WILEY

Three Birmingham Relief Funds--1885, 1886, and 1905

Author(s): F. Tillyard

Source: *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 60 (Dec., 1905), pp. 505-520

Published by: Wiley on behalf of the Royal Economic Society

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2221172>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 02:28 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Royal Economic Society, Wiley are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to
The Economic Journal

THREE BIRMINGHAM RELIEF FUNDS—1885, 1886, AND 1905.

THE object of this article is to compare the records of three civic relief funds, two administered about twenty years ago, and the other during the past winter; and to see if the comparison furnishes us with any useful information as to the thrift and foresight of the working classes, and the nature of exceptional distress.

These three funds do not represent the whole of the exceptional relief work of the past twenty years in Birmingham, but no records of any value have been kept of the relief funds of intermediate years. This is not to be wondered at. It is not an easy matter to keep good records of relief fund work, especially if the fund is a large one; and the reason is not far to seek. Relief funds are emergency measures, and are generally organised with a view merely to meet the emergency, and with no thought of recording for future comparison any exact information as to what was the emergency. I was a member of the executive and a district secretary during the administration of a large Lord Mayor's Fund in a Yorkshire city during the winter of 1903-4, and the official records of that fund consisted of a subscription list, an account of the tickets given out to each district, the receipts of the tradesmen for tickets honoured, and receipts for administration expenses. Of the number of families helped, of the ages, occupations, and circumstances of the wage-earners who were on relief, no record will be found. In the winter of 1904-5 I was secretary to the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund in Birmingham, and saw that means were provided for recording very much fuller information as to the recipients of relief. This fund was administered in twenty-three districts, and was an interesting experiment in the democratic distribution of relief. No one could expect from local workers relying mainly on their local knowledge, and on shrewdness rather than upon

education, any great keenness in keeping records, so that it is a matter for congratulation that though as many as 7,000 families were relieved for an average period of nearly four weeks, 22,000 grants were most carefully recorded; that in nine important and representative districts selected for an analysis of occupations, out of 3,458 heads of families relieved particulars were recorded of 3,031. In dealing with particulars of rents, ages, size of families, &c., the proportion of incomplete records was necessarily much larger, and here I have sampled the returns, being content to take 200 complete returns (in one case 150) from each of eight districts. As the fund lasted for three months these returns were taken, some from the beginning, some from the middle, and some from the end of the period, and I am satisfied that they may safely be taken to give an average result which is very approximately correct.

The main conclusion to which my comparison of figures seems to lead is that *the skilled artisans and respectable workmen generally are more provident, either through an extension of the mutual insurance against being out of work afforded by Trade Societies, or through increased private savings, than was the case twenty years ago; while, on the other hand, many unskilled labourers, and the less respectable workmen, whether skilled or unskilled, are less provident and less independent than they were twenty years ago.* If this conclusion is true, it is certainly of grave importance. It is not quite tantamount to the theory expressed in the phrase "the rich are becoming richer, and the poor poorer," unless we include amongst the rich the thrifty Trade Unionist and Friendly Society member; but it does point to an increasing moral weakening and degeneration of the inhabitants of the slums of a great city. So far as figures go there does not seem to be much doubt about the conclusion. The difficulty comes in when we attempt to assess the effect of differences of administration, and this must be our first task.

The 1885 fund was spent on relief work, while the funds of 1886 and 1905 were mainly spent on tickets exchangeable for grocery and coal. I will give some particulars of the 1885 fund, as I think its results are not without lessons for the present time, but they have little value as a standard of comparison with the results of the 1905 fund.

The Mayor's Relief Fund of the spring of 1885 amounted to £3,991, made up of £3,797 given as donations, and £194 value paid for work done by the unemployed. The first work provided was stone-breaking, and the stone-yard was opened on January

19th, 1885, and work was provided for 500 or 600 men daily, until, all the stone having been broken, the yard was closed on February 21st. Payment for the work done was made entirely in kind at a differential rate, according to the number in the worker's family, and in addition a midday meal of bread and cheese was provided for the men; the task imposed is said to have been a light one, and to have been cheerfully undertaken and accomplished without difficulty. In anticipation of the work at the stone-yard becoming exhausted, work was found for a large number of men by the Baths and Parks Committee, by the Water Committee, by the Drainage Board, and by private employers. The men were paid daily from the Relief Fund, and the value of the work done, as estimated by the Borough officials, was paid to the credit of the Relief Fund by the above-named departments. The number of days' work for the departments was 7,113, and for private employers 2,484. The receipts for work done, £194, are very small compared with the number of days' work. It is not said in the report whether £194 is the gross or net value of the work done; but we may, I think, safely assume that it represents the net value of the work after payment of supervision expenses, which would no doubt be very considerable. It is also not said whether private employers paid for work in the same way that the departments did. But in either case a return of just under $6\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day if the private employers paid nothing, and under $5d.$ a day if the private employers were charged the same as the public departments, shows how thin was the disguise assumed by private charity on this occasion.

The figures for the stone-yard are valuable, as they indicate the outstanding characteristic of this particular fund—namely, the comparatively large number of single men on relief. As apparently no residential qualification was required, and the task imposed was a light one, no doubt a great many men tramped into Birmingham on purpose to get this work. At any rate, the family statistics are so different from those in 1886 and in 1905 that, in my opinion, I have in that a sufficient justification for not using the results of this fund for comparative purposes.

The figures are as follows :—

	Number of days' labour performed.
Man (single)	1,819
Man (with wife)	1,167
Man (with wife and one child)	1,111
Man (with wife and two children)	1,248
Man (with wife and three or four children)	2,559
Man (with wife and five or more children)	1,367
Total..	8,771

This return shows that 15 per cent. of the work was done by single men. In 1905, not quite 5 per cent. of the men relieved were single men or widowers without family.

The family returns tell the same tale. They are as follows :—

Men.....	2,368
Women	1,799
Children	4,650
Total.....	8,817

which gives an excess of men over women of 569, a very much larger number than can be accounted for by the widowers. The family figures for 1886 were made up differently, but we are able to compare the average size of the families relieved in the two winters. In 1885 it was 3·7 and in 1886 it was 4·9. In 1905 the number of children in the 1,550 cases selected for analysis was nearly 2·7 per family. If we make a small deduction for the cases in which only one parent was living we get an average family of 4·6 persons. We may, I think, safely take the 1886 and 1905 figures as normal with an average family of between $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 5 persons, and the 1885 figures as abnormal, and due to the preponderance of single men relieved in that year. The other differences between the results in 1885 and 1886 seem to be accounted for by a marked improvement in 1886 in the iron and metal trade, a decline in the building trade, as was to be expected after long-continued depression, and by the readiness of certain classes of workers, such as jewellers, to avail themselves of the relief-tickets given out in 1886, though they would not, as a rule, take the rough work offered in 1885.

On the other hand, the results in 1886 may, in my opinion, be most usefully compared with the results in 1905. Both funds were distributed after a long-continued period of depression; both were in the main distributed in ticket relief; and in both instances a six months' residential qualification was imposed, and recent recipients of poor relief were excluded from participation in the relief distributed. The only material difference which I have been able to discover, either from the official records of the 1886 fund, to which I have been most kindly given access, or from the recollections of surviving administrators of that fund, is in the machinery employed for receiving applications for relief. The mode of procedure in 1886 seems to have been as follows:—Eight local sub-committees were formed to adjudicate on the applications, and to relieve the suitable applicants, but applica-

tions were not made in person to the sub-committees. Forms of recommendation were supplied to the secretaries of Trades Unions and Friendly Societies, to ministers of religion, and to the heads of existing relief agencies, who could fill them up and send them to the appropriate local sub-committee. Personal application could also be made to the members of a special committee which sat three times a week to take down applications and fill in recommendation forms. The recommendation form contained full particulars of the condition and circumstances of the applicant and his family, but, unfortunately, no copy of it seems to have survived. Before relief was granted the particulars on the recommendation form were verified by a visitor of the local sub-committee whose duty it might be to deal with the case. When the fund was first started it was apparently thought feasible to issue the relief tickets to the persons who had recommended the case, but in the actual working it appears that tickets were issued direct to applicants, either by a visitor or through the post, and that when recipients were no longer in need, it was to the sub-committee that they went to ask to be taken off the list of those on relief. This all tends to show that the recommender was not necessarily in close personal touch with the person recommended for relief.

In the 1905 fund there were no recommendation forms, but the normal procedure was for applicants to apply personally at the district offices, which were open, as a rule, every day in the week. Applications were taken down on application forms, from which my statistics have been compiled. The homes of applicants were visited before relief was granted, and after the first month or so particulars as to employment and wages were also pretty generally verified. Before we proceed to estimate, as best we may, the effect of the use of a recommendation form as distinct from an application form, there is one striking incident of the 1886 fund to which I would direct particular attention.

At one of the early meetings of the Executive Committee the question was raised of excluding Trade Unionists who were in receipt of out-of-work pay; but the representatives of the trade societies who were present argued that to do so would be to handicap the thrifty, and it was decided not to lay down any general rule, but to leave each case as it arose to the discretion of the local sub-committees. No records were kept of the numbers of Trade Unionists applying, but it is evident that there was no feeling that Trade Unionists were above making application. In the administration of the 1905 fund no similar ques-

tion arose, though the Trade Unionists were well represented on the committee, for the simple reason that, as far as I know, Trade Unionists did not attempt to avail themselves of the fund. Some of the applicants had certainly been members of a trade society in the past, but I do not know of any instance of an application from an actual member of a trade society. One association (the Bedstead-workers) undertook to relieve its out-of-work members during the currency of the fund, although not usually giving out-of-work pay. This was typical of the Trade Unionist attitude from the first. It is to my mind a strong piece of evidence in favour of my conclusion that the higher grade workman has grown in independence.

But this is a digression, which has, however, disposed of the differences in the administration of the two funds, so far as I have been able to ascertain them. There may also have been differences in *personnel* between the administrators in 1886 and 1905. In 1886, with only eight district committees as against twenty-three in 1905, the proportion of trained workers on each committee would probably be higher.

Let us return to the question of the effect of a recommendation form instead of an application form. A recommendation form does not appear to me to have much value as a test, because the real responsibility for refusing or granting relief, or for discontinuing it, obviously rested on the sub-committee and not on the recommender. But it would have some effect in making it easier for the Trade Unionist and the more respectable poor to send in applications. Where the method of absolutely open application is adopted, the result in the worst districts is a rush of applications from all sorts of undesirable people, and the more respectable poor stand on one side. Probably the use of the recommendation form also made it easier to refuse applicants of known bad character, which was a real difficulty in some districts in 1905. In 1886 the applicant had no right of direct approach to the sub-committee, and an applicant who was refused could never be quite sure whether the recommendation was not sufficiently favourable, or whether the report of the visitor sent by the sub-committee was unfavourable. Some of the local committees in 1905 adopted the system of giving one week's relief to the unsuitable cases rather than incur the odium of an entire refusal—an odium which was liable to be manifested in violent ways. I think we may therefore conclude that it was somewhat easier at first in 1886 for the respectable poor to apply for relief, and also easier for the committees to refuse assistance in bad

cases. But there was one difference between the two funds—the length of time during which relief was given—which tells the other way. Where a fund is open for a long while, and is well advertised, as was the case this year, the respectable poor, though they may not come in the early rush, are almost sure to be discovered, and to be even urged to apply if there is any necessity for it. Many of the local workers told me they were getting their hardest and most deserving cases in the last weeks of the fund. The 1886 fund was only open about seven weeks (February 22nd to the middle of April), while the 1905 fund was open for thirteen weeks expiring at the end of February, 1905. This extra duration of the fund in 1905 may be regarded as a set-off, so far as regards the respectable poor, to the difficulties in their way arising from the method of open application. When we have taken all these matters into consideration I think we may give the comparative figures almost their full weight.

Let us, first of all, take the gross totals :—

	Heads of families relieved.	Population.	Families (approximate).	Percentage relieved.
1886	3,365	460,000	92,000	3·7
1905	7,000	540,000	108,000	6·5

This table shows that the percentage of recipients in 1905 was not very far short of double the percentage in 1886. It is not to be imagined from this that the depression in 1905 was twice as acute as in 1886. Of that there is no evidence at all. There is, however, strong evidence of much greater eagerness on the part of certain classes to get a share of the fund. A chairman of one of the eight district committees in 1886 writes to me :—"So far as I know the loafers were not numerous, and the inquiries weeded these out." On the other hand, at a meeting of some of the district secretaries held some weeks after the starting of the 1905 fund, the following classification was made by one secretary, and not seriously impugned by anyone present :—"25 per cent. obviously genuine cases, 25 per cent. equally obviously bad cases, and 50 per cent. doubtful and requiring further testing." I have analysed the returns for eighteen districts according to the number of weeks each case was kept on the fund, and that return tells a tale in some districts of a very large proportion of undesirable recipients. I will give the figures for five districts where the average duration was under three weeks, and of two districts where the average duration was over five weeks.

CASES HELPED FOR WEEKS AS UNDER.

District.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9 and over.	Average duration in weeks.	Percentage over six weeks.	Total cases.
Deritend	298	111	89	55	43	29	24	16	16	2.7	8.2	681
Duddeston	189	80	66	47	30	48	7	—	—	2.8	1.7	417
Balsall Heath ...	99	36	36	26	14	11	4	9	7	2.8	8.2	242
St. Martin's	176	86	52	36	23	20	21	7	3	2.9	7.3	424
St. Thomas's	63	81	61	41	24	16	8	1	1	2.9	3.4	296
All Saints' and Rotton Park ...	9	12	25	28	25	21	22	22	39	5.7	40.9	203
St. Bartholomew's.	26	80	74	59	67	56	60	59	112	5.4	39.0	593

It will be seen that in five districts dealing with 2,060 cases, 775 were discontinued at the end of one week. In some cases, no doubt, persons on relief would get work at once, but 38 per cent. of them would not. The bulk, therefore, of the one-week cases may be taken to have been "undesirables." The only general conclusion I can draw is that during the last twenty years there has been in some quarters a serious diminution of the spirit of independence. What took the place of the spirit of independence was a sort of sense of proprietorship in the fund. Applicants came saying: "Well, it's our fund," and "We've a right to a share," and the like. The unemployed were a privileged class, and instances were met with in which partial employment was given up in order to qualify for these privileges. I need not point out how extremely dangerous to the community as a whole any wide extension of these sentiments would be.

If we now turn to the different trades I think we shall have ample proof that this loss of independence is fortunately confined to certain classes of workmen. And here may I say that I want to state facts and suggest reasons, but I do not wish either to blame my fellow-men or to apportion blame. It is one thing to point out physical or moral degeneration, and perhaps growing degeneration in the slums, and quite another thing to blame the slum-dwellers, who are, after all, the victims of a social system. What we want to do is to find out what methods of dealing with poverty are harmful, and liable to increase rather than to diminish it.

I find that in 1886 the returns were classified under 108 different occupations, and in 1905 under about 80 different occu-

pations, and that the classifications cannot be made to correspond entirely. My task is, however, simplified by the fact that in 1886 only 16 of the classes were above 1 per cent. of the total, and these 16 classes comprise 67 per cent. of the recipients of relief; while in 1905, 17 of the classes are above 1 per cent. of the total, and these comprise 73 per cent. of the recipients.

I will, therefore, place side by side the classes which exceed 1 per cent. of the total recipients.

Occupations in 1886.	Percentage of total.	Occupations in 1905.	Percentage of total.
Labourers.....	26.0	Labourers.....	32.1
Brass-workers	6.0	Painters	6.0
Painters	5.5	Brass-workers	5.6
Bricklayers	4.4	Cycle workers	4.3
Jewellers	4.0	Carters and drivers	3.3
Gun-makers.....	3.9	Charwomen	3.1
Iron-workers	2.9	Polishers	3.0
Carpenters	2.6	Casters	2.3
Strikers.....	1.9	Bricklayers	2.2
Blacksmiths	1.8	Hawkers	1.8
Fitters	1.6	Blacksmiths' labourers & strikers	1.6
Bakers	1.4	Porters	1.5
Shoemakers	1.4	Gun-makers.....	1.4
Plasterers	1.3	Carpenters	1.2
Porters	1.0	Filers.....	1.2
Slaters	1.0	Blacksmiths.....	1.1
		Tube-drawers	1.0

The increase in the labourers from 26 per cent. to 32 per cent. is considerable, but in my opinion does not sufficiently indicate the increase amongst unskilled workmen as a whole. For instance, carters and drivers are a new classification, and their 3.3 per cent. may be included in the same category as labourers. In 1886 carters were classified alone, and were only a little over $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total, and drivers do not appear.

Hawkers, though not a new classification, come very much higher up on the 1905 list. Now hawking, in a very amateur way, is the first resource of the labourer who despairs of getting ordinary work. One might parody Thackeray's epigram about the washerwomen by saying that the unemployed eke out a precarious existence by hawking articles to one another. The professional hawkers, who play a recognised part in the economic life of the poor, can generally get a living. The hawkers who applied for relief were labourers out of work, who had abandoned, either necessarily or unnecessarily, the desire and search for regular work. In both lists "porters" appear, but in 1905 they are 1.5 per cent. as against 1 per cent. in 1886. I say nothing about the charwomen (3.1 per cent. in 1905), mostly widows, of

course, because I have no evidence of how they were dealt with in 1886. A word here must be said about the cycle workers. When the cycle boom began some years ago the ranks of cycle workers were recruited not so much from the skilled artisan classes as from the unskilled. Any man who had some small skill in using tools could get work at one of the many small bicycle works which sprang into being. When the boom was over, and the men were thrown out of work, they no longer described themselves as labourers but as cycle workers, even though they had had but little experience and acquired but a small amount of skill. I fancy, too, that some of those classified as polishers (3·0 per cent.) should be included under cycle workers. If a man described himself as a cycle polisher he was classified with the cycle workers; if as a brass polisher with the brass workers; but if he merely said "polisher" then he was placed in this rather large undefined class. A moderate allowance for these considerations would make the figures for unskilled labour in 1905 50 per cent. higher than in 1886.

Now let us turn to the other side of the picture, and see how the figures as to some of the skilled trades come out.

The brass-workers and the painters keep second and third place, but with the order changed. The figures are very nearly equal in both years. I have tried to find out the reason for this high position of the brass-workers, but have failed. The bedstead trade, it is true, had been much depressed, but the bedstead-workers were, with a very few exceptions, provided for by their own association. The census returns include brass-workers under "workërs in miscellaneous metals," so that I cannot even tell if the reason is merely that there are so many brass-workers in Birmingham. With a portion of the brass-workers I think I have a clue. Many of them are brass-casters, and work by the piece for more than one master. One week they may make high wages, and the next they may make low wages. This would tend to make them improvident, and unprepared for a time of depressed trade. This leads up to the point, which has been emerging from the facts already given, namely, that it is the moral factor quite as much as the bare economic factor which deserves attention. The case of the painters, which we must take next, is a further illustration of this.

The building trade most undoubtedly was depressed during the winter of 1904-5, but to understand the full force of the figures as to the painters we must bring together the figures as to other branches of the building trade, and compare them with

some gross totals which we can get from the census returns. Here is such a table :—

Occupation.	Percentage of total on relief, 1886.	Percentage of total on relief, 1905.	Number in Birmingham engaged in occupation by 1901 census
Painters	5·5	6·0	2,917
Bricklayers	4·4	2·2	4,534
Carpenters	2·6	1·2	3,339
Plasterers.....	1·3	0·5	—

While the relative proportion of bricklayers, carpenters, and plasterers on relief in 1905 is one-half what it was in 1886, the relative proportion of painters is slightly higher in 1905 than in 1886. Also the proportion of painters on relief to the total engaged in that occupation in Birmingham is very much larger than in the other occupations. The explanation to my mind is clear. Painting is a seasonal trade. The earnings in summer are high, and in winter low. This is not conducive to providence. While the bricklayers, carpenters, and plasterers have been increasing in thrift—for in proportion to population there is a falling off in the numbers of those on relief—the painters have participated to the full in the growth of improvidence already noted. May I point out that there can hardly be any flukiness about these figures, as the relative proportion of bricklayers, carpenters, and plasterers in the two periods is so constant. I think we may carry the argument as to the effect of moral difficulties a little further on the strength of these figures. Bricklaying is not a seasonal trade, but it is more stopped by bad weather in winter than is carpentering. We find, by looking at the census figures, that the proportion of bricklayers on relief is somewhat larger than the proportion of carpenters, but neither come anywhere near the proportion of painters. Roughly, there were on relief, in proportion to numbers, six times as many painters as carpenters, and four times as many painters as bricklayers. When we leave the building trades and come to other skilled trades we have further remarkable figures. In 1886 jewellers stood fifth on the list with a proportion of 4 per cent, and a gross total of 135. In 1905 the jewellery trade was much depressed, but the number of jewellers on relief in the nine districts, the returns of which have been used for statistical purposes, and which happen to cover the jewellery district in Birmingham, is no more than eight. The return of male workers furnished by the 1901 census is, jewellers, 5,239, watchmakers, 502, and other precious metal-workers, 2,798. The proportion is not one in a thousand.

The gun-makers, who work at another special Birmingham trade, show a proportional drop from 3·9 per cent. in 1886 to 1·4 per cent. in 1905. The figures as to the blacksmiths and their strikers are interesting :—

Occupation.	Percentage of total on relief, 1886.	Percentage of total on relief, 1905.
Strikers	1·9	1·6
Blacksmiths	1·8	1·1

In 1886 the number of blacksmiths and strikers who came on relief was practically the same. There is a decline in proportion in 1905, but the number of blacksmiths is now only two-thirds of the number of strikers, so that relatively the more skilled artisan has improved in financial independence. Important Birmingham trades like the cabinet-makers (census figures, 2,481 males) and the printers (census figures, 2,425 males) do not contribute, in either case, $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the total figures. I think these figures bear out my conclusion as to the opposite directions in which the bulk of the skilled and unskilled labourers are moving.

It would be tedious to go through the whole of the occupations, but we can take two more groups very briefly, Group II. being made up of percentages from 1 per cent. of the total down to $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and Group III. of percentages from $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. down to $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent., and arrange both in order from highest to lowest.

Group II. 1886. 17 in group. Engine-drivers, glass-makers, gardeners, tailors, casters, tube-workers, stone-masons, brick-makers, bedstead-makers, carters, electroplaters, saddlers, &c., lamp-makers, wire-workers, whitesmiths, glass-cutters, and galvanisers.

Group II. 1905. 9 in group. Shoemakers, tin-workers, engineers and fitters, iron-plate-workers, stampers, packers, tailors, bedstead-makers, and grooms.

Group III. 1886. 17 in group. Metal-rollers, paviours, button-makers, clerks, nail-casters, polishers, stampers, tool-makers, printers, burnishers, packers, sawyers, boatmen, watch-and clock-makers, chandelier-makers, chasers and engravers, and filers.

Group III. 1905. 17 in group. Plasterers, galvanisers, silverplaters and engravers, coach trade workers, masons and sawyers, slaters, moulders, cabinet-makers, barmen, gardeners, clerks, &c., bakers, brick-makers, tool-makers, cab-drivers, asphalters, and stokers.

I now want to bring out further the connection between loss of independence and want of providence on the one hand,

and on the other hand the general conditions of life in the worst parts of the city. We have in Birmingham a return of the death-rate for each of the wards of the city. My experience as a social worker in provincial towns has led me to the conclusion that the death-rate of a district is not merely a guide to its unhealthiness, but a clear indication of its general poverty and ignorance. The most unhealthy districts of a large provincial town are not merely the districts where the physical conditions are against a healthy life, they are also the districts where the inhabitants live in the greatest ignorance, and where the moral life is at its lowest. The advantage of the local administration of the 1905 fund was that, subject to two or three exceptions, returns could be compiled of the number of persons relieved in each ward, and as the number of inhabitants in each ward is also known, it has been possible for me to arrange the wards in order according to the proportion of families relieved per 1,000 inhabitants. In the following table this list is placed side by side with a list arranged in order of death-rate.

Name of ward.	Number relieved per 1,000 inhabitants.	Name of ward.	Death-rate for years 1899-1903.
GROUP I.			
Deritend	27·6 ¹	St. Mary's	27·7
St. Bartholomew's...	20·1	St. Bartholomew's...	26·0
St. Mary's	19·0	[St. Stephen's	25·4] ²
		[St. George's.....	23·1] ²
		Deritend	22·9
GROUP II.			
Nechells	18·6	Duddeston	21·8
St. Martin's	17·6	[St. Paul's	20·9] ²
Duddeston	17·4	St. Thomas's	20·7
St. Thomas'.....	15·3	Nechells	20·5
		St. Martin's	20·1
GROUP III.			
Market Hall	13·3	Ladywood	18·8
Ladywood	11·5	Market Hall	18·2

We see that though the order in the two lists is not identical, yet the different wards fall into three identical groups, and that the worst group from the point of view of the death-rate is the worst group from the point of view of relief, the next worse group as to death-rate is also the next worst group as to relief, and so on. *The exceptional poverty of the past winter appears to have been only an aggravated condition of the chronic poverty always in our midst.*

¹ See previous table of cases helped as to the exceptional number relieved once only in this ward.

Returns from these wards as to relief are either wanting or insufficient.

Mr. Seeböhm Rowntree, in his analysis of the chronic poverty of York, gives 10 per cent. as his estimate of the proportion of working people living in primary poverty, the poverty which is inevitable, however exemplary the moral character; while he gives 20 per cent. as his figure for secondary poverty due not to economic causes directly, but to bad habits and defects in moral character. To a considerable extent primary poverty is bound to resort to the Poor Law. A relief fund is a godsend to secondary poverty. In Birmingham, at any rate, the unemployed problem is largely the general social problem of the slums in another aspect.

The further tables I have compiled from the statistics of the 1905 fund do not admit of comparative treatment, but have some interest, and may be useful for comparison with other places, or with future years.

The following is a table of the ages of the recipients of relief in the eight selected districts. I give with it the average for the whole of the eight districts and the census figures of those alive at the same ages, all reduced to percentages.

Ages.	1. St. Bartholomew's.	2. West (Heaton St.)	3. Bordesley Green.	4. Duddeston.	5. St. Thomas's.	6. Balsall Heath.	7. Deritend.	8. St. Martin's.	Average.	Census figures.
60 and over.....	7.0	6.5	11.5	11.0	9.0	5.0	10.0	11.5	9.0	10.0
50 and under 60	14.5	11.5	15.5	18.5	15.5	15.5	19.0	13.5	15.5	11.5
40 " " 50	29.0	22.5	23.0	21.5	26.5	23.5	19.5	21.0	23.5	18.0
30 " " 40	31.5	35.5	29.0	28.5	24.5	36.0	31.5	31.5	31.0	25.0
20 " " 30	18.0	24.0	21.0	20.5	24.5	20.0	20.0	22.5	21.0	35.5

We may note that age begins to be an important factor soon after 30. Of the general inhabitants of Birmingham over twenty years of age, 35.5 per cent. are between twenty and thirty years of age, while of those who were on relief (all being over twenty years of age), only 21 per cent. were between twenty and thirty years of age. After thirty years of age and up to sixty years of age the proportion of those on relief in each decennial group is in excess of the proportion of those alive at the corresponding ages. *In proportion to the number living, rather more than twice as many men were on relief between the ages of forty and fifty, as between the ages of twenty and thirty.* After sixty the unemployed are to a considerable extent on Poor Law relief, and the figures are practically of no value.

The next table contains particulars of the rents paid in the different districts by recipients of relief. It has been reduced to percentages.

Amount of rent.	District.								Average for all districts.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	
3s. and under ...	16.0	11.5	13.0	12.0	18.0	9.5	11.5	12.0	13.0
4s. and over 3s...	39.5	44.0	30.5	50.0	30.0	11.0	35.0	31.0	34.0
5s. and over 4s...	38.5	36.0	26.5	28.0	43.5	48.5	46.5	52.5	40.0
6s. and over 5s...	5.0	4.5	20.5	6.5	6.0	24.5	5.0	4.0	9.5
Over 6s.....	1.0	4.0	9.5	3.5	2.5	6.5	2.0	0.5	3.5

These figures show that three-fourths of the recipients were living in houses at rents exceeding 3s. but not over 5s. The characters of the different districts can also be gathered from these returns. District 4, for instance, is a central ward of almost uniform poverty, while district 8, although largely in the centre, yet strikes a thin wedge into the outskirts. District 6, on the other hand, is an industrial ward on the outskirts of the city, with a tendency towards small villadom. District 3, though on the outskirts, is much less aristocratic than district 6. These special features are just what we should expect from our table.

My last table contains particulars of the families of the recipients, also reduced to percentages.

Family.	District.								Average for all districts.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	
Man only	5.0	3.5	4.5	3.5	8.0	1.0	6.5	7.5	4.5
Woman only	0.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	5.0	1.5	2.0	1.5	2.0
Man and wife	14.0	6.5	10.0	13.5	8.5	16.5	15.0	10.5	12.0
Parent and one child....	16.0	12.5	15.0	15.0	12.5	16.0	20.5	20.0	16.0
Parent and two or three children	38.0	44.0	29.5	36.0	34.0	35.5	31.0	34.5	35.0
Parent and four or five children	19.5	20.0	19.0	19.5	21.5	20.0	14.5	17.0	19.0
Parent and six or more children	9.5	12.0	21.0	10.5	10.5	9.5	10.5	9.0	11.5
Average number of children per family	2.6	2.9	3.1	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.7

From the family returns we may gather that the size of the family does not seem to be a very material factor except in dis-

trict 3, where 21 per cent. of the families had six or more children. This is what we should expect from the co-existence of a high death-rate and a high relief-rate. The class of family which was on relief was not the class of people who bring up large families, though they undoubtedly have many babies. As has already been pointed out, district 3 is on the outskirts and is almost purely industrial; it also has quite a low death-rate. Here, therefore, we should expect large families to be brought up as well as born, and the return bears this out.

There is only one other fact which I want to mention, and that is the fate of the country immigrant. To all intents and purposes he was not among the recipients of relief. Very soon after the starting of the fund we had some applications from farmers for labourers with some experience of country life and country work. They would have been content with anyone born in the country, and brought up to farm labour during boyhood and youth. Town-bred men they did not want. These offers of employment were sent round to the district secretaries, who were very keen on getting men to work. We filled up three situations, but could not fill up a fourth. Besides the three men actually sent I interviewed two others, who were country-bred and out of work, but who preferred to stay in Birmingham, as they thought their children would have a better chance here than in the country. Five men out of 7,000 is a negligible quantity. It is rather difficult to get any definite idea as to what proportion of the inhabitants of Birmingham was born here. Almost the whole of the city is in Warwickshire, but one corner is in Staffordshire, and one recently added district is in Worcestershire. The census returns of the birthplaces of its 252,084 male inhabitants in 1901 is as follows :—

Warwickshire	167,652
Worcestershire	19,785
Staffordshire	16,770
Elsewhere	47,877

so that, at any rate, a considerable proportion must have been born outside the city. But evidently the country immigrant is a respectable, thrifty citizen who does not come on relief funds.

F. TILLYARD