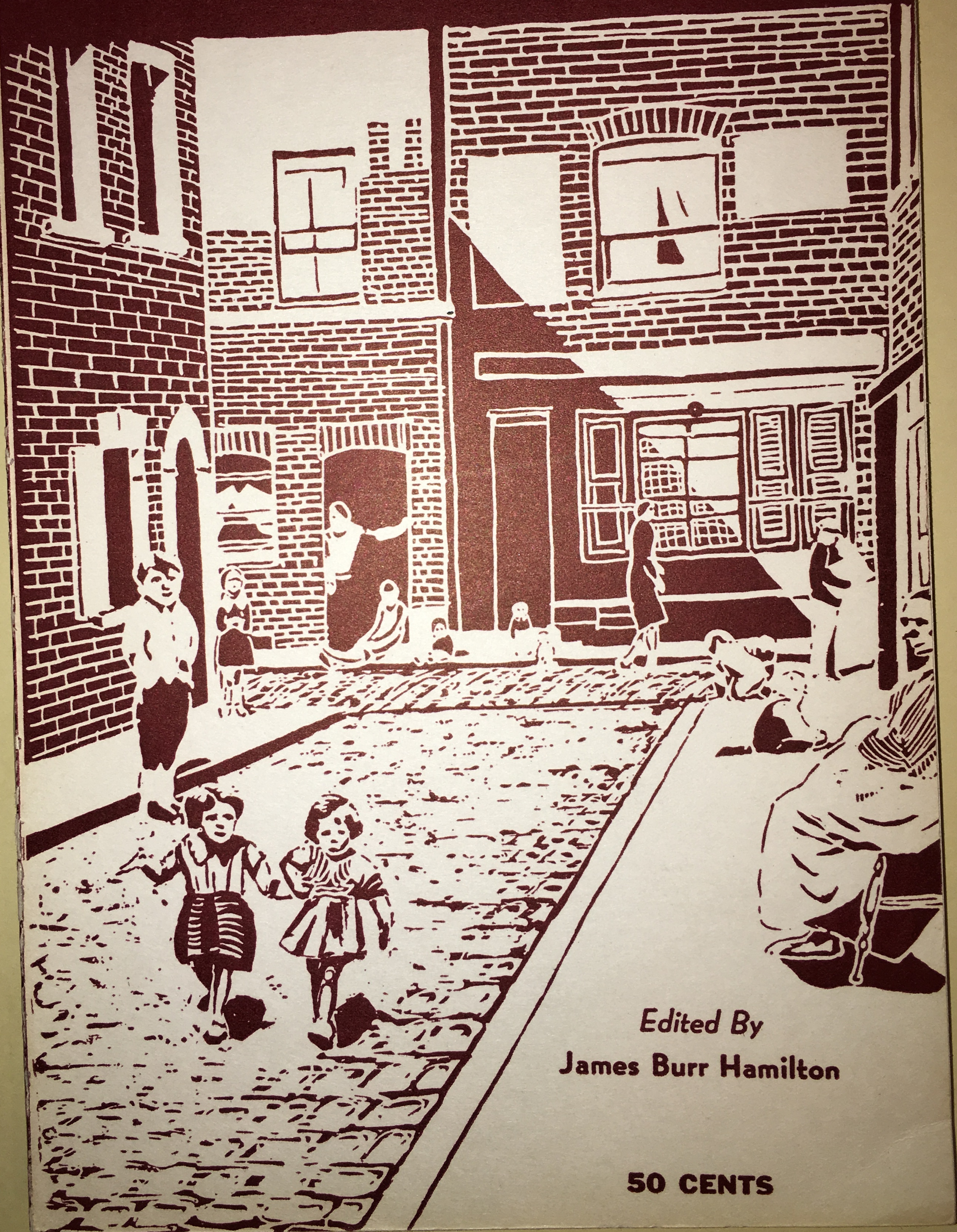


# CHILDREN OF THE SLUMS



*Edited By*  
**James Burr Hamilton**

**50 CENTS**



CHILDREN OF THE SLUMS\*



# CHILDREN OF THE SLUMS

---

*Edited by*

JAMES BURR HAMILTON

---

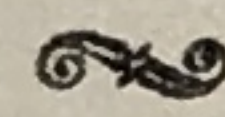
*FH*

FLANDERS HALL : *Publishers*

SCOTCH PLAINS, NEW JERSEY



### PUBLISHER'S NOTE



*The opinions expressed in this book are the opinions of the author, editor, or of the authorities quoted. They are not necessarily those of Flanders Hall.*

## CONTENTS

I. Britannia's Stepchildren	7
II. The Gypsies	21
III. Malnutrition	31
IV. Child Labor	37
V. Adult Unemployment	43
VI. The Farm Laborer	49
VII. Crime and Degeneracy	53
<i>Appendix</i>	59
<i>Bibliography</i>	71



## I BRITANNIA'S STEPCHILDREN

ENGLAND was the first land in which the Industrial Revolution, that creator of vast wealth and abysmal poverty, developed and expanded the "slum". The word itself originated in England, and the institution has always been associated with London and other wealthy English and Scottish towns. But it is not confined to the towns. Even in the lovely British countryside, slum conditions prevail.

The City slum, as we know it today, developed from about 1800 on, when thousands of British farmers were driven from their land to make room for sheep-raising on a huge scale, whereby land capitalists made immense fortunes. These "immigrants", in so far as they did not perish en route, poured into the cities and for them were provided shacks, intended to be temporary, but which in time became permanent "homes" for the very poor. The British landlord, left unmolested by a government to which the individual is sacrosanct in his enterprises for the accumulation of money, soon found that income could be squeezed out of these very poor, and nothing had to be expended in return.<sup>1</sup> The *Empire Hygiene Year Book* of 1938-9 gives a harrowing picture of the lives of these stepchildren of Britannia, as they crowd in families of eleven and twelve in one or two tiny rooms, hardly capable of housing two.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. George Bernard Shaw: *Widowers' Houses*.



These are the people who shocked Thomas Wolfe, during his otherwise pleasant visit to London, and when he calls "the gnomes" of England in contrast to the well-fed, large, complacent "big people", the British Lords of Creation as he describes them in his novel, *You Can't Go Home Again*. He is impressed not only with their congenitally stunted and miserable appearance, but especially with their stodgy acceptance of their fate and their hopelessness of any betterment.

The writer was impressed in reading Wolfe's account because of a personal experience he had had in the lovely cathedral town of Durham in 1927. Stepping from the train, he was accosted by a starved and ragged boy who looked to be ten years old but said he was fifteen and who importuned us to allow him to carry our heavy bag. We had not the heart to do that when we looked at his sticks of arms and dismissed him with a shilling to comfort him. But his appearance was haunting: trousers that ended at the knees in a ragged fringe, sleeves that left not only the elbow but half the arm exposed, a dirty face with hollow cheeks and deepset eyes out of which hunger and dullness looked forth. Still startled and abashed by the sight which we had never seen duplicated in any of the defeated countries where there was distress enough, but not so hopelessly apparent, we turned into the street and almost ran into one of the "fat, wellfed Lords of Creation," a bishop in full regalia of office, whose cheerful blue eyes above his fat cheeks passed unseeing over the lad. Of course, these were but two examples of conditions prevailing more or less in many countries where wealth and poverty dwell side by side.

But Wolfe's book brought the experience back and made it appear a much more general condition, as he declared that the "gnomes" were fifty per cent of the population.

Perhaps it is this which accounts for the calm spirit with which they take to the underground bombshelters which probably are not much worse than their accustomed "homes". Perhaps, also, the German bombs will ironically help more than decades of philanthropic endeavors to rid London of its slums.

Any one not acquainted through personal observation with the living conditions of Great Britain's army of permanently poor would find difficulty in visualizing the conditions under which, according to British sources, thousands and hundred thousands of these unfortunates live and have lived for generations. On the continent, where social conditions have been studied for many years and where the accumulation of wealth due to the Industrial Revolution, was not so vast and so sudden, there have never been conditions to compare to these. Charles Dickens described them in some of his novels in the first part of the nineteenth century and writers and agitators in the twentieth have adduced ample proof that modern times have brought no essential betterment, but have rather, through the non-employment and stoppage of housebuilding consequent upon the World War and the great depression, increased and accentuated the misery of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> According to Sir Kingsley Wood<sup>2</sup> there existed in 1938 two million of these slums.

Although the picture of misery and degradation is

<sup>1</sup> Barnes, Harry Elmer: *Living in the Twentieth Century*, Indianapolis, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> House of Commons Debate on Slumclearance, Feb. 15, 1938.



fairly uniform throughout these slum dwellings, there exist several types, arising out of historical conditions and temporary needs.

These jerry-built huts, hastily put up to serve temporary needs, then preserved through the greed of the landlords, form labyrinths of alleys and courts in the heart of cities like London, Glasgow, and the industrial and mining towns of Wales. With the rise of the Industrial Revolution and the need for thousands of factory workers, farm laborers and dispossessed farmers crowded these sections, forming entire quarters of the cities. Living conditions in these regions at the present day are unspeakably primitive in regard to canalization, water-supply and elementary hygiene. Vermin-infested houses, lack of light and sun, damp walls which never dry out, etc., produce disease and lead to criminal developments in the more energetic and enterprising of the people reduced to lives worse than those of swine.<sup>1</sup>

*The Empire Hygienic Year Book*<sup>2</sup> gives a summary of the situation in 1938-9: A long continued shortage of good and inexpensive houses drives the poorer elements of the population into badly located, poorly built and unhygienic dwellings, doomed to rapid decay, and keeps them there permanently. These people reproduce themselves to an extent that renders them impotent to deal with economic conditions. They have no recourse but to crowd together more and more, with results of increasing filth and degeneracy. They can never extricate

<sup>1</sup> Hutt, Allen: *The Conditions of the Workingclasses in Great Britain*, London, 1933. Nor do later accounts show any substantial improvement. Cf. "Special Areas Number," *London Times*, June 27th, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> p. 27.

themselves from their plight except through government assistance.

Two descriptions of a typical house in these regions, one made by a nurse in 1933,<sup>1</sup> the other by an independent investigator in 1937, will serve as typical for thousands. The former describes the home of a girl of fourteen, the eldest of a large family, who offered to keep the stairs, halls, walls, etc. of the tenement scrubbed for ten shillings (about two dollars) a week, providing soap, brush, etc., herself. The house is a four-story one with a sort of attic added in which Sally, "the heroine" of the story, lives. The stairs are large and filthy. The work could not possibly be done in less than two days, especially as the water has to be carried from the cellar. The manager of the owner, a well-to-do man, offered her four shillings weekly (about one dollar) for this herculean task, about tuppence (twenty cents) an hour. Sally figured that she could hardly buy the soap required for this sum. Thereupon the agent threatened eviction for her and the entire family, if she ever showed her ugly mug again.

At the upper end of the filthy staircase is Sally's "home". It consists of two small rooms furnished with several chairs, a few soapboxes, two beds, a table, a child's bed and a bureau nailed to the wall. There is much light, as the windows are large, but no fresh air whatever, because the frames are so warped that the windows cannot be opened. The state of the windows has been repeatedly reported but without result. The floor is sunken in the middle: if one were to step on it

<sup>1</sup> An Ex-Nursing Sister (Joan Conquest): *The Naked Truth: Shocking Revelations about the Slums of London*, 1933. pp. 51ff.



one would break through to the floor below. When the sister tried to raise the corner of a ragged bit of wall-paper still clinging to one wall, Sally exclaimed: "Don't touch it, or the bugs will swarm out. Father says, better let sleeping bugs alone!" . . . The passages were so narrow, that the sister walked side-ways, to protect her coat from the insects and dirt on the walls. Because of a flaw in the construction of the waterpipes the faucets could not be turned on without flooding the entire house. That also was reported without result. Hence all the water needed had to be carried up from the cellar. For the entire section two indescribable toilets had to serve. The chimney is not properly guarded, the stairs are frail. In case of fire all the inhabitants would perish in trying to escape through the narrow passages, which are slippery from grime. Children swarm about. The flat under Sally's is vacant because no one can pay the rent. Here the beams of the ceiling which forms the sunken floor of Sally's room stick out like broken ribs. Sally's parents pay one pound (about five dollars) a month for the rotten, decayed, empty rooms under the roof. Either pay or get out!

The large room in the first floor which had just been freshly renovated and papered was to cost thirty shillings (about seven dollars) a week, i.e. about thirty dollars per month for four naked walls in the slum.

Owners of these rotten, mouldy holes in which the poor of the slums live are:

1. A well-fare Organization.
2. A well-known society lady.
3. A former officer of the Sanitary Corp.

4. A well-to-do business man.

5. A certain Society closely affiliated with the Church.

The later account by an investigator, George Orwell,<sup>1</sup> says that however these houses or dwellings may differ in size, their general construction and appearance are identical: The number of rooms varies from two to five, but the living-space is almost absolutely identical: 14 by 15 square feet. There is an open range; in the larger ones there may be a separate scullery, in the smaller ones the sink is in the livingroom.

In 1928 the London *Times*<sup>2</sup> published an illuminating account of the situation: The splendid work which had been accomplished in building new homes in the outskirts of the city, did not extend to the slums in its (London's) heart. These have remained every bit as unhygienic and overcrowded as ever. Most of the poor who live in these slum sections cannot afford the higher rentals of the newly built suburban apartment houses, nor the loss of time and money in travelling to and from their places of employment. Only that same morning the writer had received absolutely reliable reports from an investigator of forty-two individual cases of overcrowding in a district of South-London. These reports reveal disgraceful state of affairs: Large families are literally massed into two or three ill-lighted and damp rooms, with resulting illness of many of the inhabitants. Examples picked at random could be cited for pages. Father, mother and five children (boys of 14 and sixteen, girls of five, eight, and eleven) live in one room. In another case father, mother, and six children (the oldest a

<sup>1</sup> Orwell, George: *The Road to Wigan Pier*, London, 1937, pp. 51ff.

<sup>2</sup> July 26, 1928.



girl of eleven) occupy a single room. "The longer we hesitate to find a solution for this problem, the more difficult any solution becomes. For it is clearly to be seen that the slums are increasing in extent because increasing overpopulation and neglect of the housing situation."

Three years later, the International Labor Bureau<sup>1</sup> of Geneva reported that in Scotland almost one-half the inhabitants of the four largest cities, i.e. 789,000 persons, live in overcrowded quarters, averaging more than two persons to one room; one-fifth, i.e. 368,960 inhabited flats averaging more than three persons to a room, eight percent of the entire number must content themselves with one room for every four persons.

To supplement these temporary shelters now used as permancies, old one-family houses, well-built and originally comfortable, when run-down and no longer meeting with demands made by modern middleclass families, were subdivided but not renovated to meet hygienic conditions considered necessary to-day, and turned over to the poor, becoming slum-dwellings. Where once dwelt one middle-class family in comfort there are now crowded together from five to fifteen families of the very poor. Some of these houses were built seventy or one hundred years ago. Originally solidly constructed, with good stairs and doors, they have been allowed to deteriorate until they are now unfit for human inhabitation. No Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would today allow beasts to be kept there, said the "nursing sister."<sup>2</sup> The walls are covered with tattered

<sup>1</sup> *International Labor Board*, Geneva, 1931. pp. 71ff.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Conquest: *An Ex-nursing Sister, The Naked Truth*, London, 1933. p. 19 and 42ff.

paper behind which vermin crawls, the floors sink in, stairs are unsafe, broken windows are mended with rags, the outside walls are leprous with great bald spots where the stucco, relic of Victorian days and past grandeur, has fallen off. Another investigation describes<sup>1</sup> these old houses as standing up only because they are supported by their neighbors. The roofs are caved in, dampness and odors of decay are the constant enemies of the inhabitants. To spend money on repairs would be wasted, but they are considered good enough for the poor.

The nursing sister goes on to depict the tubercular children inhabiting these damp quarters, sleeping three and four in a bed. In many cases some of the bedrooms are uninhabitable during a rainy night, because of the defectiveness of the roof. And in one case one could enter the second floor bedroom through a window from an embankment close by. No wonder that in 1938 Titmuss<sup>2</sup> showed infant mortality to be hundreds of percent higher in these slum regions as compared to healthier and more well-to-do communities. And these conditions and their results prevail not only in big cities like London but all over the British Isles.<sup>3</sup>

During the depression years after the first World War, highly qualified workers and respectable artisans were often obliged to seek refuge in such quarters, thus augmenting the race of slum-folk. The ex-nursing sister

<sup>1</sup> Hugh Quigley and Ismay Goldie: *Housing and Slum Clearance in London*, London, 1934, pp. 118f.

<sup>2</sup> Titmuss, Richard M.: *Poverty and Population*, London, 1938. pp. 170ff. and Wilkinson, Ellen: *The Town That Was Murdered*, London, 1939. pp. 240ff.

<sup>3</sup> *London Times*, "Special Areas," June, 1939, No. 48324.



quoted above tells of a child living in such a "home" who bitterly said, what wonder that when you are obliged to live like pigs, you become a pig? She goes on to describe such houses, built one to three hundred years ago, in which today the "Society for the Protection of Animals" would not permit any brute beast to be housed, but in which huge families are crowded together. The walls infested by vermin, floors that cave in, windows mended only with rags, roofs dropping down on the inhabitants, doors that do not close, an odor of decay infesting the whole—make these places unfit for any human beings. The sister then goes on to describe the heartrending cases of tubercular children who sleep three and four in a bed. No wonder that infant mortality is rampant under such conditions, not only in cities like London, but in Wales and Scotland as well.<sup>1</sup>

This type of dwelling for the poor is particularly prevalent in London, where it originated in the so-called "domestic slavery" of older days. The basements are below the surface of the sidewalk, or only a few inches above. They receive their light solely from a sort of trap near the ceiling. Here in London there still exist 100,000 of these "cave-dwellers", and that in such wealthy districts as Westminster, Islington, Kensington, etc., which charm and stun the visitor with their luxurious palaces and splendid public buildings. "Nursing Sister"<sup>2</sup> gives a graphic and shocking account of a typical family crowded into such a cellar: In this single room basement lives a family of nine. Father, mother,

<sup>1</sup> Titmuss, Richard M.: *Poverty and Population*, London, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> loc. cit. p. 60 et al.





and "Bill" (if he comes home at night) sleep in one bed, Jenny with five children in the other. The "other room" is a disused coal-cellar, rented to a lodger, to piece out the exorbitant rent. In another of these cellars, lives a tubercular man with a wife and four children, two boys of 3 and 5 years respectively and two girls of 5 and 10! This is a respectable family who desperately try to find another home but in vain. Generally the laundries of the entire house are also situated in the cellar, adding to the dampness and the odors. No wonder the families are infested with tuberculosis and the children have rickets. That no essential amelioration has occurred since the "Nursing Sister" made her "Shocking Revelations" in 1933, appears from the report on "Distressed Areas" of Wal Hannington.<sup>1</sup> His report shows how widespread over the British Empire these conditions are. And the *Economist*<sup>2</sup> writes that London in 1937 still contained 20,000 of these cellar-dwellings.

A journalist sent out to gather "human interest" stories, tells of a woman living in one of these basements, who managed with true British stoicism to joke about living in a sort of medieval castle but who concluded with an impassionate appeal: "For God's sake get us out of this!"

These form an English specialty and are scattered throughout the industrial areas of Great Britain. They crowd a maximum of families into a minimum of space with the total exclusion not only of the most elementary claim to beauty but also to hygienic decency and ordinary comfort. Placed in close rows that admit no air,

<sup>1</sup> Hannington, W.: *Distressed Areas*, London, 1937, pp. 16ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Economist*, London, May 8, 1937.



these monotonous two-story dwellings stand back to back, one row abutting on the alley, the other on the yard. In this yard are the W.C.S., to which the dwellers of the "front" houses have access only by going around the entire street, a distance sometimes of 200 yards. The dwellers of the back, on the other hand, have a splendid view of these "conveniences"—and the smells, free gratis. The lower room in each case is "the parlor" in which the cooking, washing, etc. must be done. There is no room for a pantry and food is preserved in the cellar head. Upstairs the entire family sleeps in the one room. Built 70 or 100 years ago, and often so situated that the nearby mines or railroad undermine the foundations, there still existed in 1933 twenty thousand of "back-to-backs" in Leeds, forty thousand in Birmingham, sixteen thousand in Sheffield, etc.<sup>1</sup>

These are more frequently found in Scotland, since the typical Englishman even in dire poverty shows his predilection for an individual house. The tenements of Glasgow are in particularly bad repute. According to Hutt,<sup>2</sup> half the population of Glasgow in 1931 lived in such tenements of two rooms or less! One description will stand for the rest: Hutt tells of visiting tenements in which the ceilings caved in unless continually propped by the tenant, the floor was 6 inches off the horizontal, no window could be opened, no door closed, where food was kept next to the unspeakable W. C. And here lived honest, respectable workingmen, no typical slum-dweller. And seven years before Hutt made his inves-

<sup>1</sup> Simon Sir E. D.: *The Anti-Slum Campaign*, London, 1933, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> p. 112.

tigation, the State Commissioner had made a report similar to that of Hutt, but apparently without any result whatever. So that in 1930 J. C. Symonds<sup>1</sup> could write that apparently no one in authority seemed to consider it necessary to clean out this Augeas stable, this thicket of crime, dirt, and stink existing in the midst of the second largest city of the United Kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Hutt, *loc. cit.*, p. 113.



## II

### THE GYPSIES

GEORGE ORWELL<sup>1</sup> gives a harrowing account of the lives and sufferings of the modern Anglo-Saxon nomads. No romantic gypsy cavalcade this, nor even to be compared to the modest Ford, in which American families in the years of depression, sought to find new homes. These wagons do not even afford the relaxation of a change of venue. For they are not practicable: they have lost their wheels or tires (some are discarded auto-buses), they have no methods of locomotion, they are simply the worst, the most exposed, the most hopeless tenements for the very poorest of England's outcasts. Huddled together at the side of a ditch or a smelly canal they look like accumulations of refuse. And so they are: human refuse. The town of Wigan, which forms the subject of Orwell's investigation, with a population of 85,000, had 200 such wagons drawn up along its canal, housing 1000 human beings. How many others there are in different parts of England it is impossible to compute, because authorities are reticent on the subject. In fact, in most places, local laws forbid this type of slum, but crass necessity due to lack of housing compels the authorities to "look the other way." And besides, strange as it may seem, even these miserable excuses for houses bring in good rental to some peo-

<sup>1</sup> *Road to Wigan Pier*, pp. 51ff.



ple. Five shillings a week is the very lowest rental and some bring in ten shillings weekly to whoever it is that has the heart to own and rent such refuge to human misery. The filth in which these lowest of the low live reminds Orwell of the Indian Koolies in Burma and the shelter from the rainy English climate is most inadequate. The dampness penetrates the floor of the wagon, the shelter from the rain is often nothing more than a bit of canvas. Even on a sunny day, the beds would be dripping wet at eleven in the morning. The interior is usually 5x6 feet and houses in its single room a family of from two to five or six of these derelicts. One "palatial" residence was 14 feet long and sheltered fourteen people! These seem to be the most hopeless of the outcasts, having given up hope of ever again finding employment and living one knows not how, if their precarious existence can be dignified by the name of "living".

To any one personally unacquainted with housing in Great Britain it will come as an especial surprise to hear that the rural working people—farm laborers—live under circumstances as bad as, or even worse than those of the city slums. Conservative England has been averse to thorough-going changes since the time of Feudalism and Serfdom, in the living conditions of the country laborers. The "cottages" which the tourist finds so attractive with their ivy covered walls and sloping roofs, usually belong to the "Estate" and are at the disposal of the landowners. Some of these are kindly and public-spirited enough to make alterations and rebuild. But many are not. The tenant has few rights

and has to take what he gets or get out. Repairs and additions are expensive and are often not made. In the so-called "tied cottages" the tenant, in addition to his rental, is obliged to render unpaid service to his landlord at harvest time, etc. Also a relic of feudal times.<sup>1</sup> A tenant from Lancashire puts it as follows: You stay in the cottage till it falls down on your head, then you can go to the city, or do as you like! A lady from Cambridge County tells of a family of eleven persons all sleeping in one room. An M.P. from a rural district in Berkshire writes concerning six villages in his district, that nothing was empty, however bad, more were urgently needed. The greatest disadvantage is that not one out of twenty has a second sleepingroom. All have to sleep in one room, without separation of sexes. He told of one house with two bedrooms housing eighteen people: four married couples, one betrothed pair, and a number of halfgrown individuals of both sexes.<sup>2</sup> The wife of a farm laborer writes that they possess one small bedroom which contains a double bed and a child's bed, a chair and a washstand, which completely fill all the space, leaving scarcely room to turn around; it is so low that in many places, the inmates cannot stand up straight; then there is a small kitchen with a sleeping couch, a table, some chairs, hardly giving the cook a chance to move about. The floor is no better than that of a pig-sty, full of holes and cracks; a small pantry is roachinfested, because always damp and dark and receiving light only through a hole in the ceiling. The roof is so low, that even in midsummer the house is dark by

<sup>1</sup> Hutt. p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> Fabian Tract No. 101.



four o'clock. The toilet is in an annex: the seat is broken, there is no roof, so that they have to take along an umbrella when it rains. All laundry, bathing, etc. have to be performed in the tiny kitchen.<sup>1</sup> Such luxury as running water is almost unknown even in the villages. The farmer's wife must fetch all water for household purposes from the common pump, often several hundred yards away. They supplement this by rainwater from the roof and collected in nearby ditches—a method not conducive to health. In the drought year 1929, the water had to be carried in carts from a distance often of several miles so that cattle had to be slaughtered or sold.<sup>2</sup>

Before the first World War, the official estimate of necessary renovations of decaying cottages was 100,000. Meanwhile this number has not appreciatively risen, since the building program of post-war times neglected the rural problem in favor of the cities.<sup>3</sup>

Summing up these instances, to which innumerable others well authenticated might easily be added, we may say that Britannia's stepchildren are neglected in the lovely countryside with its manorial country houses situated in the midst of vast, luxurious parks, as much as in the imperial cities where cheek by jowl with splendid private mansions and stately public buildings there exist basement dwellings, "back-to-backs," slum hovels, and tenements of unspeakable dirt and misery for the very poor. No wonder Englishmen themselves have called the slum "the cancer of the Imperium".<sup>4</sup> In the

<sup>1</sup> Hutt, p. 217.

<sup>2</sup> *The Land Worker*, Feb. 1932, p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> Hutt, p. 218.

<sup>4</sup> *Up With the Houses and Down with the slums*, London, 1934, p. 1.

same year, Hugh Quigley and Ismay Goldie<sup>1</sup> published some appalling statistics; in the county of London alone there were:

2087 families of 6—11 members living in 1 room.

4149 families of 8—15 members living in 2 rooms.

1829 families of 10—15 members living in 3 rooms.

In 1903 Jack London<sup>2</sup> had been shocked that in London 300,000 families had to live in single rooms. Since the law requires 400 cubic feet per person, he deduced that 900,000 of the London poor live under conditions contrary to law. We see from the statistics of 1934 quoted above that there was no appreciable improvement in the 30 years that had elapsed since Jack London's day. In 1933-34 the Bishop of Winchester<sup>3</sup> declared during a parliamentary debate that in that year the census showed that in the fifty largest cities of England there were not less than one-half a million people who were living three or more in one room. In London 150,000; in Durham, 90,000; in Manchester 60,000, etc. And conditions instead of improving as a result of all this publicity, seem to be growing steadily worse. So in 1935-36 the parliamentary debate<sup>4</sup> disclosed that in one region cases were found where thirty-two persons were living in a house with two bedrooms, or seventeen persons in one room. It goes without saying that vermin, rats, and beetles infest such "homes".

Great opposition is encountered by all who try to get

<sup>1</sup> *Housing and Slum Clearance in London*, London, 1934, p. 31ff. and table in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> *People of the Abyss*, New York, 1903.

<sup>3</sup> *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 1933-34, vol. 90, pp. 400f.

<sup>4</sup> *Parliamentary Debates*, 1935-36 Vol. 314, Col. 323.



an even approximately accurate estimate of the number of slum dwellers in Great Britain. It is one of the peculiarities of the British Democracy that the most essential acts for the benefit of the population are left to the judgment or caprice or venality of the local authorities. The district physician reports to the local board that a certain region is unsanitary, i.e. a "slum". If the local board agrees with the doctor, a "clearing project" is determined upon. The owner of the section is notified, the plan is submitted to the Ministry of Health, which sets a hearing and notifies both parties (owner and local board) of the date for a hearing. If the minister reports to the local board that the clearing plan (with or without alterations) is accepted, the board may proceed to evacuate the tenants, establish them elsewhere, and proceed to clear the slum, after of course reimbursing the owner. Thus it appears that, since no definite norms are extant, it is in last analysis the local doctor on whose judgment the necessity for clearance depends. There is hence a great divergence in different parts of England as to what constitutes a "slum". And one can well imagine what diverse arguments can be brought "with pressure" before the boards in whose hands the judgment finally lies.<sup>1</sup> The tenant as well as the owner is most reluctant to have his dwelling declared "slum". The former has too often experienced the bitter truth that he is moved "out of the fryingpan into the fire", since there simply are not enough houses. To the latter, it means a pecuniary loss, since nowhere are rents so profitable in comparison with investment and outlay as

<sup>1</sup> Fremantle, F. L., *The Housing of the Nation*, London, 1927, p. 80, and Simon, *The Anti-slum Campaign*, p. 87 and 123.

in the poorest regions of all—in the slums. Hence a tremendous corruption is the natural result. The district physician runs against inexplicable obstructions in dealing with the boards, the decisions of the Ministry of Health are subjected to "pressure" and often achieve strange results—all because private "interests" are primarily concerned. Simon<sup>1</sup>, taking as a basis the lowest "basement dwellings" in Wales, makes the following statistic of the number of slums in Great Britain:

1. On the basis of the worst basements: 10,000.
2. On the basis of "bad" houses and blocks: 100,000.
3. On the basis of the "Manchester slums": 1,000,000.
4. On the basis of all houses that ought to be razed: 4,000,000.

He thus concludes that 4,000,000 represent the minimum of dwellings that must be replaced if the British population is to live in decency. This was the estimate for 1933. In 1939 Sir Kingsly Wood<sup>2</sup> gave the estimate for England and Wales with the exclusion of Scotland (notorious for the number and condition of its slums in Glasgow and other industrial centers) as 2,000,000.

The causes for this overcrowding and the slowness of improvement are:

1. Lack of housing facilities in virtually the entire country.
2. Poverty.
3. Pauperization through the industrial crisis and the compulsion to save rental.

<sup>1</sup> *Anti-slum Campaign*, p. 125f.

<sup>2</sup> Whitaker, *Social Services*, 1939, p. 296.



4. The tendency to consider the expenditure of money for rent an extravagance.
5. Crowding due to landlords who thus want to make good their losses incurred as a result of the Maximum Rental Act of 1919 by additional tenants.
6. The taking in of "lodgers" by the tenant in order to reduce the rent.
7. The increase of population since the world war which was not matched by a sufficient increase of new building.

Hence in 1904 it could be stated that the main cause of the brief and miserable life of the very poor in London was the unsanitary and crowded condition of the slums in which they are obliged to live.<sup>1</sup> One fourth of all the children of the nation lack the necessary living space for healthy development.<sup>2</sup> In 1933 Joan Conquest gives perhaps the most pathetic picture of the plight of the children who have no place to play except the open toilet of the entire household, where (when the water chances to be running) they play boat with matches! But the tenant in question defended them: "They have to play somewhere, when it rains and they are not in school."<sup>3</sup>

Concerning the high rents and the "lodger" two investigators in 1933 wrote:<sup>4</sup> The scarcity of rooms for the poor is so great that the landlords and the lodging-keepers demand phantastically high rents for the meanest of accommodations. A landlord can divide up an entire

<sup>1</sup> *Fabian Tract*, No. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *The Economist*, Aug. 15, 1936, Vol. III, p. 293.

<sup>3</sup> *Ex-Nursing Sister*, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Howard Marshall and Avice Trevelyan, *Slums*, London, 1933, p. 50.

house into single furnished rooms and get one pound (about five dollars) a week rental for it. The incomes are enormous. A woman in Manchester who owned several such houses received approximately ninety pounds weekly (400 dollars) in this fashion. And in some cases the beds are let out in eight hour shifts, thus accommodating three tenants in the twenty-four hours for each bed!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fabian Tract*, 103.



### III

## MALNUTRITION

**I**N addition to overcrowding and unsanitary living there is malnutrition with all its evil consequences.

That a wealthy country like England, renowned for its consumption of meat, should allow a large part of its population to starve or live on the very borderline of starvation seems incredible, yet this is amply documented for over a large number of years. As early as 1899 a Frenchman,<sup>1</sup> depicted conditions in Britain as follows: "There is unfortunately poverty in all countries and all over Europe. But England is unique in presenting the vision of a plague of poverty that may well be called national. England is actually the classical land of misery, of this abominable and repulsive form of misery that is non-existent in lands outside of the United Kingdom, this leprosy that gnaws at its vitals and which may well spell its ruin. Only personal observation can possibly convey an exact picture of this poverty, and that not only in the congested sections of the capital, but all over; for no section of the country is free of this curse."

In 1910 Lloyd George<sup>2</sup> declared that no land that allows its injured, sick and maimed, its women and children, widows and orphans to suffer hunger, could seriously claim to be civilized. Society has for centuries

<sup>1</sup> Jean de la Poulaine, *The Colossus with Feet of Brass*, Paris, 1899, pp. 50ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Better Times*, London, 1910, pp. 31f.



abolished starvation as a punishment even for the worst criminals, and even the most barbarous societies never let the children of criminals starve. But what is happening today in the Britain's gigantic industries? A workingman collapses in the heyday of his life and becomes incapable of working. He has previously contributed his utmost to the common weal. Now he is no longer capable of doing this. Why is it permissible in this land of plenty to allow him and his children to starve? What filthy niggardliness for the richest country in the world to allow the widows and orphans of its faithful servants to go hungry!

An illustration of such "niggardliness" is furnished by a report of a court proceeding which appeared in *The New Leader*<sup>1</sup> in 1937 (twenty-seven years after Lloyd George's charges). The report tells of an old workingman who was arraigned on the charge of having "lifted" a comb worth three pence. It developed that the man had been employed by the Midland Railway for thirty-five years, was now invalided and received the magnificent sum of four shillings (about one dollar) weekly as a "pension" from the Railway. Surely, comments the paper, such Munificence should be immortalized with letters of gold!

By 1926 no improvement is shown in the report of conditions culled from the written records of workingmen themselves.<sup>2</sup> The woman who collects these records cries out indignantly at the close: Asks the men who in the midst of the coal sections, after all records for coal

<sup>1</sup> *The New Leader*, April 16th, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> *Working Days, being the Personal Records of Sixteen Working Men and Women, written by themselves and edited by Margaret A. Pollock*, London, 1926, p. 73.

deliveries have been broken sit shivering in their unheated huts in the dead of winter; ask the men who all day are immersed in filthy, heavy and badly paid labor and are kept like Chinese coolies in the treadmill, why they are raising their voices against the unjust scarlet edges of our industrial lives; ask the men who struggle for legislation to provide decent homes for the working people, educational opportunities for their children, insurance against sickness and injury for the workers, and who are continually terrorized in the coal regions—ask these men!

Yet in 1936 the Trades Union Report<sup>1</sup> shows no diminution of these evils. It gibes at a government which could spend millions in preparations for war, but could not afford the necessary funds for the preservation of the nation by contributing to the maintenance of its women and children. And in 1937 and 1938 Quincy Howe<sup>2</sup> and Robert Briffaut<sup>3</sup> writing independently agree that one-half of the population of England is suffering from malnutrition.

As late as 1939 the *Amalgamated Engineering Union*<sup>4</sup> declares that one out of every four Londoners is destined to end in the poorhouse. That the suicide quota is the highest in the world: statistics shows one suicide for every thirteen dwellings in the heart, i.e. the slum district, of London; London, the field of adventure, the stage of Shakespeare, the Mother of Nations! Almost at the same time, The British Medical Society<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Reports of the Proceedings of the 68th Annual Trades Union Congress*, London, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> Howe, Quincy, *England Expects Every American to do his Duty*, N. Y., 1937, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> Briffaut: *Decline and Fall of the British Empire* (N. Y., 1938).

<sup>4</sup> Vols. 16, No. 2, p. 75.

<sup>5</sup> Report for 1936.



declared that 10 Million of Britain's population were living on a standard below that of convicts.

Disease naturally abounds among both children and adults in the slums. In 1936 a test was made in the industrial City of Durham and out of one hundred children only six were found free from rickets, resulting from malnutrition.<sup>1</sup> Two years later, Dr. Raymond Cattell<sup>2</sup> reported a disquieting increase in mental diseases and a decrease in the intelligence of school children. Particularly do absence of air and light as well as the horrible overcrowding add to the tubercular cases. In Wales, the great mining and poverty center, infant mortality from this dread disease is claimed to be 50 percent! In 1939 Ellen Wilkinson<sup>3</sup> in her sensational book, *The Town That Was Murdered*, sums up the case for thousands of families: In overcrowded dwellings, in which so many of the people live, chances for recovery for a tubercular patient are almost hopeless. Moreover the patient becomes a source of danger for all his fellows. To treat a case of pneumonia adequately in overcrowded houses is virtually impossible. And Quigley<sup>4</sup> and Goldie add the detail: A tubercular patient shares his bed with two or three others, either also tubercular or as yet free of the disease—for how long? And close: with the incontrovertible statement. These are extremely unsatisfactory conditions for a tubercular household."

<sup>1</sup> M'Gonigle, G. C.: *Poverty and Public Health*, London, 1936, pp. 65ff.

<sup>2</sup> Witcutt, W. P.: *Dying Lands*, London, 1938, pp. 9f.

<sup>3</sup> Wilkinson, Ellen: *The Town that was Murdered*, London, 1939, p. 239.

<sup>4</sup> loc. cit., p. 140 and 239.

We may divide the slum outcasts into two groups: first, those whom Wolfe characterized as "gnomes" human beings definitely marked as "slum" by generations of forefathers whose experience had set its marks indelibly upon the faces, bodies, and probably minds of their off-spring; secondly, the recent accretions to the slum population from the ranks of decent and trained artisans and workers whom unemployment has cast out of their old surroundings and who have not yet succumbed entirely to their environment and of the young people whom industry has not been able to absorb.

The army of unemployed pours continually into the slums increasing the crowding and misery there and itself becoming infected by all the diseases of mind and body which haunt these abodes of misery. In February, 1938 the periodical, *Labour*,<sup>1</sup> states that to grasp the social tragedy of England one should first of all envisage the problem of the thousands of young men and women of between 19 and 21 years of age who have never had a job, have no hope of ever getting one, who are literally "human beings without value." John Collin in *Youth in British Industry*<sup>2</sup> speaks of Wales as a tomb of youth, since these can have no hope of employment. Just those who for fifteen to twenty years should be the back-bone of the nation, are condemned to a life of idleness and misery. What do they bring to the slums except a readiness for degeneracy and crime? From the genial Sir Philip Gibbs<sup>3</sup> come the bitter words: "But

<sup>1</sup> Vol. V, No. 46, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> London, 1937, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> *England Speaks*, London, 1935, p. 63.



England ought to do something about the human nature of these young derelicts who, according to those who know them best are not without quality before they go down too far. Or is it, as the policewoman said in St. Martin's Crypt, that 'England doesn't care', as long as tennis is going well at Wimbledon?"

## IV

## CHILD LABOR

THE outcry against child labor is as old as the Industrial Revolution itself. Cheap labor was the one consideration of the Empire Builders, and the poverty of the working classes made them willing to sacrifice their children.

As early as 1850, a Frenchman, Ledru-Rollin, wrote *De la Décadence de l'Angleterre*<sup>1</sup> in which he states: "One would hardly credit the fact that there exists a child-market in the capital of England where, twice a week, children are exhibited as wares for the industrial market. Generally there are 50 to 300 ranging from seven years up. This human ware is offered for rental, the boys as apprentices, the girls as servants. The parents are present to dicker over prices in this despicable business. The customers examine the young victims as one examines cattle in the markets. The sums are agreed upon and the parents see their children depart without a qualm."

In 1896 another foreigner, a Scandinavian, Gustav F. Steffen,<sup>2</sup> wrote from his own experience: "I have traveled through Belgium, German, French industrial centers, as well as English and Irish ones, and I must own: any one who would see the suffering and degradation of childhood, disgusting physical and mental misery in the

<sup>1</sup> Paris, 1850, Vol. II, pp. 122f.

<sup>2</sup> *Trips through Great Britain*, Stockholm, 1896.



most extreme form which the central and northern parts of Europe have to display, must make a pilgrimage to the wealthy and moral land of Great Britain. In London and the English industrial centers destruction of childhood is carried on to a gigantic extent."

The same author in 1904 writes another book<sup>1</sup> on the same subject. "I saw young men who at the age of seventeen and eighteen had become so frail in consequence of maltreatment that they were unable to walk. I know many of these unhappy creatures who since early youth worked in factories and at the age of sixteen or seventeen were thoroughly incapacitated through overwork and now after a childhood spent in this slavery, have nothing but the poorhouse before them for the rest of their lives. The children in the industrial villages hardly know their parents. They know only that every morning at five—sometimes even at four o'clock—a man or a woman comes to drag them only half awake out of bed. Dozens of factory children have told me the same story. The older children carry their little brothers and sisters still asleep on their backs. And they see their parents again only when they come home at night to go to bed."

In 1937 the Englishman, John Gollan,<sup>2</sup> limns a picture of these unfortunate sacrifices to Industry in colors that reveal that the years have brought little relief since the middle of the nineteenth century: "It is clear that a large proportion of our youth is deformed or permanently injured, or even crushed by the machines, largely because

<sup>1</sup> Steffen, Gustav J., *Studier over Lonsystements historia i. England* Vol. II, Goteborg, 1904, pp. 54-68.

<sup>2</sup> Gollan, John, *Youth in British Industry*, London, 1937, p. 196.

they are not properly trained. But it will not suffice to remain satisfied with this statement of causes. We must go farther and ask ourselves why our youth is not better trained or guarded." The answer is found in the fact which is constantly emphasized in Gollan's book. That is say, the deleterious impulse to increase production through the stepping up of labor which has resulted from rationalization and mass production. In 1939 the Cardiff Committee<sup>1</sup> sought to determine how all this came about and discovered that at bottom was the desire of the employer to keep the costs of labor at the lowest possible point and the fact that for certain industries boys of fourteen and fifteen years were able to do the work as well as their somewhat older companions. For a large number of youth, therefore, the slogan was not only "too old with twenty years" but "too old at sixteen." During recent decades the problem of nationwide unemployment acerbated the hopeless situation. Wales was notorious. Says Gollan<sup>2</sup> in 1937: Nearly seventy-three percent of the graduates of the schools of Ponthybridd were without work, fifty-eight percent in Aberdare and fifty-three in Newport. Those were the worst, but with the exception of Barry, there was no district with less than twenty-five percent, and in most it was nearer to forty. The average of all these districts was forty-one and three-tenth percent unemployed! In this region, he continues, there are thousands of young people of both sexes who are today twenty years old and have never had a day's work. Nor have they any future hope of betterment before them.

<sup>1</sup> Gollan, *Youth in British Industry*, loc. cit., pp. 240f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 167 and 170.



In 1932 Brockway<sup>1</sup> limned the evil consequences of prolonged or permanent periods of idleness upon the physical and mental conditions of the young. The greatest sufferers, he says, are the young men and lads whom one can observe loafing in the streets with empty stomachs and unwholesome appearance. The old people complain that the dole of the young is so small that they cannot support their aged dependents. Brockway warns the authorities that they must realize that such manner of life spells the ruin of the young men and women affected both physically and mentally. This was in 1932. But in 1936 the journal, *Labour*,<sup>2</sup> is equally insistent that such a state of affairs represents a major social tragedy. These young men and women who have never had an opportunity to work, who have never been given a chance to feel themselves as being of any value or importance to their country deserve the gravest attention of responsible people.

For what is more natural and inevitable than that these young people of eighteen to twenty years of age, disillusioned and hopeless, should turn to crime as a profession? . . . These helpless victims of the capitalistic system—with either monotonous and underpaid work or no work at all, living in overcrowded and most unattractive homes, driven to the streets by dire necessity, hungry and undervitalized easily fall victims to the lure of petty larceny or worse.<sup>3</sup>

In December, 1937 the parliamentary debate<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Hungry England*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Feb., 1938, Vol. V, No. 46, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> Gollan, *Youth in British Industry*, p. 187.

<sup>4</sup> *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates* 1936/7. Vol. 7, Col. 998/999.

elicited the fact that 17,044 children under 16 years of age were working in the subterranean coal mines in Great Britain.

And in the same year two investigators<sup>1</sup> could state that whenever the demand for production rose to stimulate the greed of the employer the work of the employee, most of them children, is accelerated to such a degree that many of them are literally "done to death". When the demand falls off, they are turned out into the street to beg or become dependent on the community.

No wonder "The Cry of the Children" goes up today as it did at the time of Mrs. Browning or of E. G. Bulwer.

A pious wish for betterment was expressed by an M.P. in the course of a debate in the House<sup>2</sup> to effect that he wished it were possible that the House should adopt some form of legislation to diminish the hardships and injustice for those British boys and girls who are forced into the factories at six in the morning and obliged to work till ten o'clock at night, without having any opportunity for education and recreation to which they are really entitled.

To mitigate their plight, a suggestion was made to emigrate these young unfortunates to the British colonies. Kingsley Fairbridge<sup>3</sup> wrote in 1934: There exist at present in England 60,000 dependent children orphans or half-orphans, who are being brought up in institutions which place them at the ages of twelve or fourteen in employments for which they would be considered

<sup>1</sup> Hammon, J. L. and Barbara: *The Skilled Labourer*, London, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 1935/6, p. 238.

<sup>3</sup> *The Autobiography of Kingsley Fairbridge*, Oxford, 1927-34, p. 174.



too old at eighteen. They have no parents or any one else to take their place. What future have they to look forward to? Let us, I say, form companies here and there to transport as many of these children as possible over sea, to train them in our own overseas colonies for farm life there. We need schools for agriculture in all parts of the Empire where land lies fallow. This would be no charity but an imperial investment."

In 1939 the *New Leader*<sup>1</sup> sums up the entire situation by depicting towns and villages from which all the young people have migrated. Nothing is left of the industries of these "deserted villages" but ruins of former busy plants. The vampires (usually masquerading as Industrials, Capitalists, Captains of Industry) have bled the towns and villages white and left the skeletons to rot. The young people wandered away, sometimes as far as four hundred miles in search of work; they wandered, in groups or singly, in search of luck, they tried it in twos and threes, always marching, always seeking, always seeking.

And Mr. Attlee<sup>2</sup> sums up the rights and wrongs of the question lapidarily when he calls the refusal of the right to work one of the greatest denials of freedom which have been foisted upon labor by the capitalists.

That this unemployed youth swells the already numerous permanent slum-population, increasing the overcrowding, the misery and dirt, is self-evident. They add considerably to the number of Britannia's stepchildren.

<sup>1</sup> *The New Leader*, March 3, 1939, p. 5. ("An open letter addressed to Premier Neville Chamberlain by Trevor Williams").

<sup>2</sup> Attlee, C. R.: *The Labour Party in Perspective*, London, 1937, p. 143.

## V

## ADULT UNEMPLOYMENT

NOT ONLY the unfortunate unemployed or overworked children swell the number of slumdwellers. "Unemployment is the eternal black dog that haunts Capitalism" said Gollan<sup>1</sup> in 1937. Another investigator<sup>2</sup> declares in 1938: The total figure of unemployed in all branches of industry approximates at the moment one and one-half millions. They all receive a weekly dole far less, as we have seen, than the subsistence minimum which even the hardhearted statisticians and opponents of labor consider sufficient.

These figures were confirmed by the Trade Union Congress<sup>3</sup> of the previous year. This report tries to estimate the results of unemployment for the preceding fifteen years upon the population as a whole. The findings reveal that more than half of the population of Great Britain has suffered under the effects of these conditions in their living conditions. Even at the present findings (1936) the number of men out of work reaches the figure of one million six hundred thousand and with the families dependent upon them affect not less than five million! Quincy Howe<sup>4</sup> in 1937 stated that "ever since 1920 unemployment has hovered between one and

<sup>1</sup> *Youth in British Industry*, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> Kuczynski, J.: *Hunger and Work*, London, 1938.

<sup>3</sup> *Report of Proceedings at the 68th Annual Trades Union Congress*. London, 1936, p. 286.

<sup>4</sup> *England Expects Every American to do his Duty*, p. 150.



three million." In 1939 the register of the unemployed showed the figure to have risen to two million thirty-nine thousand and twenty-six. *The New Leader*<sup>1</sup> comments upon this figure, saying that a few years ago this would have caused a sensation, but that now, in the year 1939 the publication of these figures aroused only a brief but pious wish in one of the leaders of the capitalistic press. Even now, when the number of the unemployed is acknowledged to have reached the figure of two million, certain circles still maintain "that prosperity has not deserted us"!<sup>2</sup>

The textile and iron industries seem to have been especially hard hit. In 1933 Allen Hutt<sup>3</sup> painted a depressing picture of the condition of this industry, once a monopoly of Great Britain. Normally about 15 per cent of the textile workers are "out"; but towards the middle of 1931 this figure rose to the astounding height of 45 per cent and even after tens of thousands had been shifted to other fields, the percentage in 1932 was still 30. That means that one third of the men and women once engaged in this basic industry, have been condemned to join the army of permanently unemployed. The external signs of this decay strike even the casual observer. Bulletin boards are covered with notices of looms and spinneys by the hundred as well as of finished textiles—all for sale.

Passing through Lancashire by train one need only glance out of the window to be struck with the yawning

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 10, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> See table of unemployment in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Conditions of the Working Class in Britain, p. 57.

wrecks of these plants with their broken windows as they appear through the fog.

Steel and tinworks are in the same plight. The figures for January 1933 showed forty-four and nine-tenths per cent unemployed in the steel and forty and seven-tenths per cent in the tin plants.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year a debate in the House<sup>2</sup> brought out the fact that in the Rhondda Valley sixty per cent of the employable males were receiving the dole and that 17,000 men were permanently unemployed. At any moment this figure would rise to 25,000 through temporary slackness—and this is the condition in just one narrow valley! Some of these 17,000 men have been out of work since 1924, 1925, 1926, and any one who has lived among them cannot fail to observe that from week to week, from month to month, from year to year, humiliation and degeneracy among them is on the increase. And the debate closes with an accusation of the government for not having assumed the responsibility for these nationwide hardships. In the building industry, in 1939, 100,000 idle men both skilled and unskilled were cited.<sup>3</sup>

Sir Philip Gibbs<sup>4</sup> writes of the mining villages of Durham: "They are very much like each other. These rows of houses, mostly without gardens, are dominated by enormous slag-heaps, like monstrous ant-hills, and the result of ant-like toil down below. They are ugly and grim, those villages. There is no touch of beauty here, nor of art. The houses built for these people are just

<sup>1</sup> Hutt, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 1932 to 1933*. Vol. 276, especially debate of April 12, 1933, col. 2630.

<sup>3</sup> *Daily Herald*, Oct. 23, 1939, No. 7391.

<sup>4</sup> *England Speaks*.



square boxes in which to sleep and eat, with little back yards in which the washing may hang. Standing in them, talking to miners, until they received their last wages, two years, three years, four years ago, I thought of villages in Germany and Austria where each house is pleasant to see, with woodwork carved by master craftsmen and with flower garlands or decorative scenes painted on their whitewashed walls, as at Garmisch and Pathenkirchen and Mittenwald. Here, in County Durham, life has been too hard for art. It has been too grim for flowers. Men don't indulge in playful fancy when they come up from the mines, where water has been dripping on their bodies all day long. It is only now, when so many of them are unemployed, and when they are getting a little lead from friendly souls outside, that they are beginning to grow a few flowers here and there . . ."

"When so many of them are unemployed—I have written. That does not convey the facts I saw. I went into villages in County Durham where, as at Page Bank, nearly the whole male population is out of work, and where young men, and middle-aged men, and elderly men, stand around deserted works and brickyards, listless and very bored . . . Round about Bishop Auckland many of the mines have closed down, or are closing down . . . Many of these pits will never open again. Men now working on a few shifts a week are haunted by the menace of being paid off and joining the big battalions of the unemployed. There's no hope for Durham County."

"At the best of times this region was neglected by the

people who profited most by its labour. Too much profit was taken out of the mines. Not enough was put back into the villages to create a pleasant social life. The owners spent their money elsewhere."

Beverley Nichols<sup>1</sup> made a tour to Wales to study this matter of unemployment and its deleterious effects both physical and psychic upon young and old. He describes a typical mining town where no mining is any longer carried on: "Here was only the ugly shell, without life to light it. A group of six young men, silent, dragging their feet, passed me on their way down hill. They walked as though they were going to a funeral. And indeed they were, for each was following the hearse of his own hopes.

The sun glittered on row after row of hideous little houses with roofs of slate. . . . At every street corner there were groups of black figures, leaning against the wall. The figures did not move. They stayed there in strange, static groups. There was a sense that some gigantic, essentially sinister ballet was in progress, and that the figures were waiting for the conductor's wand to make them move.

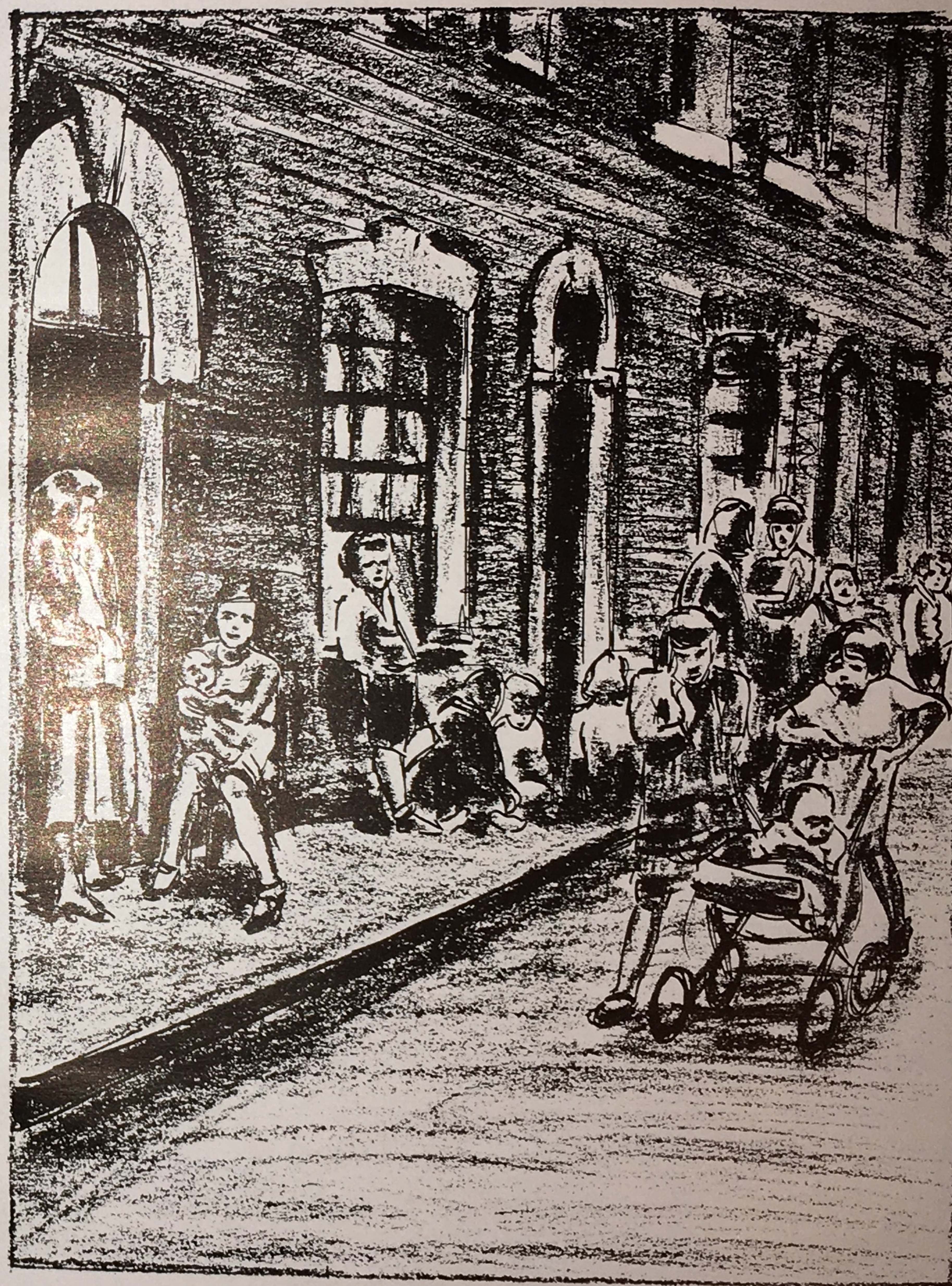
I shuddered. Better move on. It would do no good to give way to one's feelings, before one knew anything.

So I moved on down into the valley. To ask a question, and to go on asking it, until I found the answer. The question to which I sought an answer was this:

What was the nature of the mental disease engendered in the minds of men who had been unemployed all their lives? And particularly of the younger generation?

<sup>1</sup> Nichols, Beverley: *News from England. A Country Without a Hero*. New York, 1938. pp. 215ff.







## VI

### THE FARM LABORER

THE CAUSES underlying the deplorable plight of the city workers have been well formulated by the Commission Report of 1937.<sup>1</sup> Workingmen are looked upon as a part of the machinery of production, but unfortunately they are not treated as well as the machine. Because human beings when neglected or abused, unlike machines, do not immediately become useless, but can continue functioning for some time, even if ill or injured.

In case of the farm laborer one would expect better surroundings than those of the city proletariat. But evidence convincingly shows that this is not the case. As early as 1870 an article in *Revue de Deux Mondes*<sup>2</sup> expressed a Frenchman's disapproval of the British attitude toward its farm laborers: "Instead of a peasantry independent and in possession of a modest competence; that has a feeling of responsibility towards its toil, since its fate hangs upon its efforts; that has been encouraged to develop a certain intelligence through planning, the British have only crowds of paid laborers who are just as dumb as but less well cared for than the domestic animals—without initiative, since they have no opportunity of rising and are certainly more unhappy than a slave, who since he represents a certain

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Labour Party's Commission, 1937. Curd. 5641.*

<sup>2</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes, Paris, 1870, p. 390.*



value, receives greater care." This harsh diatribe of Britain's attitude toward its rural population is reinforced by English historian Green<sup>1</sup> fifty years later. "In accordance with general sentiment and also with my own observation, one may safely state that the agricultural laborer, of all classes of workingmen, has the hardest toil, the lowest pay, is the most ill-nourished, the worst housed . . . Today as formerly, the farm labourer approaches most closely the status of the slave."

Eleven years later British city and country workers alike were characterized as "wage slaves of civilization" and their living conditions declared similar to those of the serfs of the Middle Ages and the slaves of Antiquity.<sup>2</sup>

We have seen that the rural laborer and his family lives no better than the slum-dweller in the congested towns. Hutt declares that in general the farm laborer and his family dwell in decayed huts, with stuffy tiny rooms, low ceilings, surrounded by damp walls and frequently lacking the most ordinary conveniences of canalization, light or heat. So Briffault says in 1937: "In the village from which I come hunting horses and dogs are better housed than the families of the farm labourers."<sup>3</sup>

A writer in a Fabian tract<sup>4</sup> writes that some of the huts in the country which he visited are so much worse than pig-stys, that an honest farmer would be ashamed to be obliged to put his pigs into such miserable quarters.

<sup>1</sup> Green, F. W. *A History of the English Agricultural Labourer 1870-1920*. London, 1927, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> *The Socialist Standard*, May, 1938.

<sup>3</sup> Briffault, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, N. Y., 1938.

<sup>4</sup> *Fabian Tract No. 101*.

We are, therefore, not surprised to find ill health, degeneracy, crime prevalent in the rural districts only secondary to those found in the city slums.

Summing up, we may say that living quarters for the British poor both in city and country are almost unbelievably bad in respect to overcrowding, lack of hygienic conveniences, and filth; that malnutrition added to these living conditions leads to illness, degeneracy and crime; and that, despite protests, no material change for the better is apparent. In 1939 a Committee of Investigation<sup>1</sup> reports from Wales that in these poverty stricken urban and rural communities the committee struck indescribable examples of over-crowding. Primitive huts built in Celtic style, six to ten persons crowded into a single small room; damp, ramshackle, dilapidated houses; insufficient and unclean water—these were things which met the eyes of the investigators. They describe these conditions as hardly better than those revealed one hundred years ago in the congested slums of great industrial centers.

The effects of this sort of living in land and country may be summed up in the words of Quincy Howe:<sup>2</sup> "The so-called 'distressed areas'—the centers of the ruined coal and textile industries—have received widespread attention, but these districts have no more bearing on the fate of England as a whole than the equally serious plight of the various backward regions has on the fate of the United States. What does have bearing on the fate of England is the physical well-being of its people. Sir John Boyd Orr, Director of the Rowett Institute for

<sup>1</sup> *Health and Government*, London, March 18, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> *England Expects Every American*, etc., p. 57f.



Research in Animal Nutrition in Aberdeen, threw some disturbing light on this subject in March, 1936, when his book, entitled *Food, Health and Income*, appeared with the astounding statement that half the British population is undernourished. Some four-and-a-half million people have only four shillings (one dollar) a week to spend on food and nine million more spend only six shillings. A minimum of ten shillings a week is required for an adequate diet, six shillings do not buy enough fruit and vegetables; four shillings do not buy enough food of any kind. Of the different income groups Sir John writes, "As income increases, disease and death-rate decrease, children grow more quickly, adult stature is greater, general health and physique improve." In consequence, boys who attend the fashionable schools of the aristocracy average five inches taller than the corresponding sons of workingmen. This condition continues in adult life: less than half the applicants for army enlistments can pass the physical examination . . . While men decay, wealth accumulates."

## VII

## CRIME AND DEGENERACY

**A**LCOHOLISM is a concomitant upon such living. The fact that almost every corner of the "back-to-backs" is a "pub" speaks for itself.<sup>1</sup> So also does the sight—all too common in the slum districts, not only of London—of the drunken woman in the gutter. In 1938 Beverley Nichols writes: "In the past six years, convictions for drunkenness has increased 41.58 per cent."<sup>2</sup>

That criminal tendencies are engendered in the young who grow up in these overcrowded tenements goes without saying.<sup>3</sup> Orwell<sup>4</sup> shows that between 1907 and 1929 juvenile delinquency rose forty-five per cent and that far more than half of this youthful lawlessness had its rise in the slums. "Nursing sister"<sup>5</sup> tells of the "slum mentality" which spreads like a fungus and which arises from the living conditions. This mentality, she goes on, fosters every imaginable crime. Born and bred in unimaginably unhealthy surroundings, it is no wonder that the young girl of the slums demands something besides the hard work drudgery and the dirt of her home and becomes a street walker. Lads and young men become thieves and petty burglars. They gamble and swindle

<sup>1</sup> Joan Conquest, (*An Ex-Nursing Sister*). p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Nichols, Beverley: *News from England*, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Hutt, p. 196.

<sup>4</sup> Orwell, pp. 51ff.

<sup>5</sup> Joan Conquest, p. 107.



and finally land in jail. And other crimes originate in the slums, unmentionable crimes that make one shudder. And in the *Economist*<sup>1</sup> we read: "The pressure of the overcrowded tenements by removing the natural barriers of decency and shame destroys family life."

Almost unbelievable is the account of the "Review of Slumfolk" described by "nursing sister":<sup>2</sup> Exhibitions of naked and deformed children for an entrance fee of two shillings per head are attended by crowds who thus satisfy sadistic instincts, such as lie dormant in human beings everywhere and culminate in sadistic murderers. Slum living is especially conducive to the development of this base motive. Said a slum mother: "They could shut half the prisons, if they would give us a chance to live in decent conditions."

Crimes like incest and rape are of daily occurrence and can almost all be traced to the miserable homes in which these people are compelled to live.

Modern developments in British industry have added appreciatively to the army of unemployed and thus to those who cannot afford to live anywhere but in the congested slums with consequences such as we traced on the preceding pages. The question naturally arises: Has nothing been done by those in authority to ameliorate these conditions?

As the authors and speakers, the investigators and philanthropists quoted above (and they could easily be many times multiplied, if space and time permitted) prove, many Englishmen, both in public and private life, newspapers, churches, and labor leaders have not

<sup>1</sup> *Economist*, Feb. 12, 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Joan Conquest, p. 107.

spared words and appeals, have called for parliamentary action for alleviation. Early in the last century private philanthropists like Shaftesbury (1841), George Peabody (1863) and later John Ruskin (in the last quarter of the nineteenth century) either spent their own fortunes or worked upon wealthy and kindly spirited individuals to contribute theirs, so that several thousands of slum dwellers were benefited. But private philanthropy proved absolutely inadequate to tackle so vast a problem. Local government also set to work in what turned out to be rather haphazard undertakings to mitigate the evil. Some of the worst slums were cleared in cities like Glasgow and London before the war. But a change of ministry was sufficient to undo what had been begun.

In 1919 the "Lex Addison" called upon communities to build workingmen's homes, with promise of state help. This led to vast speculation and when in 1921 Addison was forced to retire as minister for public welfare, the state subsidies ceased and the Addison houses remained encumbered with nine million pounds indebtedness. The conservative government which came into power in 1923 tried, though unsuccessfully to throw the entire building program into the field of free competition, but at least passed the law for a maximum rental for workers' homes. This did not, however, apply to families who changed their residence. The World War tremendously increased the housing shortage. Several new methods of legislation were attempted. The middle class received considerable amelioration. But the Marley Report of 1931 proved that all experimentation at



tackling the slum problem adequately had so far proved ineffective. This was the result partly of the greed of the owners of the slum regions, partly also of the unwillingness of the slum dwellers to give up what "homes" they had, before new abodes were at once guaranteed. The middle class profited, the slums showed little improvement. Hence in 1933 the Bishop of London in the course of a parliamentary debate stated that he had been a student of the slums of East London for forty-five years and that he could see today no appreciable difference, no betterment, between the slums of 1933 and those of 1888.<sup>1</sup> But the same document one year later quoted Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's<sup>2</sup> answer to an impassioned demand for betterment of these unbearable conditions. Said the Honorable Lord: "We must reserve our sense of humor!"

The "Housing Acts" of 1935-36 tried to put a stop to the horrible overcrowding of families into single rooms by a law that restricted the use of one-room dwellings to two persons, of two room dwellings to three inhabitants, and demanded four to five rooms for the accommodation of seven or more people. But as the execution of this law was relegated to the time when there should be an adequate number of houses for all, its effects are largely illusory.<sup>3</sup>

The upshot of the investigation of all the slum-clearing and housing acts of the last twenty years is this: England has during that time built—under the motto "Down With the Slums"—four million new houses which in

<sup>1</sup> Hausard's *Parliamentary Debates*, 1933-4, vol. 90, p. 408.

<sup>2</sup> *Parliamentary Debates*, 1935-6, vol. 316, col. 323.

<sup>3</sup> See Statistic Tables in Appendix.

great measure redound to the benefit of the well-to-do class of its population. The slums are almost untouched. The reason lies in the simple fact that most of the legislation left open a loophole somewhere for capitalistic interests: what America calls "a joker." In other words, the moneyed interests are too strong and no "government," however well-intentioned, is strong enough for any adequate solution of this problem.

Gibbs<sup>1</sup> asks the question: "What is the matter with Yarrow?" Yarrow is one of the industrial spots ruined by the modern plague of unemployment, undernourishment and slum life. His answer is illuminating and could be applied far more generally:

"Because money is more important than human life, and credit is withheld from those who supply the goods which other people want. Who were the criminals? They were bankers and trusts, and men who deal with an industry, upon which thousands of human lives are dependent, without compunction or compassion, if it interferes with their own combinations and interests. They are the inhuman agencies—a group of men around a green cloth—who do not think in terms of industry and human values but in terms of interest on money or their own profit and powers." And more than that:

All the great capitalistic interests in England—the Crown, the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, the Anglican Church—all these venerable institutions are part-owners of slum districts. The Duke of Westminster alone owns 600 acres in the very heart of London.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *England Speaks*, pp. 396ff.

<sup>2</sup> Hutt, pp. 145ff. and Barnes, *The Slum: Its Story and Solution*, London, 1931, p. 363.



In November 1928 The London *Times* published a debate in the House in which the Premier was attacked on the ground that, before his election, he had solemnly promised to take up the slum problem, but that after election nothing whatever was done. Conditions in the slums had gone from bad to worse. In 1931 Harry Elmer Barnes<sup>1</sup> quotes a reply to a similar charge made by Mr. Neville Chamberlain to the effect that if the government took any action, the City Councils and Boards would feel relieved of their responsibility, and that that would never do.

Hence, as the *Times* in the above-mentioned article goes on to show, Commissions are appointed, when the cries for betterment become too loud to be ignored, slight ameliorations through temporary relief is given, responsibility is shifted from city administrations to Royal Commissions, and vice versa, and nothing is done.

So in 1933 Dean Inge<sup>2</sup> could declare that the entire machinery of the Empire was in last analysis chaotic. And the slums go on!

And in 1938 Beverley Nichols<sup>3</sup> declares:

“With sang-froid we tolerate slum conditions which the authoritarian states with their empty treasuries, would not tolerate for a month.”

<sup>1</sup> *The Slums, etc.* pp. 259, 268.

<sup>2</sup> Dean Inge: *England*, London 1933, p. 153.

<sup>3</sup> *News of England*, p. 5.

## APPENDIX

Approximate Table of Slum-dwellings in 1933, by Sir E. D. Simon: *The Anti-Slum Campaign*.<sup>1</sup>

I. On the basis of the worst type of basement dwellings: 10,000.

II. On the basis of very bad houses in blocks (“back-to-backs, etc.”): 100,000.

III. On the basis of notorious “Manchester Slums”: 1,000,000.

IV. On the basis of all houses that should be condemned: 4,000,000.

<sup>1</sup> London, 1933, pp. 125-6.



## HOUSING ACTS

The Housing Acts of 1935-6 sought to provide a minimum of living space for families, but the "joker" in the act which deferred the application of the law until "there should be enough inexpensive dwellings for every one," made this salutary feature illusory also as far as the slum population is concerned. Hence this generous building program has resulted in the great improvement of middle-class housing, but has accomplished very little for the class that needed help most: the slum dwellers.

The following statistics of families and available homes in the main industrial centers of England will illustrate this fact.<sup>1</sup>

	Population		No. of families		Individual dwellings occupied		Additional dwellings needed	
	1921	1931	1921	1931	1921	1931	1921	1931
Birmingham ...	922,167	1,002,413	203,813	249,907	190,459	236,661	13,354	13,246
Liverpool .....	805,046	855,539	171,565	201,426	147,818	173,938	23,747	27,488
Manchester .....	735,774	766,333	163,939	190,928	155,017	177,430	8,922	13,498
Sheffield .....	511,696	511,742	109,895	129,936	105,462	123,812	4,433	6,124
Leeds .....	463,122	482,789	110,182	128,696	108,534	126,056	1,648	2,640
Bristol .....	377,018	396,918	91,171	104,360	72,470	83,584	18,701	20,776

<sup>1</sup> Simon, p. 101.

STATISTICS OF THE HOUSING ACTS AND NEW CONSTRUCTIONS.<sup>1</sup>

Up to 1937 the following results of the various government acts and private enterprizes for better housing may be registered.

I Government Acts:	Houses Constructed
1919 Housing Act .....	213,821
1923 Housing Act .....	438,047
1924 Housing Act .....	520,298
1930 and 36 Slum Clearance Act	158,568
1925 and 36 Genl. Housing Acts	52,286
1935/36 Overcrowding Acts ...	3,620
Total .....	1,386,640
II Private Enterprizes without Government subsidies.	
1918-1937 .....	1,971,851
Total .....	3,358,491

In 1939 England celebrated the completion of the four millionth house with public demonstrations. But if we view this apparently brilliant result from the "slum-clearance" point of view, the figures tell a different tale.

In 1931 the "Marley Report", (Cmd. 3911), set up the following classifications.

- Class A—Dwellings of the well-to-do.
- Class B—Dwellings of the middle-class.
- Class C—Dwellings of the workers.

<sup>1</sup> Simon, pp. 101ff.



The last-named, which alone interests us, includes two-thirds of number of people in large industrial centers who live in overcrowded dwellings in 1935.<sup>1</sup>

Liverpool .....	89,000
Birmingham .....	68,000
Manchester .....	49,000
Sheffield .....	41,000
Leeds .....	38,000
Bristol .....	20,000
Plymouth .....	20,000
London .....	541,000

(These figures were obtained by actual count. It is estimated almost all other cities show similar conditions).

<sup>1</sup> Marshall and Trevelyan; *Slum*, London, 1935, p. 37.

The following table illustrates the need of low cost dwellings in London.<sup>1</sup>

	Suburbs		London without suburbs		Totals for both	
	1921	1931	1921	1931	1921	1931
Population .....	4,484,523	4,397,003	3,741,273	4,748,214	8,225,796	9,145,796
No. of families.....	1,120,897	1,190,030	869,225	1,219,295	1,990,122	2,409,325
Dwellings .....	720,004	748,930	749,426	1,068,031	1,469,430	1,816,961
Dwellings needed ..	400,893	441,100	119,799	151,264	520,692	592,364

<sup>1</sup> Simon, p. 108.



OVERPOPULATION AND OVERCROWDING<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with the "Housing Act" of 1935 the following norm for the number of persons occupying a certain definitely designated space was set up:

1 room	2 persons
2 rooms	3 persons
3 rooms	5 persons
4 rooms	7½ persons
5 rooms	10 persons

On this basis the concept "overcrowding" is formed. In accordance with this concept the following percentages show where the worst conditions of overcrowding prevail. The percentages reveal the overcrowding in proportion to the total number of inhabitants. It will be observed that the highest percentages are invariably found in the industrial centers, the lowest in such rural and suburban districts as Surrey and Kent.

Counties including large cities having the highest percentage of overcrowding, arranged in order.

	Per cent
Durham .....	12.
Northumberland .....	11.2
Anglesey .....	9.5
London .....	7.
Carnarvonshire .....	6.2
Denbigshier .....	5.9

## Large Industrial Cities

Sunderland .....	20.6
Gateshead .....	15.2
South Shields .....	13.1
Tynemouth .....	13.
West Hartlepool .....	10.9
Newcastle-on-Tyne .....	10.7

<sup>1</sup> Titmuss, Richard M.: *Poverty and Population*, London, 1938, p. 221.

In contrast to the foregoing table, the following counties and cities show a low percentage of overcrowding:<sup>1</sup>

## Counties including large cities.

	Per cent
Isle of Wight .....	0.7
West Sussex .....	1.0
Cambridgeshire .....	1.1
Surrey .....	1.2
Soke of Peterborough .....	1.3
Kent .....	1.3

## Metropolitan Centers

Bournemouth .....	0.3
Northampton .....	0.8
Grimsby .....	0.9
Croydon .....	0.9
Oxford .....	1.0
Doncaster .....	1.0

<sup>1</sup> Titmuss, p. 221.



The following table has been set up to estimate the number of dwellings that will probably be needed in England and Wales by 1951 according to planning program for England.<sup>1</sup>

I. England and Wales from 1931 to 1951.

Dearth of dwellings in 1931 .....	830,000
Probable increase in families from 1932 to 1941 .....	750,000
Probable increase in families from 1942 to 1951 .....	190,000
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>1,770,000</b>

II. Dearth of dwellings in the main Industrial Centers of England from 1931 to 1951.

	Present needs	Probable increase in number of families		Total needs
		1932-1942	1942-1951	
Birmingham .....	13,250	23,000	5,750	42,000
Liverpool .....	27,500	15,000	3,750	46,250
Manchester .....	13,500	13,500	3,400	30,400
Sheffield .....	6,100	10,000	2,500	18,600
Leeds .....	2,600	9,000	2,250	13,850
Bristol .....	20,300	6,500	1,600	28,900

III. Dearth of Dwellings in Greater London from 1931 to 1951.

	Need of single dwellings 1931	Probable increase	Total
Greater London ....	592,400	262,000	854,400
England and Wales with London .....	830,000	940,000	1,770,000

<sup>1</sup> Simon, loc. cit., p. 122.

UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS<sup>1</sup> FOR 1934

South Wales .....	44.5
Blaina .....	71.4
Brynmawr .....	72.5
Merthyr Tydfil .....	67.6

*Period of Unemployment*

Of 50,437 unemployed miners in Wales:  
76 percent for longer than 1 year;  
56 percent for longer than 2 years;  
35 per cent for longer than 3 years.

These are the official figures which are lower because the counting is renewed after each temporary employment. Hannington reckons that in the Scotch, Welsh, and Middle English distressed areas, fifty percent of the unemployed have been, with short periods of temporary employment, without regular work for fourteen to fifteen years.

<sup>1</sup> Hannington, Wal: *Distressed Areas*, London, 1897, pp. 16ff.



## CHILDREN OF THE SLUMS

TABLE OF UNEMPLOYMENT ACCORDING TO MONTHS IN 1937-1938<sup>1</sup>

Month	Totally Unemployed	Partially or Temporarily Unemployed
1937 I.	1,489,092.	187,874.
II.	1,460,026.	164,739.
III.	1,406,530.	169,740.
IV.	1,305,280.	130,788.
V.	1,245,589.	210,401.
VI.	1,116,881.	303,329.
VII.	1,136,287.	249,345.
VIII.	1,148,487.	208,941.
IX.	1,138,731.	194,997.
X.	1,215,000.	179,856.
XI.	1,284,386.	222,204.
XII.	1,338,850.	326,026.
1938 I.	1,466,354.	351,483.
II.	1,466,887.	340,630.
III.	1,425,596.	338,483.
IV.	1,394,315.	365,599.

<sup>1</sup> Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations, 1937/8, p. 65.

## CHILDREN OF THE SLUMS

STATISTICS FOR HEIGHTENED MORTALITY FOR ALL AGES IN THE PRINCIPAL FATAL DISEASES<sup>1</sup>

Region	Ages						
	14-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-74	75 and over
	B	B	C	C	C	C	A
North ....	63	77	74	57	52	45	30
North I ..	125	36	96	41	47	38	29
Wales ....	128	63	86	71	53	44	33
Wales I ..	136	66	108	92	65	59	38

A for Bronchitis, pneumonia, etc. B. Tuberculosis. C. Heart affections. North and North I, Wales and Wales I respectively are the great distressed areas in Northern England and Wales, which display the greatest rise in mortality percentages.

STATISTICS OF INFANT MORTALITY IN THREE COUNTIES<sup>2</sup>

(Surrey may be considered a normal case)

Regions	Congenital weakness, premature births, deformations, etc.				Bronchitis, pneumonia, etc.			
	Durham	632	446	186	42	401	135	266
Glamorgan	632	446	186	42	164	96	68	71
Surrey	465				101			

Infant mortality in the worst slum regions between 1931 and 1935, reckoning 100 out of 100,000 as the basis for the rest of Great Britain.<sup>3</sup>

	Diphtheria	Tuberculosis	Heart-diseases	Stomach	Other diseases
North and Northeast (the "distressed areas" .....	111	300	200	127	157
Wales and Northwales (distressed areas) .....	161	188	317	120	135
England and Wales .....	139	144	183	107	123

<sup>1</sup> Titmuss, p. 130.<sup>2</sup> Titmuss, p. 82.<sup>3</sup> Titmuss, p. 106.



MORTALITY AMONG WOMEN IN THE SLUM  
REGIONS<sup>1</sup>

*Of the mortality of women in England and Wales*

Taking 100 as a basis the following table shows the effect of overcrowding and slum living upon the mortality of women. In explanation it should be added that London contains a mixture of slum and decent living quarters, that Hertfordshire is fairly free of slums, that the other regions listed may be called "straight slum districts". These statistics cover the period of 1931 to 1935.

Regions	Age groups of the women	
	15-35 years of age	35 years and over
Greater London .....	99	97
Hertfordshire .....	66	73
Newcastle .....	139	127
Durham .....	136	122
Glamorgan .....	143	94
Monmouthshire .....	163	104

<sup>1</sup> Titmuss, Richard M.: *Poverty and Population*, London, 1938.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Amalgamated Engineering Union, *Monthly Journal, an Ex-Nursing Sister* (Joan Conquest), *The Naked Truth: Shocking Revelations about the Slums*, London, 1933.
- Attlee, C. R., *The Labour Party in Perspective*, London, 1937.
- Barnes, Harry Elmer, *The Slum, its Story and Solution*, London, 1931.
- Briffault, Robert, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, New York, 1938.
- Brockway, *Hungry England*, London, 1932.
- Conquest, Joan (see "An Ex-Nursing Sister").
- Distressed Areas* (see Report of the Labor Party's Commission, London, 1937).
- Empire Social Hygiene Year-Book, 1938-39*, London.
- Evening Standard*, January 27, 1933.
- Fabian Tracts.
- Fairbridge, Kingsley, *Autobiography*, Oxford, 1927-34.
- Freemantle, F. E., *The Housing of the Nation*, London, 1927.
- Gibbs, Philip H., *England Speaks*, London, 1935.
- Glasgow Health Report, 1931.
- Gollan, John, *Youth in British Industry*, London, 1937.
- Green, F. W., *A History of the English Agricultural Labourer, 1870 to 1920*, London, 1927.
- Hammon, J. L. and Barbara, *The Skilled Labourer, 1760 to 1832*, London, 1937.
- Hannington, W., *The Problem of the Distressed Areas*, London, 1937.
- Hansard's Parliamentary Debates.
- Health and Government*.
- Howe, Quincy, *England Expects Every American to do his Duty*, New York, 1937.
- Hutt, Allen, *The Condition of the Working Class in Britain*, London, 1933.
- Inge, (Dean), *England*, London, 1933.
- Islington Health Report, 1931.
- Kuczynski, J., *Hunger and Work*, Statistical Studies, London, 1938.
- Labour Woman (The)*.
- Labour Bureau (The International)*, Geneva, 1931.



## CHILDREN OF THE SLUMS

- Land Worker (The)*, February, 1932.  
*League of Nations' Statistical Yearbook, 1937 to 1938.*  
 Ledru-Rollin, *De La Décadence de l'Angleterre*, Paris, 1850.  
 London, Jack, *People of the Abyss*, London, 1903.  
*London Times.*  
 Lloyd George, *Better Times*, London, 1910.  
 Marshall, H. and Trevelyan, A., *Slum*, London, 1933.  
*Manchester Guardian.*  
 M'Gonigle, G. C. M., *Poverty and Public Health*, London, 1936.  
*New Leader.*  
 Orwell, G., *The Road to Wigan Pier*, London, 1937.  
 Pollock, Margaret A., *Working Days . . .*, London, 1936.  
 Poulaine, Jean de la, *The Colossus on Feet of Clay*, Paris, 1899.  
 Quigley, H. and Ismay Golgie, *Housing and Slum Clearance in London*, London, 1934.  
*Revue des deux Mondes*, Paris, 1870.  
*Report of Proceedings at the 68th Annual Trade Union Congress*, London, 1936.  
*Report of the Labour Party's Commission, 1937*, Cmd. 5641, London, 1938.  
 Scanlon, J., *Very Foreign Affairs*, London, 1938.  
 Shaw, G. B., *The Man of Destiny*, London, 1931; "Widowers' Houses".  
 Simon, Sir E. D., *The Anti-Slum Campaign*, London, 1933.  
 Titmuss, R. M., *Poverty and Population*, London, 1938.  
 Wicutt, W. P., *Dying Lands*, London, 1938.  
 Wilkinson, Ellen, *The Town that was Murdered*, London, 1939.

---

The foregoing analysis is based in part on the researches of F. M. Rentorff: *Slums, Englisches Wohnungslend*, Published by the Author, 1940.

Rupert Rupp: *Der ausgestossene Arbeiter. Dokumante der britischen Sozialpolitik*. Published by the Author, 1940.

---