

AN ENQUIRY

- into -

THE HOUSING OF SEASONAL WORKERS

IN SCOTLAND

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AN ENQUIRY INTO THE HOUSING OF SEASONAL
WORKERS IN SCOTLAND

In the course of the years 1910 to 1913 when I was an Inspector under the Local Government Board for Scotland, I made investigation of the housing conditions of seasonal workers in various parts of the country. I also gave evidence on the subject before the Royal Commission on Housing in Scotland. The Thesis herewith submitted is based on the facts ascertained during inspectoral work and on a special study of the subject.

PART I. THE PROBLEM.

Permanent or Temporary Occupancy.-

The housing problem is universally acknowledged to be vast in extent and of supreme importance to the physical and moral welfare of the nation. The simplicity or, on the other hand, the difficulty of one aspect of the subject depends largely on whether there is to be permanent or temporary occupancy of housing accommodation requiring to be provided. Where permanent occupancy is assumed, and provision has to be made accordingly, the proposition is comparatively simple. If there can be reasonable reliance on a house being inhabited so long as it remains inhabitable, then it is economically sound to

build the house of good durable material, and to give some attention to pleasing appearance and equipment, as well as to the elements of healthy construction and to provision for such segregation of the inmates as will favour morality. Proposals for town extension whether by town planning schemes or by private effort are commonly based on the assumption of permanent occupancy, and in discussions as to additional housing for the teeming population of Glasgow or for very rapid extension of population such as is now occurring at Rosyth and such ~~was~~, within the past generation, ^{has} occurred at Clydebank, permanence may be assumed and expenditure may be properly incurred on that basis.

New Coalfields.-

Where, however, housing has to be provided for a more or less temporary purpose such as a new local industry, whose duration, it is safe to take for granted, will be comparatively limited, an element of much difficulty is introduced. If a new coal field is to be opened up in a locality inconveniently distant from any centre of population, expert calculation of the total amount of coal available will indicate whether the dwellings required are likely to be occupied by the miners for a short or for a long period, say for twenty or for fifty years. If the former, another question will then arise as to whether the houses when they cease to be

required for coal miners are likely to be needed for other workers. If the new coalfield is situated in a district in which no other industries are likely to be established, the prospect of prolonged occupation of the houses is diminished. Such also will be the case if transport facilities are wanting owing to distance from main lines of railway or from through roads or convenient seaports. Other reasons for caution include the absence of convenient sources of public water supply. A colliery may provide its own water supply by pumping from water-yielding strata above the working levels of the mine itself, but the closure of the colliery would probably bring this source of supply to an end and so leave the dwellings waterless. For reasons like these, there may be some hesitation in spending freely on the designing and erection of a new colliery village unless the coal owners can see their way to recuperate themselves for the extra cost by adding to the price of the coal. But if the undertaking cannot be made a commercial success excepting by sacrifice of the health and comfort of the employees, it should never be begun.

Seasonal Employment in Towns and in Rural Areas.-

Coal production, however, though in a given locality it is often a temporary, is never a seasonal industry, and the housing difficulties of a mining community

are as nothing compared with those attaching to certain seasonal employments. Many seasonal operations involve no housing difficulties whatever. Town populations include seasonal as well as permanent workers, but the ordinary laws of supply and demand commonly govern the situation in towns. House painters, for example, are practically idle during some parts of the year and are fully occupied at other times. Masons and tailors have a certain seasonal variation in the amount of their employment. In such cases no difficulty arises, because these workers ordinarily occupy the same houses all the year through, no change of living place being necessary so long, of course, as they are able to pay the rent.

In short, the special problem of the housing of seasonal workers relates to those occupations where the seasonal work involves temporary change of living place. Speaking generally, the hop-pickers of Kent have to leave London in order to live close to where their temporary work is carried on, and such also is the rule with potato-diggers, berry-pickers, and herring-gutters. Even so, however, the seasonal occupation may be carried on so near towns and villages that where only a limited number of workers ^{is} are required these may travel daily to and from their place of occupation. Thus, in the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire the strawberry fields lie for the most part

between Hamilton, Lanark, Larkhall, Wishaw, and Carlisle, and these towns and numerous small mining villages supply berry-pickers to the majority of the fruit-farms in the district. On the other hand, in the seasonal business of fish gutting or cleaning, the number of women employed is so great that even though the industry is carried on in a fair-sized town, such as Stornoway^o or Lerwick, the housing accommodation required is sometimes quite beyond what could normally be provided by the town itself, and in such a case houses of cheap materials have to be provided and stand empty when not in occupation by the fish-workers.

Seasonal Housing.-

In practice the term "housing of seasonal workers" is confined to the problem of finding accommodation for those workers whose temporary employment involves the corresponding provision of seasonal housing. The question may be put thus: If the structure and equipment which distinguish houses built for permanent occupation are necessary to provide the elements of a healthy and normal life, how are these essentials to be provided or how far may they be modified ~~and~~ in the case of houses which are to be dwelt in for only a fraction of the year, and which are to stand empty as regards human occupation all the rest of the time? Much time and thought have

been devoted to the solution of the problem. Obviously, the difficulty increases correspondingly with the brevity of the occupation of the houses. An industry which lasts only for a week or two is in a worse position than another industry which lasts for a month or two.

Existing Buildings or Special Buildings.-

Efforts to solve the problem are made in two main directions; firstly, by the utilisation for housing of buildings which normally are occupied for other purposes, and, secondly, by the erection of special buildings.

Potato-digging is an illustration of an occupation mainly provided for by existing buildings, whilst in the case of berry-picking special buildings of more suitable type are usually erected. For these differences there are several reasons. The housing of potato-diggers has developed gradually. At first, some lived in adjoining villages and frequently travelled considerable distances to the farms where they were employed, whilst others brought their own tents, or, as I have heard alleged, slept behind hedges by the roadside. Then, for their own convenience as well as for that of the diggers, farmers came by degrees to place their out-buildings at the disposal of

the gangs of employees. On the other hand, fruit cultivation is in many places a new agricultural industry, and existing farm outbuildings are often quite insufficient to accommodate the large numbers of workers required at a time, so that special huts are a necessity. Thus, the numbers to be provided for make utilisation of existing buildings insufficient for berry-pickers.

Duration of stay.-

Again, the fact that the duration of stay of potato-diggers at each farm is shorter than that of berry-pickers helps to account for the accommodation of the former class in outbuildings. But from the point of view of the diggers it should be remembered that although each squad of diggers may stay only for a few days or a few weeks at one farm, yet the total amount of time spent at potato-digging by individuals may be five or six months out of the twelve, whilst each set of farm outbuildings is occupied for a total period of only from one to six weeks. Sometimes, owing to arrangements between the potato merchants and the farmer, even this short period of occupancy is divided between squads of diggers. At berry-picking, on the other hand, the workers spend at the most three months of the year, but that period may be spent at only one or two farms.

Disposal of Produce, direct or through Middleman.-

Another point to be noted in this connection is that the business of fruit growing and selling differs in an essential respect from that of potato growing and selling. In the latter the farmer commonly disposes of the whole growing crop to one or more merchants who employ and pay for the required labour, the farmer providing lodging unless the diggers live in adjoining villages. In the fruit business there is as a rule no middleman corresponding to the potato dealer. The farmer himself employs labour to pick the growing fruit, and disposes of the produce. He has, therefore, a much more direct responsibility for the conditions under which the work is carried on than in the case of potato digging. The fact that the farmer has no direct control over potato-diggers is, I think, one of the chief reasons why the standard of their accommodation is below that of berry-pickers.

Classes of Workers.-

The class of worker housed has also some bearing on the situation. Most potato-diggers are imported from the north and west of Ireland, though others, usually casual labourers, are employed from various towns in Scotland. The Irish squads are quiet and occasion few complaints beyond that of extreme

untidiness in their surroundings. The Scottish diggers are usually of a lower type and are regarded much less favourably by the farmers and by the police.

Labour Exchange.--

As regards berry-pickers, an effort is made at many farms to obtain a good class of worker through the Labour Exchange. In one instance the employees were boys from an Industrial School. These workers seemed to be quiet and respectable, and to give little trouble, and they were housed as a rule in a good type of bothy. It appears, however, to be impracticable to rely entirely upon Labour Exchange workers, many of whom come from a distance to stay on the farms.

Influence of Weather.--

The farmer cannot, at the beginning of a season, predict how many hands will be required. At one inspection I found them unemployed, because, owing to the dry weather, the fruit had not ripened as quickly as had been expected. Many of the hands had come a long way, and there was a good deal of discontent over the enforced idleness and consequent lack of pay. On the other hand, a night's rain may bring the fruit forward very quickly, and if the farmer does not take advantage of the services of "tramps" he may lose tons of berries. Even on the large fruit farms this class of casual worker is as a rule housed in existing outbuildings of the same nature as those used by potato diggers. Speaking generally

the better class of worker has the better housing, and vice versa.

Herring-gutters are comparable to berry-pickers in that they are employed directly by fish-curers without the intervention of a middleman. They are housed as a rule in special bothies, as at Baltasound and Lerwick, or in existing town dwellings, as at Fraserburgh, the curers themselves being responsible for the accommodation provided.(1)

Standard of Accommodation.-

Looking to the temporary occupancy of premises by seasonal workers a very high standard of accommodation cannot be expected or demanded, but the present arrangements are in various respects insufficient and unsatisfactory, even making full allowance for this temporary occupancy. It is difficult here to reconcile practical finance with principles of hygiene. The cost of the buildings is part of the commercial undertaking and ultimately must come from the pocket of the public, who, while unwilling to pay such prices for potatoes, fish, or fruit as will keep the workers in palaces, are probably ready to pay enough to enable the workers to be housed with some degree of decency

(1) For most of my information as to herring-gutters I am indebted to Dr. Dittmar, medical inspector to the Local Government Board for Scotland.
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and comfort, provided always that the position is properly realised. The realisation, however, must come through the Public Health Authorities, representative of the Public, and required reforms can only be enforced by them.

PART II. EXISTING CONDITIONS.

In this section is given a statement of the conditions found in certain typical districts visited.

First:- Housing of Berry-Pickers in the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire.

General:-

In 1910 I inspected the housing of Berry-Pickers in the above District.

In the Upper Ward there were altogether about eighty fruit-growing farms. On inquiry it was ascertained that of these thirty did not house workers. The remaining fifty were visited during the day, and second visits were paid to six ^{of these} in the evening. Of the fifty visited it was found that thirty-five had accommodation for workers, none except local workers ever being employed on the remaining farms. Of the thirty-five with accommodation, twenty-five were housing workers in the season of 1910. The strawberry crop that year was very poor, the plants having been injured in the winter, by the long black frosts when no snow was upon the ground, so that many farmers who were in the habit of employing "Foreign" labour

were able to dispense with it and to manage with local labour alone; and where foreign labour was employed the numbers were much smaller than usual.

At a Labour Exchange at Crossford I was informed that instead of arranging for workers to come into the district, steps were being taken to supply Lanarkshire workers to Blairgowrie. It will thus be seen that to take the conditions found in 1910 as typical, would be erroneous, though local labour is always fairly plentiful.

At the thirty-five farms the number of apartments for housing workers varied from one to five, the total being fifty-three, of which sixteen were unoccupied, these sixteen representing the ten farms not housing workers that year.

At the twenty-five farms the number of workers housed varied at the time of my visit from 1 to 34, the total being 168, and the average number accommodated 6.7. I understand that this figure is much below what it had been in former years.

Duration of Stay.-

The Strawberry pulling season as a rule lasts from 4 to 6 weeks between the end of June and the middle of August. In some cases workers are kept on for a few weeks longer for strawberry weeding purposes, so that the stay may extend to 3 months.

Wages.-

Wages vary from 1s.6d. to 4s. for a ten hours day, local employees receiving as a rule more than foreign, and strawberry-pullers more than strawberry-weeders. Work commences generally at 7 a.m. and lasts till 5.30 p.m., with half an hour off at mid day for lunch. Overtime is paid by the hour in proportion to the usual wage. If the berries do not ripen quickly enough to keep the foreigners in work they are obliged to take a day off without pay. It is not usual for the farmer to charge anything for housing accommodation, but sometimes 1s. weekly is charged for coal.

Nature of Accommodation.-

As it is the structure of the buildings that requires here to be considered, I have taken into account the total number of farms with accommodation for workers, whether occupied or otherwise.

Of the 53 apartments at 35 farms, 8 were in cottages, 7 were barns, 2 byres, 28 bothies, 5 granaries, 2 were wooden outhouses, and one was a stable.

Of the 8 apartments in cottages, 4 were very satisfactory and one was fairly satisfactory. Two others were definitely unsatisfactory, being rooms in disused cottages. One of the two was damp and the other had one of its walls in an unsafe condition. The inside of the eighth cottage was not seen as it

was empty and the owner away from home.

Barns and byres were found to be unsuitable, being as a rule dark and dismal. In addition, one of the barns was very damp.

The bothies were generally satisfactory. Most of the floors were of wood, brick or cement. Eight, however, were earthen. A number of bothies had fixed windows, though some of these had one or two panes knocked out. As a rule the windows slid horizontally in grooves.

Granaries were as a rule quite suitable, being dry and fairly well ventilated.

Wooden outhouses were unsatisfactory, being dark, badly ventilated, and having earthen floors.

The stable was clean, tidy, well lit and well ventilated.

Sufficiency of Accommodation.--

Dealing with the total number of inmates the following is a statement of the cubic space per head for the 168 workers as distributed in the various apartments:-

Cubic Feet	Inmates
-100	0
100-200	23 (8 with 180 cub. ft. 15 with 196 cub. ft.)
200-300	44
300-400	37
400-500	13
500-600	14
600-700	8
700-800	7
800-900	8
900-1000	8
above 1000	6

Of the total of 168 persons, 23 had slightly under 200 cubic feet; 67 had under 300 cubic feet; and 104 had under 400 cubic feet.

The following table shows the 37 apartments arranged in groups according to the number of cubic feet per person housed:-

Cubic feet.	Apartments
-100	0
100-200	2
200-300	6
300-400	5
400-500	4
500-600	5
600-700	2
700-800	3
Over 800	10

Separation of Sexes.-

Excepting in the case of married couples there were only two farms where it was necessary for the two sexes to use the same sleeping apartment. One was a barn housing eight people - two married couples, two single men, and two single women. The inhabitants appeared to be of a low class and indifferent to their surroundings. The other farm had a room in a disused cottage, where there were a married couple and a girl who had travelled from Glasgow together. In two other apartments several married couples were housed.

Cleanliness of Buildings.-

This as a rule left room for considerable improvement.

Cooking.-

As a rule the workers bought in their own food

from neighbouring villages or from carts going round the farms. They did their own cooking on stoves or fire-places, which were usually situated within the sleeping apartment.

In six or eight instances I had opportunity of seeing the nature of the evening meals. The food consisted largely of tea, bread and butter, bacon and eggs, and strawberries. It appeared to be plentiful, but I did not hear of any cooking of dinners on working days. On mornings when work was begun as early as 3 o'clock it was not unusual for tea to be made at the farm for the pickers, and this was also the custom in the afternoon when they worked late.

Beds & Bedding.-

Beds were nearly always of wood and except in three cases were double. Straw and a varying amount of bedding were provided by the farmer. Several complaints were made to me on the score of insufficiency of bedding.

Clothes Drying.-

This was on the whole unsatisfactory, the general rule being to hang wet garments on ropes in the sleeping apartment, though at some farms the boiler-house or other outbuilding was available.

Personal Ablution.-

Utensils were provided by the farmer, and the water supply was usually that of the steading. Ablution was carried out in the sleeping apartment or

at a neighbouring burn.

Sanitary Accommodation.-

This was deficient in many cases. About a third of the farms had none available for the workers.

General Character of Workers.-

The general character of the workers impressed me favourably. Most of those whom I saw appeared to be decent and respectable, and there was always an intelligent spokeswoman to answer questions. They had usually some spare clothing for off-times. Some of the women explained to me that the seasonal field work was a pleasant and healthy change from domestic duty or factory employment. They seemed happy and contented, and there was little grumbling except among the occupants of the barn where the sexes were mixed.

As regards drinking habits, I had no opportunity for personal observation, but was told by two or three of the farmers that drinking was too common on Saturday nights.

Second:-

Housing of Berry-Pickers in the Central District of Perthshire.

General:-

In the summer of 1911 I made inspection of the

housing of berry-pickers in the Central District of Perthshire.

There were altogether three farms which housed berry-pickers, two being in the neighbourhood of Auchterarder, and the third near Methven. The two first - one at Shinafoot and the other at Drumtogle - are large estates, the former belonging to a Limited Company, and the latter being run on syndicate lines.

A firm of lawyers in Blairgowrie were responsible for the housing of most workers, though two farmers with holdings on one of the estates looked after their own employees. The third farm had only a few acres of fruit, the occupier being responsible for the accommodation provided.

The fruit cultivated was mainly raspberries, though there were also a few acres of strawberries. Raspberry cultivation on the Auchterarder farms, has only recently been developed, and most of the buildings for the workers had been erected in the spring of 1911.

Class of Workers.-

At Drumtogle and Shinafoot a distinction was made between three classes of workers, namely, those sent by the Labour Exchange, those who had come "off the road", and those employed locally from neighbouring villages. The first class were very well housed in bothies, the owner providing straw, blankets and sheets for bedding.

One shilling weekly was charged for each picker.

The second class were generally spoken of as "tramps." They occupied farm outbuildings. Straw alone was provided for bedding, the workers as a rule covering themselves with any extra clothing they had brought with them. Nothing was charged for the use of the buildings, but the pickers bought their own coal. The third class did not, of course, require to be housed at the farms.

The Labour Exchange workers seemed quiet and respectable. As regards "tramps," I was told by the police that, with the exception of one or two who got drunk on Saturday nights, and two who were fined for stealing turnips, they gave practically no trouble. A considerable number were seen about the roadside in the neighbourhood of Auchterarder.

Length of Stay.

The season as a rule lasts for about five weeks, beginning in the middle of July. In 1911, however, it began earlier and was shorter owing to lack of rain.

Wages.

Workers are paid at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb of berries pulled. An experienced hand can make three or four shillings daily.

The following is a summary of the conditions found at the different farms:-

(1) Shinafoot

The number of acres under fruit cultivation was 70, and the number of pickers housed when I visited was 183.

Of these, 100 were Labour Exchange workers, the rest being tramps.

Provision for Tramps.-

The tramps were accommodat~~ed~~ in farm outbuildings, as follows:

- (a) Three loose boxes with cobblestone floors. Each had a small wall ventilator. The skylight windows did not open and the atmosphere was unpleasant.
- (b) A barrel shed with earthen floor.
- (c) A mill loft with wooden floor.
- (d) A flat beneath the mill loft. This apartment was said to be damp in wet weather, but was dry at the time of inspection.

Taking 200 cubic feet per head as a standard, there was practically no overcrowding.

The sexes were separate except in the case of the mill loft, where there were a number of married couples.

There were no bed frames, and bedding consisted of straw alone laid on the floor.

The water-supply was that of the farm, and washing of clothes was done in a burn close at hand. Sanitary accommodation consisted of two pail-privies.

Provision for Labour Exchange Workers.-

The 100 Labour Exchange Workers, who were all women, were housed in three good bothies, recently erected near the steading. These had corrugated iron roofs and walls, and wooden floors. They were well lit and ventilated by

wall windows opening hopper-fashion. Each bothy had wooden rafters and supports which marked it off into four parts, each of which parts had a separate door. The advantage of this is that, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease, it would be a simple matter to run up wooden partitions, completely separating the different parts and rendering administration more easy. The cubic capacity of each bothy was approximately 7,560 cubic feet, and the air space per head was in all cases between 200 and 250 cubic feet.

In each bothy there were 20 double beds with wooden frames. Bedding was clean and consisted of straw, a rough sheet and two blankets.

Water was obtained from a pump close at hand. Four basins were provided for each bothy, the workers using their own towels and soap. Washing of clothes was carried on in a burn near the bothies. No arrangements had been made for drying of clothes, and the pickers had not access to any fire under cover.

Sanitary accommodation consisted of two double pail-privies.

Very little cooking was done by the workers, arrangements having been made with a contractor to supply eatables from a shop erected on the steading. Tea and coffee were sold at $\frac{1}{2}$ d per cup, a slice of bread and butter at 1d, and

soup at 1d per bowl. Other articles of food were sold at the usual prices. Table utensils were supplied to the workers at 1d. each, the arrangement being that they would be taken back if undamaged and the money refunded at the end of the season. The Labour Exchange workers bought all their food from the shop. Some of the tramps, however, built fires on the ground in the open and cooked there. Beside the shop was a large open shed with benches where the workers took their food.

As regards general administration, there were for the whole farm a superintendent; a night and a day watchman, who also acted as scavengers, attended to the providing of clean straw for bedding and the like; and a retired policeman paid by the Company. The policeman had, of course, no legal powers, but his uniform was believed to have a salutary effect upon the workers.

(2) Drumtogle

(A) Syndicate Estate

Excluding a farm privately managed and described under heading (B), there were, on this estate, about 170 acres of raspberries. The total number of workers housed at the time of my visit was approximately 480, tramps and Labour Exchange workers being present in nearly equal numbers.

Provision for Tramps.-

Tramps were housed in eight farm outbuildings, as follows:

- (a) A loft with wooden floor and whitewashed stone walls. Lighting is by means of skylights and is poor. Ventilation also is unsatisfactory.
- (b) A cart-shed across the front of which has been erected a wooden wall with hopper windows. The floor is earthen.
- (c) A cart-shed similar to the above.
- (d) A disused cattle-shed. The floor is earthen. Lighting is by means of small skylights.
- (e) A byre with paved floor.
- (f) A turnip-shed with earthen floor.
- (g) A barn with cement floor.
- (h) A loft, poorly ventilated, with wooden floor.

In one apartment the air space per head was less than 200 cubic feet, though in another there were over 1,300 cubic feet per head.

The sexes were separate in three of the eight buildings, the occupants of the remaining five being said to be married couples.

As at Shinafoot, the bedding consisted of straw laid on the floor.

The water-supply was from a pump-well beside the

outbuildings. As a rule, a tap close at hand supplied gravitation water, but, owing to the prolonged drought, this had run short.

Sanitary accommodation consisted of five pail-privies. Some of these had been put in fields at a short distance from the farm. They were emptied daily.

The arrangements for cooking, eating, drying of clothes, and general administration were similar to those at Shinafoot.

Provision for Labour Exchange Workers.-

Labour Exchange workers were accommodated in bothies in fields at the east end and west end of the estate.

Nearly all the huts were newly erected. Walls and roofs were of corrugated iron, and floors of wood. The huts were cross-ventilated by hopper windows and were light and airy. Most of the bothies were so built that subdivision by partitions would be easy. One bothy had two small apartments for married couples and their families. The accommodation in the different apartments varied from six to forty people.

Most of the beds were double, though a few were single. Bed frames were of wood. Bedding was good, clean and sufficient, consisting of a straw mattress, sheets, pillows, and a pair of blankets. Had the beds been fully

occupied, a space of rather less than 200 cubic feet would have been available in some apartments, but it was understood that unless in an emergency a bed would be kept vacant. In all cases the sexes were separate.

Sanitary accommodation consisted of pail-privies, which were emptied daily. There were separate conveniences for the two sexes.

Cleaning of the dormitories was done by the workers themselves, who kept them in a satisfactory condition.

All the bothies had rhones and water barrels, the water from which was used for washing purposes. Water for drinking and cooking was carted from the farm-stead-
ing. The supply of basins for personal ablution was sometimes insufficient, in one case only two basins being provided for a bothy with some forty occupants.

No arrangements had been made for drying clothes in wet weather. The workers had not access to any fire under cover.

The same arrangements had been made for cooking and eating as at Shinafoot. At both the east end and the west end there was a shop, and a shed with benches which was used as a dining-room.

The staff at both east end and west end included

a number of university students, one of whom acted as superintendent and the others as weighing-clerks. A retired policeman acted as night watchman. Another watchman did daily scavenging.

(B) Private Farm

The occupier of a large farm on the Drumtogle Estate arranged for the housing accommodation of his own workers.. On this farm there were about 40 acres of raspberries, and the number of employees housed was 150. These were all boys from an Industrial School in Glasgow. None were over sixteen years of age, the great majority being between twelve and sixteen. They were accompanied by a superintendent and eight teachers.

Accommodation.-

The boys used six dormitories similar in construction to those described under heading (A). Lighting and ventilation were good. In some cases, in addition to cross ventilation by hopper windows, there was also roof ventilation. The space per head in the different apartments varied from 130 to 180 cubic feet.

Beds had wooden frames. Most were double, but in many cases three boys slept in one bed. More than half, however, were under fourteen years of age. Most of the bedding belonged to the school. It was clean and sufficient.

The boys had meals in a large apartment with iron roof and walls, and earthen floor. It was fitted with wooden benches and tables, and had a stove. A kitchen and provision store adjoined the dining-room. The cook belonged to the school, which also provided eating utensils. The teachers' accommodation was in the same block as the dining-room and kitchen, and consisted of two dormitories and a dining-room.

At the farm-steading some 300 yards from the bothies, a stone outbuilding had been converted into an emergency dormitory. Adjoining this was a recreation room with a stove.

For the bothies, there were eight pail-privies. These were emptied daily by one of the men on the farm. Near the steading there were two more for the emergency dormitory.

Administration.-

The buildings were clean and felt fresh. The boys themselves looked after them, and made their own beds. The windows were open.

Water for cooking and drinking was carted from a sunk well near the bothies, and when that was insufficient it was brought from the farm, where there was a gravitation supply. Each bothy had a rain-water barrel, and this water was used for washing purposes when available.

The boys washed at least twice a day, and the condition of their hands as regards cleanliness compared favourably with that of the adult pickers. Forty-five basins were provided for their use and they washed in batches. Each boy had his own towel, which was provided by the school.

Each scholar brought with him three suits and a waterproof. There was very little rain during the season, but arrangements could have been made to dry clothes in outbuildings. The farmer seemed anxious to do everything possible for the boys' comfort.

A fifth year medical student was resident at the farm, and his services were at the disposal of the workers at Drumtogle and Shinafoot.

The boys were paid at the same rate as adult pickers, the money going to the school funds. Nothing was charged for the housing accommodation. The farmer told me he was glad to give it to them free in order to get a good class of workers.

(3) FARM near Methven.-

This farm had only a few acres under fruit cultivation, and the occupier was responsible for the accommodation provided for the workers, who at the time of my visit numbered 25.

Three apartments were used by the pickers, as follows:-

An old dwelling-house. The walls were stone and the floor partly earth and partly stone. The building was lit by a skylight and small wall window, both fixed. Two of the beds were wooden and two consisted of straw laid on the floor. Cooking was done at a fireplace within the building. There were eight occupants, namely, six single women and a married couple, the air space being nearly 500 cubic feet per head.

Adjoining the dwelling-house was a wood and iron annex, with earthen floor. There was no fire inside

the building, cooking being done either on a fire outside or in an open shed. Bed frames were of wood. The occupants consisted of three married couples, four women and two children. The air space was over 400 cubic feet per head.

A wood and iron shed. Windows were small and fixed, but there was plenty of incidental ventilation. Bed frames were of wood. Cooking was done in an open shed. There were seven occupants, namely, four men and three women. The air space was over 1,500 cubic feet per head.

Sanitary accommodation for all the workers consisted of two pail-privies, which were in poor order.

Water-supply was that of the farm, and there was a tap outside for the use of the workers. There was also a well, the water from which was used for washing. A basin and tub were provided by the farmer.

At this farm, housing and coal were provided free of charge.

Third: Housing of Potato-Diggers in Ayrshire.

General. In the summer of 1910 I made inspection of the housing of potato-diggers in certain farms in Ayrshire. The total number of farms visited was 36, of which 18 were in the Carrick, 10 in the Northern, and 8 in the Ayr district. — At 25 of the 36 farms, diggers

were housed at the time of my visit, the number being approximately 701, occupying 50 apartments.

It is customary for the farmer to sell his potatoes in lots to different dealers, often by auction. In some cases, where the acreage under potato cultivation is large, as many as 10 different merchants may purchase lots on one farm. These merchants employ squads of workers under the direction of gaffers, who go from farm to farm in different districts to dig potatoes as they become ready. The result is that the farmer may have one squad to house at a time, or he may have 10 depending on the arrangements of the different merchants, each squad consisting as a rule of from 20 to 30 workers. It is generally impossible for long notice to be given of the arrival of a squad, as the time varies with the weather and the state of the potatoes.

Most of the diggers come from the west of Ireland, though some are employed from Glasgow, Kilmarnock, and other towns, and some locally from adjoining villages. As a rule the Irish diggers come to Scotland in June and may remain for 5 or 6 months. Work begins in the Carrick District; thence the diggers go to the other districts of Ayrshire, and later to the Lothians, a few finishing in Perthshire or Forfarshire in November.

Each digger is paid 2s. 6d. for a 10 hours' day by

the dealer. If an hour is lost one day owing to rain, it is made up another. The dealer also provides blankets and as many potatoes as can be consumed. By the end of the season, the diggers have usually saved sums varying from £5 to £20. The farmer provides housing accommodation, straw for bedding, and coals free of charge.

Nature of Accommodation.-

Accommodation consisted mainly of farm buildings as follows:- lofts, barns, potato-houses, byres, loose boxes, and other outhouses. In a few cases there were special bothies for the use of the diggers. These bothies were very satisfactory, though the atmosphere of one or two was bad, owing to fixation of the windows.

At some farms improvements had recently been carried out, such as the erection of new sanitary accommodation and of partitions in existing outbuildings for separation of the sexes. In other cases, the farmers were apathetic and had done little towards ameliorating the housing conditions, though frequently a small expenditure would make a vast difference to the comfort of the workers.

A particularly unsatisfactory farm was seen in the Carrick District. Here a loft occupied by the women was badly lit and ventilated, and another housing the men was little better. In addition, the latter was

situated above a hen house and was complained of as verminous. At this farm there was no sanitary accommodation for the workers, and the only fire was on the ground in the open.

Sufficiency of Accommodation .-

It was not always practicable to learn the exact number of persons occupying each apartment owing to the workers being employed in potato fields at some distance from the farm. The farmer as a rule could only supply the figures approximately, but whenever possible, I obtained them from the diggers themselves. The cubic space of the different apartments was reported to me by the Sanitary Inspectors. At the time of my visit, there was very little overcrowding. In only one apartment were there less than 200 cubic feet per person. This was a loft with a cubic capacity of 1,254 feet which accommodated 12 men. Even here it was only a case of bad management, as the total number of persons housed was 28 and the amount of space in 3 apartments at their disposal was 10,746 cubic feet, which would have made possible over 380 cubic feet per person. At some farms the numbers housed were said to be greater occasionally than at the time of my visit.

The following table shows the cubic space per head for the 701 diggers as distributed in the various apartments,

Under the circumstances the table can only be approximately correct:

<u>Cubic feet</u>	<u>Number of persons</u>
-100	0
100-200	12
200-300	61
300-400	152
400-500	109
500-600	144
600-700	52
700-800	46
800-900	44
900-1000	21
Above 1000	60

Of the total of 701 persons, 1.7 per cent had under 200 cubic feet; 10.4 per cent had under 300 cubic feet; and 32 per cent had under 400 cubic feet.

Cleanliness of Buildings.-

This was very defective in many cases.

Separation of Sexes.-

At 13 out of the 25 farms where workers were housed at the time of my visit there was separation of the sexes. At the other 12, men and women occupied the same sleeping apartments.

Bedding.-

Straw is provided by the farmer and blankets by the merchants. It is the rare exception to find bed-frames.

Cooking and Clothes Drying.-

The arrangements for these purposes were often unsatisfactory, in some cases the only fires being on the ground in the open.

Washing of Clothes & Personal Ablution.-

Pails, towels and other utensils are brought by the diggers, who wash as a rule in the open air or in their sleeping apartment.

Sanitary Accommodation.-

There were no conveniences at 9 out of the 25 farms.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, I propose to give a brief statement of the impressions formed from the investigations made by me, and to state generally the conclusions reached, and the recommendations which appear necessary to deal satisfactorily with the conditions found. The subject will be dealt with under the following heads:-

- (1) Sleeping accommodation.
- (2) Air space in dormitories.
- (3) Cleanliness of dormitories.
- (4) Separation of sexes.
- (5) Beds and bedding.
- (6) Drying of clothes.
- (7) Cooking.
- (8) Washing of clothes and personal ablution.
- (9) Water supply.
- (10) Sanitary accommodation.
- (11) Day accommodation.
- (12) Caretakers.
- (13) The need for new legislation.

1. Sleeping Accommodation.-

As ~~already~~ mentioned seasonal workers are commonly housed in two classes of buildings, namely, those which normally are used for other purposes, and those which are specially erected for seasonal occupation. As the occupations referred to with the exception of fish-gutting are practically all connected with agriculture and farming, farm buildings are commonly resorted to under the first heading. Under the second heading the buildings ordinarily used are bothies of simple structure.

The farm buildings in which seasonal workers find sleeping accommodation are barns, granaries, potato-houses, lofts, byres, loose boxes, stables, cart sheds and other outhouses. Of these, granaries or potato-box houses with wooden floors were found to make the most suitable sleeping apartments. These are always dry and are, as a rule, well ventilated, although in some cases additional opening windows would be an advantage. Lofts also are satisfactory in that they have wooden floors, but many are badly lit and badly ventilated. Barns are variable in their suitability. They may be damp, with stone or earthen floors, and they are often poorly lit, and although the air space may be more ^{than} sufficient the air is frequently stagnant. Byres are perhaps less suitable than any other form of apartment. It is to be recollected here that only dairy byres are under statutory

regulation, byres for stock cattle not being similarly controlled. They have a cold and cheerless aspect and their lighting is often defective. Their stone floors are certainly an improvement as compared with earth, but on a wet day when they are muddy and dirty they are little better.

Earthen floors are rightly the exception, but they were found in several apartments housing both potato-diggers and berry-pickers. At one farm diggers were housed in the stalls of a byre with an earthen floor. In this byre bullocks were fed during the winter months. They were turned out the first week in April and the brick side walls of the stalls were scraped down and white washed. A large fruit farm housed "tramps" in several sheds with earthen floors, and in a few of the smaller fruit farms the conditions were similar. Perhaps nothing contributes more to the untidiness and dismal aspect of an apartment than an uneven earthen floor.

Bothies are in most cases satisfactory for sleeping accommodation. The walls are of wood or corrugated iron and the roofs of wood with tarred felt or corrugated iron. Most of the floors are of wood, though a few are of brick, cement or earth. At one fruit farm excellent brick bothies were provided. The ventilation is usually afforded by wall windows opening hopper fashion. At some of the smaller farms the windows were designed to slide horizontally in grooves,

an arrangement which works very well in dry weather, though in rain the wood is apt to swell causing fixation of the windows. In a number of small bothies the windows were not made to open.

(2) Air Space in Dormitories.-

The question of air space per head is difficult. In bye-laws for Common Lodging-houses, made under Section 92 of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1897, the amount ranges from 300 to 400 cubic feet per head in different areas, the latter figure being rare for counties, but more frequent for burghs. The Local Government Board's minimum is 300 cubic feet. In bye-laws for Tents, Vans & Sheds, made under Section 73 of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1897, a usual figure is 200, though in one county district where differentiation is made, 100 is the figure for tents, and 200 for vans and sheds. In another county 300 cubic feet is the minimum for sheds. Under Section 67 of the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1903, the figure for "ticketed" houses is 400, as compared with 300 in the Local Government Board's bye-laws for Houses Let in Lodgings. The 200 cubic feet standard is obviously too low, and no doubt the reason for its being permitted for Tents, Vans, and Sheds is that these are commonly structures used by itinerants, where convenience and cost of transit by horse haulage or otherwise has been

taken into consideration by the authorities framing the bye-laws.

In my experience it was the rare exception to find an air space of less than 200 cubic feet per head for adults, though at a farm housing 150 boys from 12 to 16 years of age the space per head varied from 130 to 180 cubic feet in different well-ventilated apartments. In the case of 701 potato diggers only 1.7 per cent had under 200 cubic feet, whilst 68 per cent had over 400 cubic feet. Two large fruit farms with well constructed bothies housed between them 350 Labour Exchange workers, the air space per head being in nearly all cases between 200 and 250 cubic feet.

I am told by Dr. Dittmar of the Local Government Board that at the herring-curing yards at Baltasound the air-space per head in bothies was commonly between 200 and 260 cubic feet, whilst the Local Authority for the Burgh of Fraserburgh demand 250 cubic feet for fisher girls.

The larger amounts of accommodation have usually been found in structures erected for other purposes - such as are commonly used for housing potato-diggers - and the smaller amounts in bothies which have been built directly for the accommodation of the workers - as a rule berry-pickers - and which therefore form an additional charge on the business. It is evident that if there is to be greater air space the consumer must pay more; but that principle must not be pushed too far so as to raise unduly the price of such

articles of diet as potatoes, fruit and fish. Also, it must be borne in mind that persons engaged in berry-picking and potato-digging are enjoying an outdoor life in a pure and healthy atmosphere.

Much can be done even in a small cubic space by good ventilation resulting in a constant renewal and movement of the air. All bothies for outdoor workers should have ample structural means of ventilation and it should be the duty of the employer through a caretaker or otherwise to see that the means are fully utilised. Here he will probably have a constant contest with the occupants, who traditionally object to fresh air within a dwelling, but it should be part of his duty to wage the contest. Frequently windows are not opened even in the morning because it is nobody's business to do so, with the result that the atmosphere of sleeping apartments is close and malodorous.

(3) Cleanliness of Dormitories.-

Dealing first with potato-diggers, the workers are almost invariably supposed to look after the cleanliness of their apartments, which is a very defective arrangement, or want of arrangement in most cases. Some of the farms were inspected just before the arrival of the diggers, and their conditions as to cleanliness were found quite satisfactory. This, however, was not the case with those inspected during or immediately after occupation. The state of dirt and untidiness in which diggers live is too large

extent preventable although partly due to structure. A great defect is that no one is at present responsible. The farmer says that he has no power over the workers to make them keep the rooms clean; the gaffer says he cannot look after them, as he is in the fields all day; the diggers themselves, though they may be clean in body, are most untidy in their surroundings. I saw numerous instances of this. In two cases the surface channel outside the door of the sleeping apartment was blocked by potato-skins, which the diggers had been too careless to throw into the ashpit a short distance off, and the floors inside were flooded with water after rain. In another case, there was a stinking heap of decaying refuse at the door of a barn, thrown there by the inmates. The ash-pit was at some distance, but it would have been a simple matter to put the material into a barrel, which could have been emptied daily. The farmer, however, said that he had not been asked for a barrel, and the gaffer that he had not been offered one. So far as I could judge the floors are rarely if ever swept, and the condition goes from bad to worse till the diggers depart, when the farmer is left with his buildings often in a very filthy condition.

At the smaller fruit farms likewise the workers themselves are almost always left to take responsibility for the cleanliness of their bothies. As a rule any cleaning was said to be done after the evening meal or on Saturday nights. The result is unsatisfactory. When visited during the day many of the huts presented an appearance of dirt and

general squalor. Unmade beds, tables covered with unwashed dishes and broken food, floors littered with straw and papers, and unused garments in all odd corners were very common. In exceptional cases, however, the bothy was both clean and tidy, and this was more often so where members of one family had come to the same place for some years.

The larger fruit farms visited had an administrative staff, which included a general superintendent and a daily scavenger, and although the cleaning of the dormitories was again done by the berry-pickers themselves, the result of their supervised work was satisfactory. This was more especially so in the bothies than in the farm buildings, the latter being structurally less suited for housing purposes and less easy to keep clean, besides being occupied by a poorer class of worker.

Herring-gutters also keep their apartments as a rule in a satisfactory condition, supervision being exercised in some cases at least by their employer or his foreman.

(4) Separation of Sexes.-

At about 50 per cent of the farms housing potato-diggers there was separation of the sexes, and at the other 50 per cent men and women occupied the same sleeping apartment. The Irish squads often consist of near relatives, who, though of both sexes, are said frequently to offer no objection, or indeed, to prefer for the sake of protection of the women to share the same apartment. When I asked some women at a farm without separation whether they preferred staying at this farm or at another with separation which they had just left, they unhesitatingly replied that they preferred the former because the tables were better.

Some farmers informed me that it is their custom to throw open a certain number of apartments for the use of a squad and to allow them to arrange themselves as they choose, when men and women almost invariably occupy different parts of the same dormitory. Others told me that they were unable to persuade diggers to separate, but of that I am rather sceptical. At several farms where there had been many recent improvements, I was told that there had been no difficulty on this score, and that the workers had been very willing to separate when told to do so.

At fruit farms it was quite the exception to find indiscriminate non-separation, though in several apartments there were a number of married couples.

At fish curing yards the great majority of the employees are girls, and their housing accommodation is apart from that of the men.

The question of separation is a difficult one where several squads are housed at a farm at the same time. It appears that members of different squads refuse to occupy the same apartment, so that for each squad there should be at least three apartments - one for males, another for females, and a third divided by partitions for married couples.

Where large apartments alone are available they

should be divided up by wooden partitions. More privacy would thus be secured and there might be less risk of spread of infectious disease. It is not enough for the farmer to leave a sheet lying about ~~for~~ the workers to put up if they feel inclined, as was done in one case. Whatever the feelings of the workers on the matter, it is obvious that mixed sleeping accommodation is inconsistent with decency and should be prohibited. As mentioned below Local Authorities are at present much hampered, in that they have no statutory power to compel separation of the sexes.

(5) Beds and Bedding.-

At the smaller fruit-farms an abundant supply of straw is practically always provided by the farmer, and comparatively seldom are there mattresses. A few farmers refused to give blankets, as they said they were stolen, while others did not rise above pack-sheeting. Bedsteads are almost invariably of wood, and excepting in a few cases are double. In one or two apartments there were single beds, and in one, triple. The size of the bed, however, had little relation to the number of people who occupied it. In one case where two beds were available for four girls, all four used one bed.

At the larger fruit-farms the bedding provided by the farmers for Labour Exchange workers occupying bothies

consists of straw or a straw mattress, sheets and a pair of blankets. In some cases pillows also are supplied. The bed frames are of wood and are, as a rule, double, though a few are single.

Herring-gutters are, as a rule, employed in 'crews,' each 'crew' consisting of three girls, who occupy one bed. The bedsteads are of wood, and are provided by the curer, who may also give straw, other bedding belonging to the girls themselves.

For potato-diggers straw is provided by the farmer and blankets by the merchant, the number of blankets depending on the weather. At one farm a complaint was made to me by the gaffer that wheat straw had been given instead of oats straw, as is more usual. The former is harder and coarser than the latter, but, as it was dry and clean, I did not think that the complaint had much weight. It is quite exceptional to find bed frames. As a rule the straw is laid in heaps on the ground, and, except in the stalls of byres, the several heaps tend to run together, and spread over most of the floor, giving it a very untidy appearance. The diggers are generally at liberty to use potato boxes as rests on which to put the straw, but frequently they merely lay it on the ground. Similar arrangements prevailed for "tramps" occupying outbuildings at the large fruit farms.

Plenty of warm bedding is essential to successful maintenance of ventilation, and sufficient bed covers should be provided by the employer, whether farmer or merchant. Wherever possible, bedsteads should be single, thus lessening the risk of spread of vermin and other infection from one worker to another. Where the dormitories have earthen floors, it should be compulsory to provide bed frames. Potato boxes on which straw can be laid are in such circumstances unsatisfactory.

(6) & (7) Drying of Clothes and Cooking.-

Perhaps the greatest hardship which seasonal workers may have to endure is the want of proper convenience for drying of clothes in wet weather and for cooking. The arrangements varied considerably in different places.

The berry-pickers in one district did their own cooking on stoves or fireplaces. In about four-fifths of the whole these were within the sleeping apartment. In the remaining fifth, there was a special room with furnace and hot-plate or stove. The arrangements for clothes drying were poor on the whole, the general rule being to hang wet garments on wires or ropes in the sleeping apartment. Where there was a separate room for cooking, clothes might be dried there. In some cases the boiler house was available.

At two large fruit farms in another district, most of the eatables were bought from a shop erected on the steading and little cooking was done by the workers themselves. Those who did not buy their food in this manner built fires for cooking on the ground in the open. No arrangements had been made for drying of clothes, and there was no access by the pickers to any fire under cover. A third farm had excellent arrangements, a special room with hot pipes being provided for drying the workers' clothes. At a fourth farm where the workers were boys from an Industrial School, there were special kitchen and dining arrangements, the cook belonging to the school, and at the same place provision had been made to dry clothes in various outbuildings.

It is the rule for herring-gutters to have open fireplaces or stoves in their sleeping apartment, where cooking or clothes drying may be done.

In the case of potato-diggers the arrangements for cooking and clothes drying were often unsatisfactory. At five out of a group of 25 farms visited, the only fires were on the ground in the open. In a number of other instances they were in chauffers outside, and I was told that in wet weather these were placed under cover. In other cases fires were built on the ground under sheds which were often of the poorest description, affording little protection from wind and rain. In

some of these there were ropes on which to hang clothes, but often I was told that the diggers could put up ropes themselves if they so desired. In only a few cases were the arrangements really satisfactory.

On the other hand, a farmer to whom I spoke on the subject said that he had previously had a furnace and hot-plate under cover, but that the diggers had persisted in building the fire on the top of the hot plate, and that, in fear of the building being set on fire, he had removed the furnace altogether, returning to his previous arrangement of providing chauffers outside. This is further evidence of the need for a caretaker.

Even when the fires are under cover, there is often an insufficient number for the workers using them. In one case there was only one fireplace for thirty-two people, as compared with one for fifteen as required by the English Local Government Board's Model Bye-laws for Hop-Pickers. The staple food of the diggers is potatoes, which are supplied free by the merchant, and it is, therefore, important that there should be a sufficient number of fireplaces to cook them.

It has been contended that berry-picking is not long carried on in rain, and that workers rarely get their clothes wet. One farmer told me that he always made his employees stop work when it was wet, as many

had no change of clothing, and if once soaked they would work no more that day. It stands to reason, however, that clothes must often become damp through their wearers kneeling among the strawberry beds even if rain is not actually falling. The discomfort and danger of sitting in wet clothes and putting them on again still damp in the morning are obvious. The workers on several occasions complained very bitterly on this score. There should be compulsory provision for the drying of clothes and cooking.

(8) Washing of Clothes and Personal Ablution.-

At the smaller fruit-farms personal ablution was conducted in a haphazard fashion in or at the door of the sleeping apartment, or in a neighbouring burn. Basins and tubs for that purpose and for clothes washing were provided by the farmer.

At the larger fruit-farms similar arrangements as a rule existed. In some cases the supply of basins for personal ablution was quite insufficient, only one basin being available for ten or even twenty workers. On the other hand, at the farm housing Industrial School children there was a basin for every three or four boys.

For potato-diggers there were no special arrangements. The diggers as a rule brought their own pails and other utensils, though I was told that they never

hesitated to make use of any belonging to the farm on which they could lay their hands. I did not hear of any case where towels were provided by the farmers. As a rule the Irish digger brings these with him.

In the case of berry-pickers it is especially important that all reasonable facilities should be given for keeping the hands clean. Basins of sufficient number should, I think, be supplied at the fields by the employer, whilst workers might be required to furnish their own towels and soap. All seasonal workers should have means of daily personal ablution under cover - not merely in the open air.

(9) Water Supply.-

The water supply was nearly always satisfactory, being as a rule that of the farm. At two of the larger fruit farms water was obtained from pump wells close to the bothies, and at a third from a ~~deep~~ well. To one set of bothies all water for cooking and drinking was carted from the farm steading about a quarter of a mile away. A number of the most modern bothies had rhones and water-barrels, the water from which was used for washing.

A gravitation water-supply cannot always be expected, but where there is no proper local supply, arrangements should be made to have regular cartage of water to the buildings.

(10) Sanitary Accommodation---

Measured by ordinary standards the sanitary accommodation was a bad feature in many cases. About a third of the smaller fruit farms, including one which housed thirty-four, had none available for the workers. Only at one farm was there any attempt to provide separate accommodation for the sexes. Where there was accommodation, it frequently consisted of the farm privy, which might be some distance from the bothy. Where special conveniences were provided, they were very rudimentary, those of the pail type being few in number. It was not unusual to have the accommodation in a wood, any privacy being afforded rather by its situation than its structure. Where there was suitable accommodation, I understand that it was used, though little complaint was made where there was none. At the larger fruit farms the accommodation was suitable, though in some cases hardly sufficient. Separate conveniences were provided for the two sexes.

For potato-diggers there were no conveniences at nine out of a group of twenty-five farms. At one farm there was a privy for the diggers, but in a condition so filthy as to be unusable. Several farmers had recently erected new conveniences for each sex, but they were kept in an indescribably dirty condition by the workers, so much so that in one case the farmer spoke

of pulling them down as they were a nuisance in the steading.

The two sexes should have separate accommodation, which should be suitably constructed, suitably situated, sufficiently and regularly scavenged. Otherwise, it will not be used by female workers. In the case of berry-pickers and herring-gutters the farmer and the curer should be responsible for the accommodation provided, but, as regards potato-diggers, I am inclined to think that the merchant should send portable privies. The numbers which the farmer has to house at a time vary greatly in different seasons, and he can hardly be expected to erect sufficient permanent sanitary accommodation for the maximum number for such short periods. The difficulty of keeping the conveniences clean could be obviated by the appointment of a caretaker.

(11) Day Accommodation.-

In the great majority of cases workers eat in the room where they sleep. Rough tables are often provided, but for potato-diggers boxes generally have to serve. At the larger fruit farms there are special dining rooms or large sheds with benches where the workers take their food.

(12) Caretakers.-

The need for a caretaker to look after premises

was, in many cases, very apparent.

In the case of berry-picking and fish-cleaning where one party is responsible both for workers and housing, there need be no difficulty in making suitable arrangements.

As regards potato-lifting, however, the circumstances are different. It appears reasonable that the farmer should be responsible for the nature of the accommodation and for its cleanliness when the diggers enter at the beginning of the season; but I think that the duty of looking after the premises generally and of leaving them in a habitable condition for the next squad of workers should be definitely fixed upon the merchant. The farmer is in the position of letting his outbuildings to the merchant for his workers, but not of letting them with attendance, and the merchant ought to be made to send a woman with each squad to clean dormitories and women's premises and to look after things generally. A man should be appointed to look after the men's premises. A couple of hours daily should often suffice.

In the same way when the farmer provides suitable accommodation, it should be the merchant who is responsible for the way in which the diggers occupy it, and he should instruct the gaffer to see that the sexes are separated. The gaffer could notify the Sanitary Authority of any insufficiency of accommodation.

(13) The Need for New Legislation.-

The existing powers of Public Health Authorities for dealing with the housing of seasonal workers are, in many respects, inadequate and unsatisfactory. For instance, there are no legal powers to compel separation of the sexes; nor can the Local Authority insist on intimation of the arrival or departure of seasonal workers from their place of occupation. When such information is withheld, inspection is difficult or impossible.

Under Sections 16 to 28 of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1897, powers are given to Local Authorities to deal with nuisances. Even in the case of the ordinary population, it is often difficult to prove the existence of a nuisance, or the authorship of a proved nuisance. In respect of a migratory population, the difficulties become practical impossibilities. The ordinary procedure against nuisances is complicated. Firstly, the Sanitary Inspector must send an "intimation," secondly, a "notice" must be served which can only be done on a resolution by the Public Health Authority or its Executive Committee; and, thirdly, the case must be brought before the Sheriff. The time occupied is such that temporary workers like potato-diggers will almost certainly have left the place where the nuisance has been committed, and may indeed have

gone into the area of another Local Authority, before the proceedings are completed.

The enforcement of bye-laws for prevention of nuisances is a much less difficult matter than is the proving and removal of a nuisance, and it is desirable that power should be given to Local Authorities to make bye-laws for the housing of seasonal workers. Provision should be made in these bye-laws for notification to the Local Authority of the arrival and departure of workers, for air space, ventilation, lighting, heating, cooking, drying of clothes, water supply, cleanliness, beds and bedding, sanitary accommodation, clothes washing, personal ablution, separation of the sexes and caretaking. A short Act would be required to give power to make bye-laws and to specify the purposes for which they could be made. In this matter the Central Authority should have the duty and right to exercise control over the Local Authority, both in awakening ^{the} lethargy and in the repression of activities of which the main-spring is zeal rather than knowledge. Experience has shown the value of model rules for Common Lodging Houses, and similar rules might be made for the housing of seasonal workers.

It is, of course, a common procedure to give Local Authorities power to make bye-laws for the prevention, as distinguished from the removal of certain classes of nuisance. Such bye-laws already exist for Common

Lodging Houses, Houses Let in Lodgings, and Tents, Vans and Sheds, and the question naturally arises as to whether one of these sets of bye-laws would not suffice for seasonal housing. Common Lodging Houses and Houses Let in Lodgings, however, are buildings occupied all the year round, whilst no bye-laws for Tents, Vans and Sheds have ever referred to notification of occupancy, facilities for heating, cooking, clothes drying, separation of the sexes, or caretaking.

Registration of seasonal housing accommodation seems on the whole unnecessary, and needlessly troublesome to the farmer. The possibility of tyranny and undue harassment of industry must not be forgotten, but it should never be allowed to condone or excuse housing conditions essentially dangerous to either the health or the morals of seasonal workers.

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