

to work, or more often to work in the home. Usually they drifted into the worst-paid work, swelling the ranks of the sweated worker, and dragging down the standard of living for single women. These widows and necessitous mothers were to be found in every sweated trade, among the chain makers of Cradley Heath, in the lace factories, and among the shirt makers of our great cities. It had to be emphasised in reply to those who were anxious to safeguard the freedom of women to work as many hours as possible for as little wages as they may receive, that this kind of work in sweated trades was not the work that was loved for its own sake. There was no joy of craftsmanship in it, but needs must when poverty drives. All the natural instincts of motherhood were stunted, children were neglected, and in the case of the home worker the whole family were pressed into service.

Baby fingers had to learn to card hooks and eyes. In Birmingham slums babies of three and four years of age had been found helping their mothers to card hooks and eyes as late as nine o'clock at night. These children were suffering from want of proper care and medical treatment, and the proposal of the Minority Report was that the mother should be allowed as a right an amount fully adequate for the maintenance of each of her children. This had been called the "Boarding out" of children with their own mothers, but that was a contradiction in terms. The plan was really to enable a woman to support her children and make her an adequate allowance for this purpose. It was necessary for the State to see that the mother was able to do her duty to her children. This it was proposed should be done by the Education Authority in the case of children of school age and by the Health Authority in the case of infants. Children ought never to be regarded as paupers at all. The memory of that taint followed the child through life and embittered manhood or womanhood. Children should be under the supervision either of the Education or the Health Authority according to age. Every mother should be left with her children if possible, and proper provision made for their support, but in the case of mothers for whom circumstances had been too much and who had become unfitted to take charge of their children, then the children must be treated as orphans and boarded out.

THE AGED AND INFIRM.

Turning to the question of the aged and infirm, these formed one-third of all the paupers, although it was difficult to draw a line between the infirm and those incapacitated by sickness. The number of old people in workhouses had not yet been diminished to any very large extent by the granting of