
co-operation established in connection with a Society
thus constituted, should make it a simple matter to
discover imposition. Provision must be made for
central registration of all applicants for charitable
aid, & for weekly returns from the different
relieving bodies of the names & addresses of the
recipients of relief upon the books. These returns
can be checked by the Society's officials, in order
that "overlapping" may be prevented, & continued
relief to the same person from more than one agency
prevented. Applications to the Head Office should be
referred to the relieving body in whose district the
applicant resided, - indeed, it ought to be made an
absolute condition that wherever a Charitable Society
exists it must take charge of the poor of its own
district. The individual local knowledge thus obtained
of "cases" would be one of the prime safe-guards
against imposture. Want of money need not be any
obstacle to this system, because as pauperism becomes
thus localised, it can, if necessary, be obtained in
the form of special grants to meet urgent cases under
representation from the Charity Organisation Society.
This body would appoint from its own members the
various sub-committees required to carry on the
different divisions of its work, & in addition to the
general Secretary to the parent body, the Sub-
committees would appoint their own Hon. Secretaries
to communicate direct with the Officials of the
relieving bodies, in order to prevent delay in the
administration of relief. And the results could be
communicated in the reports of the Sub-committees to
the ordinary meetings of the principal Society. The
co-operative system in connection with the inspectorial
work is indispensable. It should be easy to obtain
the help of earnest capable men & women in every
district in which charitable aid is given to act as
voluntary visitors (each taking a limited number of
cases) in conjunction with the paid inspectors. In
this way an effective method of cross-check will be
established. The present system of allowing large
bodies of paupers to assemble conspicuously at a
central point once or twice a week to receive rations
will under these new methods be abolished, & the
"ticket system" substituted. The arguments urged in
favor of central distribution are that it enables the almoners to have weekly visits from the poor, & gain a knowledge of their requirements which could not be obtained under the ticket system; also that it secures good quality of provisions & prevents tickets from being sold. These arguments are fallacious. The requisite knowledge of "cases" can only be obtained at the homes of the poor; if provisions supplied in exchange for tickets are not good the recipients will soon complain, & the remedy is simple; & finally, provisions can be as easily sold as tickets. These, however, are minor details, which it is hardly necessary to set forth in a general scheme. The Hospitals should, in the interest of the Government & of the subscribers, also be included in any such policy, & submitted to the same conditions as benevolent Societies & other cognate Institutions. The funds required to meet the expenses of the Charity Organisation Society, which will not be very considerable, ought to be contributed in equitable proportions from the funds of the relieving bodies, & by the Govt. There should be direct responsible representation of the Government on every local Society or Hospital in receipt of State subsidy, & such representatives should furnish periodically, short reports to the Chief Secretary, containing information in reference to the distribution of funds & showing the increase or decrease of poverty in their several districts, & if possible, the cause thereof. In the Metropolitan area responsible Officers can be selected for this duty from the Health & Charities Departments, & in the Country districts the Government Medical Officers or Police Magistrates can be appointed. A strong sub-committee should be formed to deal specially with the "destitute unemployed" on the lines laid down under a previous heading until charitable aid to this class can be altogether dispensed with.

The foregoing are the principles of Charity Organisation briefly stated, which can be made applicable to the requirements of this Colony. The country Societies which are too distant from the centre of operations can secure representation on the parent Society by proxy; when near enough (as in the case of Newcastle, which ranks next to Sydney in regard to the extent of & character of its in-door & out-door relief) they can send a delegate of their own.
There is nothing in these proposals to cause the different philanthropic bodies which are doing their best to relieve the stress of poverty throughout the Colony under defective methods, to refrain from heartily supporting any practicable policy of Charity Organisation. Many of the best intellects of our time have been brought to bear upon this important question in older countries, & the success which has followed their efforts under much more difficult conditions than exist here, should encourage those who have the interests of the poor & of the community at heart to enter with enthusiasm upon the proposed new movement.
Report of an officer of the State Children's Relief Department on an application for charitable relief from the government.

C.S.I.L. 07/20241

Report and Recommendation in the case of Mr Anthony Kerrigan, 39 Flora Street, Erskineville.

REPORT BY INQUIRY OFFICER

1. What alteration in the applicant's circumstances during the past month has led to the making of this application for assistance? - Too old and infirm to work.

2. Are there any relatives or friends able and willing to assist? - Yes.

3. Do the applicants own property, or have they any money invested? - No.

4. Are the applicants of sober and industrious habits? - Yes.

5. Are the applicants thoroughly respectable, and deserving of assistance? - Yes.

6. Will it be to the interests of the children to leave them with their parents? -

7. Do you consider that the case should be dealt with by the Benevolent Society without the assistance of the Pauper Vote? - Yes.

8. Has the applicant or his wife been granted the Old-age Pension? - No.

9. If not, when will they be entitled to one? - Two years to come.
10. State very briefly any additional circumstances that may have come under your notice.* - Lives with his daughter Catherine - (?) at above address. Has been here over six years. Only 23 years in the State. Not eligible for O.A.P. Has a son John, a hotel keeper at Lithgow. This son assists him. Mary another daughter married in W.A. has assisted. I beg to recommend that he be referred to B.A. for assistance. Not a case for P.V. relief.

date of visit - 17.1.07. J. Webster Chalmers
Inquiry Officer

Persons interviewed:--

* State whether children should be taken in charge of by Government, whether in the case of aged persons applicants should be admitted into an Asylum for the Infirm and Destitute, whether a cash allowance (say amount) should be granted, or whether the case can be sufficiently provided for by the local Benevolent Society.

RECOMMENDATION

In this case I recommend - Approved.

AWG [Green]
Boarding-out Officer

The Under Secretary,
Chief Secretary's Department,
B.C.........190

Notes One or two administrative notes relative to the movement of the document have been omitted.
This form was used by the officers of the S.C.R. Dept. who investigated claims for assistance on behalf of children and also on behalf of old people. The former were dealt with under the various acts, especially the Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act. For the latter there was available the Pauper Vote. The Chief Secretary had final control over it.

The role of the Old Age Pension is apparent in questions 8 and 9. The importance of moral integrity and desert can also be recognised.

After 1906 the Chief Secretary required all local Benevolent Societies to care for all cases of destitution in their districts. It was on the recommendation of the inquiry officer of the S.C.R. Dept. that any alternative action was taken, i.e. applying the Pauper Vote.
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