

## INDOOR RELIEF.

Turning to the question of indoor relief, very much the same kind of thing obtained and for the same reason. The ordinary doctor connected with the Poor Law was trained to believe that a person who came within the Poor Law was something just a little less than a criminal, and that he must be made to feel that. It was said that children who came within the clutches of the Poor Law must be made to feel that they are worse than other children. The administration of the Poor Law was carried on in that spirit. In workhouses in country districts he himself had seen harmless lunatics, imbeciles and sick persons all living in the same ward and the same dining room. The result was writ large in the chapter on birth and infancy in the Minority Report. Children born in workhouses had a less chance of living their first year than if they were born outside, in spite of Local Government Board reports to the contrary.

Inspectors and doctors all agreed that the money spent on Poor Law administration was largely wasted, and, in the main, this was caused by the fact that the Poor Law started out to deal with all cases of destitution from the point of view of deterring either the person dealt with or anybody else from coming for assistance again. The result was that expectant mothers would almost die rather than go into a workhouse infirmary. Other people would keep away and endure all kinds of ills rather than go to a Relieving Officer. If a patient only came in the very last extremity all treatment was bound to be more or less ineffective.

## NEW METHODS WANTED.

What was wanted to take the place of present methods? Any sort of deterrent policy in the treatment of sickness should be done away with and the same line taken that had been taken with regard to infectious diseases such as scarlet fever and diphtheria. If you caught diphtheria the authorities did not stop to ask you how much money you were earning. You were promptly hauled off and dealt with as kindly and skilfully as possible, for the sake of safeguarding society. A whole series of public services were growing up which were making for the welfare of society. The community had taken upon itself the responsibility of interfering with the rights of parents to the extent of saying that their children should not be dirty at school. They might answer that the parents lived under dirty conditions and could not help it, but if the parents could not help it then society had got to help the children. When he remembered that his child going to school in Bow could be medically inspected, and if he was too poor to pay for the best medical treatment, the child would get the treatment free, he wanted to know why the widow living with her