

POOR-LAW EXPENDITURE.

MISS EDITH SELLERS' article in the *Nineteenth Century*, on "How Poor-law Guardians Spend their Money" is sure to attract attention at a time when most people are groaning at the poor-rate and anticipating an increase in it during the winter. Unfortunately Miss Sellers' article is founded exclusively on the study of one rather small poor-law area, and considering the great liberty allowed the guardians of every district, we cannot accept this as absolutely typical of the whole. Perhaps greater uniformity is desirable, but as things stand, it is not possible to draw safe inferences as to the management of the poor as a whole from a study limited, like Miss Sellers', to a comparatively small district. Had Miss Sellers given the statistics of a number of unions, both urban and rural, in different parts of the country, we should have regarded such a summary as helpful. We cannot say the same of an estimate of one small, unnamed parish.

This does not mean that we do not agree in some things with Miss Sellers. She had great difficulty in getting at her facts owing to the reports published by the union with which she deals being incomplete in many points. It is unfortunate that there is no uniform style of report adopted by all unions, and the Local Government Board would do a service both to Poor-law officials and to ratepayers if they would draw up something akin to the "Uniform System of Accounts" now adopted by so many hospitals, and bid the clerks of all poor-law unions keep their accounts in one fashion. At present the best attempts to compare the expenditure of one district with another are apt to be baffled by the absence in the published reports of any adequate basis of comparison. Thus—to go no further than London—if we want to know what food is allowed an able-bodied pauper, we can get the requisite information from the reports of Wandsworth, Fulham, and Lewisham, but not from that of Paddington, which gives only the dietary tables for infirm patients. On the other hand, Paddington tells at a glance how the expenditure on the relief of the poor has developed during the last 50 years, for which information we look in vain in the reports of Wandsworth and Lewisham. Wandsworth tells those who read its report to what kinds of work it sent the children brought up at its schools. Lewisham shares these schools, but gives its ratepayers no such information as to the after history of the children whose bringing up they have paid for. There is hardly a single point which is not dealt with in one report and omitted in another. Thus any attempt to find out exactly to what purpose the rates are spent in different unions is exceedingly difficult, if not absolutely impossible. Until there is a uniform and complete report given by all unions for public perusal, efforts like those of Miss Sellers to say what is right and what is wrong in Poor-law expenditure will very largely prove futile. They may excite attention when the public is in the mood for it, but they will do little to help the ratepayers in different districts to control the employment of the money they are compelled to give.

Miss Sellers' chief complaint is the very comprehensible one that so much more is spent in administration than on the relief of the poor. This is exactly what is most apt to irritate the ratepayer, and with good reason. In Miss Sellers' union some of the items of expenditure seem incomprehensible—for example, the expenditure in three years of over £3,000 on repairing a laundry, and the payment of a retaining fee of £200 a year to a solicitor, who is paid in addition for the work he does. But she would be wrong in assuming that these things are universal. On the other hand, there are items which, though they appear large are disproportionate only because the ground they cover is so small. Speaking generally it is cheaper to deal with things

on a large scale. Thus where there is a workhouse there must be a workhouse master and matron, whether the building accommodates one hundred inmates or five hundred. In the former case the salaries may be a little smaller; but, as board, lodging, and washing are included as part of the emoluments of the position, the difference in expense will be by no means proportionate to the difference in the numbers in the two institutions. The same number of paupers, scattered through half a dozen different workhouses, will cost more per head for administration expenses than they would if they were all gathered under one roof. To say this is no more than to say that if a hundred families, each of whom keep one servant, were to live together in a big hotel, they could have more efficient service with a smaller number of attendants. But it does not follow that it is always practicable or even desirable so to herd people in crowds. But it must always be remembered that in a small institution administration expenses are likely to bear a larger ratio to maintenance expenses than in a larger one, and the fact that Miss Sellers has taken only one small workhouse from which to draw her inferences makes them less valuable than they might have been had they been founded on more extensive investigations. Her ideas as to the combination of duties of the officials will surprise those who know what Poor-law work is—how trying, how thankless, how little appreciated. She thinks that the labour-master and labour-mistress of the workhouse might act as master and mistress of the casuals also. But the labour-master has to start work in the early morning—and those who know what inmate labour is will understand that the task of supervising it is no sinecure, and it is just when his day's work is done that the casuals begin to come in. Should he, having disposed of his resident paupers, be asked to supervise the washing of vagrants who drop in just as they like up to a late hour at night, and the placing of them in their respective cells. Then, while he is looking after his vagrants in the morning, and setting them to the tasks allotted them, who is to look after his other paupers? The thing might be done, but not without some sacrifice of that automatic regularity on which depends the getting through of the necessary work. Miss Sellers is very scornful regarding the laundry, which she thinks is less needed for the paupers' "bits of things" than for the officials' collars. But the paupers' "bits of things" include, besides their wearing apparel—which is changed as frequently as it is in most middle-class families—their bed-linen, towels, etc. For even the 174 indoor paupers with whom she deals this means a pretty large weekly wash, and for the laundry superintendent something more than a sinecure. In many particulars one could, while admitting the accuracy of Miss Sellers' figures, dispute the justice of her conclusions. But certainly one thing appears clearly—namely, that a pauper is an expensive luxury to the community that supports him. Wherefore, we welcome every attempt to keep him a self-supporting member of the community, and to restore him to that position when he has lost it. But before accepting the conclusion that Guardians either carelessly or wilfully waste the ratepayers' money, we should want a wider survey of the question than is put before us in the *Nineteenth Century*.

CONSTRUCTION NOTES.

A NEW out-patient's department has been opened at the Grimsby Hospital.

A PROPOSITION to establish a children's ward at the Pontypool Hospital is being considered.

THE foundation-stone has been laid of a hospital in connection with the Royal Cornwall Sailors' Home at Falmouth. It will contain a main ward for six beds and two separate wards, convalescent-room, operating-room, and usual offices.

A NEW cottage hospital for Malton, Yorkshire, has been opened by the Countess Fitzwilliam. Earl Fitzwilliam provided a house for the purpose at a nominal rent and paid for the structural alterations necessary, and gave £100 to the hospital funds. There are two wards, with two beds in each, and a single ward, operating-theatre, offices, and matron's apartments.

A NEW Isolation Hospital has been opened at Penistone, in Yorkshire, for the use of the surrounding districts. The site was presented by Sir Walter Stanhope, and the institution will be known as the Stanhope Hospital. The cost of the building has been about £6,000. There is accommodation for eight scarlet fever and four typhoid cases. The administration block has been provided to serve for future extension.

THE New Out-patient Hall was recently opened at the Grimsby and District Hospital. A memorial brass tablet was unveiled by Mr. T. W. G. Hewitt, son of the late William Taylor Hewitt, Esq., J.P., of old Weelsby Hall, by whose generosity the committee have been able to erect the new building. The late Mr. Hewitt bequeathed a sum of £1,250 to the hospital, which sum was devoted to building an out-patient department. A further expenditure of £1,600 was required, and this the trustees most generously consented to subscribe. The consequence is that the Grimsby and District Hospital now possesses a most handsome and up-to-date out-patient department. The new building consists of a large waiting-hall for out-patients, measuring 60 feet by 30 feet and 20 feet high and capable of seating 120 people, with casualty dressing-room, with lavatories, etc., surgeons' consulting-room, and rooms for men and women. The casualty and examining-rooms are fitted up with Doulton's special hospital sinks and are otherwise furnished with every requisite. The floors are of marble terrazzo, the walls having a high, glazed-brick dado and finished above in Portland and Parian cement, coloured with pale-green duresco. From the centre of the hall a short staircase leads to the hospital. The out-patients pass up this staircase to the dispensary and pass out through the exit-door in the corridor. Above the hall are built the nurses' new bedrooms, bath-room, and lavatory, on the lines suggested by THE HOSPITAL. Each nurse has a room to herself. The tablet which Mr. Hewitt unveiled bears the following inscription:—"This Out-patients' Department was erected with money bequeathed by William Taylor Hewitt, Esq., J.P., Weelsby Old Hall, who died on the 8th day of April, 1902." The Mayor unveiled a portrait of the Chairman, which had been subscribed for by the members of the Managing Committee. About 200 guests were present and the wards were tastefully decorated with plants and flowers by the nursing staff.

PRACTICAL DEPARTMENTS.

THE AMERICAN RADIATOR COMPANY'S HEATING APPARATUS.

THE American Radiator Company, whose headquarters on this side are at 89 and 90 Shoe Lane, London, E.C., make a very varied assortment of apparatus for the heating of buildings, by either hot water or steam. Their speciality, as their name implies, is the radiator, of which they make a great many types—with a single row of vertical columns for the hot water or the steam, with two rows, three, or four rows. They make also types known as the Verona, the Tuscan Flue, the Rococo, and the Italian ornamental flue, all in differently ornamental styles; the Italian plain flue, wall radiators, hospital pattern radiators, hinged radiators, curved radiators, etc. The different forms of radiators are intended for different situations and different conditions. The two-column apparatus, for instance, gives not quite twice the heating surface of the single-column, and the four-column, again, not quite twice that of the two-column. The apparatus with Italian names have also a larger heating surface than those with English names. By heating surface is meant the extent of surface of the radiator, measured in square feet, that is radiating heat, sending out heat waves into the surrounding space. As with other firms the company arrange to combine heating with ventilation, and have therefore worked out different forms of louvres, inlet valves, and other apparatus to go with the radiators, and to be fixed in the floor, in the wall, the ceiling, or wherever may be convenient. In connection with the ventilation, they arrange adjustable plates to be fixed on one side of the radiator, to direct the cold entering air up through the radiator, and so to pass over a larger portion of the heated surface than it would do if it passed straight through between the columns.

TWO SPECIAL FORMS OF RADIATOR.

The great point sought by the designer of apparatus intended either to receive heat, or to distribute it, is large surface, in as small a space as possible, and to accomplish this the American Radiator Company have designed two forms of radiators, both to be fixed in a horizontal position, the columns lying down instead of standing up. In one form—"The Excelsior"—the surfaces of the pipes of which the apparatus is formed are corrugated, like the galvanised iron plates that are so much used for temporary buildings. In the other—"The Sanitary Pin"—apparatus, each section is in the form of two flat plates with a space between them—a flat box, in fact—both top and bottom plates having a number of pins each projecting 1 inch from the metal plate of which it forms a part, and with which it is cast. All the radiators are arranged to be put together in sections, each section exposing a certain surface, so that any required surface can always be arranged. The company make "Dining Room" radiators, having hot-closets forming part of the apparatus, that should be very useful in many situations besides dining-rooms. They also make boilers for heating purposes on the sectional plan, both for heating water and for generating steam; as well as storage tanks for hot water, arranged for delivering steam directly to the water, or for heating the water by passing steam through pipes carried in the tank, and again for connecting directly to a hot-water boiler. The company make and keep stocks of every kind of valve and connecting piece and their accessories. They make a pressure-reducing valve that should be useful where live steam is employed for heating water, back-pressure valves, and a special form of nozzle for regulating the flow between the main and branch pipes, and, in fact, every necessary adjunct for heating supply. Where there is a fitting-