

THE OFFICIAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE SICK POOR IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY LANCASHIRE

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Read 20 May 1950

THE official attitude towards the sick poor during the seventeenth century was largely determined by the Elizabethan Poor Law Statute of 1601, which had made it a special obligation for the overseers of the poor "to raise competent sumes of money for and towards the necessarie reliefe of the lame impotent old blinde and such other amonge them beinge poore and not able to work."⁽¹⁾

The Statute has to be regarded as the final result of various attempts at social legislation during the preceding century. The increase in destitution at the beginning of the sixteenth century, caused by the changeover from mediaeval economics to those of modern times, forced the authorities, the state and the large corporations alike, to deal with the problem of poverty in a more efficient manner than had so far been done. Individual charity and relief given by such institutions as the Church and guilds were no longer sufficient to deal with the steadily increasing number of poor people. For the first time the legislators distinguished between vagrancy and enforced unemployment. They began to realise that various groups of poor people existed, and that some of them deserved a better fate than that provided by the old statutes for the "sturdy beggars". Further it was realised that to rely on measures for relief only was not satisfactory, and efforts were made to prevent widespread poverty and extreme destitution by attempts to control employment and the prices of food and fuel.

E. Leonard,⁽²⁾ S. and B. Webb,⁽³⁾ E. Lipson,⁽⁴⁾ and others have dealt with the history of the early poor law in detail. A short comparison of the statutes of 1601 with some of the preceding statutes shows how social conscience among the legislators gradually grew, and how the general attitude towards the poor, especially towards the impotent poor, changed. The statute of 1530-31⁽⁵⁾ made, for the first time, a difference between "vagabonds" and "poor, aged and impotent persons," and gave the justices of the peace the right to grant the latter "licence to beg within a certain Preccinct as they shall thinke to have most Need". The statute of 1535-36⁽⁶⁾ prohibited the issue of begging licences and distinguished in a more detailed way between the

⁽¹⁾ 43 Eliz. c. 2, *The Statutes*, Vol. I (1888), p. 546.

⁽²⁾ E. Leonard, *The Early History of English Poor Relief* (Cambridge 1900), p. 32.

⁽³⁾ S. and B. Webb, *English Poor Law History* (1927), Part I, p. 45.

⁽⁴⁾ E. Lipson, *The Economic History of England*, Vol. III (1947), p. 415.

⁽⁵⁾ 22 H. 8, c. 12, *Statutes at Large*, Vol. II (1762), p. 102.

⁽⁶⁾ 27 H. 8, c. 25, *ibid.*, p. 240.

various groups of the poor. This act, described by Lipson⁽¹⁾ as "an embryonic form" of the final act of 1601, remained ineffective because it still relied on private charity to collect the relief money. Further attempts to enforce and to organise private charity remained equally ineffective. Following the example of some of the large corporations which had already introduced compulsory collection, such as London in 1547 and Norwich in 1549, the statute of 1562-63⁽²⁾ provided that money for the relief of the poor—

"shall be gathered in every Parish by collectors assigned, and distributed weekly to the poor, for none of them shall openly go and sit begging. And if any Parishioner shall obstinately refuse to pay reasonably towards the relief of the said poor, or shall discourage others, then the Justices of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions may tax him to a reasonable weekly sum."

When there were more poor in a parish "than they were able to relieve", the justices had again the right to grant a licence "to beg in one or more Hundreds". So far little evidence has been brought forward to show how far this act was successful.⁽³⁾ The further increase of poverty, aggravated by the rapid increase in prices, forced the Government once more to deal with that problem. In 1597 a new act⁽⁴⁾ was passed in which, having learned by experience the inadequacy of private charity, the government introduced regular compulsory assessment and collection of the poor rate. This act was re-enacted in 1601 and became the foundation of the English Poor Law Administration for more than two centuries.

The clauses of the Elizabethan Poor Law Act concerning the relief of the "able-bodied poor" were bound to fail. For economic and psychological reasons it proved impossible to find suitable work for them. The provisions for the relief of the "impotent poor", however, proved to be workable and there can be no doubt that the statute of 1601 did become an instrument to mitigate destitution and misery. The favoured position of the sick poor in the framework of the statute can be seen from contemporary legal literature. M. Dalton⁽⁵⁾ for instance in his book *The Country Justice* distinguished "three sorts or degrees of poor". The first group, "Poor by impotency and defect", included, together with the old people and orphans, "the person naturally disabled, either in wit or member, as an Ideot, Lunatick, Blind, Lame etc.", and "the person visited with grievous disease or sickness, though casually, yet thereby for the time being impotent". "The person casually disabled, or maimed in his body, as the Souldier, or Labourer

⁽¹⁾ E. Lipson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 416.

⁽²⁾ 5 Eliz. c. 3, *Statutes at Large*, Vol. II, p. 535.

⁽³⁾ References to Poor Law Administration before 1601:

(a) *Liverpool Town Books 1550-1662*, edited by J. Twemlow (Liverpool 1935), Vol. II, p. 353.

(b) F. G. Emmison, "Poor Relief Accounts of Two Rural Parishes in Bedfordshire 1583-1598," *Economic History Review* (1931), Vol. III, p. 102.

(c) E. M. Hampson, *The Treatment of Poverty in Cambridgeshire 1597-1834* (Cambridge 1934), p. 8.

⁽⁴⁾ 39 Eliz. c. 3, *Statutes at Large*, Vol. II, p. 684.

⁽⁵⁾ M. Dalton, *The Country Justice* (London 1619), p. 87.

etc., maimed in their Lawfull callings" headed the second group, the "Poor by casualty". The idea that support has to be given to the impotent poor, to the "true, deserving or indigent poor" as they used to be called, remained dominant during all the long period in which the act of 1601 remained in force, and during all the different attempts which were made to adapt the act to the changing economic conditions. As is, however, so often the case with social legislation, theory and practice differed, sometimes widely.

The relief of the sick poor, being closely connected with the other parts of the poor law administration, was influenced by the general changes in this administration. In the seventeenth century all the relief given was outdoor relief. The idea of providing workhouses, into which the different groups of the poor could be placed, gradually took shape towards the end of the century, but relief for the sick poor remained, even during the eighteenth century, principally outdoor relief. From the early eighteenth century onwards many overseers, following the pattern of "the farming out system", made contracts with the local doctors for the medical treatment of the sick poor of their parishes.⁽¹⁾ In the seventeenth century the sick poor had to find treatment for themselves. The overseers were only expected to give financial support and to pay, if necessary, the expenses entailed by the treatment.

Parish accounts and Quarter Sessions documents dealing with the administration of the poor law provide information as to how the relief of the sick poor was carried out in practice. They throw light upon the general attitude towards the poor, and how this attitude changed following economic and political events. In making use of this information, one has to keep in mind that quantity and quality of the service provided differed greatly between one parish and the other, the inevitable consequence of the fact that the execution of the statute had been left to the parishes. This paper is based on research carried out on documents kept at the Lancashire Record Office. Broadly speaking there are three different sources of material: parish accounts, orders and entries in Orderbooks and Sessions Rolls and Petitions to the Quarter Sessions. For the sake of comparison, use has been made of the printed Quarter Sessions Records of various counties and of various published parish accounts.

PARISH ACCOUNTS

The statute of 1601 gave the overseers and churchwardens the right to assess the poor-rate and to grant relief. They were requested at the end of their term to "make and yield up a true and perfect account" to the justices of the peace. Only very few such accounts are preserved.⁽²⁾ They are usually single sheets of paper with the names of persons to whom payments have been made.

⁽¹⁾ A. Fessler, *British Medical Journal* (1950), p. 1112.

⁽²⁾ For example the Overseers' Accounts from Croston in 1659 (QSP. 199/44), from Denton in 1665 (QSP. 227/8), and from Whiston in 1681 (QSP. 546/12).

Sometimes there are remarks such as "widow" or "child", but illness is not mentioned. Occasionally one finds entries referring to special payments made to sick poor passing through the parish in churchwardens' and constables' accounts.

In the Manchester Constables' Accounts⁽¹⁾ are a few entries like the following:—

1617	Paied for sending of towne Cripples Jane Addkinson and Nicholas Harrison whoe had her legge cutt of and was sent by pass from one Constable to an other untill shee com hom.	14d
1633	To a poore boy that fell in the street of the falling sickness.	4d
1635	To a sicke child	6d
	To a mane liinge sicke 3 Dayes in Towne	2s
1641	Paid to relieue John Liegoe which had bene sore diseased, cured in St. Tho: hospital ⁽²⁾ having a pass under the hands of the governors there, to travayle to the towne of Ashton in Lanc:	6d

Among the entries in the Liverpool Vestry Books are:—⁽³⁾

1690	Dr. Norres about Morres's girl	5s
	Carriage to the burial of some dead and to the Hospital of some sick Souldiers	6s
	To maintain a lame souldier at Thomas Stuntons	10s
1696	Mr. Barrow for physick to several poor people	1. 4. 3
	Jane Rimmer for a sick woman that lay in there	7. 6d

A quite unusual entry is in the accounts of the churchwarden from Standish in 1693:⁽⁴⁾

Wine had for sick folks at several times five quarts	8s. 4d.
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The transport of sick and invalid poor was the responsibility of the constables. This type of work increased, especially after the Act of Settlement in 1662, which allowed a local authority to forbid a labourer from moving into a parish if it feared that he might some day come upon its poor rate. Already in 1639 the constables of Garstang had complained in a petition⁽⁵⁾ that they "have beene att great charges whilst dyvers Criples blynd and Impotent poore and sicke persons caryinge in Carte and upon horseback and keepinge many of them all night which to one knowledge have cost us 10s and upwards". They asked to "grant us a warrant to collect within the townshipp". This request was granted. In the Manchester Constables' Accounts⁽⁶⁾ are numerous entries like the following:

1617	Paied for sendinge of one Margerie walter of Dreton in a Carte beinge a Criples and her Daughter beinge sicke the 20th April 1617 to Streforde	22d
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⁽¹⁾ *The Constable's Accounts of the Manor of Manchester 1612-1647 and 1743-1776*, J. P. Earwaker (Manchester 1891), Vols. I and II.

⁽²⁾ St. Thomas' Hospital in London, one of the few hospitals existing at this period.

⁽³⁾ *Liverpool Vestry Books, 1688-1834*, H. Peet (Liverpool 1912), Vol. I.

⁽⁴⁾ PR/182. The entry is under the heading "The Account of the Sacram. dayes and which wine was then used". Apparently large quantities of wine were used, as can be seen from the following entry: "At easter of this year—30 quarts at two shil. the quart".

Probably to pacify some critics wine had been given to the sick poor.

⁽⁵⁾ QSB. 1/213.

⁽⁶⁾ *Op. cit.*, Vol. I.

Other bills presented concerned the upkeep of unmarried mothers such as the following bill by the overseers of Rufford⁽¹⁾ for reimbursement in 1691—

about Ann Watkinson widow and her Bastard child begotten by John Spencer of Rufford			
for drink for the midwife and women that were with her in her Labour		0.	0. 8
for meat and drink for her while she lay in Childbed 4 week		0.	7. 0
for a woman to tent her while shee lay in childbed		0.	7. 0

The next items refer to a warrant for John Spencer, to the fee of the attorney and to charges for attending "the Sessions about filiation". The last item runs:

For burying the said Bastard Child		0.	3. 0
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Other special accounts dealt with the providing of food, fuel and treatment of persons infected with plague. Suspected persons too had to be kept isolated. Some parishes built special huts for the persons who had to be kept in quarantine, forerunners of the isolation hospitals. Some of the items listed in the account sent in October 1647 by the constables of Newton⁽²⁾ "for the releife of the poore infected and suspected persons during the time of visitation" are—

For watchinge		28.	17.	04.
The women who served the sicke		03.	03.	04.
For Ale and other stronge drinks for the infected and suspected persons		12.	12.	09.
For meate and Coles and other provisions for the sicke and suspected		15.	10.	07.
For physicke for the sicke and Rosane [resin] pitch and frankincense to dresse the houses with and for the peoples paines who dressed their houses and buried the dead		21.	03.	02.

The statute of 1691⁽³⁾ charged the overseers to keep special accounts for the money they had collected and disbursed. From this period onwards several such accounts are preserved, called "Booke for the Poore". The best example are the Bury Accounts⁽⁴⁾ which cover the period from 1692-1717. Year for year from the four hamlets which formed the parish (Bury, Walmersley, Heap and Elton) are given the lists with the names of the persons who received a regular allowance.⁽⁵⁾ Besides these lists are numerous other entries referring to payments for food, clothes, fuel, house rent and to special payments made "in time of sickness". These latter entries are usually marked with "paid above booke", "by the booke", or "not booked". As a rule, the nature of the illness is not mentioned, occasionally however some details are given, e.g. smallpox, sore leg, blindness or an accident. Sometimes the name of the doctor is given to whom a payment has been made

⁽¹⁾ QSP. 702/16.

⁽²⁾ QSB. 1/296.

⁽³⁾ 3 W & M. c. 11.

⁽⁴⁾ PR. 2222.

⁽⁵⁾ There was no fixed allowance. In 1700 the allowances given to families varied between 2s. and 6s. Single persons received between 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d.

and one can conclude that at the beginning of the eighteenth century at least five doctors were practising in Bury. Many other entries deal with the expenses for "tablinge" and "tendinge" sick poor people and for the provision of "physicks". Burial expenses are given in detail. A few typical examples of entries are:—

1694	Given to Rich. Fletcher in sickness not then booked	6d.
	Given to Th. Schofield wife by the booke at severall tymes in child sickness	8s. 6d.
	Given to widow Greenhalgh by the booke when her child had the small pox	2s.
1695	Given to Richard Smithurst wife towards buying physick in sickness	2s.
	Given to Hannah Greenhalgh in her sickness and paid for tenting her therein to Rich. Hold. daughter	3s. 6d.
	Given to Abraham Leach son in the cure of his broken Legg	1s. 6d.
1696	Pd to Isabelle Setle while she was in childbed over six weeks	13s. 6d.
	To Ellen Horridge in her lameness	1s.
	To John Taylor and his family in their sickness and for his burial	17s. 6d.
	Pd to Rob. Shepherd family at severall tymes above booke in their sickness	12s. 9d.
1699	To a strange child having the pox and keeping her about eight weeks and sending her away	8s. 4d.
1703	Given to six persons about the birth of their children	6d.
	To Lawrence Duckworth wife in her Labour above books	1s.
	Pd to Dr. Burnet for help to Lawrence Duckworth wife	2s. 6d.

The accounts give the impression that the overseers in Bury at the end of the seventeenth century and at the beginning of the eighteenth century were considerate and were especially helpful towards the sick poor. Their humane attitude can be seen from the following entry in 1711.

Item to James Byron wife towards Loosening him from pressing
(i.e. being pressed into military or naval service) £1.

ORDERS

Orders issued by the justices of the peace concerning the relief of sick poor people were entered into the Order Books, which are preserved from 1626 onwards, and into the Sessions Rolls. Copies were sent to the overseers and, sometimes at least, to the petitioners. The statute of 1601 does not mention orders; the churchwardens and overseers had the right to grant relief on their own or in consultation with the vestry. Very soon however the justices started to send orders to the overseers of some parishes concerning the relief of chronic sick and invalid poor persons. It might be that the orders had become necessary as a means of enforcing the provisions of the statute. The first order given by the Lancashire justices which can so far be traced is enrolled in the Sessions Rolls of 1605. It refers to the maintenance of a lunatic woman in Whiston.⁽¹⁾ Only a few orders are to be found in the order-

⁽¹⁾ J. Tait, *Lancashire Quarter Sessions Records 1590-1606*, Chetham Society, Vol. LXXVII (1917), p. 271.

books from 1626 to 1630. After 1631 the number of orders concerning the relief of sick poor people increased. There was a corresponding increase of petitions too. The greater number of orders was the result of the *Books of Orders*, which the Privy Council circularised in 1630-31, and which led to a marked improvement of the administration of the poor law, and to the strengthening of the supervision of the overseers by the justices of the peace.

There is some evidence to show that during the Commonwealth period, some overseers preferred to delay granting an order to a chronic sick person or an invalid person, until an order had been given by the justices. They very likely did so in order to protect themselves, since they were equally responsible for assessment, collection and distribution of the poor rate and consequently found themselves frequently besieged with complaints from all sides. In 1659, for instance, Alice Hornby of Oldfield Lane in Salford stated in her petition that

"it hath pleased almighty god to visit youre poore petitioner with weakness and a pittifull sore legge."

She

"hath made her Adresse to the churchwardens and overseers of the poore of the towne of Salford who have given Answere that she must have your good worships order for her releefe which they say they will very willingly observe."⁽¹⁾

Orders were issued first at the Quarter Sessions. Later, when the work of the justices in connection with the poor law was steadily increasing, they were also issued at the "privy sessions". After the Restoration it became the practice for justices of the peace to grant an order "out of session". The order was usually given by one or two justices living in the neighbourhood. This practice, which had been found to be useful, was embodied in the statutes of 1691. Orders given "out of session" had to be confirmed at the next Quarter Sessions.

The orders give only a little information about the type of illness which had been the cause of the petition. As a rule, the legal terms "lame", "impotent" and "blind", or words such as "decrepid", "feeble", "weak", "sickly", are used. Lunacy, cancer, sore leg, King's Evil, or accidents are sometimes mentioned, probably in order to underline the seriousness of the condition. An example of a typical order is the following from the year 1640.

"yt is ordered by this Cort that the Churchwardens and Overseers of the poore within the parishe of Childwell shall furthwith upon notice hereof make provision for the manteynance and sustentacion of Magrett Houlton of Little Woolton a poore distressed blind woman soe as she shall not begg under the penalty of the Statute in that case provided and yf they neglect the same then upon complaint made to any Justice of Peace a warrant shall bee awarded against them to take them bound to answere their contemptes before the kinges Majesties Justices of Assyses."⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ QSP. 184/4.

⁽²⁾ Extract from Session Order Book 1640.

Being legal documents, the phraseology of the orders changed very little during the century. After the Restoration, however, many orders were given, in which the overseers are ordered to "allow and to pay into" or, in a somewhat pleading manner, they are asked "to take into their consideration the necessaries" or "the poor condition of —." This change in the phraseology is no doubt connected with the change in the general attitude towards the poor, which took place after 1660, and the influence of which upon the administration of the poor law will be discussed later.

The orders are important because they demonstrate how the justices tried to exercise supervision of the overseers, a duty which the statute had imposed on them. The overseers were constantly warned of the consequences of neglecting the orders, and were requested not to "show cause for contempt". They were threatened with warrants and with fines. The statutory fine was twenty shillings, but sometimes much larger sums were mentioned. Occasionally in the early thirties, the justices threatened to bring erring overseers before the assize courts, but after 1660, cases of overseers being fined or warrants issued were rare. When the administration of the poor law had become inefficient in a parish, the justices sent a special order to the officers of the parish to remind them of their duties. Such an order sent in 1648 to "the Churchwardens and Overseers of the poore within the parish of Boulton" was a replica of the whole statute, asking them "to take special care to provide for the impotent lame poore people and little orphants of poore people etc".⁽¹⁾ A similar order, which was sent to the churchwardens and overseers of Cartmel in 1683, simply ordered them "upon notice hereof to meete together as they are directed by the statute of the 43rd Elizabeth and then make an assessment thorrowe the whole parish for the releeffe of their poore and releve the poore in the parish ioyntly according to the said statute and their presents wants and necessities, there being no other way to releve them".⁽²⁾ The last words of the order give the impression that the justices had realised the limits of the Elizabethan statute and the inadequacy of their powers of supervision. The justices nevertheless succeeded in preventing a breakdown of the Poor Law administration, and mitigated the frequent harsh decisions of the overseers.

Special orders were issued concerning the transport of sick and invalid persons, and the payment for medical treatment of sick poor people. The fees of the surgeons were exceptionally high at this period, and the justices were sometimes forced to order a collection of the whole hundred when a parish was in financial difficulties. Other special orders referred to the providing of safe custody of lunatics, and to the paying of the expenses for the care of unmarried mothers and their children. The Bastardy Law of

⁽¹⁾ Extract from Session Order Book 1648.

⁽²⁾ Extract from Session Order Book 1683.

the seventeenth century⁽¹⁾ was very harsh. The mother had to be committed to the house of correction, and had to be kept there up to twelve months. Before the Restoration she was liable to receive corporal punishment also.⁽²⁾ Orders like the following show that the justices did not want the law to be administered with deliberate cruelty. In 1651, for example, the churchwarden and overseers of Middleton were ordered to "make provision for the Mainteynance and sustenciation of Elizabeth Hardman of Asheworth being greate with child in a conuinient manner as for A conuinient place of Habitation for her within Asheworth untill shee bee delivered and out of Childbed soe that shee bee not starved by lying out of dores or otherwise upon complaint made——".⁽³⁾ The orders give ample proof that the justices of the peace tried to administer the Poor Law in a spirit of humanity. Financial and administrative difficulties made it impossible for them to impose an equal standard of relief over the whole county.

PETITIONS⁽⁴⁾

The petitions sent to the Quarter Sessions claiming relief on account of illness are a very rich source of information about the social background of medicine among the poorer classes of society in the seventeenth century. The petitioners, anxious to give as many details as possible, described their illness, and, if possible, mentioned the diagnosis. They often pointed out the economic consequences of the illness to them and their families, such as that they had been obliged to sell their belongings to pay for treatment, and had been forced to go begging. To comply with the statute the petitioners stressed the fact that they were no longer able to work, and that there were no other members of the family who could support them. Occasionally it was mentioned that the petitioner was really poor, even if he possessed a cottage and a garden. More information is given by the fact that very often the clerk of the court put down the decision of the justices in a marginal note. The case was either referred to the churchwardens and overseers, or the justices themselves fixed the amount of the allowance to be paid. In a few instances the case was referred to two justices, probably for further investigation. Some of the petitioners not only asked for relief but also for "habitation", a request which was nearly always granted.

Petitions were often sent direct to the Quarter Sessions when there was cause to complain about the overseers, but there are many petitions without complaints, and some even which obviously had the support of the overseers. Both the use of stereotyped legal phrases and the handwriting make it clear that many petitions

⁽¹⁾ 7 Jac. I, c. 4.

⁽²⁾ In an order, enrolled in the sessions rolls of 1602, the justices apparently tried to justify the harshness of the order by quoting the Statute 18 Eliz. c. 3, namely, that bastard children are "to the great burden of the parish and in defraudinge of the releeffe of the impotent and aged true poore of the same parish and to the evill example and incoredgement of lewed life".

⁽³⁾ Extract from Sessions Order Book 1651.

⁽⁴⁾ The continuous series of the preserved petitions starts in 1624.

were written by people with legal knowledge, by an attorney or by the local scrivener. Consequently one finds many petitions written in the same hand. Some of the petitions which are not composed in the stereotyped form were written in a forceful, sometimes even blunt, manner. Two groups of petitions can be distinguished. The majority are petitions in which the applicant asked relief for himself, or for a member of his family. A substantial number of these petitions, especially of those in the pre-Restoration period carry signatures of parishoners—the minister, the churchwardens and the overseers were occasionally among them—who “witness the truth of the statement”. The other petitions, more common before 1660, were presented by neighbours on behalf of sick or invalid poor persons, who for some reason had been unable to petition for themselves. This fact and the willingness with which signatures were added to the petitions demonstrate that in the period before the Restoration public opinion was in favour of helping the impotent poor in spite of the costs involved.

The two following petitions illustrate the two groups. The first is taken from the year 1633.

To the Right Worships Raph Asheton and William Radcliffe Esqs. and others his Majesties Justices of the Peace and Quorum at this Session

The humble petitions of Robert Goddard of Moston and Ann his wife Showeth

That whereas Raph Thorpe sonne of the said Ann Goddard beinge a poore lame cripple and not anie wayes able to helpe or move himselfe is now destitute of all means for his maynteynance some of his friends which have formerly maynteyned him beinge dead and others of them together with your poore petitioner beinge in such povertie as they are not able to relieve him in soe much as the said cripple is like to famish for lack of maynteynance unless some other way be apoynted by your worships for his sustentacion

May it please your worships therefore acordinge to your accustomed care in the like cases to apoynt some way or means acordinge as shall seeme good to your worships soe shall your petitioner be bound (with many others) to pray for your worships present health and future happiness

[Note of the Clerk]

The Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poore within Manchester parish to provide for him under the paine of the Statute.⁽¹⁾

The second is taken from the year 1664, Manchester Midsummer Sessions.

To the right Worshipsfull and his Majesties Justices of the Peace for the County of Lancaster at the Quarter Session of the Peace holden at Manchester for the hundred of Salford, the Humble Petition of the Parishioners of Eccles in the Hundred aforesaid humbly

Sheweth

That the Worshippfull Gentry and yeomanry of the parish of Eccles in the said County whose names are subscribed doe humbly supplicate unto your Worships that the Misarable Condicion of Ann Barlow of Barton, spinster nowe in great anguish and miserie by reason of a most sad Cancer in her face; And alsoe that Katharine Irlam of Irlam Idiott, hath lately had her hand cut of, and since through her simplicities hath fallen into the fire, not beinge any waies

⁽¹⁾ QSB. 1/175.

able to helpe herselfe. And that the parish hath beene at the Charge of Fower or five pounds for and towards the care of takeinge of her hand which is not yett perfect or nere cured, by reason of her fall in the fire

The premises considered, that your worships would take into consideration the sad condicion of the foresaid persons, and that you would be pleased that they may have a collection through the hundred of Salford for the charitable benovalance of good people in their several parishes as shall take pitie of their woefull condicion. And in this doeing wee shall subscribe ourselves

Your freinds and servants to pray for your good.

Robert Hartley, Vic. de Eccles. Georg Legh Jane Latham

Thomas Scorold John Valentine Ellis Heyes

[Note of the Clerk]

Referred to Overseers, Enrolled.⁽¹⁾

Two reasons compelled persons who were receiving already an allowance more or less regularly to send an application to the Quarter Sessions. Either they wanted to complain about the overseers who refused to pay or tried to reduce their allowance, or advancing age or a worsening of their illness made it necessary for them to ask for an increase. Such an increase was usually, but not always granted. For instance in the year 1689 Jane Godshaw of Newton in Whittington, "a poor old widow", asked for an increase of her allowance of 8d per week to 12d and for habitation because "besides shee now being both deaf lame and blinde and very ould is not any longer able to subsist with the allowance". According to the note of the clerk however the justices granted her only "8d a week and a habitation". The fact, however, that the words "10d Allowed" are crossed out, leads one to assume that the justices first agreed to an increase, and then after more consideration refused it.⁽²⁾

Petitioners who asked for the first time for relief usually stressed the fact that they "had not been troublesome" to their parish until old age, and the "distempers and infirmities that usually attend old age" or an illness or an accident forced them to do so. The worsening of the general economic conditions was sometimes mentioned as an aggravating factor, such as "the hardness of the tymes", "the durth of corne" or "the scarcitie of worke". Other aggravating factors frequently mentioned were that more members of the family had fallen ill at the same time, or that the family had become "overcharged with children". The civil war and losses through fire or flood are quoted too. The fees for the surgeons and physicians were very high during the seventeenth century, and many petitioners complained how expensive it had been "to lay under the doctors hand". A typical example of this group of petitions is that of George Halliwell, collier in Standish in 1650, whose wife "it pleased God to visit with an infirmitie called the Kings Evil". He complained that his house was plundered by the Scots and that his wife "was so affrighted by the Scots (shee lying in Childbed) that the infirmitie increased so fast uppon her and presentlie there beeing dyvers holes into her breast where

⁽¹⁾ QSP. 260/12.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 516/40.

upon she hath lyen under the surgeons hand——.”⁽¹⁾ Various inhabitants of Standish, the churchwardens and the overseers among them, supported this petition with a petition of their own in which they certified that George Halliwell

“by his greate labour and industrrie hath acquired a competet livelihood, yet beinge much impoverishd and almost ruined in his small estate by the Scottish Army in August—and his wyfe havinge beene a long tyme grievously afflicted in her body with sores—all which together with the great starvation of the last year have brought the poore man to soe low an Ebbe in his Estate that he hath been forced to sell his 2 milke coves to defray the Charge of his family and to pay his debts where into the affore mentioned losses and extraordinary charges have brought him”.

The justices ordered “Churchwardens and Overseers to provide”.⁽²⁾

Reference to a crisis in the textile industry in 1691 was made by Thomas Morris, fustianweaver of Livesey, who, in asking for relief because he “has a wife great with child and five small children and one of them blinde and canot helpe herselfe,” complained that “tradinge is verie bad so that your petitioner can get little work to do”.⁽³⁾ Sick poor persons who were in need of an operation presented their petition to the Quarter Sessions either before or after the operation. The justices ordered the overseers to pay the surgeon, but sometimes they reduced the fees. In 1690 the justices granted the petition of James Crichloe of Aspull for £6. The petitioner stated that he “hath been lame and going upon crutches for a year and upwards last past and hath lyen under the surgeant hands for fyve months time and been kept with meate drinke and lodging—had several bones taken out of his left foot—his surgeant asks six pounds payment for his cure and for his Dyet six pounds, for all which he considers to be reasonable, but being poor and not able to pay——”.⁽⁴⁾ The large sums involved make it understandable that the parishes had sometimes difficulty in finding the money, and the overseers appealed occasionally against the decision of the justices. Even when the doctor treated a poor person without any charge there was still the apothecary to be paid. Ann Mercer of Thingwall asking for an order in 1675 stated

“that whereas your Poore Peticioner beinge a widdow and haveinge Fyve small Children and not able to mayntayne them, and one of her daughters Called Sarah, hath been under Doctors Richmonds hands Three and Thirtie weekes, and hath hadd one of her Legs Cut of, and soe is disinable to gett her liveinge, And the aforesaid doctor Richmond, hath bestowed his Paynes upon her, in Regard of their Poverty But there is Sixe Poundes Tenn shilinges and Three pence owinge to the Apothacary for salves and stuffe to heal her Legg withall and your poore Peticioner noe waies able to Pay him——”.⁽⁵⁾

The justices granted her only “12d a week till further order,” and one does not know what happened to the bill of the apothecary.

A large number of petitioners, especially in the first half of the century when it was more difficult than later for the sick poor to

⁽¹⁾ QSP. 27/30.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 31/68.

⁽³⁾ QSP. 618/2.

⁽⁴⁾ QSP. 678/2.

⁽⁵⁾ QSP. 432/1. The apothecaries in the provinces, unlike the apothecaries in London, did not yet carry out medical treatment.

find medical treatment, were unable to give the name of their illness. They simply described themselves as "impotent" or "lame", or stated that they were suffering from a "disease", "sickness" or "distemper", which they described as "long", "tedious", "greevius", "sharp", "sore", "sad", "lingering", "strange", "weaking", "uncurable", and so on. The word "lame" was used in a very wide sense. Sometimes it meant simple helplessness. A petitioner in 1629 complained that, "She hath by gods visitation been blynd these twentie years past . . . and hath been lame these many years by reason of her blyndness. . . ." ⁽¹⁾ As a rule being lame meant more or less restricted mobility. Sometimes there are given details, such as "going on crutches" or "going with an iron foot." "Lameness" was occasionally used to denote complete immobility, and again, from the description given, one can sometimes decide whether the lameness was caused by a stroke, or by rheumatoid arthritis, or by other common causes. Quite a number of petitions refer to lame children with apparently unimpaired mental ability. It might be that some of these children had become lame due to poliomyelitis. ⁽²⁾ Blindness is the most frequently mentioned illness, on an average about ten to twelve times a year. There were very few references to treatment of diseases of the eyes. This treatment, including the operation for cataract (being "stone-blind"), was usually left to the itinerant quacks. One of the few documents in which treatment for a disease of the eyes is mentioned is from the year 1684. ⁽³⁾ Twenty parishioners from "Orrelle within the parish of Wigan in the County of Lancaster" put their signatures on a document addressed "To all charitable and well disposed Christians" in which they certified that, "Hugh Borose a poore labourer . . . having lost his sight has desired our certificate for his Travell towards the Holywell in Wales to try whether he can get some Remedy for the same and is to Returne within forty days Againe to Orrell being his native place of abode; we therefore humbly pray that he behaving himselfe honestly on the way may be Alowed to ask releefe for necessary support . . ." In petitions for blind children it was usually stated whether the child was born blind, or had become blind after an accident or an illness, such as King's Evil or smallpox.

From the various diseases mentioned in the petitions, lunacy, cancer and King's Evil were of social importance on account of the frequency with which they were diagnosed and on account of the special methods which the justices adopted to deal with them.

The petitions made on behalf of lunatics ⁽⁴⁾ did not always concern the poor. Usually a difference was made between the melancholic and the frantic type of lunacy. Treatment was never mentioned because there was none. Legal questions were sometimes raised,

⁽¹⁾ QSB. 1/66/45.

⁽²⁾ W. J. Malloney has shown on literary evidence that poliomyelitis was present in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. *Edinburgh Medical Journal* (1949), Vol. LVI, p. 304.

⁽³⁾ QSP. 594/16.

⁽⁴⁾ Other terms used were "Distempered mind", "deprived of senses", "Distraction of mynd", "trouble of Braine", "crazed", "mad", "hunted", "non compos mentis", etc.

such as the administration of property or the regulations of the bastard law. Margaret Hulme of Prestwich in 1669 stated that her "daughter Ellin was brought to bedd of a bastard child and being simple lunaticke and not of discreson to father the said child in the tyme of her Labour although urged by the Midwife and other women. . . ." ⁽¹⁾ The object of the petition was usually to ask for provision of safe custody. Numerous reports of attempted homicide, suicide, and arson show how dangerous it must have been for parishioners to have a lunatic person in their midst. In 1689 for instance four men from Windle certified that—

"Martha Cliffe of Windle Spinster for about twelve months since is become so melancholy unruly and hard to be governed that she is now a terrour to hir neighbours. They apprehending that she may wilfully distroy herselfe, mayme their children burne their houses or do some other spoyle amongst them and having nothing in the world for hir substance or do keep guard upon her doe humbly pray that shee may be conveyed to the house of correction to bee kept at labour for hir liveing hopinge the same may be a fit meanes to reclaim hir. . . ."

[Note of the Clerk] Tho. Cliffe the Father to pay 20s. a yeare and the towne to take further care of her. ⁽²⁾

The only remedy available to deal with a lunatic was to keep him under guard, very often in chains, and the overseers had to pay for the keepers. For instance, in 1627, the justices ordered that the churchwardens and overseers of the poor in the Parish of Melling "shall make provision for Mayntenance and habitation of Leonard Townson of Hornby Carpenter who is to bee lunatick and out of his senses during such time as he shall continue lunatick so that hee may be kept close and not committ any misdemeanour. . . ." ⁽³⁾ After the Restoration the justices usually ordered that the lunatic should be brought to the house of correction, and the parish had to pay for his upkeep there. In 1663 the justices ordered "that the Churchwardens and Overseers of the poore within the parish of Lancaster should forthwith pay unto John Hulton Master and Governor of the house of correction the yearly sum of fifty three shillings and fourpence for keeping Alice Parkinson a very dangerous person. . . ." ⁽⁴⁾ In 1674, however, the charges had gone up. Thomas Anderton, master of the house of correction, asking for the expenses for keeping a lunatic woman, stated that the woman

"could not be brought into any capacity to be fit for any worke your petitioner having for all the time found her meate at his owne charge and by reason of her great distemper hath been put to much trouble and charge in attendance on her and all her Clothes are worne and spoyled so that she hath not wherewith to cover her nakedness. . . ."

[Note of the Clerk]: "25s. for yeare past and £4 a year". ⁽⁵⁾

Cancer of the limbs, of the face, or of the throat was frequently mentioned in the petitions. There can be no doubt that the diagnosis was often made when the patient was suffering from some

⁽¹⁾ QSP. 334/6.

⁽⁴⁾ QSP. 245/3.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 673/26.

⁽⁵⁾ QSP. 420/27.

⁽³⁾ Extract from Order Books 1627.

other illness, tuberculosis for instance, or had only a chronic ulcer which did not heal. For cancer of the extremities amputation was usually advised. Some of the petitioners who were or thought they were suffering from cancer used the opportunity to apply for a begging licence, to ask "for your worships licence to begg ask and receive the charitable contribution of all well disposed persons in all Chappells and other places within the hundred". The justices nearly always refused, however, to give such a licence. Sick poor persons suffering from a serious disease like cancer sometimes wished to travel a long distance to find treatment and asked the justices for a pass. In 1627 Roberte Butterworth of Castleton, woollen webster, stated that he—

"is troubled with a grievous disease called the Canker, which begunne in his face about two months agoe, and hath ever since growne worse and worse, though your petitioner hath used what meanes hee could for cure thereof. And your petitioner much doubting that hee can gett no remedye for his said disease in the Countrie, indendeth to travell up to London in hope there to gett the same cured, but your petitioner being not able (out of his poore estate) both to mentayne his wyfe and childe and home, and himselfe in his journey to London and his returne home, and also to pay for the cure of his said disease, and for that your petitioner being a poore man hath had conference with one of his neighbours a poore man, who gott the lyke disease cured at London being admitted into a Hospitall there called 'Suttons Hospitall'. . . ." ⁽¹⁾ The petitioner, therefore, asked the justices "to grant a certificate under your hands concerning your petitioners poore estate unto the maister of the said Hospitall, whereby your petitioner hopeth to be admitted. . . ."

[Note of the clerk]: "a pass for" ⁽²⁾

King's Evil was the name, used by doctors and lay people alike, for the "raising and running" of the glands of the neck, which is caused by infection with the bovine type of the Tubercle Bacillus. It was thought, since the dark ages, that the disease could be cured by the Royal Touch. Other different diseases, which produced similar signs, were also diagnosed as King's Evil. The repeated reports of miracle healing after the royal touch can be explained by the fact that, occasionally, a harmless swelling of the gland or a sore which persisted for some time was erroneously diagnosed as King's Evil and healed spontaneously. The diagnosis of King's Evil became especially frequent ⁽³⁾ in the second half of the seventeenth century as a consequence of the attitude of Charles II. Unlike his father, who in 1628, tried without success to prohibit the ceremony, Charles II is supposed to have touched nearly 100,000 persons. It is possible that he did so for the sake of the Restoration. The description given in some of the petitions leaves no doubt that the diagnosis King's Evil, once it had become fashionable, was used in many cases where there was no infection with tuberculosis at all. Considering the unhygienic conditions in which human

⁽¹⁾ Sutton's Hospital is the Charter House founded by Thomas Sutton in 1611. It was probably known in Lancashire because Sutton had acquired the manor of Tarbock.

⁽²⁾ QSB. 1/31/59.

⁽³⁾ The numbers of petitions and orders in which King's Evil is mentioned is as follows:—1624-1650, 18; 1651-1660, 3; 1661-1680, 37; 1681-1700, 35.

For the history of the King's Evil, *vide* R. Crawford, *The King's Evil* (London 1911).

beings and cattle lived at that time bovine tuberculosis was certainly widespread. This type of tuberculosis, however, usually affects children and young persons. During the reign of Charles II and in the period following, many old people, asking for relief, stated that they were suffering "from the distemper commonly called the King's Evill," and among many other illnesses, blindness had been attributed to it. In the pre-Restoration period, only four persons asked the justices for a pass to go to London to be touched by the King. One of these petitions was presented in 1634 by Raphe Cocker, who stated that he

"hath a boye which is blinde of bothe eies, and is inflicted with the kinges evill, and it is thought by some of judgement it maye bee the Cawse of his blindness. And whereas I am now determined to Travell to London to his Majestie trustinge in god to gett help. May it therefore please your good worships to grannte mee youre pass to gett some releeffe by the waies for my boye is not able to Travell above sixx miles a daie and therefore it wilbe longe in gettinge upp. . . ." The Clerk of the court put down the marginal note, "passe is granted".⁽¹⁾

During the Commonwealth period only one person asked for a grant to go to London. Richard Townson of Pristehutton in 1653 stated

"that your petitioner being a younge man and a free man of Leeds, beinge by trade a Clothier, and is now troubled with the Evill and not able to worke by reason of the said disease but is in great danger to loose his Arme unlesse remedye bee gotten speedely, neither hee nor his frends beinge able to help with reliefe".

The petitioner asked that he "may have moneyes colected . . . through the parish for helping him to London hopinge that hee may gett a place in some Hospitalls for his better reliefe".⁽²⁾ The justices issued an order in which they required that

"the Churchwardens and Overseers of the poore within the parish of Warton furthwith upon notice hereof . . . lay an assessment through the said parish for the raising soe much moneyes as they conceive will be needfull and requisite for the carrynge up to London, one Richard Townson of Prist Hutton a very poore younge man that is sore trobled with the desease called the Evill where the said Townson is in hopes to gett admittance inso some Hospitall. . .".⁽³⁾

From the period 1660-1700 eleven petitions are preserved, in which financial support for the journey to London is asked for. The justices could not refuse such a petition but sometimes they were cautious. In 1676 Richard Aspinall of Burscough asked for an order "that the overseers of the poore may allow some reasonable sume of money towards carrying the poor Child", which he had described as being "about fowre years of age" and "wellnigh consumed with the King's Evill," to London. The clerk of the court made the following note, "To pay 20s into the hands of Mr. Chorley [the overseer perhaps] to be payed when it gone or if it dye or does not go then to be returned".⁽⁴⁾

The considerable increase in prices, which went on all through the century can be seen from a comparison of the sums granted

⁽¹⁾ QSB. 1/130/68.

⁽²⁾ QSP, 81/4.

⁽³⁾ Extract from Order Books 1653.

⁽⁴⁾ QSP. 452/14.

at different periods. In 1637 the justices ordered that ten shillings should be paid to a father who wanted to take his "two smale children which hath a desease called the Kings Evill" to London.⁽¹⁾ In 1678, however, they ordered the overseers to pay £3 to Lambert Coward of Penwortham who stated in his petition that he had

"a sonne a long time beene visitted with the Disease called the Kings Evill and that he had laboured and used all the best means he can gett soe much money as would Carrie and maintain his sonne up and downe to London in hope of Amendment and his sonne being come downe with the Carrier from London and the said Carriers bill do amount into three pounds and eleven shillings. . . ."⁽²⁾

In a few petitions it is mentioned that the petitioner went at his own expense to London but without the expected result. In 1675 for instance, Thomas Charleson of Worsley complained "that he is very sadly afflicted by the Kings Evill it beinge broken upon him on severall places and though in the last springe your petitioner to his greate cost procured a touch from his Majesty yet his distemper still growes faster and faster upon him inasmuch he is totally disenabled to work. . . ."⁽³⁾ William III refused to carry out the Royal Touch, but during his time King's Evil was still frequently diagnosed.⁽⁴⁾ In 1696 Elizabeth Singleton from Whittingham asked the justices for a grant so that her son, being "very much afflicted with the Kings Evill," can become a teacher. She described her son as "not strong enough of body to labour to maintain himself but often sick and much out of order having severall holes both in his armes and leggs—", and she intended "to bring him upon learning so as to make him able in some measure to provide for himselfe in teaching Schoole in the County. . . ." She further complained "that the overseers have allowed him the yearly sume of twenty two shilling and sixpence but now doe (for some reasons altogether unknown to your petitioner) withdraw and deny the same. . . ."⁽⁵⁾ Her request was refused by the justices.

The frequent outbreaks of plague during the first half of the century, serious accidents in coal-mines and stone quarries and the large number of invalid soldiers (a residue of the civil and foreign wars) provided special problems for the justices. No petitions could be found in which an individual appealed for help on account of the plague, but many such petitions were presented by parishes. R. Sharpe France,⁽⁶⁾ in his detailed study of the history of plague in Lancashire, showed that once a parish had been hit by the epidemic, poverty and destitution became so widely spread that it was beyond the powers of the parish officers to help,

⁽¹⁾ QSB. 1/192.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 484/12.

⁽³⁾ QSP. 441/6.

⁽⁴⁾ Different ideas were already prevailing about how to help those who suffered from this disease.

⁽⁵⁾ QSP. 782/20. A few more documents show that from the end of the century onwards teaching was thought to be an occupation for the chronic sick poor. In 1700 the overseers of Winmarleigh were ordered to pay 6d. per week to Robert Gill "poor lame impotent person who can follow no employment save teaching a few children to read". (Extract from Order Books 1700).

⁽⁶⁾ R. Sharpe France, "A History of Plague in Lancashire," *TRANSACTIONS*, Vol. 90, p. 1.

and an appeal had to be made to the quarter sessions. To provide money for relief the justices were usually forced to order a collection over a wide area, sometimes over the whole county.

As mentioned before, the strict way in which quarantine was enforced (it was the responsibility of the constables) brought trade to a complete standstill and increased the number of persons who needed financial support. Wealthy people as a rule fled from the infected parish. In a petition from Pilling in 1650 it is stated that—"260 and upwards are poor and not able to subsist without reliefe from neighbouring townships".⁽¹⁾ A petition presented in 1653 by Ormskirk contained—"a list of the poor Confined, Infected and Suspected within the town of Ormskirke who are not able to mayntaine themselves without speedy reliefe". The list enumerated 398 persons, 81 of whom were "confined in the Cabbins".⁽²⁾

Most of the accidents mentioned in the petitions or in the orders occurred in coalpits and usually the cause of the accident was described, a fall of earth, fire, or the breaking of a rope. Other serious accidents happened in stone quarries and marlpits, in the building and timber trades, and at work in the fields. Road accidents are mentioned, such as "being ridden over" or "being crushed by a loaden cart". The injured persons⁽³⁾ either asked for a special allowance to pay for the treatment of their injuries, which as a rule had lasted a long time, or they applied for permanent relief when they had become invalids and unfit for work. In 1625 the justices ordered the churchwardens and overseers of Eccleston—

"to collecte and gather the somme of money amounting to one whole fiftene within the parishes And shall thereupon paye the same to John Leighe of Parbold in the said parishe towards the Sustenacion maintaynance and Recoverie of his former strength whoe by misfortune is lately hurt in a Marle Pitt and thereby like to be maimed. . . ."⁽⁴⁾

Children and women were also working. In 1626 Thomas Fazakerley petitioned on behalf of Peter Fazakerley an orphan,

"about 14 yeares of age by misfortune greevously hurt at Halsall Milne to the great danger of being forever maimed of one of his legges whereupon divers of the inhabitants of Halsall did compound with a Chirurghion that is Mr. George Shaw for the Cure of the said Peeter and that the said Peeter should remain at your petitioners house untill hee was cured . . . your petitioner kept him 14 weeks with meat drinke lodgings and other necessaries in which time the said Chirurghion has almost cured his legge and thereupon at the last sessions houlden at Wigan by order of the Court gott his money for the cure but your petitioner received or could gett anything for his keepinge whereupon your petitioner was enforced through povertie to turne the said boy away since which tyme he hath wandered up and downe the cuntrye for reliefe soe as the Chirurghion could not tell where to fynd him to dresse his legge soe as the sore is again very much festered yet the Chirurghion willing to cure him for that money he hath received if he has a place of abode . . .".

The justices granted him 3s. 4d.⁽⁵⁾

⁽¹⁾ QSP. 34/10.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 79/9.

⁽³⁾ Petitions were also sent in from the widows of men killed in accidents in coalpits and quarries.

⁽⁴⁾ QSB. 1/6/48.

⁽⁵⁾ QSB. 1/26/67.

In 1666 Ann Hope of Ashton spinster stated in her petition that—

“beinge a very poore woman ever indeavouringe to get a lyvelyhood by her owne labour and paynes did drawe coales at a coalpitt in Parr where your petitioner was by a sad mischance very sore wounded by fallenge down into the said pitt, soe that shee is not able to helpe herselfe but lyeth in bed and not likely to recover from her wounds”,

The justices ordered the overseers of Ashton “to releev her”.⁽¹⁾

The Act of Settlement sometimes made conditions for the sick poor more harsh. In 1683 the justices decided “Att a private sessions held at Over Hilton” that “one Hugh Seddon a Collier in the mines of the Right Honorable the Earle of Derby within Pilkington” who “lately had a fall into one of the Coale pitts there, as he was going downe to worke by which fall he is most sadly and dangerously crushed and hurt” should “be sent to Kearsly within the Parish of Deane there to be releevd according” because the overseers of Prestwich where Seddon was living refused to do so.⁽²⁾

The change of attitude towards poverty is illustrated by the decision of the justices to grant Harry Brown, slater of Prescott 20d. a week and “to have liberty to gett the benevolence of the whole hundred towards his cure”. The petitioner had stated in his petition that—

“havinge four small children which hee in decent manner and without being burdensome to any of his neighbours hath maintained untill about a year and a halfe agoe when it happened that as your petitioner was gettinge stone in a stone pit near Prestcott a fall of earth and gravell fell upon your petitioner and took his legge under it, and broke the same very grievously in soe much that your petitioner has never since been able in the least to helpe himselfe but by the assistance of his wife and good neighbors, is carried to and from his bed In which helpless condicion your petitioner hath wasted what small goods and estate he had . . . and now the Surgeon tells your petitioner his legg must be taken off else hee cannot recover. . . .”⁽³⁾

A special taxation provided money for relief of invalid soldiers and for the relief of the widows and orphans of soldiers killed on service. The fund was administered by the “Treasurers of Maimed Soldiers”. Applications for pensions were sent to the Quarter Sessions. It seems that the money available has not been sufficient, and therefore invalid soldiers were sometimes forced to apply to the parish for relief. Advancing age sometimes made it necessary to apply for an extra allowance. The pension usually amounted to 20s. per year, in some cases it was only 10s. but in a few cases it was 40s. The petitioners often described their wounds in detail. During the Commonwealth period each of them had been “a faithful soldier to the Parliament of England” and after 1660 each of them has “faithfully served his late Majesty of ever blessed memory Charles the First”. One of the earliest petitions from maimed soldiers is the petition of Henry Hitchen of ‘Prestcott’ in 1647. He complained that—

“beinge pressed to serve in the Irish Warrs in the Late Queen Elizabethes Tyme was there very sore maimed and hurt and beinge grown very ould and not able

⁽¹⁾ QSP. 299/18.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 575/16.

⁽³⁾ QSP. 649/6.

to labor for his Livinge heretofore obtained an order from the Justices of the Peace of this County to have £5 per year paid him by the Churchwardens and Overseers of the poore within the Prestcott parrish towards his maintenance which since these troublesome tymes has been detained from him. . . .” [Note of the Clerk]—“to be mayntayned”.⁽¹⁾

In 1673 John Hilton of Wheelton stated that he—

“hath beene a Souldier under the Command of Colonell Tyldsley at Liverpoole amd att Yorke Battle and there received Eighteene Wounds, sixe in his head, in his armes and hands nine wounds, one wound in his side, another in his thigh and another in his leg And did thereupon lye under the Surgeons hands one whole yeare the Cost and Charge whereof did much Impoverish the poore man, and now not beinge able to labor and being in declining yeares desires to have reliefe of the sayd pay and pension According as others doe and have received. . . .”⁽²⁾

The size of the allowances differed greatly not only at different periods of the century but even during one and the same period. Quite frequently single persons had a larger allowance than families had. The overseers and the petitioners had to attend the Sessions, the attendance of the latter is sometimes referred to as being “exhibited in court”. It seems safe to assume that whenever the justices fixed the amount of the allowances they did so after personal investigation, taking into account the extent of the invalidity, age, possibility of additional work, support from other members of the family, and so on. Unlike the attitude prevailing in the eighteenth century, no social stigma was attached to any receiving relief out of the poor rate. The poor did not yet constitute a special class comparable to the “paupers” of the following century. One occasionally finds among the petitioners members of the middle and professional classes, artisans, shopkeepers, schoolmasters, clergymen, officers and so on, and their widows and orphans. There is some evidence to show that the justices were to some extent influenced by the social status of the applicant when fixing the allowance. For instance, in 1662, they granted Mary Radcliffe of Burscough, “blind daughter of Captain Mullineux Radcliffe who has lost in his Majesties service his liffe and all his estate,” and who was “deprived of the glory and comfort of this mortal light,” an allowance of 1/- a week, which was a much bigger allowance than the average allowance given to a family at that time.⁽³⁾ Before the Civil War the average weekly allowance had been as high as a shilling. It seems that then a relatively larger sum of money had been available to a smaller number of poor persons. During the Commonwealth period the average allowance dropped to 8d., and after the Restoration it was as low as 3d. Whenever a complaint was made to the Quarter Sessions that the allowance of 3d. was too small to prevent starvation, the justices increased it to 6d., and after 1670 to 8d. From about 1680 onwards the average allowance amounted again to 1/- per week, and at the turn of the century it was as much as 1s. 6d. It has to be emphasized, however, that

⁽¹⁾ QSB. 1/292.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 402/18.

⁽³⁾ QSP. 235/22.

never had any attempt been made to fix the amount of the allowance.

The official "Rates of Wages", which were hardly ever enforced in the later seventeenth century, and figures given by contemporary writers leave no doubt that in many cases the allowance paid to a sick poor person was far below the minimum income thought to be necessary. The rates of wages recommended by the justices in Essex in 1651 fixed the daily wage for a "common labourer" at 14d. "without meat and drink", and at 8d. with it.⁽¹⁾ According to the tables of Gregory King, published in 1688, the yearly income of a family belonging to the "Labouring People and Outservants" was £15, and of a family of the "Cottagers and Paupers" class £6 10s.⁽²⁾ It was possible, however, for the poor to exist because as a rule, the overseers paid their rent⁽³⁾ or provided habitation for them. Various parish accounts show that the poor received fuel and clothing, but whether in sufficient quantity one does not know.

The petitions, which provide a very large amount of information about the everyday life of the people in the seventeenth century, give some useful information about the doctors, both physicians and surgeons, of that period. The information relates to their numbers, their distribution, their work, their fees, their participation in public life and so on. Frequently tribute is paid to their skill and to their devotion to their patients. The doctor emerges from the description given of him in the petitions as a type quite different from that portrayed in the contemporary satirical literature. Their fees, however, were very high and must often have caused financial difficulties to the individual. Neither the authorities nor the public cared about diplomas and licences, and it must sometimes have been difficult to distinguish between a doctor who had served as an apprentice, and a quack who pretended to be a doctor. Some documents show that in the earlier parts of the century the justices tried, but unsuccessfully, to protect the public against the mountebanks.⁽⁴⁾ Medical treatment was carried out quite openly by various people who, after having treated sick poor persons, petitioned for payment. Some of them were bonesetters, others had no titles. In 1682 William Hindley of Aspull was struck by a horse while driving a plough, and had a leg broken and asked for forty shillings to pay "one Thomas Barlow a bonesetter which hath taken great care and been at the cost and charge of curing your petitioner's leg".⁽⁵⁾ James Farrer of West Derby complained that in 1691, with the consent of the overseer "he did take two poor children of Westderby to cure of the Scowe and likewise hath cured them and the said overseers now refuse to pay him as he promised. . . ." He asked for 30s. "which money your petitioner hath layed

⁽¹⁾ *The Office of the Clerk of the Assize etc.* (London 1682).

⁽²⁾ Quoted by G. M. Trevelyan, *English Social History* (London 1945), p. 277.

⁽³⁾ The yearly rent for a cottage was 10s. to 12s. between 1660-1700.

⁽⁴⁾ In 1630 depositions were taken from witnesses against Henry Raynolde, a mountebank of Wigan, who was committed "to the Gaole at Lancaster for one year". QSB. 1/78/77. In 1636 proceedings were started against "Percival Slatke of Croynton, who had caused the death of a man by administering "Stipium". He confessed that "hee administered the said physicke without any Licence or Tolleration from any Authorities". QSP. 1/175.

⁽⁵⁾ QSP. 551/20.

out in curing and keeping the children both a year".⁽¹⁾ The justices referred both petitions to the churchwardens and overseers.

The midwife is very often mentioned in various petitions. She played an important role in carrying out the Bastardy Law. Her testimony about the father of the child which she had to take when the woman was "in the height and extremity of her paine in travail" was sent to the Quarter Sessions and formed the basis of the proceedings.⁽²⁾

The number of petitions presented to the Quarter Sessions in which relief was asked on account of illness varied at different periods of the century. The causes of this fluctuation in numbers were changes in the incidence of infectious diseases, changes in the general economic conditions, political events, and changes in the administration of the Poor Law. Towards the end of the century smallpox became more prevalent. The sickness which at that time frequently attacked whole families, sometimes causing death, might have been influenza which had made its first appearance in England during the previous century as the so-called "sweating disease". The part played by deterioration of the general economic conditions, especially a crisis in the textile industry, as an aggravating factor has already been mentioned. The civil war increased poverty in general. For many years afterwards widows and orphans of "men slain in the late disturbances" or in "those unhappy times" asked for financial support. Changes in the administration of the poor law played the most important role. The small number of petitions in the twenties of the century can probably best be explained by assuming that it had not yet become a widespread practice to send petitions (and complaints) to the justices. The opinion expressed by Miss E. Leonard that before 1631 only a few parishes in Lancashire and Westmorland had introduced the administration of the Statute of 1601 needs revision. Miss Leonard has based her research work on the Poor Law, mostly on reports sent from the various counties to the Privy Council and she could find only a few such reports from these two counties.⁽³⁾ Entries in the Lancashire Sessions Rolls and Order Books show that in the twenties of the seventeenth century the poor law administration was already functioning in a substantial number of parishes. The increase in petitions and the corresponding increase in the number of orders in the early thirties was the result of the attempts of the Privy Council to improve the poor law administration and to bring it under central supervision. The civil war disrupted the existing local government administration, and it was some time before the administration of the parishes was again functioning everywhere.⁽⁴⁾ Relatively few complaints were made to the justices during the

⁽¹⁾ QSP, 706/35. Scowe or scald head was the name given to the infection of the heads of children with ringworm.

⁽²⁾ In the eighteenth century the testimonial of the midwife was replaced by "the swearing of the reputed father" before the justices.

⁽³⁾ E. M. Leonard, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

⁽⁴⁾ Petitioners complained repeatedly in the late 'forties that the parishes had no overseers, churchwardens or constables.

Commonwealth period, and many of the petitions were supported by fellow parishioners and by the churchwardens and overseers.

A complete change occurred immediately after the Restoration. The number of petitions⁽¹⁾ presented by sick poor persons increased, and many parishioners complained about the overseers who had either stopped the allowance altogether or had reduced it. The social and economic changes which, since the civil war, had affected nearly all classes of society were the cause of many parishes being faced with a much larger number of poor persons than ever before. The township of Leyland presented in 1660 a petition asking that

“the charge of the poore may be equally borne by the whole parish of Leyland”, because “of late years the number and charge of poore hath mightily bene multiplied and encreased. . . .”⁽²⁾

The overseers of Moston complained in 1663—

“whereas the poor people in Moston at this time are very manie the number and quality of them consisting of twoe Cripples, one blynde man and above twentie others aged and impotent people that stand in need of dayly reliefe and finding ourselves greatly burdened and overcharged in affordinge maintenance for their supplys. . . .”⁽³⁾

The resentment against the rising poor rate was bound to lead to a resentment against the poor themselves. A second factor which has probably also been responsible for the change in the general attitude towards the poor may have been the important psychological factor which after a revolution or a restoration causes the winning side to try to do away with all regulations which are disliked, whether they were introduced by the overthrown regime or not. This factor together with financial considerations, might have tempted some of the overseers, if not to abolish, at least to reduce the poor rate as much as possible. The reaction of the overseers to the Restoration was immediate. In October 1660 Jenett Porter,

“a poore blynd woman of Alston in the parish of Ribchester,” complained “whereas your petitioner had an order for her releefe granted the XIIIth Daie of January, 1657 and the overseers of the said parish have neglected to yield obedience to the said order and have given noe releiffe to your petitioner since the 1st May but 10s. . . .”⁽⁴⁾

The change in the general attitude towards poverty affected the impotent poor too because stricter criteria were applied and less pity was shown towards them.

Another factor contributing to the deterioration of the poor law administration was lack of central supervision. The statute of 1662 called “An Act for the better relief of the Poor of this Kingdom” worsened the condition of the poor. Being principally concerned with the important and difficult problem of their settle-

⁽¹⁾ It was a general increase of all petitions concerning the different parts of the poor law administration, e.g. care for old people, orphans, etc.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 199/15.

⁽³⁾ QSP. 244/29.

⁽⁴⁾ QSP. 198/43.

ment, it gave the parish officers vast powers to decide the fate of the poor. It is to the credit of the justices that they prevented a probable breakdown of the administration of the poor law in spite of their greatly lessened power of supervision. The number of petitions in which relief was claimed on account of invalidity or serious illness remained high until the eighties of the century. The gradual fall from that period onwards can best be explained by the fact that the justices dealt with an increasing number of poor law matters "out of session", and that some disputes between the overseers and the poor could be settled without being brought before the Quarter Sessions. The act of 1691 strengthened the position of the justices and improved the parish administration by aiming at better accounting. Overseers' accounts such as those at Bury show that some parishes were able to deal effectively with the relief of their poor for at least a certain period.

The orders published in the Quarter Sessions Records⁽¹⁾ of various counties (West Riding, Warwickshire, Middlesex, Lincolnshire, etc.) show that the relief of the sick poor during the seventeenth century had everywhere been similar to that practised in Lancashire. The existing differences in the amount of poverty can be explained by the differences in the economic structure. Lancashire with its coalmining sites and its widespread and specialised textile industry, linen, wool, fustian and lace, was undoubtedly worse off than the principally agricultural counties. The number of almshouses in Lancashire seemed to have been very small—there are but few references to them—compared with the numbers in some other counties. For example, the justices of Somerset in 1646 appointed two treasurers for the maintenance of the "hospitals and spittels", which they thought "have benee of late much neglected to the great aggreivance of the people".⁽²⁾

How far was the relief of the sick poor people of seventeenth century Lancashire effective, and, if such a far-reaching generalisation is permitted, how far was it so in the rural England of this time? Before one can attempt to answer this question one has first to realise that the petitions and orders provide no statistical data about the amount of poverty or of the number of sick people. They refer only to those who for one reason or another were forced to address themselves to the Quarter Sessions. Overseers accounts and other parish documents show that many poor people were relieved without intervention by the justices. The fact that during the whole century many parishes are mentioned only a few times in the petitions also proves that they relieved their poor as well as they could. The justices were only asked to help in serious cases, such as the maintenance of a lunatic person, or when larger sums were involved, for such things as the payment for medical treatment.

To judge the relief of the sick poor is to judge the whole poor

⁽¹⁾ Petitions have not been published yet.

⁽²⁾ *Somerset Quarter Sessions*, (1912), edit. by E. M. Bates, Vol. II, p. 7.

law administration. The administration of the Elizabethan Poor Law, especially during the eighteenth century, has been severely criticised by S. and B. Webb⁽¹⁾ and other historians. In judging the efficiency of the administration of the poor law in former times, however, one should not apply the standards of the present day with regard to public morals and administration. For instance the fact that the execution of the statute of 1601 had been left to the parish has been severely criticised.⁽²⁾ The legislators of the statute, however, had no other choice than to use the parish as the administrative unit.⁽³⁾ The Webbs admit that at the time of their writing "little systematic study of the archives of parish and county" had been made, and they also admit that "it would be unfair to judge the poor law administration by twentieth century standards of honesty and efficiency". Nevertheless they concentrated their interest mainly on the shortcomings of the administration and on the frauds and crimes committed by some of the justices and overseers. Being largely influenced by the writings of contemporary critics which were biased (as they had the right to be) S. and B. Webb condemned the whole poor law administration as the "Relief of the Poor within a Framework of Suppression", or as "Charity in the grip of Selfdom".⁽⁴⁾ It was a mistake, unfortunately frequently made, to regard the conditions which existed at certain periods in the London area as typical of the whole administration of the poor law.

In judging the work of the justices and overseers of the seventeenth century one has not only to consider the then administrative and financial conditions, but also has to see their work against the background of the time. In the late Tudor and early Stuart periods interference by the state was tolerated in many ways without much protest in private and public life. Accordingly it has been generally accepted that the care of the poor has to be the responsibility of the community. Everybody understood "community" as the parish to which one belonged. The hundred, but no larger area, might be assumed. In some cases only the township in which one lived was admitted. The justices had repeatedly to declare that all the hamlets of a parish must share equally the burden of the relief of the poor of the whole parish. Three factors, the general attitude towards the problem of poverty, the interest taken by the Privy Council after 1630 in the administration of the poor law, and the fact that the Elizabethan statute still fitted the economic structure of the country, combined to make the relief of the sick poor in the period before the civil war efficient, but only so far, of course, as the conditions of the time permitted.

Although the public of that period was in favour of supporting

⁽¹⁾ S. and B. Webb, *English Poor Law History*, Part I (London 1927).

⁽²⁾ D. Marshall, *The English Poor in the eighteenth century* (London 1926), p. 14,—"the untrammelled parochial responsibility".

⁽³⁾ E. Hampson, *The Treatment of Poverty in Cambridgeshire* (Cambridge 1934), p. 272,—"the technique adopted in 1597 was inadequate"; "the evils were the miserable outcome of throwing upon petty localities the whole expense of a malady which was essentially national."

⁽⁴⁾ S. and B. Webb, *op. cit.*, p. xi., pp. 396 and 425.

the poor, the Quarter Sessions had, nevertheless, to deal with protests against the assessment of the poor rate. The protests were, however, less frequent than after 1660. There were also complaints about the overseers. For example, in 1639, Margaret Houghton, "a poore distressed blinde woman" of Childwall,

"complained that she hath long since made her complaints at the General Sessions of the peace where it was ordered that the parish of Childwall should maintain her as will appear by the order; But soe it is that the parish will not hitherto regard that order, nor afford her any releefe, some of them giving her ill words for seeking that way for releefe, others biding her depend upon charitie which charitie is so cold that she is like to starve for want of releefe, all the means hath been a collection in church which is a small thinge to maintain a blinde woman. . . ." [Note of the Clerk]—Order enforced⁽¹⁾

Nevertheless the information supplied by the Lancashire Quarter Sessions Records seems to permit the inclusion of Lancashire in the area where, according to Clapham's opinion, before 1640, the administration of the Poor Law was "in fair working order"⁽²⁾. The same material indicates that during the Commonwealth period, justices and overseers restored the poor law administration, interrupted by the civil war, to working order again in accordance with the spirit of the period.

The change in the general attitude towards the poor after the Restoration did not occur at once, but was spread over a long time. Consequently the change was not completed before the closing stages of the seventeenth century. The change became visible in the lowering of allowances, in the increasing number of complaints about the overseers, and in the resentment shown by some overseers against the decisions of the justices. Until now the overseers had refused mainly on financial grounds. A completely different note appeared in the complaint of Sarah Rishton of Haslingden in 1692. She complained "that havinge foure small children and two of them havinge the Kings Evill and your petitioner going to ask of the overseers some releefe he threatened to send her to the House of Correction". The justices granted her only 6d. a week.⁽³⁾ The threat of the house of correction foreshadowed the threat of the workhouse of a later date. What Clapham has described as "extra streak of hardness that seems to enter public life in the Restoration Age"⁽⁴⁾ also became manifest in complaints about the poor sent to the Quarter Sessions by some parishes. Already, in 1663, the inhabitants of Whittingham complained to the Quarter Sessions that,

"for severall yeares are manie poore people within the Tonshippe which have orders for their reliefe and manie of them in greate sumes so that the burthen groweth given upon the towne. An the charge not necessarie to many of the said poore in that some who are lame are able to spinne and get sumthinge

⁽¹⁾ QSB. 1/230. *Vide supra*, p. 91.

⁽²⁾ J. Clapham, *A Concise Economic History of Britain* (Cambridge 1949), p. 299—"the whole system was in fair working order except in the North and North-West, and in Wales."

⁽³⁾ QSP. 717/2.

⁽⁴⁾ J. Clapham, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

towards their releefe that waye. Others that weare infants are grown stronge and able to get for what they want amongst their neighbours as others doe and those that weare sickley doe recover their health and are better able to helpe themselves in some things so that less monies may well suffice"

they therefore asked that—

"the sumes of monie so given to any person . . . maye be mitigated regulated and distributed at the discretion of the Churchwardens and Overseers of the poore with the consent and advice of so manie of the foware and twentie as they shall be pleased to call to their assistance. . . ."⁽¹⁾

The clerk made the note "Referred till morning".

Or to give another example, in 1691 the overseers of Parr asked that an order for a widow and her son should be rescinded because "she hath taken him from his worke and sent him to the schoole".⁽²⁾

Decisions of the justices, especially those made "out of session", were sometimes resented by the overseers because the recipients of the orders were not, in their opinion, really poor, and one has to admit that the overseers were perhaps occasionally in the right. In 1698, Bridget Winder of Warton received an order for 6d. per week because she had described herself in her petition as a very poore woman who "hath a boy aged 3 years and going for four which has been violently holden and still continues in the distemper commonly called ricketts and your petitioner has sought severale ways for cure of the infant, till like the woman in the gospel⁽³⁾ she hath spent all her living . . . she likewise sold her household utensills, yea the cloak off her back for sustainance . . ." she asked for relief "till it pleases God to dispose of her child".⁽⁴⁾ The petition was accompanied by a certificate signed by four witnesses, that "John Winder and his wife are in great poverty and have sold all their goods that would give money for towards the cure of a lame child ricketed. . . ."⁽⁵⁾ At the next sessions however the justices were presented with a petition signed by about twenty inhabitants of Warton who certified "that John Winder and his wife Bridget have a mansion or dwellinghouse of their owne and are able to worke and earne a comfortable livelyhood as others of their rank doe and therefore noe necessittie for any weekly allowance to them. . . ."⁽⁶⁾ In response to the complaint the justices decided that the order should be withdrawn. It must often have been difficult for the justices to be generous, not knowing the exact circumstances of every case. They refused, however, to accept a suggestion made by the parish of Rossendale in 1699 that they should "not grant an order for reliefe without the consent of one or two copyholders".⁽⁷⁾

It has been emphasised that in spite of the general deterioration of the poor law administration in the second half of the seventeenth century, many parishes still relieved their poor, especially the sick, in a satisfactory manner. Overseers accounts like the Bury one or

⁽¹⁾ QSP. 640/5.

⁽²⁾ QSP. 682/4.

⁽³⁾ Many petitions contain phrases which demonstrate the deep religious feeling of the period.

⁽⁴⁾ QSP. 809/7.

⁽⁵⁾ QSP. 813/9.

⁽⁶⁾ QSP. 815/16.

⁽⁷⁾ QSP. 831/1.

the two accounts of Bedfordshire analysed by Emmison⁽¹⁾ are proof of this statement. The consequences of the change in attitude towards the poor became fully apparent in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Poverty was no longer seen as a social problem, it was looked upon as an inevitable result of the existing social order, or, was even regarded as a nuisance. One was prepared to regard poverty among the impotent as misfortune, poverty of able-bodied people, however, was regarded as a crime.

The contemporary criticism of the Poor Law has very likely played a double role, it was both result and cause of the change of attitude. It is difficult to estimate its exact influence, but a comparison of the critical writings before the Restoration with the critical writings in the post-Restoration period illustrate the change which had taken place. Levellers, like R. Overton, criticised the poor law administration in their "appeals", as being unsatisfactory because it does not stop "begging, the shame of the nation", and they demanded that the government should build hospitals for the sick people.⁽²⁾ The critics of the later period accused the poor law of enforcing idleness by paying relief indiscriminately, and no more mention is made of the building of hospitals by the authorities. Nothing was done until, in the first half of the eighteenth century, local philanthropic societies started to build hospitals. One may be allowed to assume that one of the results of the change in attitude toward the poor has been the fact that the hospital system in Britain has developed differently from the continental system. The number of voluntary hospitals in the continental countries remained very small in comparison with the number in Britain.

The legislators of the statute of 1601 hoped to abolish poverty by providing work for the able-bodied poor and by providing relief for the impotent poor. Although they were mistaken in their optimism, one has to appreciate their attempt to achieve "freedom from want." One appreciates their attempt even more when one compares the condition of the sick poor in seventeenth century England with the conditions which existed for them in contemporary Scotland⁽³⁾ and France,⁽⁴⁾ where the care of the poor was mainly left to private charity. Paul de Vincent in France founded a large charity organisation. After his death, however, the movement lost its driving force and poverty and destitution went on increasing in the large towns as well as in the rural parts of France. Although the Webbs condemned the administration of the poor law so severely, they did not deny the possibility that the Elizabethan statute might have been one of the factors whereby England was saved a social revolution in the eighteenth century.⁽⁵⁾

It has been repeatedly stated that the social medical service of

⁽¹⁾ F. G. Emmison, *op. cit.*

⁽²⁾ Don M. Wolfe, *Levellers Manifestos* (New York 1944), pp. 194 and 270.

⁽³⁾ Th. Ferguson, *The Dawn of Scottish Social Welfare* (London 1948).

⁽⁴⁾ E. Archer, "The Assistance of the Poor in Paris and in the North-Eastern French Provinces 1614-1660" (Thesis 1936).

⁽⁵⁾ S. and B. Webb, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

Britain had been built to a large extent on the basis laid down by the administration of the statute of 1601. "Social medical services" are understood to include care for the old, for the orphans, for the chronic sick, for the lunatic people, for injured workers, and so on—all those activities which H. Levy has called the obligation and duty of the state.⁽¹⁾ The Quarter Sessions records are the documents to prove the truth of this statement. The petitions are of special interest to the student of social medicine because they show the close connection between illness and poverty. Illness is seen entirely from the patient's point of view. There are also other sources such as letters and diaries in which patients describe their illnesses. The petitions, however, provide information about the illness and accidents of ordinary people, people who have remained silent as far as posterity is concerned, because they left neither diaries nor letters.

I wish to thank Mr. R. Sharpe France, M.A., F.S.A., the Lancashire County Archivist, who suggested this research work to me and who has given his advice freely. Also I would like to thank the staff of the Lancashire Record Office, who have given me every assistance.

⁽¹⁾ H. Levy. (a) "The Economic History of Sickness and Medical Relief before the Puritan Revolution," *Economic Historical Review*, Vol. 13 (1943), p. 42.

(b) "The Economic History of Sickness and Medical Relief since the Puritan Revolution," *Economic Historical Review*, Vol. 14 (1944), p. 135.