

The charge of bureaucracy had been made. What did it consist of? The bureaucracy that was being complained of was that it was proposed to extend the service of school doctors, nurses, sanitary visitors, and inspectors, acting under the direct order and control of their democratically elected council. He did not know how much nearer they could get to democracy than that. The same reasons that he had stated in regard to Education Authorities applied equally to the Health Authorities, Lunacy Committees, and the authorities for dealing with the aged.

The methods suggested in the resolution were the first steps to be taken, and when once they made a start they would, in time, be able to bring about practically the entire abolition of poverty.

F. J. Pearce (Hampstead Trades Council) seconded.

H. Quelch moved an amendment to the resolution, the main point in which was to provide that the relief of distress should be carried out "under the supervision of a directly elected local authority."

He largely agreed with the terms of the resolution, but thought that the modification proposed was necessary. Lansbury had said that Trades Unionists and Socialists ought to be ashamed of themselves for not having done more in the way of agitation against the administration of the Poor Law. He absolutely repudiated any blame attaching to his organisation (S.D.P.) in this connection. Twenty-seven years ago they formulated proposals for the amelioration of the Poor Law, and over and over again on their recommendation circulars were issued by the Local Government Board in the direction of better treatment of the unemployed. He would like to know just what lay behind "The Break-up of the Poor Law." It was proposed to abolish Boards of Guardians which he claimed were susceptible to public opinion, and create authorities which would not be so susceptible to public opinion. When they had classified their poor and their destitute, and had handed one set to the Health Committee and another to the Education Committee, they would not have abolished destitution, and they would still want an authority to whom people could go and say they were in need of public assistance. He did not think that Boards of Guardians had performed their duties half as badly as the London County Council Education Committee.

E. C. Fairfield seconded the amendment.

Sidney Webb, opposing the amendment, expressed great surprise at the attitude of Mr. Quelch and his friends. Boards of Guardians up and down the country were now sheltering themselves behind the Social Democratic Party who, for once, were to be found fighting for Bumble. He himself would not