TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

A Study of Physical Environment: The Prelude to Post-War Reconstruction

by
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and
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with a foreword by
The Rt. Hon.
ARTHUR GREENWOOD, M.P.

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To

KATHARINE BRUCE GLASIER

FOREWORD

By The Rt. Hon. Arthur Greenwood, M.P

(Member of the War Cabinet and Chairman of the Ministerial Committee on Reconstruction Problems)

Peace will come with honour and victory. When it does come the people and the Government of this country will be faced with the special duty of reconstructing the fabric of our national, social and cultural life on a new and better pattern.

It is my special responsibility to consider now, even when the people of this country are bearing the stresses and strains of war and the horrors of aerial bombardment with a fortitude that has amazed the world, what steps are necessary to produce an ordered social economy giving security to all. Within the framework of this larger pattern come the problems of physical reconstruction with which my colleague Lord Reith, as Minister of Works and Buildings, is specially concerned.

For these great tasks, vision and courage are essential qualities. Vision is necessary in order that we may plan for human health and happiness and in order, too, that we may make some contribution to the spiritual life of the people. Courage is necessary that we may plan boldly and on a large scale—that we may plan nationally and regionally as well as locally. Knowledge is also necessary. We must know the efforts that have been made in the past. We must realise how great was the task which faced our predecessors at the end of the last war, and how great indeed was their achievement in the period between 1919 and 1939.

Anyone who remembers the slums of 1914 cannot be sufficiently grateful to those who laid the foundations of a housing programme which enabled millions of people to live under honourable conditions. We must know, too, the mistakes of the past. No longer is

there any conflict about the desirability of national planning. That is a matter which has won the approval of a Royal Commission after the most searching examination of all the issues involved. We have learned that merely to provide good housing is not enough. We have learned that merely restrictive legislation—Acts of Parliament prohibiting ribbon development, by-laws limiting the heights of buildings, zoning for this density here and that density there—are insufficient for our purpose unless they are part of the framework of an integrated national plan.

The great destruction wrought by the enemy's bombers on our towns and cities has merely given a new urgency to the problem of national planning. It will not detract from our war effort in the slightest degree if we give attention now to the problems raised by the bombing of the City of London, Greater London, Coventry, Liverpool, Southampton, Plymouth, Bristol, Glasgow, Swansea, Sheffield, Manchester and other places which have suffered from aerial attack. We shall indeed be giving a new incentive to their heroic citizens.

The claims which are made for this book by its authors, Elizabeth and Gilbert McAllister, are modest. They claim that it is informative. There is no doubt about that. It contains the background of knowledge common to town planners and housing experts in this country today. It traces the story of physical environment from the time of Chadwick to the appointment of the Uthwatt Committee. It provides in a concise form and yet with considerable detail the story of our housing and town planning legislation and its practical results. The writing is vigorous: when the authors look to the past they recreate the story of a great movement, when they look to the future they are lively and suggestive. It is a book which should find many readers not only among technical town planners but among the wider public whose imagination has been stirred by the dark horrors of the war to look forward to the happier world to come.

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It is not possible to have any right morality, happiness or art, in any country where the cities are thus built, or thus, let me rather say, clotted and coagulated; spots of a dreadful mildew spreading by patches and blotches over the country they consume. You must have lovely cities, crystallised, not coagulated, into form; limited in size and not casting out the scum and scurf of them into an encircling eruption of shame.—JOHN RUSKIN.

And now London, the capital of English civilisation, has caught the infection of Continental experiments which are at variance with the whole character and tendency of the city! Thus the foolish mistakes of other countries are imported everywhere, and at the end of a few years all cities will be equally ugly and equally devoid of individuality.—STEEN EILER RASMUSSEN.

We, the people of England, are building and extending our towns in a manner that we know to be wrong, that we know to be destructive of a good life for the present generation and for generations to come.—F. J. OSBORN.

INTRODUCTION

In the greatest disasters there is an element of good. When an earthquake devastates Napier, Tokyo, or San Francisco, the dust has hardly settled on the scene before the planners and the architects are busy making blue-prints for new cities, more spaciously planned, more harmonious in their design, built on sounder foundations.

So it was when, at last, on that brilliant day of autumn sunshine, the dichotomous throb of the bombers of the Luftwaffe was heard over London, R.A.F. fighters threaded sinuous patterns as they broke the enemy formations twenty thousand feet up in the pale afternoon sky. The oncoming of darkness found the city bright with such a fire as had not been seen since 1666. The bombs screamed down to destroy this church or that hospital, this block of flats or that group of cottages. But before morning came, to reveal a London surprisingly all but intact despite the night of horror, men were already fashioning in their minds their hopes of a better London after the war.

Wherever the bombs have fallen that has been so. There is something symbolic in the fact that while directing relief operations after the bombing of Coventry, the City Architect, Mr. D. E. Gibson, yet found time to point out to a friend, indicating this devastated area or that, the site of the new town hall, a new school, a new shopping centre, to draw a verbal picture of the nobler Coventry which will commemorate the heroism of its citizens. Among the ruins of Southampton, Mr. Herbert Collins plans a revivified city. After the grim ordeals of the bombing of Cardiff and Swansea, Mr. T. Alwyn Lloyd sketches the background of a plan for Wales. Sir William E. Whyte, leading Scottish opinion in this war as in the last, surveys the results of the bombing of

Clydeside and sees the West of Scotland as it may be, fashioned to newer harmonies of life, industry, agriculture and landscape. Government itself is stirred to action. Mr. Arthur Greenwood is appointed to survey the problems of reconstruction after the war. Lord Reith is appointed Minister of Works and Buildings, with a special mandate to consider the problems of physical environment and to devise machinery for national planning.

Among the broad masses of the people, too, there is a quickened interest reflected in letters to the Press, in a thousand articles, in broadcast talks. 'I wish', says Mr. Greenwood, answering the public demand, 'to mobilise the departments of State, our local authorities, representative organisations of all kinds, and people of knowledge and experience, in a mighty effort to reap the harvest of our sacrifices.' Those who have given long and devoted service to the cause of planning, particularly those who have carried on the patient forty years' propaganda of the Town and Country Planning Association, see at last the evidence of their success in a public receptive to their ideas, eager to have them translated into reality as soon as victory is won.

In the twenty years between the wars Great Britain carried through a vast rehousing programme. Democratic Britain can take pride in the fact that no other country, operating any other political system, produced anything like the number of houses, abolished so many slums, or so splendidly improved housing standards: in comparison with the achievements of Great Britain in this field the efforts of the dictatorship countries are insignificant indeed. It must be admitted, however, that there was a complete failure to co-ordinate housing with any other aspect of living. The necessity for abolishing the most intolerable of the slums was clearly seen. The result was housing estates, representing a standard of housing for the working classes undreamed of in 1914, but many of them cut off from the amenities of town life and representing also an enormous waste of time, energy and money in long daily journeys to and from work. At last, London having been built up on the periphery to the limits of human endurance (if not to the point

when the London Passenger Transport Board—which thinks of London and its population as a device for making transport pay—was prepared to cry, 'Hold, enough!'), the London County Council was compelled, in the absence of greater vision or national planning or both, to build great blocks of flats, near the work-places of their inhabitants, but lacking in gardens and an abundance of fresh air and sunlight. For that is the choice that the continued growth of great towns anywhere—in Russia, China, the United States or Great Britain—ultimately forces upon its citizens: either suburbia and a garden and a tedious daily journey or flat life and no garden and an environment unsuited to family life. And the one breeds the other: suburban expansion leads to central congestion: central congestion leads to suburban expansion. Neither, in fact, is a true method of city planning. They are both the results of non-planning. They are both the results of a nineteenth-century habit of thought time-lagging into the twentieth century. The nineteenth century believed that town growth was inevitable, that towns were founded, grew and expanded, conforming to an unalterable law, that every industry found its optimum location, that every building, house, shop or factory found its best site in obedience to the same inscrutable law that causes the conger eel to half-circle the seven seas to find its spawning ground. Every by-pass road with its ribbons of houses, the Great West Road with its litter of factories, are typical manifestations of its hideous results—results as anti-social in their consequences as they are offensive to the eye. It was against the deadweight of that idea that the town planners had to struggle for recognition. They had to prove not only that planning was desirable, but that planning was possible. The bombs greatly helped the argument, for they, knowing nothing of immutable laws except perhaps those which were first formulated by Newton, blew many a building from its optimum location and blew the whole silly theory sky-high with the blast. The question is no longer *whether* we should plan but *how* we should plan.

On the answer to that question depends much of the future health and happiness of the people of this country. It is a question

not to be answered hastily: on the other hand, it is a question the answer to which cannot be long delayed or the peace may find us as unprepared for action as war found us in the autumn of 1939. The answer must ultimately depend on the desires of the mass of the people and not on the whims and predilections of a coterie. It is for that reason that informed opinion, the technical town planners, who are as able as they are public-spirited, the architects, and, perhaps most of all, those who approach town planning not as experts but as sociologists interested in humanity and anxious for that progress which good environment can achieve, must begin, not by a consideration of good design, or the preservation of the countryside, or the virtues of this architectural canon or of that, but by a consideration of the needs of the family. Even more important than the consideration of the needs of industry, whether primary or secondary, should be our anxious care that, whatever we do and however we plan, the needs of the family must be served. It is important to stress this because in town-planning circles there are curious schools of thought which think it possible to build up a consistent theory on no more solid a foundation than the desirability of a street architecture or the delightful fantasies of a Corbusier. The problems to be resolved by town planning are deeper and more complex than that. The planner must arbitrate between the rival claims of this industrialist and that agriculturalist, this preservationist and that development company; must determine the balance between town life and country life; must concern himself with the questions of national parks, distressed areas, 'blighted' areas and 'blitzed' areas in existing towns; must consider, as the Royal Commission did, the distribution of the industrial population; and must determine to greater or lesser degree the location of industry; must strive to achieve design and harmony in our physical environment. It is a science that calls for the utmost skill and the utmost knowledge, for idealism and for purpose, for the co-operation of many apparently conflicting interests. But it is a science which pre-eminently must be based on a secure and sound relationship between ends and means. If, there-

fore, we are clear that in our planning we are not trying to serve any particular interest, but to produce the best physical environment for our fellow-citizens, for the families which make up our national life, and keep that sharply in focus, then, just as the elements in a Picasso painting fall into place when we look at the picture as the artist himself did, the various factors will be seen in their true relationship.

We aim, therefore, to plan for the family. The first need of a family is a home to live in. There is perhaps no need to determine in advance the form of the home; but there is clearly a need to determine the relationship of the home to the land area at the disposal of each family. If that factor is left unresolved then planning is impossible. Each family needs adequate fresh air and sunlight: the very young and the very old need access on the same level to a private enclosed space, in other words, a garden: all have some need of access to a garden, whether private or semi-public. Therefore, at the very basis of our planning, there must be a national maximum density standard for population per acre. This, again, is a much more important matter than may appear at first glance (although the reader will find abundant evidence in this book of the relationship of density to health and happiness). The people of this country have always, when given a free choice, preferred to live in a house surrounded by its own garden to any other form of dwelling. They have preferred it always to the flat, which is, as it were, a house on stilts. They have even preferred it to the terraced house, which is not open to the same objections that many urge against the twentieth-century tenement. Local authorities—even democratic Vienna, whose workers' flats intoxicated architects everywhere—reluctantly adopted the flat, rather than the house with a garden, as a regrettable expedient. It follows, therefore, if the density question is settled satisfactorily, that people will get the houses they wish: that is to say, the majority will get houses with gardens, a considerable number will get terraced houses, a minority, particularly single people, young men and women and childless couples, will live in flats with communal gardens. Because the

planner, as distinct from the architect—although many architects are also planners—wishes people to have the kind of houses they need, he is not concerned with the current controversy of flats *versus* cottages when the controversy is conducted in the air, ***in vacuo***, as a mere question of architectural design, but he is very much concerned lest certain people, misled by the photogenic qualities of flat as compared with cottage architecture, attempt to force upon the public a form of development which is the result of bad town planning in the past, and which represents merely an attempt to secure a greater financial return from land the value of which—because of wrong development—has been allowed to soar to anti-social heights. Let us then, as the first step towards a Britain positively planned, fix what Mr. F. J. Osborn has called a National Minimum of Family-living-space, the right of every home to its modest share of the earth's surface.

From the home, the planner reaches out to all those manifold activities which characterise human life, striving to achieve his biological trinity, Environment, Function and Organism, as Patrick Geddes put it, or, more directly, Place, Work and Folk. A town, in short, is a *place* in which *folk* live and *work*. From his home, therefore, a man should be able to get easily and conveniently to his work; he should be able to get from his home or his office or his factory easily and conveniently to shopping centres, schools, libraries, hospitals, cinemas, theatres, recreation grounds, parks, swimming pools, football grounds, and all the other amenities of urban civilisation; and from all of these he should be able easily and conveniently to get into the open, unspoiled countryside. These are simple rule-of-thumb criteria, and yet the observance of them would have prevented a great deal of folly in the past and may prevent many senseless mistakes in the future. Had these simple tests been applied, a vast dormitory housing estate, divorced from industry, divorced from social life, divorced equally from the amenities of town life and the country, would have been clearly seen as a social impossibility. Equally, a trading estate without provision for residence would have been seen as

atrophied, unbalanced development. Put a trading estate and a good housing estate together and you have roughly two-thirds of a town. Add to them facilities for shopping, for social life, for education, for entertainment, and you have four-fifths of a town. Limit the size of the town by encircling it with a belt of country devoted exclusively to agriculture and to recreation and prohibit all building development within the belt, and you have a town that satisfies human needs and fulfils the demands of the greatest town planners, that satisfies the aspirations of Howard and Geddes, Unwin and Abercrombie, Mumford and Osborn.

Such must be the basic pattern of our future development. That is not to say that the town planner can only operate when he is presented with a clean sheet, when on a virgin site he has the opportunity to create a new town. Such opportunities there must be after the war, and the work of building at least a score of new towns must be one of the most urgent tasks to which town planners address themselves. But the work of rectifying small, existing towns must proceed. These two tasks are essentially bound up with the re-creation of the swollen cities, which, rightly regarded as a menace to health and true civilisation in peace-time, are seen as serious strategical disadvantages in war-time. The Barlow report re-affirmed the views of the Special Area Commissioners, Sir Malcolm Stewart and Sir George Gillett, that the evils, industrial, economic and social, arising from the uncontrolled spread of the great urban agglomerations—London, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Glasgow—were not only vast but intolerable. The town planner is able, therefore, to say, with the full weight of expert opinion on his side, that it is basic to national planning to stop at once the expansion vertically or horizontally of all the existing great towns. The policy inaugurated by Mr. Herbert Morrison of securing a green belt for London should be extended for London itself and adopted for all the other large towns—and the belt should consist, not of a series of more or less connected public parks, but of real country, several miles broad, from which the townspeople may receive fresh milk and vegetables, and to which they can go

for those delights of body and spirit which the town itself can never offer.

As the process of decentralisation into new towns and into older smaller towns capable of expansion proceeds, the great towns themselves will be loosened up and great tracts of land in London, Manchester and elsewhere will become available for the re-planning schemes which must be carried out if these towns are to regain the dignity and the beauty which ought to characterise city building. There is a curious misconception in some quarters that those who favour decentralisation are not interested in the re-planning of the great towns. That is not so. Decentralisation is the necessary preliminary to the improvement of great cities. No-one has seriously suggested the abolition of London, Manchester or Glasgow. What is suggested is, first, that these towns should never have been allowed to grow to their present gargantuan proportions; second, that that process of growth should be stopped; and, third, that industries and populations should be moved out from these towns in the interests of the remaining, and still numerous, citizens as much as of those who go to the satellite towns. And the word 'satellite', although in many ways unfortunate, does suggest the relationship between a town of, say, fifty thousand people ten miles away, beyond a green belt, and a parent city of a million. To the capital city, whether it be regional capital or national capital, the people of the smaller towns will look for certain forms of higher education, for specialist medical services, for great art galleries and other cultural facilities, for the theatre at its highest levels. But for ordinary life, work, education, recreation and entertainment, they will find all that they need within a few minutes' walk from their own homes.

Emphasis has been laid on the green belt round each town. This is essential for many reasons, but not least because of the claims of agriculture itself. Great Britain has become a nation of secondary industries. With an Empire and a world to draw on for its food supplies, the claims of agriculture to its full share in the national economy are neglected until, as in 1914 and again in 1939, the

exigencies of war force us to re-develop our land resources. That is a foolish policy, and in the future the needs of agriculture must have the adequate attention of the nation and of the planner. It is to be regretted that even in some of our existing town-planning schemes the claims of agriculture have bulked so small in the eyes of the planners that the best food-growing land has been earmarked for industrial or residential purposes. This is a form of national waste which obviously leads to disaster. It could only be condoned on the ground that we had reached the point when production of all kinds far outreached man's capacity for consumption. As it is, we know that that is not so: we know that since the eighteenth century—that is to say, parallel with the rapid and uncontrolled development of the towns—the diet of the people of this country has suffered a catastrophic decline. If, as we hope, minimum nutritional standards will be fixed at generous levels after the war, then there will be need for all the home-grown food we can produce, and once again we shall secure a balance as between agriculture and industry. We must plan our towns against a background of green country.

In this way the pattern of our national planning begins to take shape. We see land put to its proper, that is to say its best, use. We see, instead of scattered development or ribbon development—which is not only ugly but wasteful and uneconomic—controlled group development. Instead of great urban agglomerations spreading their dreadful mildew over the countryside we see beautiful cities, spaciously planned, their form and their limits defined by the green country from which they rise. We see, too, the hill lands reclaimed. We see great national parks, the mountains, moors, hill pastures, forests, heaths, downlands and rugged coastlines, permanently reserved for the enjoyment of their landscape beauty, accessible freely to the walker and the mountaineer, their flora and fauna protected. We see a Britain from which ugliness has disappeared, and in which the claims of daily beauty and daily bread are seen not to conflict but to be one and the same. Instead of town chaos we see town order. Instead of conditions which breed

disease, unhappiness and crime, we see a physical environment making for health, happiness and a positive social life.

The war has removed many of the objections to national planning that were urged as late as the summer of 1939. Industrialists, forced from their 'optimum locations' by the threat, or, later, by the fact, of bombing, were compelled to adopt hasty, haphazard decentralisation and found, even when the dice were thus loaded against the experiment, that many of the conditions hitherto thought necessary for the conduct of business were not in fact essential. The first evacuation, with its horrifying revelations of health and living conditions in the great cities, brought hundreds of thousands of children, and their mothers, into contact with clean air and a fresh countryside for the first time. The town gained a better understanding of the country: the country began to understand the town. In these sweeping war-time movements of population and industry, hastily contrived as they were, was seen the demonstration of the possibilities which the planners had urged. The problem which remained outstanding was the most difficult and the most controversial of all: the relationship of land ownership to land use.

It has been a cardinal belief of town planners that the site of a town should be owned by, or held in trust for, the community. This ensures the wise use of the land: it also secures that any rise in the value of a piece of land, resulting from the activities of the community, should accrue to the townspeople. It is elementary that where land is under a single ownership it is easier to plan positively than when the claims of conflicting ownerships have to be considered. In order to surmount the difficulties thus caused, the scheme of Compensation and Betterment was embodied in town-planning legislation. It has, nevertheless, to be admitted that the scheme as at present operated has been a complete failure. Nor is it of the slightest use merely to say that we must nationalise the land. Public ownership and control is merely a phrase until a scheme is drawn up to make that possible. And since all political parties in Great Britain are agreed that compensation must be paid when an

interest is adversely affected by public policy, any scheme, to gain acceptance, must first be elaborated in some detail. Many variations of compensation and betterment are urged, but the present writers are of the opinion that any scheme which involves the collection of large capital sums for betterment or the paying out of large capital sums in compensation would prove unworkable, and that therefore the solution of the problem must be based on a system of land values taxation. Such a scheme would require a datum line of values—just as the War Damage Bill has taken the 1939 value of buildings as the basis of its operations. Once that datum line was fixed owners would pay additional taxation on all land which had increased in value—and they would pay it immediately. There would therefore be no delay in collecting betterment. Where land had deteriorated in value, the landowner would require to claim relief of taxation. His claim would be fully investigated and, if established as a just one, his taxation contribution would be reduced. But the problem is a complex one not capable of an easy solution. For that reason Lord Reith, as one of his first acts as Minister of Works and Buildings, appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Uthwatt:

> To make an objective analysis of the subject of the payment of compensation and recovery of betterment in respect of public control of the use of land;
>
> To advise, as a matter of urgency, what steps should be taken, now or before the end of the war, to prevent the work of reconstruction thereafter being prejudiced. In this connection the committee are asked:
>
> to consider (*a*) possible means of stabilising the value of land required for development or re-development, and (*b*) any extension or modification of powers to enable such land to be acquired by the public on an equitable basis;
>
> to examine the merits and demerits of the methods considered; and
>
> to advise what alterations of the existing law would be necessary to enable them to be adopted.

Lord Reith described the formation of this committee as a particular initial step in the preparatory work for reconstruction. Existing provisions for compensation and betterment had not worked satisfactorily. They had been proved an obstruction to planning throughout the country. The Government, he added, did not intend that reconstruction after the war shall be hampered or prejudiced in any way by speculative transactions or any other such individual operations carried out in advance.

Closely associated with this problem is the question of the management of large estates. It is by no means clear that there exists at the moment a technique for public management which would be an improvement on present private owner management. The most determined opposition to national planning is not likely to come from the great territorial landlords who from the eighteenth century—it is to the eighteenth-century landlords that we owe much of the greatest landscape beauty in this country—have had a tradition and a technique of management which has not always been inimicable to the public interest. The experience of land-use by large municipalities, the experience of the National Trust, the experience of Letchworth and Welwyn, will all help to resolve the dilemma. But seldom has a committee had a more important field of enquiry. The recommendations of Mr. Justice Uthwatt and his colleagues, supplementing the Barlow report, should provide at last a complete and coherent solution to the problems of national planning.

In this book the writers have attempted to provide the reader with the background of knowledge common to housing experts and town planners in this country. The statistics, in the main, belong to the pre-war world, which already seems centuries away. Yet there was little to be gained and much to be lost by bringing them up to date—even if under war-time conditions (much of the book was written in the heart of London on black-out evenings when the bombs were falling and shells were bursting overhead) that had been possible. The war qualifies many things, but it does not qualify the deductions drawn from the various statistics sub-

mitted. The war has merely given a new urgency to the problem. The merit of the book, we believe, lies in the fact that in it the reader will find much information not readily accessible elsewhere. It records the progress and the errors of a hundred years. It appears at a time when the nation appears to be ready to take a great leap forward from the era of haphazard development to the era of positive planning.

The writers owe more than they can adequately acknowledge to F. J. Osborn, who has built up a unique position for himself in the planning movement, not only in Great Britain but throughout the world, and whose close analysis of the problems of planning and his suggestions for their solution have put the whole movement in his debt. Three authors in recent years have made great contributions to the sociological background of planning, and to them the present writers offer their thanks: Steen Eiler Rasmussen's *London: The Unique City* is the best introduction to town planning from the point of view of the humanist and the sociologist; Robert Sinclair's *Metropolitan Man* is the most vital study of the human consequences of London's overgrowth yet made (and this book owes much to his flair for statistical research); while Lewis Mumford's *The Culture of Cities* marks him out as the man who above all others has integrated town-planning thought with the whole of human life. The reader should study F. J. Osborn's pamphlets: *London's Dilemma*, *Planning is Possible*, and *Overture to Planning*, and digest his *Evidence of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association* (to the Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population), which was instantly recognised as 'one of the ablest and most devastating political documents of recent times'. It exercised a profound influence on the Commission, and it is therefore a document which has had, and will have, the most far-reaching consequences on the social life of this country. Sir Gwilym Gibbon's *Problems of Town and Country Planning*, based on his great experience as an administrator, complements Professor Patrick Abercrombie's *Planning in Town and Country—Difficulties and Possibilities*. Surveys such as *The Future of Mersey-*

side, by W. G. Holford and W. A. Eden are important as representing the social data of planning, while Sir Ernest Simon's *The Rebuilding of Manchester* and A. P. Simon's *Manchester Made Over* do for a town what Sir William E. Whyte's *Plan for Scotland* does for a country. On the important subject of the better agricultural use of land Sir George Stapledon's *The Hill Lands of England* is indispensable.

The authors have tried to show that it is not possible to deal effectively with the housing problem without also tackling the town-planning problem. They have tried to demonstrate that the problems of physical environment, whether for industry, commerce or family life, are so closely inter-related as to be capable of solution only by national planning. They believe that positive planning can be achieved only through a Ministry of Planning operating in turn through regional and local planning organisations. They subscribe to the National Planning Basis, formulated by the Town and Country Planning Association, and adopted by many organisations concerned with the relevant national issues. Here, for the consideration of the reader, are its terms:

'We approve, and urge the Government and Parliament to accept, the following principles of town and country planning, so that they may be brought into full operation at the renewal of development after the war:

'(1) A Ministry, advised by a National Planning Council, should be set up to guide future development and re-development, and the future grouping of industry and population, in order to secure the best use of the land and to conserve the national resources in the general interest.

'(2) The distinction between Town and Country should be maintained in all development, and sporadic building in rural areas discouraged. In particular, good food-growing land, places of special landscape beauty, and areas suitable for national parks or coastal reservations, should be protected from ordinary building development.

'(3) Good design and layout of buildings and roads should be an

object of policy equally with sound construction. Outdoor advertising should be limited to certain approved situations.

'(4) In the rebuilding of urban areas, the density of residential districts should be limited so as to provide a sufficiency of open space for all necessary purposes, including reasonable garden-space for family houses. Wide country belts should be reserved around and between all cities and towns, so that town-dwellers may have access to the countryside.

'(5) New developments required by industrial changes, by decentralisation from congested areas, or by the growth of towns up to their planned limits, should be directed to other existing towns, or to new towns carefully sited to meet the needs of industry, agriculture and social amenity. New towns and extending towns should be planned as compact units, scattered or ribbon building being prevented. All developments and re-developments should be planned and equipped for the encouragement of local community activities.

'(6) As a means to promoting a better national distribution and balance of industry in the regions of Great Britain, the Ministry charged with National Planning should have power (*a*) to prevent, except under licence, the settlement of new industrial undertakings in overgrown or congested towns and in undeveloped rural areas, and (*b*) to offer inducements to industry to settle in suitably selected places. Business firms should retain full freedom of choice among areas where such restriction is not imposed.

'(7) In order that the rebuilding of overcrowded parts of towns on better plans or at reduced densities, and the provision of country belts and open spaces, shall not be hindered by difficulties of compensation and the number of ownerships, new legislation is needed to replace the inadequate provisions for compensation and betterment under the Town and Country Planning Act. This vital issue should be referred to experts for consideration and report before the conclusion of the present war.'

Town and country planning is a subject of absorbing interest which has attracted the disinterested zeal of some of the ablest

men and women throughout the world over a period of forty years. Anyone who, reading this book, wishes to help forward a great movement should become a member of the Town and Country Planning Association, 13 Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, London, S.W.1. There will be fields of opportunity opening up after the war for those who feel they would like to adopt town planning as a profession: these should address themselves to the Town Planning Institute, Maxwell House, Arundel Street, London, W.C.2. Linking together town-planning organisations throughout the world is the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, which, even amid the stresses of a world conflict, nevertheless manages to maintain its existence against happier and more constructive days.

Town and country planning is a world problem, although it is capable of national and regional solutions. The creation of two new towns and one satellite town in Great Britain has led to the creation of new towns in many parts of the world and particularly to the Greenbelt towns of the Roosevelt Administration in America. Similarly Britain has much to learn in the field of regional planning from the vast work undertaken by the Tennessee Valley Authority. In the past we have freely imitated each other's mistakes: in the future we should be able to profit from each other's successes. But we must begin now to plan for the world after the war. And behind all our planning efforts must be an alert, critical, informed and enthusiastic public opinion. We must not only build anew, we must educate while we build.

G. McA.
E. McA.

6 *Cavendish Mews North,*
London, W. 1.
June 1941.

Chapter I

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT: SOME SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Undoubtedly within another generation it will seem unbelievable that millions of people should ever have tolerated the waste, the ugliness, the noise, the foul air, the lack of facilities, and the general unhealthiness, fatigue and discomfort of life in a British town of the nineteen thirties. These conditions must come to be regarded in the same way that we now regard the dust-storms, the stenches, the gutters and the pools of refuse, and the clouds of flies characteristic of an earlier period in England, and of many towns in other countries to-day.

MAX NICHOLSON

We are what we are because of where we are. That simple statement condenses the results of a great deal of research and a great deal of thinking on the part of some of the ablest minds of this and previous generations. It is a restatement of the belief that man is the product of the environment in which he lives. It is part of the accepted axiomatic thought of our time, and nowhere is the truth of it seen more clearly than in the study of the housing and town and country planning of Great Britain. It would indeed be superfluous to reiterate this were it not for the fact that although there is general recognition of the truth of this contention there is, nevertheless, not sufficient recognition that the only way to a nation of men, women and children as fit as possible, as intelligent as possible, as happy as possible and as morally sound as possible is through the creation of the right environment, and that there are, moreover, some simple, if dramatic, steps which the community as a whole might take which would result in a tremendous advance towards the ideal.

What are the things which people need in order to live happily and well? They need good and sufficient food, good clothing,

good shelter, good towns and access to an unspoiled countryside, holidays, education, recreation and the opportunity of foreign travel.

It is not our purpose here to deal with all these necessary conditions. The problem of malnutrition has been the subject of many exhaustive and authoritative studies in recent years. Education is a perennial topic for experts and amateurs alike. The question of holidays with pay—and holidays without pay are not holidays at all but merely 'idle time'—has raised itself as a first-class social issue, and demands for it have been conceded recently by the British, French and New Zealand Governments. Recreation is the care of important national organisations, and in its physical fitness aspect has recently won the belated recognition of the Government itself. In recent years we have seen troopships converted into holiday cruising vessels for school children, and organisations do exist to provide cheap but good travel facilities for the working class. All these aspects of environment are important, but it is certain that none is more important than the good housing of the people and the wise and bold planning of town and country.

Consider certain dramatic facts—that the infantile mortality rate in Glasgow is 103 per 1,000, in Newcastle 80, in Manchester 71 and in Letchworth 33; that the infantile mortality rate in Manchester between 1891 and 1895 was 186·75 and in 1931–5 was 76·90; that in a certain part of Liverpool the infantile mortality in 1870 was 398 per 1,000 (i.e. that more than 1 out of every 3 children born died before attaining his first birthday) as against Liverpool's 86 per 1,000 to-day. A study of these figures shows more clearly than many pages of vague generalisation that both historically and contemporaneously the infantile death-rate goes down as population becomes less dense, and conversely that the rate goes up as population densities increase. Any Government seriously alarmed about the inevitable decline in the birth-rate in this country would ponder over these figures until the truth concealed in them became clear and would then take steps to see that the present needless loss of infant life was curtailed to the limits of possibility.

Take again these amazing figures, both three-year averages for the same area first, when a slum, and, second, after reconstruction:

General mortality	37	26
Infantile mortality	259	162
Phthisis rate	4	1·9

That was the saving effected within a period of six years simply by reconstructing slum houses and making them sanitary. A similar result was obtained as long ago as 1897, when the Metropolitan Board of Works cleared the Boundary Street area, where the death-rate was 40 per 1,000 against the general London rate of 18 per 1,000. In the reconstructed slum area the death-rate and the general mortality and infant mortality rates were halved. It is worth noticing, too, that in Tabard Street, a notorious slum area, the epidemic disease rate was 6·07 per 1,000 as against a rate of 1·71 for the Metropolitan area.

Let us glance at a few individual cities. In Liverpool the slum mortality rate is 28·4 as against 18·2 in municipal houses, the tuberculosis incidence 299 per 100,000 as against 164, and the infantile mortality 171 as against 131. These figures are particularly interesting because in the slum district the houses are systematically cleansed, sewers and private drains regularly flushed, and, in addition, baths and wash-houses, infant welfare centres and clinics have been provided in close proximity to the area. In other words, methods falling short of demolition have failed to prevent the continuance of the high death-rate. In Manchester the mortality rate in St. George's Ward, which has a density of 92 persons per acre, is 19·45 as against an average for the city of 12·8 and against 7·86 in Wythenshawe (Manchester's near-satellite town), where the density is only 6 to the acre. In Glasgow the infantile mortality rate goes up steadily and almost proportionately as the overcrowding in the various wards. The city has an average infantile mortality of 103. In Townhead, where the overcrowding is 34·5 per cent, the infantile death-rate is 140. In Whitevale, where the percentage of overcrowded houses is 40, the infantile mortality

rate is 144. In Newcastle, one of the most overcrowded cities in Great Britain (10·48 per cent overcrowding exists throughout the city), the tuberculosis death-rate is 1·2, i.e. among the highest in Britain. An examination of the Newcastle city records also shows that deaths from tuberculosis and pneumonia are highest in the most overcrowded wards of the city, which has at the same time the highest maternal mortality rate—5·92 per 1,000 births. In Edinburgh, a comparison of the ward mortalities reveals that the highest death-rates occur in localities associated with congestion of population, unsatisfactory housing and faulty environment. St. George's Ward has a mortality of 17·2 as against the city average of 13·4 and a tuberculosis rate of 1·1 as against ·8 for the city. In Gorgie Ward, including a large municipal housing scheme, the lowest death-rate for seven years prior to 1936, viz. 9·8 per 1,000, was recorded.

From these random but typical figures it is possible to assert positively that bad housing and overcrowding, with their corollaries of lack of open space, lack of sunshine, lack of air, lack of trees and fields and contact with nature, are the direct causes of a great many unnecessary and premature deaths among adults, the deaths of many thousands of infants who under better conditions would have lived to be healthy men and women and useful citizens, the deaths of a smaller—but who shall say insignificant?—number of mothers, an enormous increase in the number of deaths from and in the incidence of pneumonia, phthisis and tuberculosis. It may reasonably be deduced that these conditions are the cause of many of the scourges in our social environment, that these conditions are, in the words of *The Times*, 'the direct cause of injustice, vice, misery, discontent, disease, degradation and degeneracy'. And who shall say that these social evils are confined to the areas and the classes directly afflicted by them? Is it not clear that if tuberculosis is to be made as rare in the future in this country as bubonic plague is to-day, then the fundamental causes must be tackled vigorously and wisely and at once? And would not the better country which would result benefit not merely the present-day slum-dweller, freed for ever from his squalor, but also those

more fortunate sections of the community who are, nevertheless, liable so long as slums exist to be stricken by tuberculosis and other diseases which, having their roots in poverty and bad conditions of life to-day, percolate through all ranks of society?

It can be shown, indeed, that there is a definite relationship between the overcrowded central wards of a city, the less crowded inner wards, and the more spacious outer wards and the incidence of practically every disease. Incidence of disease tends to diminish the further one resides from the centre of a city. Dramatic proof of that statement is to be found in the Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the City of Birmingham for the year 1936. Whooping-cough, diphtheria, influenza, tuberculosis, cancer, malignant disease, diseases of the nervous system, diseases of the heart, other diseases of the circulatory system, bronchitis, pneumonia (all forms), diarrhoea and enteritis, non-venereal diseases of the genito-urinary system, premature birth and diseases of early infancy—all these are most deadly in the central wards, less deadly in the middle ring, and least deadly in the outer ring.

Take the pneumonia mortality figures as typical:

Central Wards	*Middle Ring*	*Outer Ring*	*City*
1·06	·84	·61	·77

The excessive mortality is almost as strikingly illustrated in the mortality figures for tuberculosis and heart diseases. But what do the pneumonia figures mean in terms of human life—and death? If the death-rate in the central wards had been the same as in the outer ring, instead of a mortality of 222 persons (actually recorded), the figure would have been 128. In Birmingham, in one year, ninety-four people died from pneumonia who would not have died had they enjoyed the more favourable environmental conditions of their fellow citizens in the outer suburbs.

Nor does the story end there: the general mortality rates in Birmingham in 1936 were:

Central Wards	*Middle Ring*	*Outer Ring*	*City*
13·5	12·2	9·8	11·3

These figures show a considerable levelling-up since 1912, a quarter of a century earlier:

Central Wards	*Outer Ring*	*City*
20·8	10·25	14·5

In great measure this levelling-up may be accounted for by the improved health services during the past twenty-five years, but the 1936 figures plainly reveal that beyond all mere 'treatment' services there is a need for immediate attention to those fundamental factors of environment which are the biggest cause of heavy mortalities to-day and the improvement of which would give the biggest hope of lower mortalities in the future. One may reasonably say that 775 of the people who died in Central Birmingham in 1936 would not have died had they been fortunate enough to live in the conditions obtaining in the outer suburbs. Malnutrition may account for some of the deaths in the crowded central wards, as it may have been the cause of some of the deaths in suburban housing schemes. But when these and similar factors have been allowed for it remains true that hundreds of people died in the central city who would not have died in more spacious surroundings. The same slaughter went on in 1936 in every other city in Great Britain. People died by the hundred in the crowded centres of London, Manchester, Newcastle, Glasgow and Edinburgh who would have lived had they had good homes set in even moderately spacious surroundings.

Consider for a moment the infantile mortality rates in Birmingham:

	Central Wards	*Middle Ring*	*Outer Ring*
1912	170	105	75
1925	104	74	50
1934	87	69	58
1935	85	59	58
1936	87	62	52

It is apparent that twenty-five years of public health, and, more recently, pre-natal care and child welfare have not gone for nothing.

The infantile mortality rates in all parts of the town have been substantially reduced, the rates are more even throughout, and in the central wards only one baby dies in infancy to-day for every two who died a quarter of a century ago. That is real progress. But the sad fact must be faced that out of every thousand babies born in Central Birmingham thirty-five die before they reach the age of one year who would have lived had they been born in the more spacious outer town.

The fact that the outer city is more spacious has been stressed in the foregoing paragraphs because the spaciousness, with all that that implies in additional houseroom per person, additional light and air, and freer access to the country, is the most noticeable additional factor making for better health. Just how much difference this additional factor can make to the mortality rates can be demonstrated again on a wider basis than that we have just been considering:

	General Mortality
Welwyn Garden City -	5·9
Letchworth - - -	8·0
Wythenshawe - - -	7·86
Manchester City - -	12·85
Manchester Clearance Areas	17·32
Birmingham - - -	11·1
Newcastle - - -	12·8
Edinburgh - - -	13·3
Liverpool - - -	13·5
Glasgow - - -	14·1
England and Wales - -	9·06

The story told by these figures is obvious. Take people out of the crowded slums of the Hulme district of Manchester and place them in decent houses in the spacious, planned satellite Wythenshawe and you cut the death-rate by more than half. Place all the population of the country in well-planned areas similar to Wythenshawe, Letchworth, Welwyn, and you save more than a third of the people at present doomed to die because of bad conditions.

	Infant Mortality
Welwyn	25
Letchworth	33·6
Wythenshawe	60
Manchester City	71
Manchester Clearance Areas	120
Birmingham	65
Edinburgh	70
Newcastle	80
Liverpool	86
Glasgow	103
England and Wales	57

It was these revealing statistics which made Dr. Norman Macfadyen say, 'If the infants born in England and Wales were all born under Garden City conditions, it would not be unreasonable to hope that 20,000 infants would be saved every year, and that these infants would have every opportunity to grow into healthy happy youngsters!'

Consider the tuberculosis figures for the same areas. Tuberculosis rates are a good index of the kind of conditions under which people live. The better the conditions the lower the tuberculosis incidence: the worse the conditions the higher the tuberculosis rate.

	Tuberculosis Death-rate per 1,000 living
Letchworth	·38
Welwyn	·574
Wythenshawe	·72
Manchester City	1·04
Manchester Clearance Areas	1·97
Glasgow	1·1
Edinburgh	·88
Birmingham	·91
Newcastle	1·2
Liverpool	1·2
England and Wales	·804

'Tuberculosis', Dr. Macfadyen points out, 'is a disease, often lingering in character, which brings much misery, poverty, and expense in its train. The disabling effect of it is very great, and the money needed to combat the disease and alleviate its consequences to the victim is enormous. The disease is widespread, and its ultimate conquest will depend largely, however treatment advances, on good food, healthy surroundings, and good social conditions of life. Tuberculosis is always ready to give the final blow to exhaustion and feebleness in any form.' How great the part that good housing and bold town and country planning will play in the conquest of tuberculosis is clear from a consideration of the above table, where the death-rate is halved by removing people from slums to a satellite town, and where the mortality steadily declines as one moves from crowded city conditions to planned garden cities such as Welwyn and Letchworth. The overcrowded, insanitary slum in the overcrowded ill-planned growths which we call cities not only prevents the victim of tuberculosis from recovering, but is one of the major causes of the spread of the disease. How can it be otherwise when many tuberculosis victims must perforce sleep in the same bed as others not yet infected? The Bishop of Winchester has drawn attention to the fact that of 283 patients on the dispensary register of one poor London borough no fewer than 128 shared their beds with others.

Three facts stand out from the welter of evidence (and we have Sir George Newman's word for it that there is no subject in the whole range of preventive medicine in which the evidence, given in numerous reports ever since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, is 'so general and incontrovertible' as in the evil effects of bad housing in bad towns):

That bad housing and bad planning result in markedly lower physique.

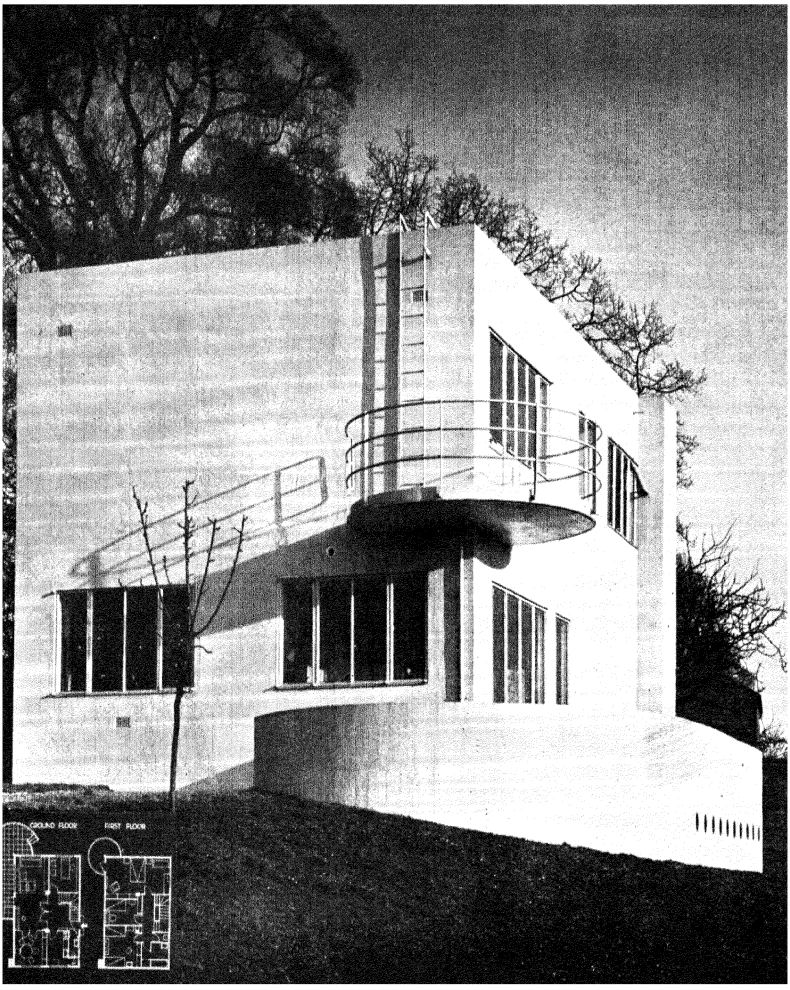
That bad housing and bad planning result in the higher incidence of every kind of disease, but particularly of infectious diseases and respiratory diseases.

That bad housing and bad planning result in higher mor-

talities of every kind, general, infantile, tuberculosis, pneumonia, etc.

Conversely, good housing in well-planned towns results in markedly improved physique, the lower incidence of disease of every kind, and a reduction in the general, infantile, tuberculosis, pneumonia, and other death-rates.

In the train of death and disease to which our great city overcrowding gives rise—diseases ranging in severity from the common cold and the sore throat to measles, mumps and whooping-cough, bronchitis, influenza, infantile paralysis, tuberculosis, syphilis and gonorrhoea—comes all the lowering of mental and moral qualities which these conditions induce. It can be shown that whereas in slum conditions one policeman is needed for every hundred inhabitants, in housing estates as big as some county towns only one policeman is required for all the inhabitants. It is not simply that the houses themselves are bad, insanitary, overcrowded, but that the whole environment is bad, that there is lack of open space for recreation, no real community sense (no 'Nosey-Parker', no 'Mrs. Grundy', to fix standards is one way of putting it: no general moral standard is a better way of putting it), no care for neighbours because 'nobody cares for me', a constantly shifting (and hence 'shifty') population, in fine, all the conditions which give rise to friction, discontent, and, as we shall see, crime. Not always, particularly among the mentally sub-normal, does discontent take a democratic political expression: very often it gives rise to crime, a half-articulate protest against society. Crime, like charity, begins at home. 'Nearly every tragedy of crime', says Professor Cyril Burt, 'is in its origin a drama of domestic life.' The foetid overcrowding and lack of playing spaces in Shoreditch and St. Pancras gives rise to innumerable crooks: the squalid slums of Bridgeton and Gorbals give rise to Glasgow's crop of juvenile gangsters, the Billy Boys and the Norman Conqs., complete with 'molls' and, if not 'guns', then at least with knuckle-dusters and vicious daggers. There is five times the delinquency in Shoreditch, Finsbury, St. Pancras and Southwark that there is in Hampstead, Putney and Streatham.



A REINFORCED CONCRETE HOUSE AT RUGBY
(Architect: Serge Chermayeff)

One out of every sixty-seven inhabitants of the central areas of London knows what prison is like from the inside. Of London's juvenile delinquents, 32 per cent are under-nourished, 18 per cent are of poor physique, 90 per cent are below standard mentally, while they are found to be four times as verminous as other Londoners of their own age. Dr. Vernon Wiley declares that ninety-eight per cent of the cases of juvenile crime brought to his notice are due to the lack of a decent upbringing. Probing just a little deeper than that, one would come to the conclusion that ninety-eight per cent of juvenile crime is due to the lack of opportunity for a decent upbringing, that the slums and the overcrowding and the lack of planning in great cities are among the root causes of crime. Mr. Robert Sinclair suggests that if the population of London were spread out, as population is spread out in the provinces, the number of policemen required would be reduced by half. In the meantime London requires one-third of the police force of England and Wales, three times as many policemen as Scotland, and whereas the provincial citizen pays £1 per policeman, Londoners pay £2 10s. for every two policemen. In more senses than one crime does not pay. Therefore bad housing and lack of planning do not pay.

Just as there is a clear connection between crime and bad housing and bad planning, so there is abundant proof that the same evil conditions result in stunted mental development. Consider these facts:

	Finsbury	*Lewisham*
Scholarships per thousand children	1·2	8·1
Percentage of population living more than two in a room	29·4	4·1

It is interesting to notice that only those London boroughs which are adjacent to open country show a normal average of admissions to secondary schools: the inner circle show a very poor average, and just as there is five times the delinquency in Finsbury, St. Pancras and Southwark that there is in Putney and Streatham, so there are seven to nine scholarships awarded in the latter areas for

every one awarded in the former. Similarly, out of the total number of children who win junior county scholarships, only a small proportion come from the overcrowded districts. 'Much of the value of education', observes the Bishop of Winchester, 'is lost by the children who sleep in overcrowded conditions. They have no place in which they can quietly prepare home lessons; the noise of the older people going to bed keeps them awake until late at night; when they return to school next morning they are apathetic and sleepy.' Night starvation caused by bad housing, cumulative fatigue caused by the lack of planning of our social structure give rise to troubles more deep-seated than proprietary nightcaps will ever cure.

How can it be otherwise with these children of the slums, these Shoreditch children, these Cardiff children, these Glasgow children? A Welsh teacher told James Hanley of a child in her class who fell asleep in the back row and cried pitifully when shaken in order to wake him up. On going to his home she discovered that the boy, his father and mother, and his little sister aged nine all lived in one room—the boy slept either on the floor or on a hard high-backed chair. We have the Lord Bishop of Southwark's word for it that the house in which father and mother sleep in the kitchen and a grown-up daughter and five sons aged fourteen to six sleep in a small bedroom, and the other house, a single room measuring ten feet square, occupied by a man, his wife, and five children, are typical of overcrowding in London. Sir Francis Fremantle also cites some typical cases. He mentions a house with one living-room and one bedroom in which dwell father, mother, four adult sons, an unmarried daughter, a married daughter with her husband and their baby, and an adult (male) lodger. He mentions another of a man, his wife, and seven children in one room. Sir Francis tells of a one-room house in which a father sleeps in the same bed as his mentally deficient daughter, who has an illegitimate child of ten. 'What morality', he asks, 'is possible under these conditions?'

Yet under these conditions hundreds of thousands of men and

women put up a hard fight for the 'decencies'. A thousand make-shift beds are put up in the slums every night, families take to sleeping in a shift system, fathers sleep with sons and mothers with daughters as the only method of avoiding the danger of incest. George Orwell mentions a house in which three grown-up girls shared the same bed, each going to work at different hours.

In England and Wales 341,554 houses were found to be overcrowded according to the standard laid down in the Housing Act, 1935. In the London Metropolitan Boroughs no fewer than 70,953 families were living in overcrowded conditions. In Shoreditch one-fifth of the working class population was found to be living three or more to a room. No fewer than 27,367 families were living in the London boroughs in a state of overcrowding equivalent to more than two persons to a room. In Glasgow 82,109 families are living in overcrowded conditions. No fewer than 1,062 of these families are overcrowded because there is insufficient accommodation to allow of sex separation. These figures do not perhaps make it quite clear that in Glasgow almost one-third (31·2 per cent) of the city's families are living in a state of overcrowding. More than one-half of the single apartment houses and more than two-fifths of the two apartment houses are overcrowded.

It would not be a creditable state of affairs if the standard of overcrowding were a high one: as it is, the standard of overcrowding is pitifully low. The Minister of Health himself declared, in an explanatory memorandum on the 1935 Act: 'It is relevant to point out that this standard does not represent any ideal standard of housing, but the minimum which is in the view of Parliament tolerable while at the same time capable of immediate or early enforcement.' Thus, in Leeds the survey revealed that there were 2,345 overcrowded houses, equivalent to 3·27 per cent of the city's 142,145 houses. But, it should be noticed, that among the houses not surveyed were some 30,000 (many of them known to be overcrowded) in Unhealthy Areas. When an examination was made of 6,112 of these houses, 8·5 per cent overcrowding was revealed. It is well to remember, therefore, in considering overcrowding any-

where that the results of the surveys made under the 1935 Act should not be regarded as telling the whole story.

Moreover, it should be remarked that what constitutes a 'slum' in one town or district may not be regarded as a 'slum' in another town or another district. Sir Ernest Simon points out that the Medical Officer of Health condemned thirty thousand Manchester houses as unfit for human habitation. On the standards of a visiting Medical Officer, however, Manchester had no slums, while, if one were prepared to condemn as slum every house which fell seriously below the standard generally accepted by local authorities in providing housing accommodation for the working class, then Manchester would have at least 80,000 slum houses in its total of 180,000 houses. 'What', says H. V. Morton, 'would be a bad slum in Birmingham would not be quite such a bad slum in Liverpool. What Manchester regards as its worst slum might pass without notice in Glasgow . . . .'

A large part of the overcrowding in every great city is due to the sharing of homes. Sir Ernest Simon declares that the worst slums of Manchester are to be found in the houses let as lodgings. As a neighbourhood declines and becomes less and less attractive for members of the middle class, houses with eight to ten large rooms are broken up into several dwellings. The usual practice for a long period was to divide them up in the ratio of one room per family. What is true of Manchester is true of London, Glasgow, and other large cities. Simon tells how he found as many as eight families in a house intended for single family occupation. The house had only one water tap inside and another in the yard, while only two water-closets were available. A special ramp develops when the rooms are let 'furnished'. A landlord 'goes to market and buys a rickety bed for a shilling, bedding full of bugs for sixpence, and a couple of tumble-down chairs', installs these in a room and lets it as furnished. Having thus transformed a dwelling, in itself a bad dwelling, into a verminous hovel the landlord is able to charge rents ranging from nine shillings to twelve shillings per week, as against the six shillings to nine shillings per week of the 'controlled' house.

These houses, which Simon calls the 'super-slums', number 1,412 in Manchester alone. In Birmingham there are 512 such houses on the register, in Liverpool no fewer than 15,565 houses of this type are recorded. In London 1,520,000 people live in a state of overcrowding equivalent to more than two persons to a room, while 63 per cent of the population live in shared houses. 'The Englishman's house is his castle', but only 37 per cent of Londoners can claim a castle at all, whether it be mansion, house, cottage, luxury flat, council house, council flat, maisonette, or what you will.

These shared homes often cause infinite trouble and expense to local authorities. In Leeds, for example, 152 houses, let in 1,067 rooms to about as many families, were inspected during 1936. In these no fewer than 157 suffered from structural defects, 156 of the rooms were dirty, and other nuisances ranging from dirty closets to dirty bedding brought the number of offences up to 797—that is to say that more than two-thirds of the rooms were offensive in one way or another. No fewer than 133 notices had to be served for breaches of byelaws and 24 statutory notices were served for nuisances under the Public Health Act.

This housing evil is not so frequently met with in Scotland as in England, but even in Edinburgh, where the letting of houses in this way is an offence under the Edinburgh Corporation Order, 1926, the practice of sub-letting rooms to several families is a prevalent one. In the Scottish capital, too, the practice of sharing the water-closet dies slowly. In 1925 it was found that 514 houses were 'served' by dry-closets or medieval privy-middens, while 19,276 families shared their water-closets with others. Progress is, however, recorded. Twelve years later only 17,630 families were sharing their water-closets.

A basement home might be considered as a war-time amenity. In peace-time it can only produce bad health and bad living. The Medical Officer of Health for the County of London says: 'There are, in fact, no worse housing conditions existing anywhere than those to be found in the underground rooms. The most insanitary areas do not and never have provided such in-

tense degrees of insanitariness. The urgency of removing these worst insanitary dwellings does not appear to have been appreciated by many of the authorities consulted. . . . The basement rooms which, sanitarily speaking, are most objectionable are not those used merely as sleeping places, but those which are occupied mainly by women and children. . . . Frequently, in base ment kitchens, artificial lighting during the daytime is continuously necessary. . . . Such rooms are notoriously not only dark, but damp and ill-ventilated. . . .'

The dampness and the overcrowding bring exorbitant rents to the landlords, increased costs to the local authority and hence to the ratepayer, and an immense amount of suffering for the occupant and his children. Quite apart from the usual increased liability to disease of the slum dweller, the basement dweller runs additional risks of disease. Children from basements are found to contract pneumonia in 2·2 per cent of cases as against 0·8 per cent for the non-basement child: his chances of catching diphtheria are doubled. Scarlet fever is also very much more prevalent among basement children. A very high proportion suffer from general debility. Non-basement children account for 24·8 of the sub-normal progress in London County Council schools: 43·6 of the basement children make sub-normal progress. One in every five non-basement children is under-nourished: two out of five basement children are under-nourished. No less than 44·1 per cent of basement children suffer from anaemia.

Is the basement problem widespread? It is, at least, common to all large cities in Britain in greater or lesser degree. In London it is estimated that there are no less than 30,000 basement dwellings. In Westminster alone there are 6,000 basement dwellings. Most local authorities have regulations for dealing with basements, but these are seldom enforced, and it was only after the Thames had overflown its banks, forced its way into basements, drowned a few inmates and deposited sewage before subsiding that the sanitary authorities made the cementing of a few of the floors compulsory.

Action is sometimes taken on other occasions, usually when there

is an infringement of the regulations or because of extreme dampness making the room unfit for habitation. In one case where a man and his wife and their adult son and daughter shared a basement home of two rooms, the sanitary authority forbade sleeping in one of them because of the damp, so that father, mother, son and daughter perforce slept huddled together in one room. 'To close a basement', write Quigley and Goldie, 'is not so easy . . . front basements pass muster if they are more than seven feet high, and they are not ranked as underground unless more than three feet is sunk below street level. If they do not come up to these standards they may not legally be used to sleep in, but many are. Back basements fare better and the tenants, in consequence, worse. . . . Unless it is rented separately . . . it cannot be closed on the grounds of being "unreasonably inhuman".'

Sanitary authorities seldom take steps to have damp-proof courses put into basements, nor is there much evidence that they take steps to find alternative accommodation for families sleeping in basements without damp-courses. The Public Health Act, 1875, prohibits the occupation of cellar dwellings, built or rebuilt after the passing of the Act, or which were not lawfully so let or occupied at the time of the passing of the Act. It would seem that that Act of Parliament has gone by default. It would be a salutary thing if every local authority were to take a leaf from the book of Liverpool Corporation, which in 1908 obtained special powers to close all cellar dwellings, even those of the type permitted in other towns under the 1875 Act. What is more, Liverpool Corporation used the powers obtained. Sir Ernest Simon points out that in Manchester there are practically no cellar dwellings. London, in this respect as in many others, has an unenviable pre-eminence.

London does not, however, share to any extent one of the main housing evils of many Midland towns, namely the back-to-back house. Sheffield, Bradford, Birmingham, Leeds, Wigan head this particular black-list. '"Back-to-Back" houses', says Orwell, 'are two houses built in one, each side of the house being somebody's front door, so that if you walk down a row of what is apparently twelve

houses you are in reality seeing not twelve houses but twenty-four. The front houses give on the street and the back ones on the yard, and there is only one way out of each house. The effect of this is obvious. The lavatories are in the yard at the back, so that if you live on the side facing the street, to get to the lavatory or the dust-bin you have to go out of the front door and walk round the end of the block—a distance that may be as much as two hundred yards; if you live at the back, on the other hand, your outlook is on to a row of lavatories. There are also houses of what is called the "blind back" type, which are single houses but in which the builder has omitted to put in a back door—from pure spite, apparently. . . .'

It is more than half a century since Dr. Tatham compiled careful statistics for the Salford district showing the effect of back-to-back houses on the health of the people who lived in them. His researches were confirmed by Dr. Niven for Manchester in 1894, for Shipley by Mr. Herbert Jones from 1887 to 1892, and for Bradford by Dr. Arnold Evans in 1890–2. These investigations showed that the mortality was greater from all causes, and for lung diseases, phthisis, zymotic diseases and diarrhoea, while the mortalities increased as the streets became narrower.

Back-to-back houses in these towns and in many mining villages in England, Wales and Scotland have claimed their tens of thousands of victims every year of that half-century. The slaughter continues. Sir George Newman pointed out a few years ago that the general mortality rate in back-to-back houses was still 15 per cent higher than in through ventilated houses, while the phthisis death-rate was 12 per cent higher.

The following table shows the number of back-to-back houses in certain towns:

Bradford	30,000
Birmingham	38,772
Sheffield	6,000
Leeds	70,954

Progress, however, falls to be recorded. Leeds had 72,000 back-to-

back houses in 1920. Leeds has been getting rid of its back-to-back houses at the phenomenal rate of sixty-six per year. At that rate Leeds should have no back-to-back houses in some seven hundred years. If it adheres to its recent decision to speed up the clearance to 400 per year, back-to-back houses should have disappeared by about the year of grace A.D. 2114, or about two and a half centuries after Dr. Tatham first drew public attention to their manifest evils.

Slum areas in large towns are conspicuously deficient in flora; they are not at all deficient in fauna. Perhaps the best known of the fauna to the slum dweller is the Cimex Lectularius. Two hundred years ago the Cimex Lectularius was rare in Britain, although its name, which is probably derived from a Keltic word meaning 'ghost' or 'goblin', indicates the degree of terror which its first attacks inspired. Oval in shape, rusty-red in colour, it gives off an offensive odour when touched. Its proboscis, when not in action, lies along the lower side of the thorax, and through it the creature sucks the blood of man, 'the sole food of the species'. It is nocturnal in its habits: it remains concealed by day and shows considerable activity in its nightly raids in search of food. Slum dwellers could not, as a rule, tell you the natural history of the Cimex Lectularius, but there is no doubt whatever that they are thoroughly and painfully familiar with their habits. They call these creatures 'bugs'.

We ourselves have seen many hundreds of bugs infesting the beds of slum dwellers in a section of the wealthiest Parliamentary constituency in Scotland. In London, in Glasgow, and in many towns and villages throughout Britain to-night hundreds of fathers and mothers will sit up throughout the night to kill the bugs which attack their infant children: the older children must look after themselves. Bugs increase and multiply with warmth. In the cold weather they tend to die off and the thinner insects feed on the fatter ones. With increased heat they make new attacks and after a successful raid new swarms are born. In order to exterminate the bugs it is necessary to gain the consent of the tenants, explaining that furniture and bedding will require to be sprayed, usually with SO_2 (sulphur dioxide gas), or, in sterner cases, fumigated with

HGN (hydrocyanic acid gas). When the corpses have been swept away and infected woodwork stripped and burned (there can be no half-measures in the war against the bug), the room is thoroughly cleaned and left for ten days to see if any stray survivors crawl out from the plaster. If that happens, the work starts all over again. In Liverpool, where they attempted to exterminate the bed bug by the use of heavy naphtha—one gallon to every 750 cubic feet of house-room—in a house where the treatment was completed on March 4, four live bugs were found on April 27. Nor are the ravages of the bed bug finished when the slum dweller and his family are removed to a municipal housing scheme. In Glasgow it was found in 1936 that in 811, or 6·3 per cent, of the houses there was bug infestation and serious infestation in 295, or 2·3 per cent. In Birmingham, of 2,626 houses bug-infested, 912 were council houses. Yet belongings of tenants going to council houses are treated by means of hydrocyanic gas and their bedding and soft goods passed through a steam disinfector. In Cardiff 344 houses were disinfected in 1936 and 9,873 articles of bedding and clothing, etc., were treated at the disinfection station. Of these 345 infected articles were destroyed, often at the request of the owners. In Leeds the demands on the disinfection station were so great in 1936 that outside help had to be enlisted to cope with the evil. No wonder: 171,817 articles were either fumigated or disinfected by steam, that is, more than one article per head of the population had to be deloused. No fewer than 2,613 houses had to be treated, that is, one dwelling-house out of every fifty in Leeds had to be treated for bugs in the year 1936. In Edinburgh one out of every five houses inspected is found to be bug-infested.

In a certain district in Scotland one of the main tests for candidates for new houses is: 'Is your house infested?' The opportunity was taken by an enterprising native to sell bugs in match-boxes to people who wanted to get out of their slums in order that they might be able, truthfully, to give the correct answer.

Some sailors might know, and every schoolboy would know, what you were talking about if you referred to the Chimaera Mon-

strosa. It is, of course, the sea rat. There is a good deal that is monstrous but nothing chimerical about the rats which infest the slums. Rats are not only destructive of property and foodstuffs but they have been known to attack sleeping infants in their cots. The mere presence of rats in a house is sufficient to destroy the peace of mind of all the occupants. Women and children especially may spend nights in terrified sleeplessness disturbed by their presence. But there is more to the rat problem than the mere terror they inspire: rats carry lice and, dropping these everywhere, spread disease. One reason given by the Medical Officer for Liverpool for maintaining incessant warfare against rats is 'the possibility of the spread of plague'. Plague has scarcely been known in this country for hundreds of years, but one infected rat brought into port on a ship arriving from a foreign country might infect all the rats in a city, and they in turn all the people in the city, with consequences which do not suffer contemplation. In Liverpool, in 1936, 14,331 rats were caught in the city, 5,586 in the Port. Birmingham rat-catchers had a haul of 1,967. In Manchester 1,894 dwelling-houses and gardens were found to be rat-infested. In Cardiff (excluding the docks) 36,983 rats were killed in the same year. In Edinburgh during *Rat Week* alone the staff of the Public Health Department laid down 21,650 pieces of bait on the banks of streams in the city area. You will be glad to know that the results were 'very satisfactory'.

Rats and bugs do not exhaust the list of interesting animal life to be found in the slums. The common house-fly becomes in the summer a nuisance of the first order, carrying disease everywhere, and carrying disease, it should be noted, from the slum areas to the non-slum areas. The owl-midge, breeding in basement sludge derived from a leaking drain, may become such a nuisance that opening up the premises, spraying the walls liberally with carbolic solution and subsequently cleaning out the premises becomes the only remedy. In slum areas in smaller towns beetles may infest houses until they become a veritable plague. Not quite so obnoxious as those pests already referred to, it is nevertheless no joy to the

overworked housewife to find her living-room floor covered with these insects every morning. Nor can it be over-stressed that far and above the actual physical havoc caused by such pests the mental anguish they give rise to and the amount of disease they spread are quite incalculable.

* * *

There is probably no aspect of the housing problem to which less attention has been paid than that of housing the rural worker, yet as long ago as 1884 the Royal Commission to inquire into the Housing of the Working Classes clearly recognised that here was a special problem. 'The steady drift and rapid migration from rural parishes to large towns,' wrote Mr. Jesse Collings in the appendix to the report, 'which has been going on for so many years, should be stayed and, if possible, turned back. This can only be done by improving the condition of the agricultural labourers by giving them facilities for acquiring a personal interest in the soil, and by opening out for them some hopeful career in the land.' In the Report of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on the Decline in the Agricultural Population of Great Britain (1881–1906) the opinion is expressed: 'Among specific causes of discontent, a deficiency of adequate or satisfactory housing accommodation is reported from about thirty counties . . . the rural labourers' standard of comfort has been raised, and they are not now contented with the accommodation which previous generations placidly accepted. . . .'

An echo of these phrases is to be found in the report of the Ministry of Health for 1937: 'Nothing is better calculated to cause young workers to "drift to the towns" than the absence of any dwelling in which the young couple wishing to get married can settle down in a reasonable degree of hygiene and comfort. Young people to-day commonly have many opportunities of learning how desirable is a good house, with reasonably up-to-date domestic conveniences, and they will not be satisfied with what was thought good enough by their fathers. . . .'

In 1906 the rural workers were not contented with what had

been accepted placidly by previous generations. In 1941 the rural workers will not be satisfied with what was thought good enough by their fathers. There is something wrong somewhere. The cottages, whatever father or grandfather thought of them, are still the same—damp, insanitary, lacking in conveniences, altogether uncivilised. But the language of government never changes, and, though that is perhaps comforting in a rapidly changing world, we scarcely look forward with pleasure to reading in 1966 that the rural worker is not now contented with dwellings his forefathers were quite happy in when we shall know that these are the same dwellings referred to in 1937, 1906, and in 1884. Yet at the present rate of progress a great many of them will be. One could go further back than that indeed and recall how Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, speaking in Sheffield in 1875, declared: 'I say that the homes of the people of Britain would disgrace a barbarous nation. There is no one who knows anything of conditions in a great city such as this, or in many a country parish, who does not know that the poor are living, if living it can be called, in conditions which would not be tolerated in the stables and the kennels connected with the dwellings of the rich. . . .' We have already seen that these words still stand true for the great towns. They are equally true to-day of the country parishes.

The survey of 1936 revealed that 41,928 rural houses in England and Wales were overcrowded. In 1937 it was found that there were no fewer than 51,080 unfit houses in rural areas. Progress in tackling this question is far from rapid. Ten years have passed since a subsidy was proposed and even embodied in an Act of Parliament so that agricultural labourers could be provided with decent cottages to be let at three shillings a week plus rates. That Act was suspended in the economy wave of 1931. Since then the labourer and his family have continued their immemorial battle against dirt, damp, cold, overcrowding and the lack very often of the elements of sanitation. And everybody wondered why the young men could not be kept down on the farm. It was not that they had seen 'Paree'—yet—the war was yet to come for them

—perhaps it was just that they were tired of reading governmental promises of the brave new homes which never materialised.

Local authorities in rural districts, of course, took little advantage of such legislation as was available. Until 1909, at any rate, practically no cottages had been built by local authorities in rural areas. In that year, however, the passing of the Housing and Town Planning Act gave a slight impetus and by 1913 loans had been sanctioned for the erection of 470 cottages. In the meantime 5,486 cottages had been closed or demolished since 1900. After the first world war progress was slightly accelerated but the problem of rural housing which (in its overcrowding aspects at least) is, according to the Ministry of Health, 'by no means unmanageable', has not yet been tackled in a bold, determined fashion. The constant drift to the towns continues. Meantime an Act had been passed (in 1926) for the reconditioning of rural dwellings. Ten years later Dr. Mackintosh was pointing out that only seventeen cottages per county per year had been restored. The insufficiency of the grants and the short period (twenty years) for loan repayment made it impossible for many societies to carry out this work. The Hampshire Rural Cottage Improvement Society, for example, wished to restore nine cottages but obtained grants for two only. Nevertheless Hampshire holds a leading place among the counties in this work, and Mr. Herbert Collins has pointed out that since 1926 some 678 cottages have been reconditioned at a maximum permitted rent of 6s. per week inclusive.

Under the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1938, an effort was made to improve the housing conditions of the agricultural population. The subsidy, which was fixed at a fairly high level, aimed at producing houses which could be let to agricultural workers at appropriately low rents without imposing an excessive burden on the local rates. The Ministry of Health report of 1938 reiterates the conclusions of all its predecessors: 'The shortage of good dwellings in the villages presses most hardly on young people, and it is the young workers who are essential to the proper conduct and development of agriculture. The lack of cottages

supplied with modern amenities is one of the main factors which accounts for the desertion of the land, especially by the younger generation, for industrial employment in towns.' The Ministry adds, optimistically, that 'the Provisions of the Act of 1938 should go far to check this drift, and to make life worth while for the agricultural worker.' The Act provides for a subsidy of £10 per annum for forty years in respect of houses provided for slum clearance, for the abatement of overcrowding, or to meet general needs. The contribution from the rates of the District Council amounts to £1. In special cases the Exchequer subsidy may be increased by a sum not exceeding £2, with a corresponding addition to the County Council's normal contribution of £1. On 31st March 1939 the number of houses approved under this Act was as follows:

Rural District Councils

For non-agricultural population (Section 1)	3,559
For agricultural population (Section 2)	1,159
For private owners, building for agricultural population (Section 3)	682
	5,400

There is another aspect of this matter which cannot be overemphasised: the indifference of the townsmen (forming the great majority of the electorate of this country) to the needs of agriculture and the countryside. The pattern of our agricultural industry, although as little subject to deliberate planning as our towns, has nevertheless followed to a considerable extent the physical limitations of the soil. The countryman himself has remained closer to nature. From the chat moss, new crops of potatoes have come: the draining of the fenlands is one of the epics of mankind's struggle to secure a living from the most unpromising land. But the Welsh mountains and the Scottish deer forests remain unused except for sport, and so, too, do the Chilterns and the Cotswolds. Formerly the villages at least were self-contained and self-supporting: to-day, in

war-time, the villager draws upon the whole resources of an Empire, in peace-time of the world, for his sustenance. And because that was true of countryman and of townsman alike, the urban population has, as Dr. Dudley Stamp has pointed out, 'been content to see the best land swallowed up by industry and housing, for is it not true that nearly all essential foodstuffs can be produced more cheaply abroad?' It was the inevitable outcome of this unthinking attitude that when Great Britain entered the second world war in September 1939 she did so with the smallest acreage under the plough ever recorded in history, with a home food production equal only to 35 per cent of her requirements. The frantic efforts which have been made since the war began to make up for the lack of foresight before the war began are common knowledge. 'Dig for Victory' became the slogan. 'Dig for Victory' will have to become a policy after the war if the nation is to maintain the standards of nutrition which modern scientific knowledge has taught us are essential for the full life. Co-ordinated planning is the only solution. 'Let us', writes Dr. Dudley Stamp, who, through the Land Utilisation Survey of Britain, of which he is the Director, has rendered invaluable service to agriculture, industry and planning alike, 'Let us postulate two ideals, both of which are concerned with post-war planning. The first ideal is the whole population fed to an adequate and recognised nutritional standard, of which fresh and home-grown vegetables and fruits shall play their part. We may hazard a calculation that first-class agricultural land which is needed for such a purpose occupies some 3,000,000 acres of Britain at the most. It would *all* be required for such a task. The second ideal is for the accommodation of the people in towns of garden-city type. A rough calculation will show that some 3,000,000 acres would be a reasonable area for the purpose and well-drained arable land would be very suitable.' Dr. Stamp has pointed out that there are 30,000,000 acres of land of intermediate quality in Great Britain: that being so, there is not the slightest need to use the best arable land for industry or for housing—as has happened frequently in recent years. Instead we should use our first-rate land

WYTHENSHAWE

A characteristic glimpse of a residential street in Manchester's satellite town of Wythenshawe, designed by Barry Parker for residence, industry, and recreation

only for agriculture. The land of intermediate quality should be used for new towns and the siting of housing and industry generally: in so using it the town planner would find those rapid local variations in character which are part of the thrill of town building and which add to the attractiveness of the completed community. Finally, too, although it is not the business of the town planner to solve the whole economic problem, it must be remembered that the flight to the towns is caused not only by the low standards of housing and of amenity in the agricultural areas, but in the low standards of wages of the agricultural area against which the higher wage rates of the town act as an irresistible magnet to many.

Neither the question of housing in large cities nor the question of housing in rural areas can properly be considered without reference to large-scale movements of population. The sprawling and unregulated growth of London during recent years is one of the most dramatic if one of the most depressing facts of our time. London has added two millions to its population since 1901, over one million since 1921, and some 200,000 between 1931 and 1934. Greater London represents 1/127th part of the total area of Great Britain, but it contains one-fifth of the population and one quarter of the rateable value. This concentration of wealth and population would in itself be an unbalancing element in national and economic life, but even within the bounds of Greater London itself rapid changes of population are taking place. There is a big outward movement from the overcrowded, densely populated centres. This is not evil in itself, indeed anything which encourages the exodus from the crowded slums of Southwark, for example, is a definite gain, but it creates problems. Problems are also created by the inflow of population from the provinces to London. Both the outward flow and the inward flow merge in the Outer Ring of Greater London, that is to say, within the Metropolitan and City Police areas but outside the Administrative County area. This area is 576 square miles in extent, and its population increased between 1931 and 1935 from 3·8 millions to 4·3 millions—one hundred thousand people were added to the already vast population every

year. During the year 1935 no fewer than 213 factories were established in the Greater London area. Only two new factories were established in the whole of the special areas. Forty per cent more factories were established in the Greater London area than in the whole of the rest of Great Britain. Nevertheless decentralisation of industry has been going on—haphazard decentralisation. Dr. D. H. Smith, in an investigation covering the years 1927–32, discovered that in that period in the northern and western sectors of Greater London, i.e. from the Lea Valley in the east to the Great West Road in the west, approximately 232 factories had been erected which were formerly in central London prior to 1920. Some 12,000 employees were transferred. When Dr. Smith's figures are taken in conjunction with Mr. Colin Clark's view that for every additional ten industrial workers employed on the average six non-industrial jobs are created, it is easily seen how these rapid changes of population are effected. And when one remembers that the transfer of a main wage-earner means, too, the transfer of his family, the dimensions of the problem are more clearly realised. Every month, every year, saw the problem intensify. In one year sufficient additional population moved into Essex alone to form a complete new town. The county found itself with an additional population—an 'abnormal growth', the Medical Officer of Health called it—of 38,661. And only 4,000 of this increase could be discounted as excess of births over deaths. Migration accounted for 34,318. Londoners are moving out of London. The same movement from the centre out is visible in every large city in Great Britain.

On the other hand, the movement away from the land is just as marked. Between 1851 and 1911 half a million agricultural workers —discontented, as Government departments would observe, with the conditions their forefathers were content to live in—left the land. Between 1921 and 1930, 127,487 agricultural workers gave up their smocks for factory overalls. Between 1930 and 1937, 110,039 rural workers quit the country for the towns.

What does it all mean? Townspeople leave the crowded central cities because they want fresh air, houses with gardens, and free

access to the countryside. And they go there at infinite expenditure of money on travelling, infinite physical wear and tear, and infinite nervous exhaustion, to say nothing of the time lost. On buses and tubes alone Londoners lose 700,000,000 hours per year on travelling—that is equivalent to more than the full span of life for 1,143 men, or one full year out of the lifetime of 80,000 men. In every twelve years the time spent in travelling in Greater London alone is equal to one full year out of the lifetime of one million people. The late Dr. Elizabeth Sloan Chesser remarked that a very large proportion of the nervous diseases, and of those cases on the borderland of complete mental breakdown, were primarily attributable to the over-urbanisation of modern life.

And yet the rural population continues to drift to the town. 'Drift' is not perhaps the *mot juste*. Sometimes they are subsidised in order to go there. Grants to certain undertakings in London are given only on condition that they absorb a certain amount of provincial labour.

Nevertheless the farm labourer's son does not want to work on the land: he wants to get to town. Why? Because wages are low and life is dull down on the farm, and the cottage he lives in, while condemned by three generations, is even more intolerable to him than it was to his father. If he wants to get married there is no new cottage for him and his bride. But, apart from all these considerations, he feels the pull of town life. Lights of London are still a strong attraction. And what are the lights of London?—shops, theatres, cinemas, dance halls, restaurants, art galleries, museums, educational facilities. Not much that could not be provided in a town one-hundred-and-eightieth part as small as London. Both the townsman and the countryman realise that something is missing: the one wants the country, the other wants the town.

Chapter II

A HUNDRED YEARS OF HOUSING PROGRESS

It must always remain one of the great historic ironies that the century which invented the notion of material Progress, which unfolded more scientific possibility than all the preceding years of western civilisation put together, was also the century which debased human environment to about its lowest known level. . . . The average dwelling of the average citizen was narrower, dirtier, and more crowded in the prosperous middle decades than it ever had been before. And if it was a trifle more sanitary in some instances by 1900, this advantage was balanced by far less accessibility to work-places and play-places and open country, and by greatly increased rents . . .

Perhaps I have overdone the horrors. Was there really nothing but ugliness, petty reform, frustrated romanticism, smug exploitation, darkness, filth, overcrowding, waste, indifference, chaos, and despair? After inventing the whole notion of material progress, was the only contribution of the Victorians to human shelter a mere list of emergency sanitary regulations, a string of misused utilities and a handful of gadgets? Not quite. Or, perhaps, indeed no. For, if they did invent a great many of the evils which make up the housing problem as we confront it today, they also suggested practically all of the means by which it may be solved, and actually tried out a great many of them on a small scale. If as a whole they were remarkably unresponsive to sensory stimuli, individually many of them were able to criticize the results of their handiwork with eloquence, sensitivity, and revolutionary imagination.

CATHERINE BAUER

Just over a hundred years have passed since public attention in Great Britain was for the first time focused on the question of the housing conditions of the people. Attention was badly needed and was long overdue. Edwin Chadwick, calm, dispassionate statistician, keen administrator, dour Benthamite, had been appointed one of the Commissioners to administer the Poor Law. He at once detected the close connection between poverty and ill-health, be-

tween bad housing and ill-health, between ill-health and a high poor-rate. In 1838 Chadwick issued a report on the sanitary conditions of the labouring classes in London. His cold facts and figures were backed by Dr. Southwood Smith, physician in the London Fever Hospital, who in the report of that institution had some caustic things to say about London housing. 'The houses', he wrote, 'are never cleaned nor ventilated. They literally swarm with vermin. It is almost impossible to breathe. Missionaries are seized with vomiting or fainting upon entering them.' Smith took Shaftesbury through the slums of Bethnal Green and Whitechapel. 'What scenes of filth, discomfort and disease!' Lord Ashley (as he then was) exclaimed in his diary, 'No pen or paint-brush can describe the thing as it is. One whiff of cow dung outweighs ten pages of letterpress.'

It would perhaps be an exaggeration to say that public opinion was shocked by Chadwick's disclosures. Only a small section of it was shocked in the moral sense. But public opinion was shocked to think that by permitting insanitary conditions it was not saving money, but possibly losing money. Public opinion saw, too, that the breeding ground of cholera, of which not only the poor were the victims, was the squalid, foetid slums with their cesspools (often within the houses), their scanty water supply (liable to be cut off whenever the landlord failed to pay his rates), their long alleys hardly an arm's length apart, and their 'accommodations' (one to several hundred people), whose stench by day and night was overpowering to all but the most case-hardened inhabitants. It was not on the ground of sympathy for Sally or any of the other inhabitants of her alley that Chadwick and his colleagues appealed to English public opinion in 1838. Having pointed out that 'in general, all epidemics and all infectious diseases are attended with charges, immediate and ultimate, on the poor-rates . . .', they stressed the fact that the 'amount of burdens thus produced is frequently so great as to render it good economy on the part of the administrators of the poor-laws to incur the charges for preventing the evils'. Touched at the most vulnerable place (its pocket) early Victorian

public opinion responded by appointing Chadwick to conduct an official inquiry.

The resulting report added a grim chapter to the horrible story of the conditions of industrial England at that time. Of 'Lamb's Fields', Chadwick learned that '... of this space about 300 feet are constantly covered by stagnant water in winter and summer ... an open filthy ditch encircles the place: into this ditch the privies (completely uncovered) of a street called North Street open ... nothing can be conceived more disgusting than the appearance of this ditch, and the odour ... is most offensive ...'. Of 'Virginia Row', 'in a direct line from Virginia Row to Shoreditch, a mile in extent, all the lanes, courts and alleys in the neighbourhood pour their contents into the centre of the main street, where they stagnate and putrefy ... families live in the cellars and kitchens of these undrained houses, dark and extremely damp ...'. The Medical Officers, Arnott and Kay, told how, during the removal of a heap of dung from a mews behind Bedford Square, a woman and her three children sitting at a window near by were overcome. Two of the children died. Body snatchers visiting the graveyard that night, mistook the grave they meant to rifle, caught fever from one of the already putrefied corpses and as a result two of them died. 'It is not possible', wrote Dr. Southwood Smith, 'for any language to convey an adequate conception of the poisonous condition in which large districts always remain, winter and summer, in dry and in rainy seasons, from the masses of putrefying matter which are allowed to accumulate. There is no strength of constitution, no conservative power in wealth, capable of resisting constant exposure to the exhalations which are always arising from these collections of filth.' Submitting his evidence, Dr. Smith observed: 'All this suffering might be averted. These poor people are the victims that are sacrificed. The effect is the same as if twenty or thirty thousand of them were annually taken out of their homes and put to death, the only difference being that they are left in them to die.' There was much that was prophetic in the report. Arnott and Kay anticipated a general sewage system, an abundant

water supply, a scavenging service, free ventilation by means of wide streets, the beginnings of town planning, and Acts for the prevention of overcrowding. History owes a footnote, too, to 'a Mr. Swainer of Peckham' who said: 'I would suggest the idea of the landlords of many of these wretched, filthy tenements being held responsible for their being tenantable, healthy and cleanly, by declaring the tenants not bound to pay their rent, if the relieving officer or medical attendant should report them untenantable, or liable, from improper drainage, etc., to promote disease.'

Chadwick's report fired the indignation of an important part of the literary community. Charles Dickens's help was enlisted to make generally known the evils cited. *Hard Times* was the result, and where Blue Books failed the novel was successful. Kingsley's *Yeast* and Disraeli's *Sybil* helped to fan the first flames of indignation not to become a bonfire for a hundred years or more. The Government of the day, afraid to do anything, but even more afraid to do nothing, asked Chadwick to conduct a more general enquiry into the condition of the labouring classes throughout the country. His report was addressed to Sir John Graham, the Home Secretary, on 9 July 1842. The Boards of Guardians throughout England and Wales submitted their evidence: the doctors in Scotland submitted local reports. The report showed that conditions in the metropolis were duplicated all over England. In Manchester patients could not be conveyed to the 'House of Recovery' because of the filth blocking the streets: they had to be carried. In Leeds stagnant water lay 'under the doorways of the uncomplaining poor' while 'privies so laden with ashes and excrementitious matter as to be unuseable prevail'. Chadwick himself declared that if the sickness rates of the Edinburgh slums prevailed in a prison 'the circumstances would excite public alarm and attention'. The horror excited by this report led to the passing of the first of the Public Health Acts, and a Board of Health, which sat from 1848 for six years, was appointed with Lord Ashley (who in 1842 had formed 'A Society to Improve the Condition of the Working Classes', which concentrated on the erection of model dwellings) as chair-

man and Chadwick and Dr. Southwood Smith as Commissioners. Faced with considerable opposition, but armed with Chadwick's report, Russell, the Prime Minister, carried the day in Parliament. Chadwick's efforts to clean up England, however, met with a mixed reception. Every vested interest complained that the inalienable right of freeborn Englishmen to make profit out of the disease and squalor of the poor had been seriously attacked. *The Times* spoke for every vested interest: 'We prefer to take our chance of cholera and the rest than to be bullied into health.' In 1854 the Board of Health was abolished.

Ashley's chagrin was acute. He felt that after six years of incessant effort he had been cast aside 'like a piece of useless lumber'. Nevertheless, in 1851 he had carried through both the Commons and the Lords two bills: the second dealt with the common lodging-house scandals of the metropolis: the first, designed to promote the building of houses for the working class, placed the charge for such building on all towns of 10,000 population or more. Ashley, or Lord Shaftesbury (for that year he succeeded to his father's estate), thus laid the foundations of subsequent housing legislation. One of his first tasks was to clear up his own lands. 'I have passed my life', he said, 'rating others for allowing rotten houses and immoral and unhealthy dwellings and now I come into an estate rife with abominations.' The immediate results of his housing bill, however, were negligible. Only one town, Huddersfield, took advantage of its powers.

In 1855 all the legislation bearing on the subject was consolidated in the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act, but it was not until 1866, when an Irish member introduced the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act, that the question of the actual state of dwellings became important. The Torrens Act—as it is usually called—laid the responsibility for the maintenance in good condition of houses upon the owner, in default of which the local authority might compel him to repair it or to demolish it. If the owner was unwilling to do this, then he could ask the local authority itself to demolish the property and purchase the vacated site, on which

dwelling-houses for workpeople should be erected. The Act also raised the question of compensation and discounted the ten per cent allowance for compulsory purchase, the allowance of the value of worthless buildings, and, perhaps most important, that part of the value of land which is supposed to disappear when the use of land is restricted to housing purposes. Compulsory purchase and restricted compensation emerge in this great housing Act, never to recede from the attention of reformers since. The coping stone to this triumph of early legislation was placed when in 1875 Sir Richard Cross presented a Bill to Parliament which substituted for the Torrens' individual house the application of housing legislation to whole areas. The battle of the Pig and the Stye was over. Parliament had declared that people lived like pigs only because they were compelled to live in styes. The Acts themselves might temporarily be forgotten, but at last housing legislation was placed on something like a sure basis. True, the miracles which were expected to follow their placing on the Statute Book were not achieved, but the machinery for removing mountains of slums was now in being.

Local authorities were apathetic. Sanitary inspectors were forced to supervise intolerably large areas—Islington with one inspector to 56,000 inhabitants was typical, Mile End with one inspector to 105,000 was only a degree worse than Bermondsey with one inspector to 86,000. Assistant inspectors, where these existed, sometimes included grave-digging among their duties. Nevertheless, although very gradually, the effects of the Acts became apparent. The blackest spots disappeared, although the very poverty of those who lived in the most squalid tenements made it impossible for them to take the new accommodation available and they were forced to seek refuge in other slums, thereby heightening the overcrowding and worsening the conditions there. In any case local authorities were not as yet compelled to provide immediate accommodation, but only to build on the vacated sites. Invasions of countrymen, unable to secure work on the land their fathers had tilled, made town conditions even more intolerable. The one-room

per family in a grim tenement building became the rule in the working-class districts of London, Glasgow, and the other great cities. A Royal Commission was appointed.

The Commission began its work in 1884 and reported in 1887. Its personnel was curious, varied, brilliant. The Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, was a member. So was the aged Earl of Shaftesbury. Joseph Chamberlain brought his experience in Birmingham to the pool. Edwin Chadwick was there—as ever in the thick of the fight. Octavia Hill, grand-daughter of Chadwick's colleague Dr. Southwood Smith, gave her testimony. The report on England and Wales alone occupies 728 pages and records 18,260 questions put in 39 days. Cardinal Manning was deeply concerned for the plight of the Irish immigrants, whose scanty wages would not permit them to occupy dwellings erected by such philanthropists as American millionaire George Peabody and his trust administered by Sir Curtis Lampson. That trust brought in a dividend of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent—although it might, had it acted on 'commercial principles', have paid 5 per cent or $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent 'without any difficulty', said Sir Curtis—but clearly its houses were not available for Irish labourers with twenty shillings (or less) per week, even if the trust had not shown extreme discrimination and even prejudice in the selection of tenants. 'Our whole object', said Sir Curtis, 'is to house those who are most needy and who have the means to pay the rent'. Just how 'the needy' could have 'the means' he did not explain to the Commissioners. It became clear that the effect of the Peabody slum clearances was to make the slum dwellers move into other slums, adding acute congestion to acute overcrowding. Sir Sydney Waterlow was another exponent of 5 per cent philanthropy. The Commission suggested that 4 per cent might be sufficient, but Sir Sydney demurred: 'Unless the public thinks it is going to get a return of 5 per cent it does not seem satisfied.' It was clear that trusts of this kind scarcely touched the problem of the underpaid worker in his squalid slum. The Earl of Shaftesbury himself was at a loss for a solution. From Bristol came a very modern idea—that 'if the cost of putting up buildings exceeded the amount upon

which a remunerative return could be obtained, the burden should be put upon some general property or other to make good the deficiency'.

'*Commissioner:* Does that amount to relief in aid of wages, either out of rates or out of taxes?

'*A Bristol Guardian of the Poor:* Yes.'

The damaging evidence piles up: the Commissioners are told of mansion-houses built in 1815, from which the noble freeholder has departed, and in which are now living scores of families screwed to the uttermost limit by the middlemen and house-farmers. Into the sober discussions comes the polemic by the Rev. Andrew Mears, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London.* It is made abundantly clear that the freeholder of some of the most foetid parts of Clerkenwell is none other than the Marquess of Northampton. The Commission learns of houses crammed from cellar to roof, of water-closets shared by eight families, of costermongers who keep their vegetables under their beds, sprinkling water on them in the morning and then selling them as fresh, of slaughter-houses under dwelling-houses, of dirt, disease, destitution, death. The Marquess takes cover behind, and disowns, his agent, Alfred Ball—'I do not pretend for a moment that we are not disappointed in Mr. Ball'—and is more than a little shocked to learn that Mr. Martin, another member of the Vestry Committee, who rents a house from the Northampton estate at £20 per year, is able to rack-rent £100 a year out of it. The days of the London Vestry are numbered. Octavia Hill staggers the Commission by her calm contemplation of the one-room house. Sympathy, understanding, work by individuals among the slum dwellers is her solution—no solution really, but her greatest contribution to housing reform. George Shipton, representing the London Trades Council, swings the pendulum the other way . . . 'it is totally impossible that private enterprise, philanthropy and charity can ever keep pace with the present demands. . . . Economic forces and population have outstepped their endeavours; hence evils accrue. But what the individual cannot do the State municipality must seek to accomplish . . .

for it alone possesses the necessary power and wealth.' It is 'rent', he points out, 'which forms a great drain upon the earnings of the industrial population'. Subsidised housing was clearly emerging as an important social issue, but it was beyond the terms of reference of the Commission.

The Commission's recommendations led to the reform of London local government and administration. Its suggestion that a general survey of the sanitary state of London should be made was immediately carried out. It also recommended more efficient inspection of the dwellings of the poor, cheap Government loans for municipal housing with longer time in which to repay, the reduction in the obstacles towards the erection of workers' dwellings by municipalities, the reduction of compensation for land acquired under the Housing Acts, provisional orders for compulsory purchase, the creation of municipal water supplies, and the encouragement of small holdings for labourers in rural districts. The inquiry into the sanitary state of London confirmed the findings of the Commission, and was conducted by Mr. Daniel Cubitt-Nichols, assisted by Dr. Shirley Murphy, subsequently first Medical Officer of Health to London County Council.

In 1890 was passed the last Housing Act of the nineteenth century—the Housing of the Working Classes Act—bringing together the Cross Acts as Part I, the Torrens Acts as Part II, and Shaftesbury Acts as Part III. This was to remain 'the principal Act' until 1925.

The first part provided for the clearance by the sanitary authority of unhealthy areas—defined as 'any houses, courts, or alleys, unfit for human habitation', or an area containing 'such narrowness, closeness, or bad arrangement of the streets or houses . . . or the want of light, air, ventilation, or proper conveniences as are dangerous or injurious to the health of the inhabitants'. On the call of two Justices of the Peace or of twelve ratepayers such an area was required to be inspected, and on its unhealthiness being proved the local authority, having decided on a clearance scheme, must apply to the Local Government Board for confirmation in a pro-

visional order. Compensation having been paid, the local authority could then proceed to clear the area and was held responsible for the rehousing of at least half the ejected inhabitants. The second part applied to all urban and rural sanitary authorities, and made it possible for the medical officer of health or four ratepayers to call the attention of the local sanitary authority to 'houses unfit for human habitation'. The authority might then apply for a closing order and finally demolish the houses, and it might also remove obstructive dwellings, including back-to-back houses, and reconstruct dwellings on an improvement scheme subject to the ratification of the Local Government Board. Part III of the Act was easily the most important from the point of view of results and the hastening of housing reform. It enabled local sanitary authorities to erect workers' dwellings whenever they considered it necessary and without any clearance of other areas. This part of the Act might be adopted by official resolution by the London County Council and all urban sanitary authorities (later the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, conferred the same right on rural authorities). Land might be purchased by compulsory purchase—market value plus ten per cent compensation, says J. J. Clarke, was the usual implication—and then either let to builders or used by the authority itself. Gardens not exceeding half an acre could be attached to the houses, and the houses might be supplied with fittings or even fully furnished.

In 1899 the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act enabled a ratepayer to become the owner of his own house by permitting the local authority to make advances to the resident occupier of a house not exceeding £400 market value, the amount advanced not to exceed four-fifths of the market value of £300. Advances were to be repaid in equal instalments over a period not exceeding thirty years; the interest the local authority was entitled to charge might exceed by one-half per cent the rate at which the local authority could borrow from the Public Works Loan Commissioners.

A number of less important measures was passed in rapid succession. The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1900, was fol-

lowed by the setting up of a Joint Select Committee in 1902, which suggested that whenever action was to be taken regarding houses of the labouring class notification should be made to the Home Secretary. This was followed by the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1903, which empowered the Local Government Board to extend the period for which money might be borrowed to eighty years, and also gave the Board power to approve the erection of shops near new housing or the provision of recreation fields. In 1906 the Select Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes Amendment Bill reported that Rural Councils had taken little advantage of their powers. The evidence submitted was valuable, and some of the recommendations were later embodied in the 1909 Act. In the meantime Liverpool had promoted the Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Act, 1908, which enabled the Town Council to insist upon streets likely to develop into thoroughfares being made eighty feet wide, and to effect other improvements calculated to open up new developments and to make the centre more spacious. A curiously enlightened Act, it is in some ways better than the more general Act which was to follow.

In the Campbell-Bannerman administration John Burns became President of the Local Government Board, and in 1908 he introduced into the House of Commons a Bill designed 'to improve the health of the people by raising the character of the house and the home, and by extended inspection, supervision, direction and guidance of central control to help local authorities to do more than they do now'. Conservatives, Liberals and Labour alike were convinced of the necessity of more vigorous legislation on a broader basis, and the Bill became law as the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909. Part I dealt with the acquisition of land for housing purposes and amended the legislation regarding closing orders, so that where a landlord or a local authority take no action to effect necessary repairs a closing order must be enforced. Part II represented a new and important departure in legislation, the introduction of town planning. This part has formed the basis of all subsequent legislation on the subject. It enabled local authorities to prepare

schemes for the development of particular areas and to control that development for the general benefit of the community. The approval of the Local Government Board (subsequently the Ministry of Health) was necessary, however, before an authority could adopt a scheme. Part III made it obligatory on every County Council to establish a public health and housing committee to which all matters relating to housing were referred. (This compulsion was removed by the Housing Act, 1936.) Part IV dealt with commons, open spaces, and allotments.

The 1909 Act represented a great advance: henceforward no-one could regard housing as an isolated problem. The business of rehousing was seen at last—even if not very clearly—to be part of the general scheme to provide a proper environment at work, at play, and in the home, for men, women and children.

Despite the long series of Acts thus outlined, despite the wide powers possessed by local authorities since 1890, the total number of houses, lodging-houses and tenements provided by local authorities between 1890 and 1899 was a mere 1,597, and from 1900 to 1913 only 12,213. Both figures represent a mere drop in the ocean of misery represented by the huddled slums of the town and the dilapidated cottages of the rural areas. Nor is the force of that observation much mitigated when it is remembered that between 1900 and 31 March 1912 some 5,846 cottages had been closed or demolished. Only 182—approximately one-tenth—of the local authorities had taken any action under the Acts. Parliament might legislate, but against the indifference, the lethargy, and the stupidity of many local authorities, prescriptions for the cure of evil were left neglected and housing conditions grew steadily worse. The local authorities had one excuse: they argued, with considerable force, that the cost of rehousing ought to be a national burden rather than an additional cost to the local taxpayer. Only by such a method could the burden be equitably adjusted throughout the country.

Here and there local authorities did attempt to make serious inroads on the mass of slums. As early as 1864 the Medical Officer of

Health made eighteen 'presentments' under the Liverpool Sanitary Amendment Act, 1864, regarding 6,300 houses declared to be unfit for human habitation, and these were subsequently demolished. Liverpool also made representation under the 1890 Act whereby eighteen Unhealthy Areas, comprising 2,454 houses, were scheduled for demolition and reconstruction. But it was not until 1923 that eleven of these were cleared and 1,206 houses built on the sites. In London the Metropolitan Board of Works expended a total of £1,318,890 on sixteen slum clearance schemes, leaving over six to its successor, the London County Council. The Boundary Street scheme and the Tabard Street (Southwark) scheme were among the earliest municipal efforts at rehousing in London. In the Boundary Street scheme fifteen acres of slum clearance were effected between 1893 and 1897. The actual work of demolition and reconstruction was painfully slow, even allowing for all the difficulties. The London County Council, for example, obtained in 1912 an order confirming the London (Tabard Street, Grotto Place and Crosby Row) Improvement Scheme, 1910, prescribing the rehousing of 2,580 persons on the Tabard Street area—of about 10½ acres, not less than five acres of which were to be reserved as a public open space. Building did not begin, however, until 1915, and the first block was not completed till March 1917. Work began again in November 1919 and was completed in January 1925! Fifteen years to rehouse 2,500 people is slow, even when a world war occupies four years of the period. In the whole of the London County Council area prior to 1914 clearance schemes under contemplation covered only 97·22 acres and a population of 45,438. It took until 1935 to carry out these projects. Manchester began its public housing efforts with the erection of two large blocks of flats in Oldham Road and Pollard Street in 1891. Five storeys high, with an asphalt courtyard for the children to play in, Sir Ernest Simon describes it as 'gaunt, gloomy, and barrack-like'. These tenement houses were of one and two rooms, without bathrooms and with lavatories—such was the force of tradition—shared by two tenants. In 1904 Manchester Corporation purchased 238 acres of

A corner of the London County Council cottage estate at Roehampton The Council, wherever possible, retains existing trees, maintains greens and shrubberies, and has planted large numbers of ornamental and forest trees

WESTQUARTER

Faced with the problem of rehousing a mining community, Stirling County Council decided to build a completely new village for the population This glimpse of miners' cottages shows how effectively advantage was taken of the natural features of the site

land at Blackley for cottage development, and did, in fact, build 203 cottages but, owing to opposition within the Council itself, building ceased and was not resumed until after the war. The examples cited are typical of the work of the more or less enlightened one-tenth of local authorities, which, before the war, entered the housing field. The record was scarcely an inspiring one.

On the other hand it is difficult to second the note of satisfaction which creeps in to Sir Francis Fremantle's statement on the work of private enterprise before the war. 'It was private enterprise, without State assistance', he remarks, 'which undertook the main provision—99 per cent of all new houses up to 1910 and 95 per cent in the last few years before 1914.' True—but it was also private enterprise which built the slums described earlier: it was private enterprise which wanted to run the risk of cholera rather than have England cleaned up by Chadwick: it was private enterprise which hid behind their middlemen when they rack-rented the uncomplaining poor. Private enterprise houses were built to pay—as the Medical Officer of Health for Manchester observed when, in 1878, he noted the improvement due to the byelaws, but regretted that the houses were jerry built.

'They are built to pay, of course . . . and very few of them are cellared or have any ventilating space underneath the ground floor, which is flagged; the walls are thin and porous, and therefore it is probable that many of them are damp.'

They were built to pay and the dispossessed could not pay. The housing problem was as much as anything a poverty problem, and the underpaid submerged tenth—the fraction is quite inadequate—could not pay the rents even of those houses which were built on the cleared sites. When the London County Council built the Boundary Street estate, out of 1,069 houses it provided only fifteen—and these single-roomed houses—which were within the means of the dispossessed. Every piece of nineteenth century legislation, every piece of nineteenth century thinking—with the notable exception of the thought of the unknown Bristol Guardian—was based on the assumption that it was sufficient to pull down a few

slums and that somehow the slum dweller's condition would be improved thereby. Instead, matters became worse, since, dispossessed of their slum dwellings the tenants had no alternative but to seek accommodation in other slums. Only the better-paid artisans could avail themselves of the accommodation provided by local authorities or by philanthropists of the Peabody type. It became clear—gradually—that 'an economic rent' was out of the question for a very large section of the working-class, and that some form of subsidy must come if the slums were ever to make way for healthy, happy homes.

The outbreak of war in August 1914 brought the building of houses, either by local authorities or by private enterprise, to a standstill. In 1915 the Rent Restriction Act was passed to prevent unfair exploitation of tenants. It was an Act which, when profiteering and a policy of beggar-your-neighbour were the order of the day, discriminated a little unfairly against one particular class of investor: but it was an absolutely necessary Act for all that. It completely finished, however, whatever slender chance was left that private enterprise might continue in war-time to build houses for letting. By the end of the war the housing problem, dreadful enough at the commencement of hostilities, had become intolerable. In Scotland a Royal Commission sitting in 1917 revealed that more than half the population lived in houses of one or two rooms. No fewer than 399,876 people lived in houses of one room only—single-ends they were called: 1,881,529 others lived in two-roomed houses, many of them mere hovels, a great proportion completely unfit for human habitation. In England and Wales it was estimated that 796,246 houses were needed: in Scotland 115,565. Dr. Christopher Addison (now Lord Addison) estimated the minimum requirements at half a million. The war had added a quarter of a million to the list of absolutely indispensable new houses if the nation was to be even moderately well housed.

The shocking housing conditions were reflected in the health of the nation: of 2,434,252 school-children medically examined, 1,166,784 were found to be physically defective. In England and

Wales four million working weeks were being lost annually through sickness by the insured population. If it did not pay private enterprise to build houses for the poor, quite clearly it did not pay private enterprise to tolerate such unhealthy conditions. The eight Commissioners appointed in 1917 to inquire into the Causes of Industrial Unrest had reported, too, that the lack of housing accommodation was one of the first causes of deep discontent among the working-classes.

There were, however, big difficulties in the way when, under the impulse of the wave of humanitarianism which swept the country after the war and which took specialised form in the nation's general desire to provide homes 'fit for heroes to live in', Parliament decided to take action in the matter. Bricklayers' wages were 185 points above the 1914 level: labourers' wages were 224 points higher. The cost of the building materials had soared, ranging from a 196·4 increase in the cost of cement to a 300 points increase in the price of timber. Both wages and basic materials were, therefore, very much above normal when the Government housing scheme came into operation under the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919. This legislation, for which Dr. Addison was the responsible Minister, represented the taking over by the State of the financial loss on what was recognised to be no longer a remunerative field for capital investment.

The history of housing legislation between the wars represents a ding-dong struggle between the two major political philosophies in the State on this important issue, at one time one side having the legislative upper hand, at another time the other side. Yet there is nothing in the history of post-war housing in Great Britain to indicate that at any point in that period private enterprise had found a solution whereby houses of the improved standard could be built and let to those who needed them at rents they could afford to pay. The battle between the two opposing sections of public opinion can be traced in all the post-war housing legislation.

Under the Addison Act (Housing and Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919) local authorities were called upon to prepare schemes for the

provision of working-class houses within their areas. To meet the loss, recognised here as inevitable, the Government undertook to bear the annual deficiency from approved expenditure—that is to say, the excess over the results of a local penny rate, the local authority's contribution to the cost. The Housing (Additional Powers) Act, 1919, was designed to stimulate private enterprise and gave lump sum payments to private builders varying from £130 to £160, and later from £230 to £260 for each house. A number of factors tended to make these Acts extravagant in their effect. The high costs, which became still higher, of building materials; the higher rates of pay in the building industries; the uncontrolled expenditure by local authorities (Liverpool Housing Committee, for example, placed a contract for two million pounds with a firm with a paid-up capital of £3,000: ultimately an over-payment of £350,000 was authorised by officials of the Housing Committee and the firm went bankrupt, leaving the Corporation and the Government to face an enormous loss); the increased cost of transport: all these factors made the average tender rise from £770 per house in July 1919 to £920 in July 1920, while the cost of the dearest house erected in 1920 with State assistance was £1,258.

It was obvious that State-assisted housing could not proceed at such a cost. Intensive efforts were made to cut down expenditure. The Ministry tried to control every detail of construction. 'We cannot', remarked the Chairman of the Glasgow Housing Committee, 'fix a nail or screw in Scotland without getting the sanction of the Board of Health.' He did, perhaps, exaggerate, but it is a fact that there was a dispute lasting many months between the Manchester Housing Committee and the Ministry as to whether the former were to be allowed to fix towel rails in the bathrooms of municipal houses. The Government decided to cut its losses. The Ministry described its new policy as one of 'limited new commitments'. It was decided that the total number of houses to be built under the Addison Act (Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919) should be restricted to 176,000. Actually by 1938–9, 174,635 houses

had been built at a cost to the Exchequer of £121,242,090. Under the Housing (Additional Powers) Act, 1919, 39,186 houses were built at a cost of £9,498,156, or roughly £245 per house. Before the loans are repaid on the Addison Act the cost to the nation will be at least £200,000,000. In the meantime over £600 have been paid out of the national revenue for each house built under the Addison Act. 'It is interesting to note', wrote Sir Ernest Simon in 1933, 'that the subsidies under the Addison Act, if applied under to-day's conditions, would be enough to build not a mere 176,000 houses, but a million houses, and to let them not at 15s., which is probably the average rent of the Addison houses, but at about 7s. 6d.'

Dr. Addison, the author of the Act, resigned, and the late Sir Alfred Mond (later Lord Melchett), who succeeded him as Minister of Health, drastically reduced the number of houses to be built under the Act, at the same time as the subsidies to private builders were extended only to those houses completed before June 1922. Economy was the order of the day.

It says much for the resiliency of public opinion on the housing question that very soon the demand for a resumption of a re-housing programme was renewed. There were demands for fresh legislation and fresh grants. The cities, led by Manchester, demanded a fixed grant per house which would leave the burden of excess costs to the municipalities at the same time as it allowed them to take advantage of any economies. Tired of interference, they demanded control rather than partnership with the State in their local administration. These demands were the basis of the Chamberlain Act of 1923.

In the meantime, with the limitation of the programme, building costs fell rapidly. By March 1922 cement fell to 91 points above the pre-war level, while timber was 75 points. Wages fell, too; labourers received (by March 1923) wages 197 points higher than in 1914: bricklayers' wages were 175 points higher. The cost of a parlour house was £838 in March 1921, £512 in March 1922, and £371 in January 1923.

The Government was faced with two charges: one, that it had

embarked on too ambitious a scheme; the other, that it had allowed that scheme to be dropped abruptly. Everywhere there was a widespread desire that the work of rehousing should proceed. British public opinion held to the idea of a State-aided housing scheme. The Government accepted the proposals of Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol, Leeds, Sheffield and Salford Councils, and on 11 April 1923 introduced a 'Bill to amend the enactments relating to the Housing of the Working Classes, Town Planning, and the acquisition of Small Dwellings'. It became law on 31 July 1923.

Under this (the Chamberlain) Act the Government granted a subsidy of £6 a year for twenty years for the building of two-storey cottages, or one-storey cottages, bungalows, or flats, the Minister being empowered under Section I of the Act to pay the subsidy in approved cases to the local authority. Section II empowered local authorities to make grants to private enterprise, either handing to the builder the bare subsidy received from national funds or the subsidy augmented from the local rate funds. Section V contained the important provision authorising local authorities to advance money to private builders and to guarantee the repayment to building societies of advances made by them. The Small Dwellings Acquisition Act was amended to permit of loans being granted within much wider limits to persons desirous of purchasing a house for their own occupation. Advances could now be made during the construction of the house and on houses up to a market value of £1,200. Moreover, the maximum amount advanced might be up to 90 per cent of the total value. Grants were not terminated in 1925–6 as provided, but were extended by the 1924 Act till 1929, although they were reduced from September 1927 to £4 per annum. The Act to 1938–9 produced 438,047 houses, at a current annual cost to the Exchequer of roughly two and a half million pounds and a total cost to the Exchequer to date of £30,142,041.

In 1924 the first Labour Government came to office in Great Britain. Mr. John Wheatley was appointed Minister of Health, and he—perceiving the fact that previous housing legislation had made no great difference to the conditions under which the very

poor were living, since that section of the community could not afford the rents asked—introduced the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1924. Wheatley held, too, that in rural districts where building costs were high compared with those in the towns, and where wages of workers were even lower, the subsidies were quite inadequate to revive the building industry. Instead of granting subsidies of £6 a year for twenty years, Wheatley granted subsidies of £9 a year for forty years. Subsidies in agricultural districts were fixed at £12 10s. for the same period. The conditions attaching to these grants were that the houses could not be sold, but must be let at rents averaging the existing rents of houses built in the district before the war. The cost to the local rates was limited to £4 10s. per annum for forty years, and, where this sum was exceeded, rents could be proportionately increased to keep down the local contribution to that amount. The Act further laid it down that in selecting tenants reasonable preference should be given to large families, while the houses were not to be sub-let without the approval of local authorities. The Act extended the period over which subsidies were to be granted to a period of fifteen years. This decision was taken after consultations between the Government and the building industry, subject to the condition that the industry undertook to carry through at least two-thirds of an agreed building programme within that period. The programme specified that in fifteen years two and a half million houses were to be built, 1,500,000 to supply normal annual requirements at the rate of 100,000 per annum, and 1,000,000 to make good the deficiency of the war years and the years immediately following. The Wheatley Act produced 520,298 houses at a cost to the Exchequer, up to the 31st of March 1939, of £41,088,113, or well over one-third of the houses produced under all the post-war Acts at a cost to the Exchequer equal to less than one-fifth the total cost of all the Acts.

By 1926–7 the various Acts of Parliament had produced 545,287 houses, towards the expenses of which Government contributions had been made. In 1926 was passed the Housing (Rural

Workers) Act, which entrusted County Councils with the task of making provision for the agricultural labourer, empowering them to improve old houses or convert existing buildings for occupation by rural workers, provided that the work involved expenditure of at least £50 on houses the value of which on completion did not exceed £400. Subsidies were granted either in a lump sum or annual payments over a maximum of twenty years, the total sums granted not exceeding two-thirds of the outlay or £100 per house. The benefit of the subsidy was to be passed on to the tenant, and rents were not to be raised for twenty years above the normal level paid by similar workers in the district. In addition to the subsidies the County Councils might grant loans up to ninety per cent of the value of the improved dwelling. Under the 1930 Housing Act County Councils were instructed to keep in touch with the housing conditions in rural districts and empowered to grant financial assistance to Rural District Councils, while it was made obligatory that they should pay a contribution of at least one pound a year for each new house occupied by agricultural workers. The Housing (Rural Authorities) Act, 1931, gave additional financial assistance to rural districts whose Councils satisfied the conditions and made application before 20 November 1931. Before the coming into force of these Acts local authorities had built 14,712 houses in rural areas—although many of them were occupied by workers from neighbouring urban districts—under the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1924. Under the 1926 to 1938 Acts only 18,482 houses had been built for rural workers by March 1939. The number of cottages improved since the 1926 Act was (at 1938–9) 14,207.

All told then, about 23,000 agricultural workers and their families found better accommodation in rural areas as a result of legislation between the wars. It is a dismal achievement, even although —as was pointed out with over-much satisfaction in the report for 1936–7—the rate of progress is now double that obtaining in 1932–3. It is still far too slow. Sir John Tudor Walters pointed out on the 30th of September 1931 that the supply of agricultural labour is not by any means equal to the demand, and that the prin-

cipal reason for the shortage was the lack of housing accommodation. Pointing out, too, that 'Arcadia is often both uncomfortable and insanitary', Sir John declared that a sound agricultural policy must be accompanied by, and indeed preceded by, a bold scheme of rural housing. Sir John envisaged, as indeed did Parliament, the provision of 40,000 houses within twelve months. After a decade not half that number have been erected under the Act of which he had such high hopes. But the flight from the farms to the towns continues. Between 1927 and 1936, 11 per cent of all adult males engaged in regular agricultural work have ceased to be so employed: they number 51,299. Between 1926 and 1936, 25 per cent of all males under twenty-one engaged in regular agricultural work have ceased to be so employed: they number 33,561. Between 1926 and 1936, 28 per cent of all girls and women engaged in regular agricultural work ceased to be so employed: they number 18,028. Casuals are also drifting to the towns, 13 per cent of the adult males, 55 per cent of the juvenile males, 32 per cent of the girls and women have forsaken the farms for the overcrowded towns. All told, they make a grand total of 133,876 farm servants who have left their broken-down hovels in the country for the squalid (yes, still squalid) slums of the great towns.

Up to the time of the 1931 census overcrowding in the London County Council area had been reduced by 0·07 of a person per room: in Poplar, 30,000 persons were still living two to a room: the density per room of six thousand people in the East London boroughs is higher than the towns of the Special Areas, Gateshead, Sunderland and South Shields. No fewer than one hundred and fifty thousand people in London live huddled together, in sleeping and waking, in sickness and health, in breathing and dying, three or more to a room.

Slum clearance had, of course, been going on. Under the 1923 Housing Act the Minister of Health made grants to local authorities towards the loss incurred in clearance schemes, the amount, an annual contribution, to be settled in mutual consultation, but

not to exceed fifty per cent of the average annual loss. Under that Act 14,000 houses have been erected. Under the 1930 Act subsidies were granted on the basis of the number of persons displaced, amounting annually to 45s. per person rehoused in the urban areas to 50s. in rural districts in England and Wales and 50s. or 55s. in Scotland. When the cost of land exceeds £3,000 per acre a special subsidy rate of 70s. per person rehoused is granted. By March 1934, 17,450 houses had been provided under this Act.

In 1933 a five-year programme of slum clearance was announced, with a programme which envisaged the demolition of 280,000 houses, of which 207,500 were in clearance areas, the others being scheduled for individual demolition. By the end of 1936–7 the programme had been extended to cover 266,000 houses. In rural areas the original programme envisaged the clearance of 14,000 houses: that was increased to 21,660 houses. By 31 December 1936, 100,355 houses had actually been demolished. At the same date approval had been given for 192,991 houses for replacement purposes, while 127,553 had been completed.

The Housing Act of 1935 laid down standards of overcrowding, and the survey, completed smoothly and efficiently by local authorities, reveals that of 8,923,523 dwellings inspected, 341,554, or 3·8 per cent, were overcrowded. An additional 380,000 (4·4 per cent) families were so near the borderline of overcrowding that only a slight variation of the overcrowding standard would have brought them below the datum line. The average overcrowded family was 74 per cent larger than the average family and occupied occupation approximately 37 per cent less. The worst overcrowding was found in the East End of London and the north-east of England. The degree of overcrowding in local authority owned houses was 5·1 per cent as compared with 3·7 per cent in privately owned houses.

The clearance of 300,000 houses in five years, however, even if the whole programme were achieved, would not even keep pace with the needs. If the standard of Manchester were adopted for the whole country, 1,000,000 houses would be needed for slum clearance. Mr. Philip Massey assessed the need in 1931 at 1,400,000 new

dwellings, to which would require to be added another 400,000 to meet population changes. The Council for Research on Housing Construction postulated the building of 350,000 houses (June 1934) in five years if slum clearance was to be effective, and concluded that 'an annual production for Great Britain of 250,000 dwellings for at least five, and probably ten, years is not incommensurate with the need', while *The Economist* estimated that the total required during 1934–44 was 1,918,000 or 200,000 houses annually.

Account has to be taken, too, of the increasing number of small families and the decreasing proportion of large families. This brings a new factor into the situation, especially as the decrease in the number of families will not take effect for ten years after the population itself begins to decline. PEP calculated that the increase in the number of families requiring separate dwellings for 1931–41 was 511,000. PEP also estimated the total requirements for the same period as 1,150,000 to 1,255,000 houses.

Housing needs are seriously aggravated by the present distribution of the national income, by which 0·4 per cent of persons having incomes receive 11·5 per cent, or £5,000 each, while 99·6 persons receive 88·5 per cent, or an average of £150 each. Only 19 per cent of the principal male wage-earners in this country earn more than sixty shillings per week: only 2·2 per cent earn wages of over seventy shillings per week. It is a safe assumption that the latter are the only members of the working-class who could within anything like reason pay rents in excess of eleven to twelve shillings per week. No less than 81 per cent of principal wage-earners receive less than £3 a week: of these 43·8 per cent receive from 50s. to 55s. per week, 27·5 per cent receive from 55s. to 60s. per week. Only this last section of the working-class could within anything like reason pay rents of from 9s. to 11s. per week. The submerged tenth below that could not reasonably be expected to pay rents of more than 8s. per week; but even in these calculations, which are on the basis of one-fifth of income for rent, the assumption that it is right for such poorly paid workers to expend that amount of

income on rent to the detriment of food, clothing, etc., is probably an injustice to the health and happiness of the people themselves. A full and adequate diet is as much an essential of a healthy population as an adequate supply of good houses, and the working-class should not be faced with the choice—the one or the other, or neither. Mr. Colin Campbell, presiding at the annual meeting of the National Provincial Bank, in January 1936, said: '. . . if the under-nourished classes of this country were able to enjoy a full diet, there would be an increased trade in foodstuffs amounting to about £200,000,000 a year, giving revived activity to British farming. . . .' Perhaps then, too, the neglected rural housing problem would receive the urgent attention it has needed for so long. Unemployed families, McGonigle and Kirby point out, show a woeful shortage of all dietary constituents except carbohydrates: when these families are removed to new housing estates and their rent commitments thereby increased by three or four shillings per week this deficiency is increased, with a consequent rise in all the mortalities—mortalities in no way due to the housing estates themselves, but due to the absurdity of a situation which presents the poorest section of the community with the cruel dilemma, either moderately good and sufficient food and bad housing or good housing and completely deficient food.

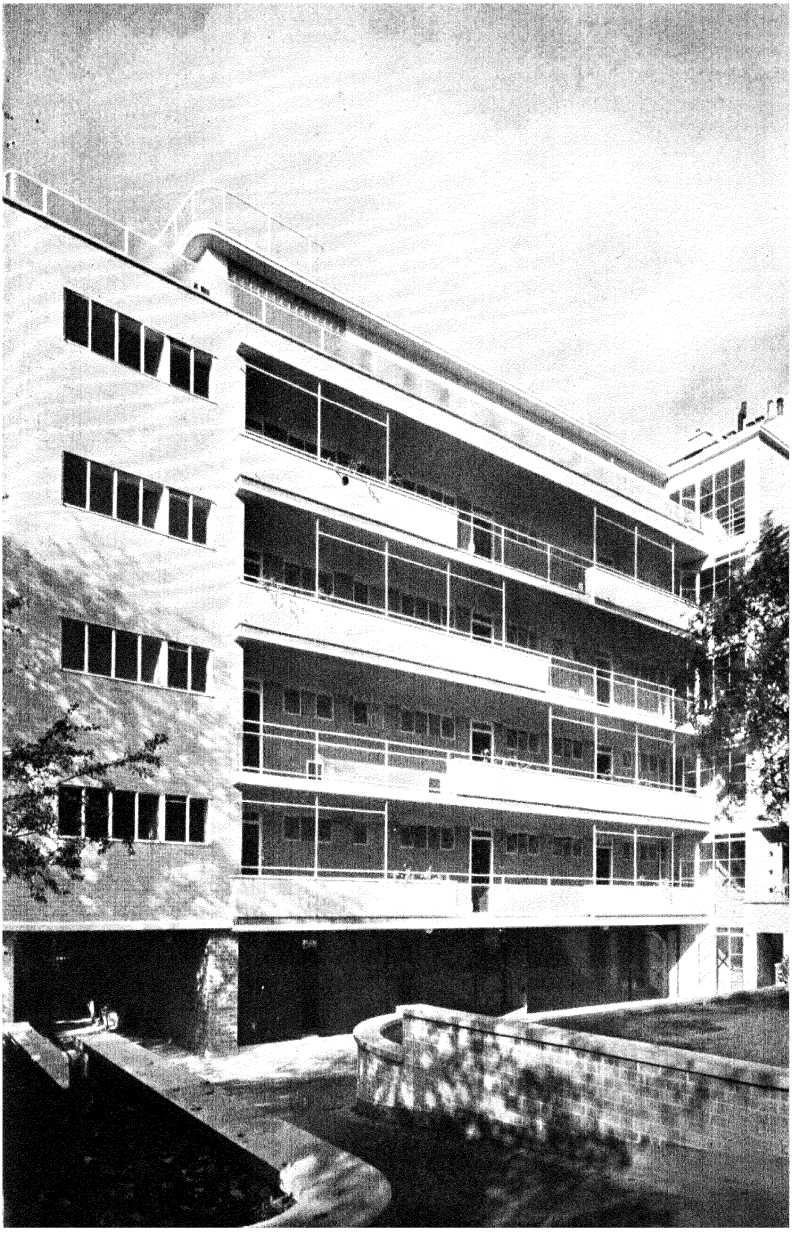
The Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1938, introduced into the House of Commons by Sir Kingsley Wood, as Minister of Health, provided that in respect of houses built by local authorities with the approval of the Minister for the housing of persons displaced from unfit houses as a result of demolition and closing orders and in pursuance of clearance, improvement or redevelopment operations for the rehousing of persons displaced from other houses in pursuance of redevelopment operations and for the purpose of abating overcrowding, an Exchequer contribution of £5 10s. per house per annum shall be payable for forty years. Under sub-sections 3 and 4 of Section 1 the subsidy of £5 10s. may be increased to £6 10s. in non-county boroughs, urban and rural districts where the level of working-class rents is substantially

below the standard for the particular type of district, and where the financial resources of the district are small in relation to the housing work to be done. Sub-section 2 of Section 1 makes provision in respect of flats built on expensive sites, the Exchequer contribution being graded according to the cost of the site per acre as set out in the Schedule of the Act. Section 2 of the Act provides that, in respect of houses built by local authorities with the approval of the Minister for members of the agricultural population, whether for slum clearance, overcrowding, or for general needs, the Exchequer contribution shall be £10 a year for forty years, which may be, in exceptional circumstances, increased up to a maximum of £12 a year. Section 3 of the Act provides that local authorities may, in special cases, make arrangements for the erection of houses for agricultural workers by persons other than themselves, and that in such cases the Exchequer contribution may be made available to the owners of houses up to £10 a year for forty years.

A significant contribution to the problem of housing the lowest-paid workers has been made by the Housing Societies recently co-ordinated under the National Federation of Housing Societies. In the opinion of Sir Reginald Rowe, the chairman, it is to-day only possible to cater for the lowest income group by voluntary housing societies acting either with or without State assistance. The Islington and Finsbury Housing Association, for example, lets flats at 2s. 9d. per room per week (inclusive). The Cambridge Housing Society lets two-bedroom non-parlour houses at 8s. a week inclusive. Each society pursues its own individual policy, and some, like the Kensington Housing Trust, build large blocks of flats, while the Hampshire Rural Cottage Improvement Society improve and reconstruct rural cottages. Before the war there were about sixty housing societies: to-day there are over three hundred, and some idea of the extent of the movement may be derived from the fact that the capital value of housing society property is approximately £15,000,000. The significance of the movement, however, is not the actual number of houses actually built or reconstructed, but in the attention it has paid to the housing needs of the very

poorest and to the many useful experiments it has conducted in the working-class housing created by it or under its management. This was specially important even at the beginning of the subsidising of housing, for much of the early subsidies, as Sir Reginald Rowe remarks, 'went largely into the pockets of builders who provided houses for the needier members of the black-coated workers'.

The needs of the middle classes, however, have been very largely met by the activities of the building societies. Before 1914, with assets of £65,000,000 and lending operations of under £10,000,000 annually, they were a considerable factor, but there was little to indicate the possibility of the amazing improvements which have been seen in the years between the wars. To-day their assets are not less than £710,000,000, while their lending transactions amount to some £140,000,000 a year. Of the 3,998,000 houses built since 1919, 2,885,000 have been built by private enterprise, and a great many of these have had their origin in building society funds. Out of every eleven persons in the United Kingdom one appears in the books of the building societies, either as a shareholder, depositor, or borrower. Between 1919 and 1939 nearly £1,350,000,000 has been lent for the purchase of houses, a great majority of which are occupied by their owners. An applicant for an advance from a building society fills up a form describing fully the property offered as security, the date of his purchase, the price he has paid, or is under contract to pay, the age of the property, its assessment for local rates, and any particulars necessary to establish the *bona fides* of the application. The society surveyor then inspects the property, and upon his report as to its security value depends the amount of the loan. Where the applicant can find a substantial part of the purchase money the society readily advances the balance. But if only a small deposit can be made, the normal loan is 75 per cent of the valuation—not the purchase price. There are means, however, by which up to 90 per cent or even 100 per cent of the valuation may be advanced if additional security is forthcoming. There is also a system of builders' pools whereby a builder, who is also the vendor of the property offered as security, guarantees the



LADBROKE GROVE
(Architect: Maxwell Fry)

difference between the normal advance and the excess over that sum, taking his guarantee by an agreed cash deposit with the lending society.

As the average number of non-subsidy houses built each year prior to the war was some 250,000, it is clear that the contribution of the building societies to the housing problem is a very considerable one.

At the same time, it remains true, as Sir Harold Bellman has pointed out, that the housing problem to-day is largely a poverty problem—poverty in the rural districts: poverty in the towns. Housing, however good, which cuts down the general standard of living of the inhabitants is only a part solution of the general problem of providing a suitable environment. It is probable that nothing would so quickly abolish the housing problem in Great Britain as a general rise in the wage levels of the population.

Something may be done, much has been done, by way of reducing costs and thereby rents. Experiments on the lines of the building guilds might be extended under more favourable circumstances than those which they encountered prior to their collapse in November 1922. This movement, begun by building operatives in Manchester in 1920, was one which spread rapidly. The guilds undertook the execution of local housing schemes on condition that the local authorities would pay the actual costs, which, in this case, included one not taken into account by the ordinary private enterprise firm—full-time wages, in bad as well as good weather, at the standard rate. The guilds could not, however, undertake to quote a fixed price, because they took no profit and could not stand any loss. Local authorities proved willing to accept the guilds' offers and many substantial savings were effected: at Bentley, in Yorkshire, the saving was nearly £200 per house; in South Wales, £150 per house; in numerous other cases £50 per house. The collapse of the Addison Act, however, killed this experiment almost completely, and in November 1922 the National Building Guild was taken over by a private undertaking, although the London Guild of Builders, the Scottish Building Guild, and other local guilds continued.

Interesting and important as such experiments may be, however, the primary need is to allow good houses to be supplied to the poorly paid at rents they can afford to pay.

Much has been done since Chadwick lodged his first protest against the insanitary conditions under which the labouring classes were living. To-day in housing estates all over the country hundreds of thousands of families are enjoying a new life. But much remains to be done.

Chapter III

HOUSING STANDARDS: DESIGN FOR LIVING

One can live without culture of any kind worth the name. One can live without music, ignorant of flowers, of trees, blind to the beauty of nature and to things made by man. One can live in squalor or on a bypass. Obviously one can. Thousands do. . . . Such is not the whole life. It is only half a life, deprived of half the pleasures which are open to us, and lacking in those finer instincts of order and clarity of thought which distinguish civilized man.

LORD SEMPILL

The average bungalow to-day wavers in appearance between the 'bijou baronial' and the 'Tudoristic': that is to say, it makes an exceedingly bad shot at looking like a stone castle built for the wicked uncle in the pantomime or like a primitive timber and daub dwelling built for a medieval agriculturist. If the owner were logical he would wear cheap tin armour or hodden grey. In fact he wears a cap and a reach-me-down and maybe a bowler hat and a gent's suiting on Sundays, because he is neither a knight nor a villein, but Mr. Smith of 'Osocosy'. What odd frustrated dream is it that makes him put his home into such makeshift fancy dress?

ANTHONY BERTRAM

I

Things which are acceptable to one generation are not acceptable to the next. This is true of housing standards as of everything else. Medical Officers of Health and Housing Committees would now be ashamed to have in their boroughs houses that would have been considered fairly good by well-meaning Victorians. Sir J. D. B. Fergusson, of the Ministry of Agriculture, is at one with other social experts when he says that one of the contributory factors in the decline of the rural population is the fact that rural housing does not comply with modern standards: '. . . thousands of young men and women have in recent years left the countryside and gone to the town because they were unable to get a good cottage where they could look forward to bringing up a family under the sort of

standard that modern life had led them to regard as reasonable. . . .' 1871, discontented at last with the squalor resulting from building houses in 'courts' and 'back-lands', adopted the byelaw street. 1941 looks with horror at the drabness and unimaginative lay-out of those bleak geometric rows and demands three-bedroomed homes set at twelve to the acre, in wide tree-lined streets, or, when faced with the apparent necessity of building flats, demands that they should be of the best modern design, set in large semi-public gardens and having restaurants, shopping centres and other amenities. On the other hand, there is a danger of a certain smug satisfaction when a comparison is made between the insanitary one- or two-roomed working-class hovel of the nineteenth century with the fairly bright, well-equipped working-class municipal house of to-day. It is fatally easy to assume that the whole community is at last decently housed.

There are, of course, certain legal standards. These cover questions of density, size of rooms, numbers of persons per room, and all houses built to-day must conform to them. Before dealing with these, however, it would be well to glance at the changing outlook which, during the past hundred years, made the standard of 1841 different from that of 1871, and that of 1881 different from that of 1941.

We have already shown how, in the nineteenth century, enlightened men and women urged upon Parliament the necessity for sanitary reform and persuaded both the Commons and the Lords that it was in the interests of the community to attend to drains, sewers, the dry lavatory, and the removal of garbage. For many years after the passing of the Public Health Act of 1848, the institution of local Boards of Health and the passing of the Nuisances' Removal Act of 1855, builders continued to erect the worst type of slum house without any restriction on their activities whatsoever. There was no regulation which could prevent a builder from condemning any number of his tenants to the sharing of sanitary conveniences; there was no regulation to prevent his building houses 'back-to-back' in rows, so that every visible house front was really

two houses; there was no restriction of the number of people he could cram into each house; there was no minimum size of each room. There was not even any insistence that the houses should be damp-proof. It was not until 1867 that Parliament turned its attention to the quality of houses themselves, apart from such elementary considerations as drainage, sewers and water-supply. The idea of 'housing standards' began to take shape. To Manchester City Council goes the credit of being the first corporation in the country to obtain (in 1867) a local Act whereby houses 'unfit for human habitation could be closed without compensation to the owner'. The same year saw the passing of the first byelaws regulating the building of new houses in Manchester, laying down minimum sizes for rooms and windows and providing for space round the house. The most important qualities in a house, summed up Professor Kerr in his book, *The Gentleman's House*, in 1865, are 'Privacy, Comfort, Convenience, Spaciousness, Salubrity, Aspect and Prospect, Cheerfulness and Elegance'. The Professor was not, of course, advocating these as necessary qualities in working-class houses. Nevertheless, bereft of capitals and translated into the terser language of to-day, these qualities do sum up the standard now regarded as necessary for every section of the community. The 1875 Public Health Act gave all local authorities power to issue building byelaws with regard to sizes of rooms, sufficiency of air space and the proper construction of houses. Where they were used these byelaws prevented the building of more of the worst type of slum houses. Although the houses built subsequent to this Act were no doubt more spacious, comfortable and convenient than their predecessors, the byelaw street is hardly noted for its cheerfulness and elegance, and since the houses gave directly on to the street, with the windows well below the eye-level of passers-by, privacy was not their chief attraction. Even this low standard, however, did not mean that the inhabitants of the slums could quit their hovels. The two extra panes of glass, the added square foot in the parlour, the fact that there were now a few square yards of back garden, all meant higher costs, with consequently higher rents.

Since twelve shillings a week was considered a good wage for a labourer of the time, he could not afford anything but the cheapest accommodation available. The byelaw street houses were well outside the limits of his income.

Medical Officers' reports (see page 43) showed that even these 'improved' houses left much to be desired. 'But what really happened?' asks Catherine Bauer. 'No new provision was made for residents of the cleared areas. . . . The perfectly natural result was that they adjourned to neighbouring slums.' It was not until 1890 that local authorities first began to adopt byelaws making the installation of proper damp-proof courses compulsory. Progress, we see, is slow. Standards that were condemned as bad and unsatisfactory in 1840 are outlawed by Acts passed fifty years later. After 1890, however, there was a general quickening of interest in improved standards of housing. New ideas, a wider culture resulting from the education of the working-classes, mass production and a slightly higher standard of living gave rise to an increased demand for better housing. The houses in the suburbs, not yet for the poorest but for the white-collar worker and the more 'respectable' artisan, were set neatly in rows. And even if bathrooms were still considered unnecessary, these houses reflected the marked improvement in the general level of taste and requirements.

In 1918 the Women's Housing Sub-Committee was pleading for fixed standards, for separate bathrooms (or where the bath must necessarily [*sic*] be in the scullery that some movable partition be granted to give a measure of privacy), and pleading, too, for that air, space, light and aspect which had hitherto been completely denied the working-class. That plea was the first articulate expression of the needs of working people—and especially of the needs of working women.

In 1917 a committee had been set up 'to consider questions of building construction in connection with the provision of dwellings for the working-classes in England and Wales and Scotland and report upon methods of securing economy and despatch in the

provision of such dwellings'. Sir John Tudor-Walters was appointed chairman, and among notable members was the late Sir Raymond Unwin. The rather stark official description did not suggest the value of the report which the committee made, and which was first published on the 24th October 1918.

The committee, having circularised local authorities throughout Great Britain, estimated that the total number of houses required to make good the urgent deficiency was 500,000. If the low standard of housing then in vogue remained, however, only 409,000 houses were required. Evidence was received from doctors, builders, architects, members of local authorities, housewives, town-planning experts, and representatives of working-class families. This was the first occasion in the history of housing in this country where with housing legislation, covering the provision of houses in such numbers as had never been dreamed of prior to the war, impending, a group of people, appointed by the legislature, deliberately set out to find (1) what were the requirements of the people who were to use the houses, and (2) how these requirements could be met.

Part IV of this historic report deals with the type of accommodation required by the working-classes and with designs to meet it. Section 86 (Part IV) raises 'the debatable point', whether 'a parlour should be provided in addition to a living-room and scullery'. The friendly, human language in which the report is couched is surprising in an official publication, and yet another mark of a new approach to the whole problem. 'The desire for the parlour or third-room', runs this section, 'is remarkably wide-spread both among urban and rural workers. The provision of a living-room of sufficient size, and of a scullery so equipped as to relieve the living-room of cooking and other such work, goes some way to meet the wishes of many of the tenants, particularly in view of the extra rent which the provision of a parlour must involve; nevertheless, it is the parlour which the majority desire. Numbers of individual tenants would undoubtedly be willing to sacrifice the size of the living-room and scullery in order to secure the parlour; some

would even be willing to adopt the old type of house with combined living-room and scullery in order that the second-room might be retained as a parlour . . . witnesses state that the parlour is needed to enable the older members of the family to hold social intercourse with their friends without interruption from the children, that it is required in cases of sickness in the house, as a quiet room for convalescent members of the family, or for any who may be suffering from a long-continued sickness; that it is needed for the youth of the family in order that they may meet their friends; that it is generally required for home lessons by the children of school-age, or for similar work of study, serious reading or writing on the part of any member of the family; that it is also needed for occasional visitors whom it may not be convenient to interview in the presence of the whole family. . . . We consider, therefore, that whenever possible a parlour should be provided and that, in all schemes, a large proportion of houses having parlours should be included. . . . We are convinced that the provision of a parlour will in the long run prove to be conducive to economy. We do not, however, consider that the parlour should be secured by cutting down the desirable minimum sizes of the living-room, scullery or other essential parts of the house. . . .'

The desire to keep all the cooking and dirtier work of the house to the scullery was strongly expressed, but it was agreed that while the scullery should be of sufficient size to allow this work to be conveniently carried on, it should not be large enough to tempt the occupants to use it as a living-room where no third-room was provided. Despite evidence that 'the need for economy' had led to the placing of baths in the sculleries of existing small cottages, the committee, 'realising the disadvantages of this custom', recommended separate bathrooms for all new houses.

The committee recommended, too, that houses should have three bedrooms. A proportion of houses, it was stated, should have four bedrooms for families requiring this additional accommodation. 'For such families . . . the use of the parlour as an extra sleeping apartment would be especially inconvenient, since in such

the second living-room is essential.' The size and placing of [illegible]der, cupboards and coal cellars received careful attention with a view to increased convenience for the housewife.

The committee recommended the following minimum standards for various rooms:

House without Parlour	*Floor Areas in sq. feet*
Living-room	180
Scullery	80
Larder	24
Bedroom No. 1	150
Bedroom No. 2	100
Bedroom No. 3	65
House with Parlour	
Parlour	120
Living-room	180
Scullery	80
Larder	24
Bedroom No. 1	160
Bedroom No. 2	120
Bedroom No. 3	110

In making these recommendations the committee drew attention to the fact that any reduction in these minimum areas would not result in a corresponding economy, as costs, it had found, did not fall in proportion to the reduction in accommodation. Fifteen years later the Minister of Health again emphasised this point, remarking that 'reduction in area of accommodation below the normal does not result in a *pro rata* reduction of cost'.

Having carefully considered the question of lay-out of new housing schemes the committee declared that densities of not more than twelve houses to the acre, or eight to the acre in agricultural areas, were desirable. Paragraph 349 of the report is also important: 'We recommend that every housing scheme submitted for approval shall be prepared by a competent architect, whose duties shall include the preparation of the lay-out plan and the design and

planning of all the houses.' A distance of seventy feet between facing houses was regarded as the minimum spacing, while main roads required wider spacing.

The standards laid down in the Tudor-Walters report have remained the basis for all municipal housing in Great Britain and have had an enormous influence in determining housing standards throughout the world. They have provided for a large section of the working-class population a standard of physical environment not thought possible in the pre-war period. The amazing contrast between the Tudor-Walters cottage in a municipal estate and the one- or two-roomed slum, often to be found almost cheek-by-jowl in the same town, tempted many to think that housing standards had reached their limit, and that the housing problem would cease to vex legislators and administrators alike when all the slum dwellers were rehoused in cottages of this kind. In practice the standards laid down were not always fully observed. But Tudor-Walters had established a Plimsoll line for housing.

The standard of occupation to be adopted for the rehousing of overcrowded families by the local authority is that laid down for slum clearance schemes, namely, that specified in Section 37 of the 1930 Act (now Section 136 of the Housing Act, 1936). This section provides that the local authority 'shall treat a house containing two bedrooms as providing accommodation for four persons; a house containing three bedrooms as providing accommodation for five persons; and a house containing four bedrooms as providing accommodation for seven persons'.

No mention was made in the Act of 1930 of the size of the bedrooms (see, however, 1935 Act) or of what was to happen to families of more than seven persons. Incidentally, it has often been brought to the notice of local authorities that large families of nine or more members are neglected in housing schemes, and that these families are often denied the benefits of modern housing because the authority would commit an offence under the 1935 Overcrowding Act if it allowed a family of this size to occupy one of its houses.

To meet this difficulty the Ministry of Health issued a circular on the 7th May 1936 which said:

'For a family of seven persons appropriate accommodation could be provided in a four-bedroom non-parlour type of house containing bedrooms of approximately 150, 120, 100 and 80 square feet, and a living-room of about 220 square feet, with a total superficial area of about 1,050 square feet. In certain cases if the local authority considers that the circumstances call for it, one substantial living-room of, say, 180 square feet, together with a smaller parlour of, say, 100 square feet, might be substituted for the single large living-room. In some cases this accommodation could be conveniently planned by arranging for a folding door between the two living-rooms. By such an arrangement fuel could be economised, as one fire could often be used to warm the two rooms.

'For a family consisting of eight persons a four-bedroom house with a superficial area of approximately 1,130 square feet would afford appropriate accommodation. The bedrooms might be approximately 150, 120, 120 and 100 square feet in area. The living accommodation would normally take the form of a living-room and a parlour.

'For families of more than eight persons the same general principle should be followed, that is, that a necessary increase of sleeping accommodation should be accompanied by a corresponding increase of living accommodation. Where there are nine persons in one family, appropriate accommodation might be provided in a four-bedroomed house, on conditions that the bedrooms were made large enough, e.g. so that the second bedroom had a minimum area of 130 square feet. In the case of very large families it may be necessary to provide for five or even six-bedroomed houses. Where this has to be done the Authority should, as far as possible, associate with each large house a small dwelling, e.g. one suitable for an aged couple, in such a way that, at some future date, the combined dwelling might be structurally altered into two separate family houses. In some areas, especially in rural districts, it may

be sufficient to add a bedroom or parlour with a bedroom over it to existing houses. Many plans of existing houses will be found to lend themselves to this arrangement.'

It was in the Housing Act of 1935 that overcrowding was first legally defined as follows: When the number of persons sleeping in the house is such that (1) any two of these persons being ten years old and more of the opposite sex (and not being husband and wife) must sleep in the same room, and (2) the relation to the number and floor area of the room exceeds the permitted number of persons as defined in Schedule 1 as under:

(*a*) where the house consists of

(1) one room	two persons
(2) two rooms	three persons
(3) three rooms	five persons
(4) four rooms	seven and a half persons
(5) five or more rooms	ten persons with an additional two persons in respect of each room in excess of five;

or

(*b*) the aggregate number obtained by reckoning for each room the number of persons thus:

Where the floor area is

(1) 110 square feet or more	two persons
(2) 90–110 square feet	one and a half persons
(3) 70–90 square feet	one person
(4) 50–70 square feet	half a person
(5) under 50 square feet	nil.

NOTE: Children under one year are not counted, but children from 1 to 10 years are counted as half a person each.

The Report of the Overcrowding Survey of 1936 showed that if the standard had prohibited the use of the living-room for sleeping purposes, the number of overcrowded families would have been 853,000 instead of 341,544. This would have meant that 500,000

new houses would have been needed to make good the shortage caused by overcrowding alone instead of the 200,000 estimated.

The following table, taken from the Report of the Overcrowding Survey in England and Wales, 1936, shows the size distribution of overcrowded families:

Size of family (equivalent number of persons)	*Overcrowded families of the size in Column 1*		*Percentage proportion which the number in Column 2 bears to the number of all families of the size in Column 1*
	Number	*Percentage of total overcrowded families*	
1	867	0·2	0·1
1½	267	0·1	1·3
2	5,254	1·5	0·2
2½	13,072	3·8	1·7
3	14,613	4·3	0·8
3½	31,643	9·3	6·5
4	38,087	11·2	3·4
4½	16,822	4·9	5·4
5	28,132	8·2	4·8
5½	32,062	9·4	17·3
6	41,703	12·2	15·7
6½	24,349	7·2	26·0
7	28,323	8·3	24·1
7½	16,010	4·7	33·7
8	19,517	5·7	41·7
8½	9,940	2·9	51·6
9	8,888	2·6	50·1
9½	4,425	1·3	63·4
10	3,541	1·1	59·8
10½	1,707	0·5	70·7
11	1,134	0·3	60·4
11½	497	0·1	67·4
12	378	0·1	48·7
12½ and over	323	0·1	40·4
TOTAL	341,554	100	

I

Materials of course have changed and will change. In 1919, when the building programme was accelerated to an unprecedented pace, both materials and labour were scarce and, therefore, dear. It was at this period that many local authorities turned their attention to materials other than the traditional brick, which, however, is still the predominating basis of house construction. The use of concrete blocks and poured concrete enabled unskilled labour to be employed in the absence of skilled bricklayers. On the Becontree Estate, for example, the L.C.C. in 1922 used both block and poured concrete with embedded uprights of metal piping. In the construction of flats, of course, concrete had many advantages and enabled construction to go ahead on a floor by floor basis, thus eliminating a considerable amount of 'wet time' for the workers and consequent disorganisation for the industry. The use of concrete in Great Britain, however, has never been so widespread as in certain continental countries, but even there there has been a reversion to brick construction and, in Scandinavia, to timber.

Timber housing makes nevertheless but slow progress in this country. A great deal of prejudice against the timber house still persists, and the litter of army huts with which the country was covered in the years subsequent to the war did little to dispel this. In Scandinavia, of course, the pre-fabricated timber house has made substantial contributions to the solution of housing problems there and such building is not without its advocates here. Prefabricated steel houses have been the subject of experiment (as well as of jokes and cartoons) in the United States for a number of years. The makers claim that such houses need cost a sum 10 per cent cheaper than similar timber houses, and that the problem of insulation (a troublesome feature of such houses) has been overcome by a double exterior surface outside the frame with an air space in between.

In Great Britain considerable controversy was aroused when, in 1923, Lord Weir proposed the building of steel houses for the

working-classes. Opposition was forthcoming from many quarters. The National Federation of Building Trades Operatives objected strenuously to the competition of engineers (paid at engineering union rates) in the building industry. The general public, including the working-classes themselves, looked askance at a new type of dwelling, and although about fifty local authorities took part in the steel house experiment, disputes at Leeds, Sheffield, Glasgow and elsewhere rendered the experiment abortive.

Experiments, however, continued, and in 1925 Parliament took an important step when it voted £25,000 for the conduct of experiments with new building materials and methods. The Building Research Station at Watford, which has conducted years of valuable work, was the result.

Materials which have influenced new methods of house construction in recent years include steel (all-steel, steel-frame, steel frame and roof), cast iron (as at Derby), concrete (pre-cast, block and poured), and timber. The advantages in using new materials depend largely on natural supplies in the neighbourhood of construction. Seldom is the cost less than that of brick construction.

It is for that reason (although many books have been written about changes in building materials) that brick remains the basis of building construction, and, particularly, house building in this country.

II

'It is on record', writes F. J. Osborn, 'that what ought to have been a town-building movement . . . became a housing movement.' It is equally true that the housing developments in Britain between the wars, which should have been recognised as an opportunity for refashioning our environment in a twentieth-century idiom, failed lamentably in two important ways. First, they failed in that little or no attempt was made to relate housing to any other aspect of living. The far-flung dormitory housing estate made the inhabitants strangers to the towns of which they were supposed to

be citizens. Instead of the garden city came the 'garden suburb'. Instead of the 'satellite town' came the housing estate. Instead of central replanning there was increased huddle; and 'warehouses', slick, sanitary but inhuman, were offered as dreary substitutes for architects' dreams of flats on the Corbusier model. That was a fundamental failure. Secondly, they failed in architectural construction and design. The failure in design was perhaps not so fundamental: it is nevertheless of great importance.

The speculative builder was responsible for the worst of the housing horrors. He knew 'what the public wanted'. He gave them something that was a wanton insult to their hardly articulate aspirations. He knew they wanted 'nice' houses, in 'pretty' gardens, in 'the better part of the town'. But they did not know about architecture: how could they? When they thought about it at all, they thought of it, as the Victorians did, as something 'applied' to a building—ornament, decoration, gables. And so, in the world of the air liner, vacuum-cleaners and television, they were given the pseudo-Tudor and the 'ye olde', the gimcrack, the ramshackle, the fifth-rate. It was the biggest confidence trick of the age.

That the victims were 'willing' did not make it any less a swindle. People who knew no better were easily fobbed off with 'decoration' as a substitute for design. The municipalities produced the best housing of the period—some of the housing estates were models of individual house and street architecture—but due to a curious inversion of social values, the tenants of the municipal houses, too, hankered after the leaded lights, the old-world beams, and the 'individuality' of the tea-cosy school of architecture. Subsidised housing was associated in their minds with poverty. The petty middle-class spoke of 'council houses' with contempt, and in a world of keeping up appearances, the Joneses must be right.

Structurally, many of the houses were as bad as their design. The National Housebuilders' Registration Council has made a good beginning in helping to eliminate bad construction and in safeguarding the interests of the consumer, but in the matter of

design there is as yet no authority to guide and protect the householder. The Ministry of Health has done some good educational work. It is curious, however, that when the Ministry produced a well-illustrated book contrasting, without comment, good design with bad, many of its readers preferred the bad to the good. This preference was not confined to one section of the community. A group of public schoolboys when shown the illustrations at the Housing Centre, London, almost invariably chose the badly designed house. Many organisations are attempting to raise the level of general taste. The Design and Industries Association, the Council for Art and Industry, the National Register of Industrial Art Designers, the Schools of Art, the Domestic Science Training Colleges and other organisations are spreading a knowledge of the beauty which results when an object is simply created in the terms of its use, whether it be a kettle, a cottage, or a cathedral. Broadcasting, too, has helped the process of education. But just as important as propaganda is the educational value of good design met in daily life. Nothing finer or more consistent has been accomplished in Britain than the work of the architects employed by the Miners' Welfare Committee in the construction of pithead baths. These buildings, light and gracious, as straightforward in their lines as a locomotive or a refrigerator, stand out in the desolate wastes of the Rhondda Valley or the Lanarkshire mining areas as symbols of twentieth-century civilisation and of the promise that such a civilisation can hold for all men. Flats, such as Highpoint, Highgate, designed by Tecton, under the brilliant direction of Lubetkin, point the way to the right treatment of one aspect of urban development. The cottages at Tewin, designed by Mary Crowley and Cecil Kemp, show that architectural essays in this less spectacular form of building can be as arresting and even more delightful. Shop design, as in Maxwell Fry's treatment of the London Electricity Company's showrooms in Regent Street, suggests a shopping thoroughfare of to-morrow. Boots' factory at Beeston, Northamptonshire, by Sir Owen Williams, K.B.E., or the Roche Products factory at Welwyn Garden City, designed by

O. R. Salvisberg and C. Stanley Brown, foreshadow the industrial zones of our post-war towns. The elegance, dignity and order of many of the London Passenger Transport Board underground stations, the work of the designers of the new London University, Holden, Adams, and Pearson, contrast with the dingy, Victorian muddle of some of the older railway termini.

Here and there, too, are examples of buildings planned coherently as town or community units. The village universities of Cambridgeshire indicate how sweetness and light may be introduced into the life of the village and the scattered rural community. Stirling produced results as admirable as the scheme was daring when the County Council tore down a derelict mining village and created a new village (Westquarter) on a site some miles away from the old. Manchester stands alone among the great municipalities in having produced the nearest approach to a satellite town—Wythenshawe, a completely integrated design, the work of Mr. Barry Parker. Liverpool's able city architect, Mr. L. H. Keay, who has produced some of the best housing schemes in Britain, has combined, in one pattern, housing, industry, education and recreation in Liverpool's daughter town of Speke. The great trading estates—the result of the work of the Special Areas Commissioners—Treforest, Team Valley and Hillingdon—are models of the clean, smokeless, efficient and even beautiful, factory areas that must replace the ugly smoke-laden squalor that was in the nineteenth century synonymous with heavy and light industries alike. Other municipalities are beginning to realise the need for planned decentralisation both of population and industry into separate communities, designed for use and amenity. Kincorth, the self-contained estate now being created by the City of Aberdeen, promises to be an excellent example of the smaller unit. Welwyn Garden City remains, however, as the only piece of urban development attempted in Britain between the wars which was designed for living and industry, for social life, for agriculture, and to satisfy the common need for a balance between town and country life.

It is the business of the planner and the designer to give expres-

WELWYN GARDEN CITY: AERIAL VIEW

PARKWAY, WELWYN GARDEN CITY

These houses are within a few minutes' walk of the factory area, the shopping centre, schools, hospitals, cinemas, theatres, inns and restaurants, churches, tennis courts, golf courses, swimming pool, and the open country. The houses are, briefly, related to every aspect of living

sion to the unfulfilled, often unexpressed, desire of the ordinary citizen for harmony and beauty in his daily life. If, therefore, design influences our future developments, we can look forward to the day when our lives will be spent in houses, offices, factories, in towns and in a country, at once beautiful and efficient. To-day only a tiny minority of the population knows the meaning of harmony in physical environment. But the machine has made beauty possible for all. Who does not know the beauty of the 'cheap' Czechoslovakian glass sold in every sixpenny store before the war? There is no reason at all why the very best designers should not use their talents to make beauty universally available. Cutlery designed by Jensen should be within the reach of all. In recent years the importation of Finnish furniture, strongly built to stand the roughest use and yet elegant, was making simple furniture (previously the most expensive of all furniture) a matter of taste rather than of income. The *décor* of the house of even the humblest labourer should bring him daily delight and beauty. His house, whether terraced house or cottage, should take its place in a street designed to one graceful pattern. The street itself should lead to harmonious shopping centres, to factory areas, to civic centres enshrining the spirit of democracy as completely as the Winter Palace embodied the idea of the Czarist régime in Russia. The town should be set against a background of countryside devoted to agriculture and the recreation of his body and his spirit, the whole part of the pattern of national life, integrated, synthesised, co-ordinated, positively planned for human health and happiness.

Chapter IV

BUILDING COSTS

If our Cities are to be re-built on the best possible lines after the war . . . there must be a great deal of money and plenty of drive and enthusiasm among those actually doing the job, if anything effective has to be done.

SIR ERNEST SIMON

The 'humbug' of finance!

J. M. KEYNES

There is probably no aspect of the housing problem about which more has been written than the effect of subsidies on building costs. There are two points of view. The Conservatives, in the main, contend that subsidies are a waste of money and that the grants serve mainly to raise building costs, and that, therefore, it is the builder and not the tenant who gains. They also argue that the abolition of subsidies lowers building costs. Reference to the history of the Addison Act (see Chapter II) shows just what amount of substance there is in this argument. If all Housing Acts gave financial assistance in the unhappy-go-unlucky manner of the 1919 Act, then the worst foreboding of the most pessimistic would be more than justified. The Labour Party, on the other hand, contends that subsidies cannot influence costs, and that the rises in prices which have followed are due principally, if not solely, to profiteering, and they argue that the effective way to safeguard the subsidy method is by restricting opportunities for profiteering. *Post hoc* but not *ergo propter hoc* is the Labour view. Sir Ernest Simon has put forward what is essentially the sound view on this question—a view which is subscribed to by most economists. If the demands made upon the building trade, he argues, are equal to its capacity to meet them, then prices should equal, and, in general, will equal the costs incurred by the contractors—costs which, of

course, include their normal profits. It follows from that argument that the granting or the withholding of subsidies only has an effect on building prices in proportion to the changes in the demand for building subsequent upon the grant or its abolition. If the intention of a subsidy is to bring about an increased production by the building industry, and if the capacity of the industry is in itself insufficient, then prices will undoubtedly rise. If, however, there is a sufficient supply of labour, then prices will not rise because of the subsidy. In 1933, for example, it was estimated that the building trade was capable of producing 250,000 houses per annum. If a subsidy had been provided to bring production almost up to that limit, then prices would not have necessarily—or even probably—risen.

The argument outlined above can be well illustrated by a consideration of the upward movement in building prices, which began in October 1923 and which reached 20 per cent higher by June 1924, so that a cottage which cost £388 to build in December 1923 cost £413 in June 1924. After the failure of the Addison Act, the demands upon the building industry both by local authorities and private enterprise were so small that the industry found no difficulty in coping with them. Local authority building had, in fact, practically ceased, private enterprise building was comparatively a mere trickle. During 1924, however, the effect of the Chamberlain subsidy was to increase the total production by about one-third. 'But', says Sir Ernest Simon, 'the increase in the capacity of the trade, as measured by the number of persons employed, was very slight, and, as might be expected . . . there was a large upward movement in building prices. . . .' The industry had indeed failed to find a solution to the problem, which resulted partly from the reluctance of the Building Trades Unions to allow a relaxation of the rules concerning the entry of new employees into the industry. Mr. Wheatley solved that problem in 1924. He did not, however, succeed, because of the fall of the Labour Government, in passing a further Act fixing the prices of building materials. The result was that while in 1925 there was an increase

of nearly 50 per cent in the total number of houses built, the cost of building throughout that year was 25 per cent above what it had been in 1923. 1926 and 1927 saw a rapid increase in the total number of houses built, and this was accompanied by a continual expansion of the building trade, which employed nearly 20 per cent more people in 1927 than in 1923. In 1925 and 1926 building prices remained at the level reached at the end of 1924, and in 1927 they fell below the 1924 level. 'The inference may be drawn', says Sir Ernest Simon, 'that subsidies (apart from those for building on expensive sites) only increase prices when the effect of the subsidy is to exceed the capacity of the industry to produce the number of houses the subsidy is intended to bring into being.'

It is curious, however, that one of the deleterious effects of subsidies has been revealed by an organisation which certainly had no intention of doing so. In 1934 was published the first Report of the Council for Research on Housing Construction. An exceedingly able report, it is invaluable for its study of housing costs, but it is unfortunately tendencious in its advocacy of flats—or tenements—for the central areas of cities. At the same time, it should be pointed out that the writer—the more or less anonymous writer—of the report, while arguing for tenements, qualifies his exposition by a statement of the Council's belief in a policy of progressive decentralisation of industry, which would remove large portions of the population and its work to new and well-planned towns as one of the most fundamental planning needs. Not perceiving, however, that it is the upward tendency of buildings in the centre of a city which is the motivating force behind the flight to the suburbs, the Council came to the conclusion that the only way to stop ribbon development and the like was to erect four and five storey tenement buildings, arranged in such a way as to give up to sixty dwellings to the acre. Even the fact that this would produce a density of 250 to 300 persons to the acre—a density equal to some of the worst slum densities in the country—is swallowed with equanimity by the Council. That was tragic, that was fatal. But it was even more

tragic that the British Labour Party, which, through Mr. Wheatley, Mr. Johnston and others, had done so much to raise housing standards for the working-class, ultimately swallowed the same specious reasoning. The Council concluded that it would be possible to create a five-roomed flat for £424. In September 1937 the cost of a flat of 622 average area feet super was £577, as against £468 for a parlour cottage house of 1,074 average area feet super. Something was wrong with the calculation somewhere. The calculation was even more hopelessly wrong when it is considered that from 1936 to 1939 the actual costs have varied from £483 (minimum) to £603 (maximum). The Exchequer grant under the 1930 Act is payable annually for forty years at £2 5s. per person, £2 10s. per person in agricultural areas, and £3 10s. per person where dwellings are provided in tenements of more than three storeys on land costing more than £3,000 per acre. The effect of this is to give 1s. 2d. per person per week for sixty years for the dweller rehoused in a tenement, as against ninepence per person per week for sixty years for the dweller rehoused in a cottage. Worse than that, the effect is to maintain high land values in the centre of large towns—in London the L.C.C. very often pays as much as £13,000 per acre for land for housing purposes—and to make it quite impossible for a local authority either to leave cleared sites unbuilt upon or to build upon them at a reasonable density. Here there is a case, not against the subsidy, which, as we have already pointed out, is absolutely essential so long as the wage level of the British working-class remains at the present wretched average of less than £3 a week for the principal wage-earner in more than 80 per cent of families, but a case against the misuse of legislative power which was intended to raise the whole standard of existence of the working-class and not to debase that standard in any particular. It would be a supreme tragedy if it were to be found that those who profess to hold the interests of the working-classes most dearly were to prove in fact to be the people who most easily surrendered the fine standards established as a result of the propaganda and the experience of such men as Howard, Tudor Walters, and Sir Raymond Unwin.

BUILDING COSTS

In building a house the basic first cost is the price of land, which varies from £50 in the heart of the country to £20,000 per acre in the heart of the city. It is clear that it is quite impossible to build houses for the working-class to be let at rents they can afford to pay (or begin to afford to pay) even with a reasonable subsidy on land costing up to £20,000 per acre, and here there is a danger that the whole tragedy of 1919–21 will happen all over again. Under the 1919 Act much of the money paid by the State towards rehousing went into the pockets of manufacturers and builders (see page 46). To-day much of the money is swallowed up in high land costs. This process is heightened and accelerated by Section 106 of the Sixth Schedule of the 1936 Act, which provides for an Exchequer contribution towards the expenses of local authorities in erecting, with the approval of the Minister, blocks of flats of not less than three storeys on expensive sites. This subsidy is payable annually for a period of forty years in respect of each flat the building of which was commenced on or after the 1st February 1935, and is on a graduated scale per flat according to the cost of the site, including the cost of developing the site. The scale is as follows: where the cost of the site as developed per acre exceeds £1,500 but does not exceed £4,000 the annual Exchequer subsidy is £6 per flat; where it exceeds £4,000 but not £5,000, £7 per flat; exceeding £5,000 but not £6,000, £8 per flat; where it exceeds £6,000, £8 per flat, increased by £1 for each additional £2,000 or part of £2,000 in the cost per acre of the site as developed. This is to put a premium on a form of building which is socially wrong, which represents the most serious injury to the standards established by the best housing reformers for the working-classes, which the Ministry knows to be wrong and which local authorities know to be wrong. The evil of the scheme is again increased by Section 107 of the Act, which states that the Minister *may* make a contribution not exceeding £5 per annum per dwelling when accommodation other than in flats is provided on sites of high value, especially when the Minister of Health's Memorandum D on the Financial Provisions of the Act makes it abundantly clear that before a

subsidy will be granted for other than flat development the local authority must furnish evidence showing that the carrying out of the programme in this way would impose an undue burden on the district.

In discussing this problem it is interesting to take account of the following paragraph from the evidence submitted to the Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population by the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association:

'In the statement issued by the Ministry of Health with the Housing (Financial Provisions) Bill (February 3, 1938) the following estimates of the "ultimate annual charge" for housing under the new Bill are given (the subsidies being for forty years in each case):

HOUSING BILL, 1938; PROPOSED SUBSIDIES

	Number of dwellings	*Annual charge on Exchequer*	*Annual charge on local rates*	*Total*
		£	£	£
Flats on expensive sites	60,000	900,000	450,000	1,350,000
Houses or flats on other sites	270,000	1,500,000	750,000	2,250,000
Agricultural cottages	30,000	310,000	30,000	340,000

'It is important to note, in studying this table, that normal housing development in prosperous and in healthily growing towns is not included, for no subsidies are granted in such cases. The subsidy is a support to what must be regarded in this context as the economically weak areas—the overgrown and overcrowded cities, towns dependent on declining industries, and the denuded agricultural areas. The greater the city the more it needs this support, and for the 60,000 dwellings on expensive sites the State and the local authorities are to incur a loss over forty years of a total of £54,000,000, or £900 per dwelling. If it is capitalised (at say 22

years' purchase) the loss is £29,700,000, or £495 per dwelling. Clearly with all the calls there are upon the Exchequer, this expenditure is not lightly incurred.

'It is sanctioned only because it is a dire necessity. In the opinion of the Association this dire necessity is the result of a long-continued uneconomic and disastrous form of city growth, which State policy has not only tolerated but facilitated in innumerable ways. Housing under the Housing Acts, now an important part of town development, could, if guided under a national plan, influence the trend. Actually it has followed the trend. But in doing so it has reinforced it. Of the 1,390,000 houses built and building under the Housing Acts up to March 31st, 1937, 1,128,500 were in towns and urban districts. The capital sum expended to date is of the order of £750,000,000. Over £180,000,000 has already been paid out in State subsidies, and when present programmes are completed the Exchequer charge will be £17,250,000 per annum. The average rate charge is £4,000,000, or 3½d. in the £, and is expected to rise by another 1d. This is a lot of money to pay out on the theory that workers must be housed wherever industry goes. Much of the loss could have been avoided if a policy of decentralisation had been pursued as proposed by the Association in 1919.'

The National Council for Research on Housing Construction estimated that 'as high flat development becomes more popular than it is now, then costs due largely to unfamiliarity will decrease'. In the meantime the cost of flats remains substantially higher than the cottage type of development without its amenities or its suitability for family life. Nor, when contemplating the main problem of rehousing the lower income groups, is it just to consider the 'luxury flats' of the London West End and elsewhere. These contain amenities it would be, and has proved, impossible to provide in municipally erected tenements. The middle-class inhabitants of the 'luxury flat' have cars in which to escape to the country: many have week-end cottages. The working-class family condemned to live in a tenement is cut off from the country fifty, at least, out of the fifty-two weeks in the year. The whole trend of the present

subsidy is to bring land valued at £15,000 to £20,000 per acre economically within the scope of subsidised building. It maintains high land values and even causes them to rise—a thoroughly vicious and anti-social result.

The conveyance of land from one owner to another is a transfer of property subject to stamp duties equivalent to 1 per cent on amounts over £500. The stamp duty is payable by the purchaser. The purchaser is obliged to employ a solicitor, and the Solicitor's Remuneration Act lays it down that the charge for investigating title, completing conveyance, etc., is equal to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the first thousand pounds, 1 per cent on the second and third thousand pounds, $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the fourth to tenth thousand pounds, and $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent on each further thousand pounds up to one hundred thousand pounds. In 1925 solicitors were empowered to add $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent to their remuneration in transactions not exceeding £50,000. This, however, was reduced to 25 per cent in 1932 so far as High Court business and reference to Arbitration were concerned. In non-contentious business and in transfers with registered titles the scale is $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent on a purchase price of £1,000, $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the second and third thousand pounds, $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent on the fourth and fifth thousand pounds, $\frac{1}{5}$ per cent on the sixth to tenth thousand pounds, and $\frac{1}{10}$ per cent on each succeeding thousand pounds up to £100,000, provided that where the purchase price exceeds £50,000 the amount chargeable shall be either according to scale or reckoned as if the transaction were the value of £50,000, whichever is the greater.

Valuation by a surveyor is a further item of preliminary costs, the fees in this case being at the rate of one guinea per cent for the first £1,000 of valuation, half a guinea per cent on the next £1,000, and a quarter of a guinea per cent thereafter.

The most important of the charges incidental to land purchase, however, is the loss of interest during the development period. It is necessary therefore to add to the original capital outlay a percentage sufficient to cover interest charges incurred during the non-productive period, which is likely to vary from six to eighteen

months, with a minimum allowance of 2 and a maximum of 6 per cent on the value of the land on this account.

Factors affecting the cost of building (including maintenance) to be taken into account in purchasing land are steep slopes, which should be avoided; liability to flooding; subsoil foundations with a view to avoiding damp; height above sea-level and exposure to wind; where colliery workings are present the liability to subsidence; the effect of near-by noxious industries.

Bricks constitute from 15 to 25 per cent of the total materials cost of working-class houses. Bricks and bricklayers' wages together constitute up to approximately 31 per cent of the total building cost.

Timber, including joinery, constitutes 15 to 25 per cent of the total all-in building cost of an A3 type house. Timber prices are, in the main, controlled by factors outwith the United Kingdom, although the tariff and quota policy of the British Government has its effect, and the increase of the importation of Canadian timber should effect considerable reductions in price.

Building costs vary from district to district, but it is nevertheless possible to arrive at an average. Rate charges, however, vary much more widely, and it is not so easy to come to a conclusion regarding their average level and trend. In working-class houses rates are usually collected by the landlord together with the rent. Two factors enter into the calculation: (1) the assessment placed on the property and (2) the poundage levied on that assessment. It follows that a high assessment combined with a low poundage is much the same, in fact, as a low assessment with a high poundage. The local authority with a low poundage may have a high effective rate by making a high assessment. Usually, however, a high poundage indicates financial stringency in the local authority's area, and is often accompanied by stricter assessment where the pressure is not so great and the poundage charge is less. There is no standard method of assessment throughout the country.

Rateable value is arrived at by a calculation of gross value—the rent which a tenant could reasonably be expected to pay, less an

allowance for repairs. In 1934 the average local rate for the whole country was 10s. 9¼d. in the £ against 12s. 5¼d. in the £ in 1929. Actually rates varied from under 5s. in the £ in agricultural parishes to rates of almost 20s. in the £ in the depressed areas. These are important factors taken into consideration by large estate developers, who are not likely to choose, for large-scale development, either the industrialised areas or completely rural areas.

The following tables are of some interest in that they show how wide a selection of areas is available where rates are not excessive.

NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTIES AND COUNTY BOROUGHS LEVYING VARIOUS RATES IN THE £, 1933–4

	Under 10/-	*10/- to 11/-*	*11/- to 12/-*	*12/- to 13/-*	*13/- to 14/-*	*14/- to 15/-*	*15/- to 16/-*	*16/- to 17/-*	*Over 17/-*
Administrative Counties:									
England	17	14	10	6	—	2	1	—	3
Wales	1	1	—	—	3	4	—	—	—
County Boroughs:									
England	12	10	11	9	9	5	11	4	7
Wales	—	—	—	2	—	—	1	—	1

The second table continues this analysis in more detail by discriminating between the various types of local authority, and illustrates the divergence between urban and rural rates.

COMPARISON OF RATES LEVIED OR LEVIABLE BY 1,724 LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS, 1933–4 (ENGLAND AND WALES)

	Under 10/-	*10/- to 12/-*	*12/- to 14/-*	*14/- to 16/-*	*16/- to 18/-*	*Over 18/-*
Metropolitan Boroughs	13	9	4	2	1	—
County Boroughs	12	21	20	17	9	4
Other Boroughs and other Urban Districts	246	362	240	93	41	30
All Urban Areas	271	392	264	112	51	34
General Rate leviable in Rural Districts	426	94	51	23	5	1

Some assumption must be made with regard to rates in order to arrive at an inclusive rent. We believe the adoption of £12 as the average rateable value, and 11s. as the average poundage, to be adequate, giving an annual charge of £6 12s., or rather more than 2s. 6d. per week. While the poundage adopted may be open to criticism as being on the low side for certain areas, there is some margin for variation in the adoption of a rateable value as high as £12. The same weekly charge would result from any of the following combinations of assessment and poundage:

Rateable value	*Rates in the £*
£ s. d.	s. d.
13 0 0	10 0
12 10 0	10 7
12 0 0	11 0
11 10 0	11 6
11 0 0	12 0
10 10 0	12 7
10 0 0	13 2

As water rates are generally collected by the landlord, together with the local rate, a further allowance must be added on this account. The Metropolitan Water Board's rate is levied at 6 per cent of the rateable value of the property. We have adopted an average of 5 per cent which, on £12 rateable value, brings inclusive rate charges up to £7 4s., or 2s. 9d. per week.

In certain areas additional rates are levied, generally for the purpose of drainage in fen counties, or, over very limited areas, for upkeep of local amenities. These are not common, and may safely be ignored.

The running costs include allowance for repairs, insurance to cover damage by fire, and property owners' liability, an allowance for default in rate payment on houses standing unlet, and the cost of management. These running costs on a cottage development should, PEP estimates, not exceed about £5 10s. 0d. per annum. The cost of building land is, of course, an important factor. It is

impossible to make a hard and fast estimate of cost on this account, and, in practice, sites are selected within the limits of a capital cost predetermined with regard to all-in costs. PEP has tabulated a minimum cost based on the conditions of January–March 1934 for a three-bedroomed non-parlour cottage of 760 square feet, which is assumed to be part of a scheme of some size.

MINIMUM COST BASED ON CONDITIONS OF JANUARY–MARCH, 1934

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Capital Cost:		
Building		260
Land and Development		60
		£320
Economic Return:		
Interest at 4 per cent		12 16 0
Sinking Fund at 2 per cent (redemption period 30 to 35 years) on building cost only		5 4 0
Running Costs:		
Repairs, about	3 10 0	
Insurance, about	0 4 0	
Vacancies and Defaults (1 per cent of rent)	0 6 0	
Management (4 per cent of rent)	1 4 0	
		5 4 0
Rates:		
Allowed at 11s. in £ on £12 rateable value	6 12 0	
Water Rate at 5 per cent of rateable value	0 12 0	
		7 4 0
Inclusive Rent, per year		30 8 0
„ „ per week		11 8

Every reduction in all-in capital costs of £20 is equivalent, all things being equal, to almost 6d. per week off rents.

The question of building municipal housing schemes by 'direct labour' is one which has aroused considerable controversy, a controversy accentuated and embittered when made a political issue. The Labour Party Local Government Department, however, states categorically that direct labour should be regarded as a business

proposition. 'There is no "principle" about it—it is a matter of getting a job done in the most satisfactory way, and its adoption or otherwise should be decided on that basis.' Nevertheless many successful direct labour schemes have been carried out, and in a memorandum dated June 1936 the Labour Party Local Government Department tabulates the cost of houses and flats built by direct labour by Liverpool, Bligh and Leigh Borough Councils, and by Barry, Chester-le-Street, Edmonton, Hebburn, Houghton-le-Spring, and Newburn Urban District Councils, showing net savings per house, as compared with the lowest contractor's price, ranging from £2 1s. 4d. in the case of Houghton-le-Spring Urban District Council to £96 16s. 7d. in the case of Edmonton Urban District Council. The memorandum declares that each case must be decided on its merits, and that (1) overhead costs must be spread over a sufficient number of houses, (2) the management must be capable and not subject to undue interference by the committee, (3) it is inadvisable to form a special and entirely new and inexperienced organisation to undertake highly specialised construction, (4) continuity of direct labour is essential if it is to be established as a sound proposition. Among the biggest direct labour operations are those carried out by Manchester.

Professor J. Harry Jones, member of the Barlow Commission, has recently pointed out that the tragedy of the war has given birth to an opportunity never equalled in the past. Professor Jones added the warning, however, that the goodwill which war curiously engenders might be dissipated very soon after the peace, and that those who, while the struggle is keenest, are willing to contemplate vast schemes of reconstruction for our bombarded cities, may be the first to approve economy cuts soon after the Armistice. He has a vision of a new and a fiercer Geddes wielding a larger and a keener axe. This danger is obvious to anyone who has followed the ebb and flow of expenditure on housing and town planning in Great Britain between the wars. It is worth remembering that during the whole period between 1919 and

1939 the total Exchequer contribution to housing and town planning in this country was a mere £208,424,000, or just enough money to keep the present war going for fourteen days. This distortion of a civilised sense of economics must not be allowed to obstruct replanning after the war. If money can be found for destruction money can also be found for construction for human use. The warning of Mr. J. M. Keynes, given at the Housing Centre, London, that no 'humbug' of Finance should be allowed to stand in the way of our plans for reconstruction was as timely as it was impressive coming from so responsible an economist.

Sir Ernest Simon has made the same plea. If we are to avoid the spectre of post-war depression, with all the grim unemployment and waste of human life that that would involve, we must absorb the men and women who will be released from war-time service. No scheme of Public Works will be adequate to meet so great an emergency. Only the re-building of Britain will provide scope for their energies and give purpose to their lives. Money, whatever the Bank of England may say, must not be allowed to stand in the way of the fulfilment of their dreams.

GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS IN RESPECT OF HOUSING IN ENGLAND AND WALES[1]

(*a*) NUMBERS OF HOUSES

Financial Year	*Numbers of dwellings (completed by the end of each financial year) towards the expenses of which Government contributions were made*								
	Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919	*Housing (Additional Powers) Act, 1919*	*Housing, etc., Act, 1923*	*Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1924*	*Housing (Rural Workers) Acts, 1926 to 1938*	*Housing Act, 1936 (Sec. 105)*	*Housing Act, 1936 (Secs. 106, 108)*	*Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1938*	*Totals*
		(*a*)							
1919–20	715	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	715
1920–21	17,597	11,208	—	—	—	—	—	—	28,805
1921–22	100,516	29,441	—	—	—	—	—	—	129,957
1922–23	159,002	39,179	—	—	—	—	—	—	198,181
1923–24	169,526	39,186	8,140	—	—	—	—	—	216,852
1924–25	172,428	39,186	70,421	2,486	—	—	—	—	284,521
1925–26	173,515	39,186	149,043	29,764	—	—	—	—	391,508
1926–27	174,397	39,186	241,649	90,055	—	—	—	—	545,287
1927–28	174,593	39,186	328,516	181,574	44	—	—	—	723,913
1928–29	174,603	39,186	381,972	232,900	836	—	—	—	829,497
1929–30	174,635	39,186	436,633	288,576	1,922	—	—	—	940,952
1930–31	174,635	39,186	436,633	343,639	3,377	—	—	—	997,470
1931–32	174,635	39,186	436,633	411,135	4,775	2,429	—	—	1,068,793
1932–33	174,635	39,186	438,047	460,718	5,787	8,491	—	—	1,126,864
1933–34	174,635	39,186	438,047	508,426	6,750	17,569	—	—	1,184,613
1934–35	174,635	39,186	438,047	520,298	8,280	41,231	—	—	1,221,677
1935–36	174,635	39,186	438,047	520,298	10,054	80,611	—	—	1,262,831
1936–37	174,635	39,186	438,047	520,298	11,875	136,044	1,070	—	1,321,155
1937–38	174,635	39,186	438,047	520,298	14,762	195,246	2,852	—	1,385,026
1938–39	(*b*)174,635	39,186	(*b*)438,047	520,298	18,482	261,875	9,000*	16,000*	1,477,523*

(*a*) These houses were the subject of lump sum grants and do not attract continuing annual payments.

(*b*) In addition, Government contributions are included in the expenditure shown below in respect of :

(i) 14,869 houses (1,103 under the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919, and 13,766 under the Housing, etc , Act, 1923) provided under Rehousing Schemes.

(ii) 130 demonstration houses—Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919—years 1925–6 and 1926–7.

(iii) 50 Tuberculosis Ex-Service Men's Cottages—Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919—years 1924–5, 1925–6 and 1926–7.[2]

*These figures are provisional.

(*b*) AMOUNTS PAID

Financial Year	*Amounts of Government contributions paid in each financial year*								
	Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919	*Housing (Additional Powers) Act, 1919*	*Housing etc., Act, 1923*	*Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1924*	*Housing (Rural Workers) Acts, 1926 to 1938*	*Housing Act, 1936 (Sec. 105)*	*Housing Act, 1936 (Secs. 106, 108)*	*Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1938*	*Totals*
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1919–20	20,455	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20,455
1920–21	568,749	2,528,552	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,097,301
1921–22	4,568,942	4,540,424	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,109,366
1922–23	7,227,911	2,427,487	—	—	—	—	—	—	9,655,398
1923–24	7,850,014	1,693	6,108	—	—	—	—	—	7,857,815
1924–25	7,951,582	—	96,665	1,885	—	—	—	—	8,050,132
1925–26	7,305,432	—	439,641	88,683	—	—	—	—	7,833,756
1926–27	6,953,157	—	948,459	474,428	—	—	—	—	8,376,044
1927–28	6,864,817	—	1,509,129	1,167,030	—	—	—	—	9,540,976
1928–29	6,827,364	—	1,976,897	1,865,713	—	—	—	—	10,669,974
1929–30	6,738,118	—	2,141,089	2,253,087	509	—	—	—	11,132,803
1930–31	6,723,699	—	2,621,250	2,528,263	2,594	—	—	—	11,875,806
1931–32	6,742,070	—	2,731,051	3,245,955	7,427	5,100	—	—	12,731,603
1932–33	6,781,395	—	2,633,567	3,873,297	11,369	50,130	—	—	13,349,758
1933–34	6,589,724	—	2,523,650	4,178,750	15,358	125,144	—	—	13,432,626
1934–35	6,671,006	—	2,499,822	4,264,145	19,819	303,464	—	—	13,758,256
1935–36	6,498,129	—	2,501,768	4,347,616	20,374	629,666	—	—	13,997,553
1936–37	6,275,321	—	2,533,171	4,286,967	27,603	1,203,229	4,603	—	14,330,894*
1937–38	6,065,875	—	2,502,043	4,269,546	29,771	1,735,855	14,453	—	14,617,543*
1938–39	6,018,330	—	2,477,731	4,242,748	28,879	2,154,314	49,268	14,854	14,986,124*
Totals -	121,242,090	9,498,156	30,142,041	41,088,113	163,703	6,206,902	68,324	14,854	208,424,183

* In addition the following amounts were paid—(*a*) £1,000 in each of the years 1936–7, 1937–8 and 1938–9 to a Central Housing Association under Section 96 of the Housing Act, 1936, and (*b*) £1,386 in 1937–8 towards a loss sustained by a local authority under a guarantee given to a building society under Section 110 of the Housing Act, 1936.

[1] From the Twentieth Annual Report of the Ministry of Health, 1938–9.

ENGLAND AND WALES[1]—HOUSING

Particulars of certain dwellings for which tenders or estimates were approved by the Ministry in each of the years ended 31st March 1938 and 31st March 1939

Area	*Type*	*Number of dwellings*		*Average cost per dwelling*		*Average superficial area per dwelling*		*Average cost per foot super*	
		1937–8	1938–9	1937–8	1938–9	1937–8	1938–9	1937–8	1938–9
				£	£	*sq. ft.*	*sq. ft.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
ENGLAND AND WALES	Three-bedroomed non-parlour houses	32,615	30,030	363	370	784	791	9 $3\frac{1}{4}$	9 $4\frac{1}{4}$
	Small one-bedroomed houses	5,737	4,074	256	257	414	407	12 $4\frac{1}{4}$	12 $7\frac{1}{2}$
	Flats in buildings of three or more storeys	4,851	5,352	573	541	639	633	17 $11\frac{1}{4}$	17 $1\frac{1}{4}$
Urban Areas	Three-bedroomed non-parlour houses	26,342	22,933	363	370	782	789	9 $3\frac{1}{4}$	9 $4\frac{3}{4}$
	Small one-bedroomed houses	5,256	3,295	257	259	414	405	12 $4\frac{3}{4}$	12 9
	Flats in buildings of three or more storeys	4,851	5,352	573	541	639	633	17 $11\frac{1}{4}$	17 $1\frac{1}{4}$
Rural Areas	Three-bedroomed non-parlour houses	6,273	7,097	364	368	792	799	9 $2\frac{1}{2}$	9 $2\frac{1}{4}$
	Small one-bedroomed houses	481	779	246	250	410	413	12 $0\frac{1}{4}$	12 $1\frac{1}{2}$

[1] From the Twentieth Annual Report of the Ministry of Health, 1938–9.

Chapter V

THE ORGANISATION OF THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

The building industry . . . is distributed largely according to the distribution of population and industry . . . (it) is a good example of a 'sheltered' industry: there is no question of foreign competition . . . on the other hand, it cannot expand by entering other markets abroad . . . (it) is one of special interest, since employment in so many trades and industries depends directly or indirectly upon building activity. Employment, not only in the building trades themselves, but also in the raw materials industries and those industries producing complementary products . . . is dependent on the volume of building. Employment . . . is subject to seasonal fluctuations because building activity depends on weather conditions and social factors.

HERBERT W. ROBINSON

What oil is to creaking machinery, collective bargaining is to industry. Both make for smoother working. The clear recognition of that fact both by employers and employed in the building industry in recent years has helped enormously to make the industry a powerful agent for the social well-being of the whole community. Friction is inevitable: injustices real or imagined, grievances well founded or insubstantial, are bound to occur in the course of the conduct of any enormous industry, but the adverse results of friction, injustice, grievances, will be greatly minimised if there are prescribed forms for the settling of disputes and if there is a positive understanding by the contending parties that greater than their sectional interests are the interests of the industry as a whole, and that greater even than these are the interests of the whole community. It would be idle to pretend that the structure of British industry is perfect, and that at all times and in all places the different interests involved remember either their duties to the in-

dustries of which they are part or to the community as a whole; but as an effective practical example of good organisation making for efficient service to the community the organisation of the building industry stands out as one of the best in the industrial life of Great Britain, and gives to the employees better standards of work and of life and, increasingly, more security.

Half a century ago organisation was only beginning to take shape, the workers on the whole being better organised than the employers. Gradually, however, the employers organised themselves in local associations to negotiate collective bargains with their operatives. Later, the local associations merged into regional organisations and surrendered some part of their local autonomy. The regional organisations in turn were co-ordinated in the National Federation of Building Trades Employers, officially described as a Federation Union of Employers in the Building Industry, composed of Regional and Area or Local Groups, the members of which are affiliated through the section covering the locality in which the firm in membership is situated. There are some two hundred and sixty local associations throughout Great Britain to which individual builders and firms belong and who, thereby, are entitled to attend General Meetings of the National Federation. Between the local associations and the National Federation stand nine Regional Federations to which the local associations are affiliated. Each Regional Federation is allocated voting power in proportion to the wages paid to its membership, and it is the Regional Federation which allocates to the local associations accredited representatives to attend and vote at General Meetings of the National Federation. (It follows that while every builder in the Federation may attend these meetings, only accredited representatives may vote, thus obtaining a more representative view on points at issue.) The control of the National Federation is paramount in all matters of general policy involving national agreement, policy, or administration such as wages and conditions of employment, contract conditions, building regulations, etc., but each section of the Federation has local autonomy with regard to domestic matters.

Membership of local associations, and thereby of the regions and the Federation itself, is limited to *bona fide* employers.

The National Federation is managed by a Council appointed by the regions in numbers proportionate to the amount of the subscriptions paid, while there is a competent executive consisting of an Officers' Committee, made up of the five members elected to hold the various offices of the Federation at the Annual General Meeting each year. The objects of the Federation may be summarised as follows: to represent members individually and collectively, to secure their freedom in the conduct of their business, to maintain friendly relations among the members and with those with whom they have business relations, to protect members against attack, to secure mutual support and co-operation in meeting demands, to protect the members individually and/or collectively against strikes or disputes with workmen or against losses incurred by acting in conformity with the decisions or recommendations of the Federation or its Council, to promote the formation of regularised methods of procedure in regard to (i) the negotiation and conclusion of agreements relating to wages, hours and other conditions of employment, (ii) the adjustment of any differences arising out of the operation of such agreements, (iii) the prevention of cessations of work pending such adjustments, and (iv) the adjustment of differences involving demarcation of work. The Federation also seeks to safeguard the interests of members and to obtain from Government Departments, public bodies, professional societies, manufacturers' and merchants' associations, individual officials or members thereof and others, fair and equitable treatment for members in relation to conditions of tendering, bills of quantities, conditions of contract, specifications, supply of materials, and in any other way. Its other objectives deal with the raising of common funds, the examination of legislation affecting the industry, the pecuniary or legal assistance of members, co-operation with other organisations, and finally are summed up in the paragraph: 'To do all such things as are ancillary or conducive to the attainment of the aforementioned objects or

any of them.' A condition of membership is that no member shall also be a member of an employees' trade union.

In pursuance of its objectives the Federation has joined with architects, surveyors, building trade operatives, manufacturers and suppliers of materials in setting up a body to speak with authority on matters of importance affecting the industry, namely, the Building Industries National Council. The Federation co-operated with the Royal Institute of British Architects in producing a form of contract, and later a standard form of sub-contract, which have been accepted as standard throughout the industry. The Federation publishes a monthly periodical called *The National Builder.*

The National Federation of Building Trades Operatives includes among its affiliated societies the following: the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, the National Builders', Labourers' and C.W. Society, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, the National Painters' Society, the Plumbers, Glaziers and Domestic Engineers' Union, the Amalgamated Slaters and Tilers' Provident Society, the National Association of Operative Plasterers, the Street Masons, Paviors and Roadmakers' Society, the Amalgamated Slaters' Society of Scotland, the Building and Monumental Workers' Association of Scotland, the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Constructional Engineering Union, the Amalgamated Society of Woodcutting Machinists, the Amalgamated Union of Asphalt Workers, and a composite section of the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives. England and Wales are divided into nine sections or regional councils, and there are Scottish and Irish sections, each with three representatives on the National Federation. The individual affiliated societies appoint their own representatives to the national organisation. The constitution of the Federation is at present under consideration with a view to possible revision; but the objective of the Federation, as of its component parts, may be stated broadly to be the safeguarding of the interests of the operatives, the improving of their conditions, wages, and hours of labour, collective bargaining with the em-

SHOP FRONT IN REGENT STREET, LONDON
(Architect: Maxwell Fry)

ployers, and the correlation of the needs of the operatives and the industry with the needs of the whole community.

Collective bargaining is a matter of long standing in the building industry; but whereas before 1914 such bargaining was local in character, the post-1919 period has seen the building up of a national organisation to formulate national conditions to deal with national problems regarding conditions of employment. These are subject to certain local variations which, however, are subject to national approval. The controlling body in these matters is the National Joint Council of the Building Industry (formerly called the National Wages and Conditions Council), which consists of representatives both of the employers and the operatives. The employers' representatives are drawn from the National Federation of Building Trades Employers, the National Federation of Plumbers and Domestic Engineers, and the National Federation of Slate Merchants, Slaters and Tilers. The operatives' representatives are drawn from the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives, together with its constituent craft of unions of bricklayers and masons, woodworkers, painters, plumbers, slaters and tilers, plasterers and the unions covering builders' labourers, which include the National Union of General and Municipal Workers and the Transport and General Workers' Union. England and Wales is again divided into nine Regional Joint Committees serving as connecting links between the National Council and the local areas. The Council has concluded an 'agreement' binding on both employers and employed whereby (1) wages are fixed in the form of hourly time rates, (2) provision is made for these rates to be varied periodically in accordance with the movements in the level of the cost of living as ascertained and recorded by the Ministry of Labour, (3) different localities are classified into 'grades', in each of which a distinct time rate is fixed, (4) overtime rates are laid down upon a national basis, and (5) detailed regulations are made for out-of-town and for travelling allowances.

This agreement may be modified either by means of a constitutional amendment or by a variation amendment. A constitutional

amendment is one which proposes to alter the essence of the constitution or an essential agreement thereto, and may be proposed by any of the parties to the agreement for consideration, after due notice, by the full Council. If the Council fails to reach a settlement, the dispute (if a majority on each side favour the course) may be referred to the Industrial Arbitration Court or to an arbitrator. Alternatively, the Council may appoint a special committee to examine the question with a view to the settlement of any point at issue. Such a committee has full powers of conference with the executive of any of the adherent organisations and must report to the Council within one month of its appointment. This last course is one which now finds most favour and was followed in 1935 when the operatives applied for an increase in the national standard rate of wages. 'Variation Amendments' are such as not to affect the essence of the agreement and may be submitted before May 17 in any year for the consideration of the Regional Joint Committee, which may either approve or reject them. If approved, the amendment is then submitted to the National Joint Council. If rejected by the region, the applicant party may submit an appeal to the National Joint Council. These recommendations and appeals are considered by the appropriate committees of the Council and reported to the Statutory Meeting of the Council in January of each year. The decisions of the Council on variation amendments are final, and, if approved, the amendments come into operation on February 1 next following. Variation amendments are not unimportant matters, and deal with questions such as the adjustment of rates and the grading and re-grading of districts.

Wage rates fall into three categories: standard, exceptional, and differential. Standard rates are the hourly rates applicable to craftsmen generally in each of a number of specified grades into which districts are classified and are reviewed at the January meetings of Council. Changes in the standard rates are founded upon variations in the cost of living in accordance with the scale set out in the agreement. Exceptional rates are those which apply for a prescribed period instead of the current standard rate in a defined dis-

trict. Exceptional rates are designed to meet the position where a large building work is to be carried out in a rural district, and where the standard rate of wages is insufficient to attract the number of operatives required to carry out the special job. The exceptional work completed, the district reverts automatically to the permanent grade rates. Exceptional rates are accorded for a period of six months and may be extended on application for a further six months, but any further extension is subject to the specific approval of the Council. A differential rate applies to one section of the industry only in a particular district and continues until it is changed by national decision.

The detailed classification of districts for the purpose of wage rates is, it is claimed, one of the most striking results of collective bargaining in the industry. There are nine grades with a wage difference of one halfpenny per hour for craftsmen in the standard rates as between each grade and the next one above or below it. The London district has special rates: within a twelve miles radius of Charing Cross the rate for craftsmen is 1½d. per hour in excess of the current Grade A rate; within between twelve and fifteen miles radius of Charing Cross the rate is 1d. per hour in excess of the current Grade A rate. Both in London and in the districts, in all nine grades, the hourly rates of wages for labourers are in all cases 75 per cent of the standard rates for craftsmen.

Variations in grading of districts are only permitted after the previous grading has been in operation for three years. Applications are dealt with regionally and subsequently by the Grading Commission of the National Joint Council, which reports and recommends at each January meeting of the Council. In grading a district the Council takes into consideration the size, nature, and position of the town, local living conditions (including rents, local authority charges, and relative levels of prices), transport facilities, and the amount and type of building work in the locality, as well as the rates of wages in the chief local industries.

All disputes and differences arising out of the interpretation of the National Joint Council Agreement and Working Rules are con-

sidered by standing regional and National Conciliation Panels. The decisions of the latter are final and binding. All other disputes are dealt with by the National Joint Emergency Disputes Commissions appointed under the separate agreement between the employers' and operatives' federations working under what is commonly called 'Green Book' procedure. The parties undertake to exhaust every means of effecting an amicable settlement before resorting to direct action, and not to instruct their members to strike or lock-out without complying with all the agreements in existence and giving customary notice to terminate the employment. All disputes which threaten to cause a stoppage are immediately reported to local officials, and if these, with the assistance of regional officers, are unable to settle the matter, a Regional Emergency Disputes Commission is called without delay, takes evidence and reports and recommends to the respective National Executives. Meantime it gives directions in order to avoid a stoppage or, if that has occurred, to provide a resumption of work. If the Regional Commission is unable to find a solution, a National Commission is at once convened, and its findings, although reported to the National Executive for confirmation, become binding as soon as given.

Basic wages are subject to the operation of the cost-of-living index figure under the sliding scale provisions of the agreement. In the inner London area craftsmen receive 2s. an hour, labourers 1s. $6\frac{3}{4}$d. In Grade A districts craftsmen receive 1s. $10\frac{1}{2}$d. an hour, labourers 1s. $5\frac{3}{4}$d. In the lowest-graded rural districts craftsmen receive 1s. $6\frac{1}{2}$d. an hour, labourers 1s. $2\frac{3}{4}$d. (all as at 1st June, 1941). The general working hours are 44 hours a week in winter and $46\frac{1}{2}$ hours in summer, but in some districts, including London, there are 'variation amendments' whereby the hours are 44 per week all the year round.

Speaking at the annual conference of the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives at Douglas, Isle of Man, in June 1937, Mr. George Hicks, M.P., the President (now Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works and Buildings), said:

'I believe we are on the eve of having the opportunity to realise

the greatest reform the Building Industry has known. I refer to the proposed Scheme for the payment of time lost through inclement weather.

'This will be an Insurance Scheme jointly contributory and applicable to all the employers and operatives in the Building Industry.

'The Scheme will be part of the Unemployment Insurance Act.

'We had hoped to have been able to state the precise time for the practical operation of this Scheme.

'The Scheme will be under the control of a Joint Board of Employers and Operatives.

'At least fifty per cent of the hardship and handicap of Wet Time —the immemorial curse of the Building Industry—will be gone. In this way a great step forward will have been made to stabilise working conditions.'

Owing to the war and the many new problems associated with it, this scheme has been held in abeyance. The Ministry of Labour conducted an informal inquiry into the question, but the report of the committee (under the chairmanship of Mr. Lascelles, K.C.) has not been published. Most building indeed came under Government contracts which provided a guaranteed thirty hours' week (under the 'Uniformity Agreement 1940' between the National Joint Council for the Building Industry and the Civil Engineering Construction Conciliation Board approved by the Ministry of Labour).

At the same conference Mr. Griff Jones, Regional Secretary for the North-Western Counties, said that he did not think members of the operatives' Federation had paid sufficient attention to the 'important matter' of the National House-Builders' Registration Council. It is safe to say that neither the members of the unions nor the members of the general public have paid sufficient attention to this most important matter. In 1934 the National Federation of Building Trades Employers was asked to take steps to protect the interests of members engaged in speculative house-building, and consideration having been given to

the matter it was found that *bona fide* house-builders did suffer from the competition of somewhat unscrupulous rivals, who were not unwilling to supply the house-purchasing public with houses of unsatisfactory quality. Sufficient evidence was indeed forthcoming '... to convince the Federation that the evil of "jerry-building" was so widespread as to constitute a menace to the house-building industry and to the public'.

Means were accordingly sought 'to compel any dishonest and unscrupulous builders to reform their methods or to go out of the house-building business', and these were adumbrated in a scheme covering the formation of a minimum standard specification for ordinary houses, the registration of builders who undertook to build houses in conformity with this standard, the certification of such houses, and the establishment of a National Council to deal with registration and certification. The scheme was formulated and submitted to the Minister of Health, who referred it to the Central Housing Advisory Committee, upon whose advice it finally received the practical support and encouragement of the Ministry. The Housing Improvement Association (a non-profit-making association limited by guarantee) was incorporated on 17th November 1936. Steps were immediately taken to form the National House-Builders' Registration Council, and the following organisations nominated representatives to it: the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Chartered Surveyors' Institution, the Building Societies Association, the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives, the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, the Auctioneers' and Estate Agents' Institute, the Institution of Municipal and County Engineers, and the National Federation of Building Trades Employers. The Earl of Dudley became honorary president and the late Sir Raymond Unwin, Past President of the R.I.B.A., was appointed chairman, with an architect, a builder and the managing director of a building society as vice-chairmen of the Council and chairmen of the three standing committees.

The first meeting of the Council was held on 12th January 1937, and the three committees, one to deal with specification, the second

to deal with registration of house-building and the certification of houses, and the third to deal with general purposes, were appointed. Two days later the scheme was publicly announced by the Minister of Health, Sir Kingsley Wood. Applications for registration were immediately lodged, and within a few months of its commencement the Council enrolled after examination 1,068 builders in the probationary section. Promotion to Section B takes place as soon as the Council's supervising inspectors have collected the available information and submitted it to the registration committee with a recommendation for approval. A number of certificates have already been issued with regard to completed houses, while inspections are continuously being made of houses under construction. Typical of the small defects found by the inspectors are: (*a*) zinc as a covering to small bay windows, (*b*) doors, windows and other joinery unprimed on the back, (*c*) uncovered electric cable in roofs, (*d*) inadequate strengthening of roofs, and (*e*) uncased cisterns and unwrapped water pipes in roof. Small defects, but each capable of causing major troubles later on. If defects of this kind are to be found in the houses of builders willing to have their work inspected, what are the defects likely to be found in the houses of builders unwilling to permit such inspection? The public should take notice. They have been warned. No-one considering the purchase of a house in future should accept one uncertified by the Council. If that became the general practice the days of jerry-building would be finished. As it is, the jerry-builders' days are numbered—and not before time.

Methods of Building Finance hinge on two factors: (1) the demand by builders for finance necessary for the development of estates, and (2) the demand for credit by house purchasers. The first method is that of private finance by private funds controlled for a client by solicitors; the majority of this class of investment being trust moneys on which a more remunerative return than Government securities offer is desired. Security for such loans is necessary, and the terms depend on the personal integrity of the recipient of the loan. The investment of trust funds is limited by the Trustee

Act, 1925, under which funds may be invested on mortgage of freehold property. Leasehold security is accepted where the lease runs for at least 200 years and is not subject to ground rent exceeding 1s. per annum. In areas where leasehold is general, advances may be made on properties with a minimum term of eighty years. The minimum loan is two-thirds of the value of the property, and the rate of interest is normally 5 per cent. Advances for building may be obtained when building has been partly completed. Legal fees, according to the Law Society's scale, are 1 per cent of the money lent plus a negotiation fee of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The second method is by Joint Stock Banks. Advances on house property are not regarded as first-class securities by banks because of the difficulty of immediate realisation. House purchase by this method has decreased because of the facilities offered by building societies. The granting of advances is treated with great caution. The bank manager ascertains the purpose of the loan, the business capacity of the applicant, whether he has failed or not, and the state of his balance sheet, if any. In the case of a normal residential property loan the valuation of the security offered is left in the bank manager's hands, and the estimate is based on the consideration of the applicant's current account. Particular attention is paid to current values in the district and the possibility of rise or fall. Various methods of valuation are adopted, but the ten-year value method is a popular one, for example:

Annual rent	£120
Deduct rates and taxes (say)	20
	£100
Deduct allowances for repairs	20
	£80

Multiply by 10 = £800—this gives the valuation.

If this figure is below that arrived at by the first method a balance is struck between the two. The usual rate is 1 per cent over the

current bank rate. The Joint Stock Banks prefer freehold property on which to grant building loans, but they, unlike building societies, will give loans on leasehold security. The normal advance does not exceed two-thirds of the valuation, and the terms for repayment do not extend beyond six or seven years. Unlike building society loans the joint stock loan does not entail repayment of the loan granted at a specified rate over a number of years. Certain repayments of capital may be made at regular intervals (for example, half-yearly) in addition to the interest payments, but if these repayments become insecure, the banker may, after due notice, realise the security. This will only be done after every method of extracting repayment has been tried. Banker's advances are recorded either as an overdraft or in a separate loan account. A lower rate of interest is charged on the loan account than on an overdraft. If it happens that the usual offer of two-thirds of the valuation is insufficient for the customer's needs, the banker usually accepts the guarantee of a third party (collateral security). Stock Exchange securities and life assurance policies are also accepted as securities for further loans over the two-thirds value. A Consideration Clause provides that the bank may withdraw when it thinks fit, and Equity of Redemption covers any direct or indirect liability arising at any time. Most important from the banker's point of view is the covenant for payment under which the mortgagers will pay, on demand, the moneys secured, and, if not, they shall carry interest at a certain rate to be charged on the property. The Consolidation Clause gives banks the power to refuse to allow the debt owing on one mortgage to be paid off while a debt is outstanding on another. The mortgager must first obtain the bank's consent if he desires to grant a lease on the property. All these conditions relate to houses ready for occupation, but banks will also make advances on the security of the speculative builders' land, and then further loans on the properties erected thereon, in stages. The terms for such loans depend on the standing of the mortgager. The amounts advanced by joint stock banks in any of these ways is not disclosed in their financial statement.

The first building society was founded in 1781, but did not receive acknowledgement in legislation until 1836, when the first Act exercising 'benevolent control' was passed. Progress was slow until about 1910; the societies' activities were solely confined to the middle and upper classes. Property was bought through them as an investment. In post-war years, when the great demand for housing began, the building societies developed. The building society movement machinery was already formed, and they had the ability to mould their practice to meet the needs of the moment. The finance of housing was the only use to which their funds were put and all their energies were devoted to this end. Since 1919 two-thirds of the total cost of housing has been supplied by them. There are several methods by which societies make advances. They are empowered to advance money on freehold or leasehold security, but in general practice they only accept freehold security. In some cases advances are made on building estates where there is only land as security. These advances are, however, exceptional. The societies rely on the borrower's personal covenant to repay loans and give greater considerations to the borrower purchasing a house for his own occupation than for investment, for there is a cash value in the sentimental attachment of the borrower to the house he lives in and is making his own. The building societies are given powers of sale in the event of the borrower failing to fulfill the covenants of the mortgage deed. Loans are made on completed property or during erection if the plans and site satisfy the society's surveyor. The usual advance made is $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent of the valuation, but this sometimes goes up to 75 per cent or even to 90 per cent where collateral security is offered. The first instalment of the loan is payable as soon as the first floor joists are completed, and the balance is paid at convenient stages depending on the size of the property. It is not usual for building societies to take more than six properties at one time. These arrangements here described are available for anyone building for his own use, but they are primarily intended for builders requiring finance for the erection of properties for sale. The completed properties remain mortgaged until a pur-

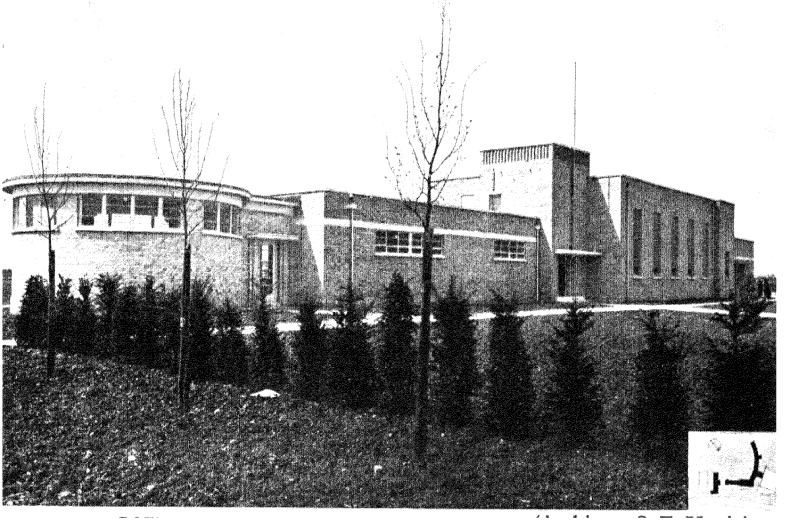
chaser is found. These credit arrangements facilitate large-scale building operations without locking up capital.

In the meantime the amount of the loans varies from place to place according to whether the building society is small and confined to local people, in which case the loan is greater, or a national concern. In recent years a measure of rationalisation has come in. On properties costing £1,000 societies will lend up to 75 per cent of the valuation, or 80 per cent where the property is occupied by the purchaser. Loans on houses over £2,000 are usually limited to $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. When the applicant accepts the offer of the building society, the society solicitor investigates title and prepares a mortgage deed. On the borrower signing this the advance cheque is available, and the conditions as to repayment are contained in the mortgage deed. The deed explains the manner in which the loan is to be repaid. In most societies repayment may be made (*a*) on the annuity system, whereby fixed amounts are payable at regular intervals. These repayments are constant during the whole term, or (*b*) by instalments which include interest—thus payments decrease as the principal is reduced. Some societies alternate these systems. Repayment may be spread over five to twenty-five years, but it is optional for the borrower to repay part of the capital at any time, thus reducing the interest charged. Rates vary according to the national and economic factors at the time of the loan, and provision is usually made in the deed for the interest to be increased in proportion to the interest increase at the bank. Although special terms are given to those occupying the houses themselves, this does not preclude the letting of a house, although societies generally require any lease to be submitted and approved by them. Selling can take place without the society's consent, but the deeds will not be released except on the repayment of the mortgage debt.

Assistance is given to borrowers by special arrangements made by the building societies with the Inland Revenue authorities for relief under Schedule A to the extent of the interest charged on the loan. Allowance is made automatically in the assessment. All properties mortgaged to building societies must be insured against

fire. Also included in the mortgage deed is a clause providing for the amalgamation of the repayment system with an insurance system whereby the society releases the deeds to a representative of the borrower in the event of death during the mortgage term (*a*) a combined Life Assurance Scheme, or (*b*) an Endowment Assurance Purchase Scheme, taken from the Insurance Company, who grants to the borrower an assurance sufficient for a sum to repay the loan at expiration of the mortgage term or at death. The borrower pays to the society the interest on the loan with the premium payable to the insurance company.

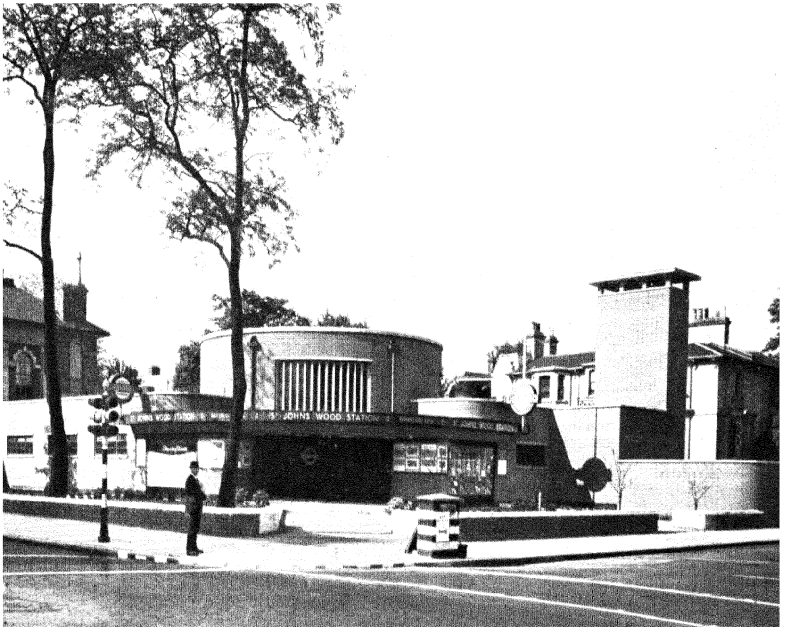
Among the benefits of the building societies is the extension of loans to poorer sections of the community. Those people who can afford to pay 20 per cent or 25 per cent of the purchase price of a house are a comparatively small section. The societies realised this some time ago when a system of collateral security in co-operation with the insurance companies, whereby an advance could be made up to 90 per cent of the valuation of a property, was introduced. This security took the form of an indemnity policy taken out by the borrower to cover the 15 per cent necessary—as most cases could only afford a 10 per cent cash payment—guaranteeing to the society any later loss resulting from default. For this cover the company quote a single payment—payable when the advance is made. The borrower then repays the premium discharged by the society on similar terms to those governing the mortgage debt and thus avoids finding the capital sum immediately. Later development came when 10 per cent cash payment was still beyond a large section desirous of purchasing a house, in the form of collaboration with the builder, who deposits cash for the advance made in excess of the building society's normal limit. This cash is paid into an account in the builder's name and is charged to the society for a time specified in the deed. This period of guarantee is operated as agreed on, either for a term of years specified or until the balance of the loan has reached an agreed percentage of the security value. Many variations and adaptations of this additional loan system are worked by the various societies. Generally the guarantor deposits



BOTTISHAM VILLAGE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE (Architect: S. E Urwin)
One of the 'village universities' resulting from the genius of Dr Henry Morris, Director of Education for Cambridge, which are giving a new dynamic impulse to life in isolated small communities

AN L.P.T.B. STATION

St John's Wood Station—typical of the London Passenger Transport Board's new underground stations—is an example of good design in everyday life, and a pointer to better towns after the war



cash only in the first few cases, then only a proportion, entering thus into a deed of guarantee for the full amount and giving to the society a lien on the total balance of his deposit account. The facilitation of the sale of houses is the builder's motive here, and the mortgager on one of the houses may not necessarily come into the bargain. In the case of any loss incurred by the society in this respect, that is, in agreements with the builder, the mortgager cannot be held to any responsibility unless he is fully aware of and has agreed to the arrangement. The value of the building society in making easier provision for houses has been recognised by local authorities. Legislation has been passed to make easier the individual purchase of houses, and also to assist private enterprise to make use of building society finance.

The Housing Act of 1925 empowered local authorities to guarantee the repayment of advances made by building societies to their members. These are similar to fidelity bonds and are applicable only where the loan does not exceed 90 per cent of the mortgager's interest in the property. Normally the guarantee is for the amount of the advance exceeding 70 per cent of the security value. Where advances are made in instalments the loan must not exceed 50 per cent of the value of the work done. This includes site value. The Act is not now applicable to properties exceeding £800 in value. Moreover, by the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1933, as re-enacted in the Housing Act, 1936, in the case of houses to be let to working-class persons, the Minister of Health may undertake to re-imburse the Local Authority concerned up to one-half of any loss sustained in consequence of such a guarantee.

In the 1933 Housing Act greater encouragement was given to private building enterprise in the erection of working-class houses at low rents. Building societies had offered to make their funds available here for people who could still not benefit by their other provisions. This Act provided for the undertaking by the Minister of Health to share equally with the local authorities and the building societies the risk involved by making advances in excess of those normally granted and over periods exceeding the normal

mortgage terms. Here building societies will advance up to 90 per cent of the security value for thirty years at 1 per cent below current rates, with a minimum of 3 per cent. What is guaranteed here is the amount of the advance exceeding 70 per cent of the security value, and liability is not fixed until the mortgage debt is reduced to a figure which is less than 45 per cent of the value. In the event of default the local authority guarantees to pay a sum equal to two-thirds of the difference between the actual loss and the deficiency. These provisions have not been very widely used by builders.

Since 1920 the building societies have loaned £1,207,317,566. There are 985 registered building societies.

Loans by local authorities under the Small Dwelling Construction Acts, 1899 to 1923, were first granted to assist in building houses for owner's occupation. This was a result of the indignation aroused first by Chadwick following the Report of the Royal Commission of 1844. The powers given under the Act were enforced up to 1923 and have since been amended. The Housing Act of 1925, Section 92, also empowers local authorities to lend money for house purchase. The following table shows the results:

	1919–1936. Number of houses in respect of which advances have been made	*Total amount advanced*
Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts	128,956	£64,459,832
Section 92, Housing Act, 1925	60,720	27,933,654
	189,676	£92,393,486

The operations of these Acts are usually supplementary. The 1925 Act also gives local authorities power to advance loans for alterations to houses. Instalments for house building for owner's occupation paid by local authorities will not be more than 50 per cent of the value of the work done at any point. In leasehold property at least sixty years unexpired period is required under the Acquisi-

tion of Small Dwellings Act: under the 1925 Act the unexpired term need only be ten years in excess of the mortgage paid, that is, if the mortgage term is twenty-five years the lease need only have thirty-five years to run. In the 1899 Act the percentage advanced was 80 per cent, but up to 90 per cent[1] is now advanced. The purchaser provides the difference between the purchase price and the amount advanced.

Originally £400 was the limit of value. This was increased in 1925 to £1,500, but was again decreased to £800 under the 1935 Act. The rate was fixed in Section 92 of the 1935 Act at $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent over the rate current one month before the advance is settled. The present rate charged to borrowers is $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Advances are granted for any number of years up to thirty and on the condition that sums are paid punctually when due; the proprietor must reside in the house (here there are exceptions); the house shall be insured against fire; the house shall be kept in good condition; the house shall not be used for the sale of liquor; the local authority representative has the right of entry for inspection. Building societies in many cases have been able to transfer many of the loans to themselves at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, a more profitable rate. Advantages of this are: (1) The cheapness at the present rate. (2) All expenses go on the rates, therefore injudicious lending may lead to reflection on the local authority's accounts. (3) While a building society's advance is only up to about 75 per cent or 80 per cent and requires additional security thereafter, the local authority has power to advance up to 90 per cent without collateral security. In cases of default the deficiency goes on the rates.

It is only during recent years that insurance companies have become interested in advancing loans for house purchase. This development of insurance work dates from 1931 with the slump and the consequent cheapness of money. Mortgage advances through insurance companies are attractive to the company because of the increased proportion for life assurance. Special terms are made to attract the public in a field already well covered.

[1] See also Section 91 of the Housing Act, 1936.

The main provision is a combined life assurance and house purchase. Only a few companies provide this facility and loans are limited to 80 per cent of the value of the finished structure. More usually loans are advanced on the finished property. The minimum term to run on leasehold security is fifty to sixty years. Loans are seldom granted in excess of £750, and repayment is provided for in an endowment on the life of the borrower, the term for which is limited to twenty or thirty years. The deferred advance scheme is peculiar to the insurance company, and is designed for the prospective borrower who wants to purchase a house for his own occupation at a later date.

All associations intending to promote the better housing of the poor are required to register under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1893, and are thereafter known as Public Utility Societies. Housing societies do not have the imposing figures of building societies to impress one, but they undertake building as well as advancing loans. The activities of housing societies before the war were confined to building tenements in the centre of large cities. By 1914 there were sixty societies of this kind. All the facilities available to housing societies have been consolidated in the Housing Act of 1936. Under Section 188 of this Act a housing society is defined: '. . . Society . . . which does not trade for profit or whose rules prohibit the issue of capital with interest exceeding the rate prescribed by the Treasury'. The capital required is raised by issue of shares, debentures, and loan stock. Local authorities and county councils have powers to take shares and grant loans.

The National Federation of Housing Societies was incorporated in June 1935, and received official recognition under the Housing Act, 1936, with a grant towards its expenses. The work and objects of the National Federation include the provision of (1) a focal point for knowledge on every aspect of the housing societies' work; (2) a medium for the pooling of experience by means of a central office, central council, conferences, bulletin, etc.; (3) a means whereby housing societies can receive advice on all matters

connected with the formation of their organisation; (4) contact with the Ministry of Labour, the Department of Health for Scotland, and with local authorities and other bodies; (5) a centre for publicity campaigns, for the promotion and amendment of parliamentary bills, and for the creation of new societies. They aim at building houses for letting at 8s. to 14s. a week.

Great development has taken place in the United States and on the Continent of the Mortgage Banks. It has been said that the building societies take the place of these in this country; but there is a growing number of companies investing in real estate in London and large cities, concerned with the purchase of property and subletting as offices, flats, etc. Mortgage bonds are not issued and they are not known as mortgage banks, yet the function is similar to those of the mortgage banks. Lord Kennet (then Sir Hilton Young) revealed in the House in February 1933 that the Government had been giving consideration to such a scheme.

Many friendly societies and co-operative societies offer mortgage openings to their members, although these are limited by the funds available. This is not the primary function of these societies, and therefore they only do so when surplus funds are available. The terms of such loans are similar to those of insurance companies, although they do not insist on endowment insurance for redemption purposes.

Chapter VI

HOUSING BETWEEN THE WARS

It is interesting to speculate what might have been done if one or two million people out of the eight millions who have been provided with detailed local residential planning in this country had had their housing made the subject of a really comprehensive plan. A couple of dozen real *new* towns in different parts of the country would have been more constructive, if also more adventurous, than a multitude of garden suburbs. In fact this post-war housing as regards a *general theory of civic planning*, does not show much advance upon the Victorian muddle.

PATRICK ABERCROMBIE

The number of houses built in England and Wales since the Armistice of 1918 until the 31st of March 1939 was 3,998,366, representing the rehousing, between the wars, of roughly one-third of the total population. Of that number 1,112,544 were built by local authorities, 430,481 by private enterprise with State assistance, and 2,455,341 by private enterprise without State assistance. Of these 2,455,341 houses, 2,050,705 (or 83·1 per cent) had a rateable value not exceeding £26 (£35 in the Greater London area).

This unprecedented building of dwellings has resulted in an enormous change in the way of life of millions of people, has changed the whole appearance and character of many towns, and has resulted in an encroachment—much of it thoughtless—on the countryside. A large part of the building, since the reformer was naturally anxious to remove the slum dweller from the overcrowded central areas to the country fringe of towns, has been on the perimeter. Housing estates, ranging in size from groups of fifty or a hundred dwellings to semi-towns of twenty-five thousand houses, came into being as a post-war phenomenon, resulting in enormous benefits to their inhabitants but also resulting, since they were created without a sufficient sense of the need for national and

regional planning, in new problems yet to be solved and some insoluble.

The first and most important general criticism is that these estates are in the main 'dormitories' in which people sleep and spend their leisure hours, but from which they travel fairly long distances to work at a great cost in money, time, and often health. The estates are often, and nearly always in the beginning at any rate, deficient in everything else which gives 'life' to a community. 'Nearly everything', says the National Council of Social Service, 'which contributes to the well-being of a normal town is conspicuously absent.'

It was natural and, perhaps, inevitable that mistakes of this kind should have been made, but why both local authorities and private enterprise should continue to make the same mistakes when they are abundantly clear to almost everyone it is difficult to fathom.

Becontree, created by the L.C.C., is the biggest municipal housing estate in the world and covers an area of 2,770 acres. Situated within the County of Essex, it adjoins Ilford and Barking and the Urban District of Dagenham. Over five hundred acres were reserved for open spaces and playing fields, including Parsloes Park, a central open space, and broad belts to the west and south. The central park has 118 acres, of which 86 acres are in grass, including a cricket-ground with a pavilion, and 32 acres forming an enclosed park and including a children's gymnasium, hard tennis-courts and a bowling green. The estate is served by two railway companies, by the L.N.E.R. with Chadwell Heath station just beyond the northern boundary, and by the L.M.S. with Dagenham station and Dagenham Dock station, to which the company has added Becontree station and Heathway station. There is a tramway service to Chadwell Heath, just outside the estate, and omnibus services operating nine different routes. The time by train to central London is approximately half an hour. One contracting company (Messrs. C. J. Wills & Sons, Ltd.) has been responsible for the building of the estate. Dwellings numbering 25,039 and providing accommodation for 112,570 persons were built between September

1920 and March 1934. The houses comprised 138 six-room, 3,369 five-room, 5,085 four-room parlour dwellings, 6,739 four-room non-parlour, 8,726 three-room houses and 19 five-room, 28 four-room parlour, 8 four-room parlour, 161 three-room and 745 two-room flats, together with 21 superintendents' quarters. The total cost of the work under this single contract was £13,455,170. Twenty-seven churches have been erected, thirty schools, four hundred shops, nine licensed premises, fourteen doctors' houses, together with cinemas, clinics, libraries and a swimming pool. An out-patients' department of the King George Hospital at Ilford has been established on the estate, the site being leased by the L.C.C. to the hospital authorities at a nominal rent, together with a donation of £6,500 towards the cost of the building. Thirty-two acres of the estate had been reserved for development by private enterprise, and there were a number of small scattered sites unbuilt upon. In 1934 the L.C.C. decided to proceed with the development of these, and contracts for 696 houses (out of a total possible of 800) had been let by January 1937 to four firms of private builders, the total estimated cost being £356,959. This development permits of the building of houses for letting at remunerative rents to people able to pay more for the housing accommodation than the tenants of the L.C.C. houses. Nevertheless there is not a sufficient proportion of these houses to prevent Becontree being other than a one-class community.

Becontree is the largest municipal estate: the Sea Mills estate at Bristol is much more typical in size and in every other way. Bounded on the northern side by the wooded slopes of Kingsweston Down and on the south-west by the River Avon, Sea Mills Park, the corporation itself claims, is the most picturesquely situated of all its estates. Four and a half miles from the centre of the city, transport to and from the estate is by omnibus and rail. It has 614 non-parlour three-bedroom houses, 424 three-bedroom parlour houses, 2 four-bedroom parlour houses, 93 houses on lease erected by private enterprise, and 134 houses on lease erected by the corporation, a total of 1,279 houses, with a population of

approximately 3,500. For amenities the estate possesses its picturesque situation, the church of St. Edyth overlooking the Avon, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, two schools, twelve shops erected by the corporation and leased for twenty-one years, a branch library, and a recreation ground.

The cottage estate created by Messrs. John Laing & Sons at Elstree might be taken as typical of private enterprise development at its best. The developers were attracted to this Hertfordshire estate by the fact that under the Town Planning Acts a very large area had been zoned for industry in connection with the cinema film-producing industry, and that already there were industries in the neighbourhood such as a photographic supplies manufactory, a stocking factory, and the fire-testing station of the large insurance companies. The total area of the estate is 470 acres, and it lies close to a part of the green belt preserved by the joint action of the L.C.C. and the Herts County Council. In addition to houses the estate provided open spaces, recreation grounds, sites for public buildings, churches and shopping centres. All-concrete roads have grass verges or borders of shrubs, and are lined with flowering and variegated trees. In addition there is an area zoned for industry, the factories, unfortunately, being built along a main road, thus creating a factory-ribbon instead of a housing-ribbon.

Instances of this kind cited could be multiplied in every city, town, and even district in the country. It will suffice that they are typical of nearly all post-war housing development whether public or private.

Before considering the question of block development, which has greatly increased during recent years, particularly in London, it is interesting to note the opinion expressed by Sir Miles E. Mitchell, J.P., former Lord Mayor of Manchester, in an address to the National Housing and Town Planning Council. 'There is no doubt', observed Sir Miles, 'that all persons interested in housing matters are strongly of the opinion that rehousing in cottages rather than in multi-storeyed flats is desirable in normal circumstances.... The town of less than 150,000 inhabitants may not

have to consider the question of erecting multi-storeyed flats, but in the case of larger towns, it usually becomes necessary at least to consider the question of rehousing near to centres of employment or the alternative of rehousing in satellite towns. . . .'

Just how much consideration the councils of the larger authorities gave to the alternative methods it is difficult to assess, but there is no doubt that in recent years many local authorities have embarked on a tenement-building policy to the detriment of the ultimate well-being of the community and adding a further complication to problems of replanning already bristling with difficulties.

Sites for development by means of block dwellings comprise clearance areas and other sites acquired for the purpose. They are, the L.C.C. point out, usually attended by conditions not usually obtaining in the development of large tracts of open land, such as sites for cottage estates. The following is a summary of the arguments put forward officially by the L.C.C. in favour of this type of development.

By building blocks of dwellings five storeys high it is generally possible, except in the case of exceptionally overcrowded districts, to provide on the same area as that from which the old buildings have been cleared new housing accommodation for approximately as many persons as those displaced by the clearance and at the same time to leave ample [*sic*] space about the buildings for light and air as well as for necessary courtyards. (Note that the density, except in 'exceptionally overcrowded areas' is to remain the same.) Where people must live near their employment the transfer to cottage houses would be of 'serious consequence'. Cottages would be overshadowed by surrounding factories. 'Reasonable privacy for the tenants', it is argued, is secured by the provision of a grass forecourt of not 'less than fifteen feet'. The disposition of the blocks to secure light and air, it is claimed, usually provides adequate [*sic*] space in the yards for communication and playgrounds. In the larger estates special spaces are provided with swings and other play apparatus for the children. Factors controlling lay-out have a direct bearing on density of development, which varies from 45

dwellings to the acre on a site having restricted conditions to 65 dwellings to the acre where the site conditions are particularly favourable. 'Particularly favourable' for what? In the architectural treatment of the buildings the aim has been 'to maintain an appearance of domesticity while keeping within the bounds of economy'. It might not be unfair to translate that aim by saying that the blocks are to be built as little like prisons as means will permit, or alternatively that the blocks are to be built as like houses as finances will allow.

Walls of such blocks are of solid brickwork in hard mortar, the floors of steel and concrete, finished in the living-rooms and bedrooms with boards and elsewhere with a cement surface; the principal staircases are of concrete, the partitions are of concrete slabs, and the roofs are generally of timber covered with red tiles. The normal time for the erection of a five-storey building may be taken as from nine to twelve months. Practically the whole of the accommodation provided in such dwellings is by self-contained flats, usually in buildings of five storeys of the balcony access type. The living-rooms and the majority of the bedrooms are ranged along the side of the building which has the better aspect, and on the other side are placed the kitchens, domestic offices, and a few bedrooms, and the access balconies from which each flat above the ground floor is entered. Each flat extends from the front to the back of the building and thus through ventilation is ensured. The access balconies are generally approached by common staircases and give direct access to dwellings on all floors. All rooms are eight feet six inches high—although, in fact, some built as a special measure have rooms only eight feet from floor to ceiling. The average areas of the rooms are as follows:

1934 (1 and 2) types—	living-rooms	150 square feet
	first bedrooms	110 square feet
	other bedrooms	100 square feet
1934 (3 and 4) types—	living-rooms	160 square feet
	first bedrooms	120 square feet
	other bedrooms	100 square feet

Each dwelling contains an entrance lobby, from which are approached a living-room, one, two, three or four bedrooms; a kitchen, a bathroom, and a water-closet.

The China Walk Estate may be taken as a typical block-dwelling development by the L.C.C. A clearance scheme was formulated by the Council in 1925, and included four areas: China Walk, Lambeth; Hankey Place, Southwark; Hatfield Street, Southwark, and Wyndham Road, Camberwell. The scheme was confirmed with minor modifications in 1927, and building work began in the China Walk area in 1928. The estate has an area of about five acres, and the accommodation provided in six walks is 283 dwellings containing 936 rooms—a density of 58·6 dwellings to the acre. Building was begun by A. T. Rowley, Ltd., and three blocks, forming a quadrangle facing Walnut-Tree Walk, were completed in February 1934. Two wings of a large block fronting Kennington Road were built by R. J. Rowley, Ltd. The total estimated cost of the buildings was about £163,000. Wedgwood House was designed so as to secure a large quadrangular garden space about 95 feet wide and 500 feet long. The garden is, of course, railed off and children are not allowed to play on the grass. Ten barrow sheds, five workshops and an estate workshop complete the 'amenities' of the scheme.

Sir Gwilym Gibbon points out that few people (even among those who know the figures) realise the enormous amount of new building which has taken place in recent years, so difficult is it to understand what big totals really mean. 'Most of this new development', he writes, 'has occurred under planning control, some under that of definite schemes, relatively few in number, the largest part under interim control, the control which planning authorities are enabled to exercise after a resolution to prepare a scheme has come into effect and before a scheme has been brought into operation.'

'Yet all is far from well. Much of the development has been sporadic, a good deal of it just continues the sprawl of existing towns without any endeavour to make real communities; there has been little effort to relate place of living and place of work so as to reduce, instead of adding to, the serious waste of long and fatiguing

travel to and from employment; not nearly enough conveniently located open spaces have been provided; many amenities which could have been readily preserved have been destroyed, and a good deal of country has been needlessly spoiled. Even though this is fortunately not nearly as much as alarmists would have us suppose, its loss is the more regrettable because so much of it has been country within easy access of towns.'

That is a shrewd judgement. New housing estates, whether public or private, have provided a new and better life for millions. At the same time these estates have not been developed with regard to all the needs of the people living in them. Public housing by local authorities has, in the main, resulted in developments which, from the point of view of lay-out and architecture, are better than those created by private enterprise. Nevertheless one tires of the monotony of design, the paucity of imagination. Business men tend to regard planning as a nuisance. Planning in fact would, in a comparatively short space of time, benefit the whole community. The main criticisms to be levelled at housing estates to-day are that dormitory suburbs involve loneliness for the housewife, tedious and expensive journeys for the wage-earner, and that they lack the essential social life, while flat estates, devoid of gardens and situated often in congested areas, divorce the occupants from the country at the same time as they deny them abundant light and air. The mere fact that they are high buildings makes them unsuitable for the very young or the very old.

To grapple with the problem of the dormitory estate, community centres are now being erected in many places. These centres provide facilities for recreation of many kinds, and the movement for the extension of community centres is a praiseworthy one. Nevertheless community centres are a substitute for the real active co-ordinated life of a town, and even for the somewhat crowded 'neighbourliness' of the congested slum areas. As we shall see, the solution does not lie in the provision of these or other amenities but in complete re-orientation of our ideas regarding the necessary environmental background for the average man, his wife, and his children.

Chapter VII

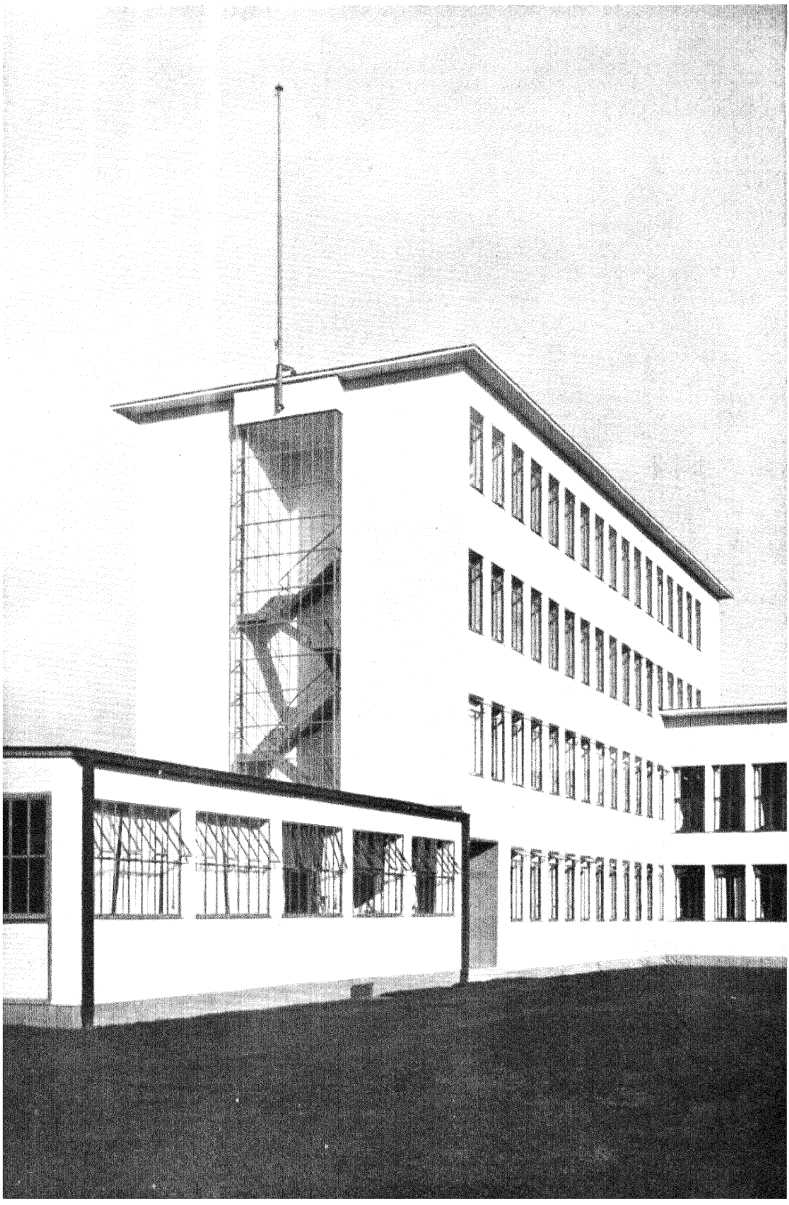
HOUSING FOR THE FAMILY

It is not a question of how many bodies can be kept in a dry and quiet place, but of living beings, who need an opportunity of satisfying their need of exercise, of meat and drink, of a healthy sexual life and of sleep.... You English should know that the Frenchman le Corbusier is a modernist in his artistic forms, but a conservative in his planning of a city. When he plans to rebuild Paris with rows of sky-scrapers, he is merely keeping up the old tradition from the reigns of the Bourbons and the Bonapartes. In England new slums largely develop in houses that have been given up by their middle-class owners. On the Continent we construct slums.

STEEN EILER RASMUSSEN

In considering the national demands for houses, whether cottages or flats, the main factors to be taken into consideration are population, national prosperity, and changes in social habit. Considerable thought has been given in recent years to the consequences of a declining birth-rate. The size of the average family has steadily declined since the beginning of the century, and that fact, at first sight, might lead to the belief that there would be a steadily decreasing demand for accommodation. The decrease in the size of families, however, has been offset by an increase in the number of families, and for at least a decade, and probably for a considerably longer period, there is no likelihood of any diminution of the demand for houses.

It has been argued, however, that the decline in population will tend to result in the contraction of suburban development and the increase of centralisation, that as the town population diminishes there will be a tendency for the towns themselves to contract. This is not borne out by recent population movements in the Greater London area, where two distinct trends are clearly seen—a movement from the provinces to the outer ring and a movement from



A MODERN FACTORY

Roche Products Ltd. factory in Welwyn Garden City, a town designed for industry and residence

the centre to the outer suburbs. Only for sheer economic reasons do people live in the very heart of great towns. They live there not by choice but from necessity and, whenever their income reaches the limit which makes it possible to do so, they supplement their urban dwelling by a country cottage.

Between 1911 and 1921 the number of occupants per house in Great Britain dropped from 5·56 to 4·85, between 1921 and 1929 the number dropped from 4 85 to 3·5. It was estimated that between 1931 and 1941 there was an additional one million families of three persons or less, an increase of $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, while the increase of families of all sizes was estimated at 900,000, an increase of 9 per cent. Each of these families requires a house, and it is for these additional families in the national community that the building industry must cater.

The decrease in the size of the family has its interesting result in the demand for better housing, for, since the family is smaller, the family income may be spent in ways different from those which were customary when families were larger. It is universally admitted that one of the first signs of a feeling of improved economic status is a demand for better housing. Very often the first transfer of family income from purposes necessary in the rearing of four or five children as against one or two or three is the purchase or part payment of an individual dwelling. Credit purchase appeals to the man with the smaller family much more than it did to the man with the full quiver of Victorian times.

Those who have benefited most from the post-war building are those members of the community whose wages enable them to pay rents of fifteen shillings per week and over. There has been an indirect gain to the lower income groups (apart from rehoused slum dwellers) in that more commodious but older accommodation has been left vacant by the transfer. The census of 1931 showed that despite the construction of over 2,000,000 houses since 1919 slums have not been greatly reduced. The difficulty is always one of rent, and private enterprise cannot tackle the problem thoroughly even when financial inducements are offered. Building societies base

their advances on the principle that repayments of loan together with rates should not exceed one-fourth of the purchaser's income. *A New Survey of London Life and Labour* shows that the average rent paid by a London worker earning between 57s. 7d. and 62s. 6d. a week is 11s. 2d., or 19 per cent of his income: where the income is approximately £5 a week the average rental is 14 per cent. The suggestion has been made that the setting up of a super Public Utility Society co-ordinating the work of local authorities, public utility societies and, possibly, building societies might help to solve this problem. It has also been suggested that building societies might amalgamate into a few separate units and then operate as agents of a mortgage bank.

The modern small family has perhaps accentuated the development of the service flat dwelling. As on the Continent, there has been an increase in these dwellings in recent years, particularly for the higher income groups. Their chief attraction lies in the elimination or reduction of housework, which makes them suitable for single women and married women in employment. The same factor is possibly the chief attraction of the 'luxury flat' in London and other great cities.

An important factor, as had been noted, governing the demand for houses and certainly governing the actual construction of them is the state of national prosperity. The demand for private enterprise houses declines as national prosperity declines: the converse is also true. The construction of houses by local authorities (and by private enterprise) even in a period of boom may decline substantially if the boom is the result of, say, a re-armament programme which of necessity absorbs a great many building trade workers and much of the essential materials of the industry.

Quite apart from the state of boom or depression in which trade finds itself at any given period, there is nevertheless a constantly increasing desire among all sections of the community for improved standards of housing and improved amenities within and without the houses themselves. It is this desire which has given rise to the acute flats *versus* cottages controversy.

It may be stated quite categorically that it is the unanimous view of nearly all housing reformers and town planners that the individual family house with its own garden is greatly to be preferred to the flat dwelling, and that such a dwelling is indispensable to a full family life. Why, then, the controversy? The controversy has arisen because as in London, Manchester, Glasgow, and other great cities land suitable for cottage estates on the circumference became used up, local authorities were compelled to consider as a temporary expedient the desirability of rehousing sections of the community in central flats. Some details of the reasons given by the L.C.C. have already been given in Chapter VI. Where local authorities have been quite honest with themselves, however, they have admitted the desirability of cottages. A deputation from the city of Birmingham visited Hamburg, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Munich, Frankfort-on-the-Main, and Cologne in an endeavour to see for themselves the best continental experiments in flat development. In addition they inspected some of the latest type of tenement dwellings erected by the London County Council.

'Notwithstanding all we have seen', the deputation reported, 'we are unanimously of the opinion that the most satisfactory system for housing the people, provided the requisite land and other facilities are available, is that which prevails in Birmingham at the present time, viz. the single or self-contained house with its own plot of garden ground attached thereto.'

All the towns visited by the deputation acquiesced in that view.

The same view is to be found in scores of reports, in the books and pamphlets of numerous housing authorities.

Manchester University Settlement conducted an inquiry into 'Some Social Aspects of Pre-War Tenements and of Post-War Flats'. In the statement of conclusions reached they state that their researches show that 'the cottage house with its own garden plot is undoubtedly the most satisfactory type of family house'.

'Few people doubt', says Sir Ernest Simon, 'that the separate cottage, standing in its own garden, provides by far the best housing for a family. Perhaps the most important aspect of the new

housing estates is the gardens and open spaces. Land is cheap and adequate; open spaces and playing-fields can be provided for adults as well as playgrounds for the children.'

'Injury to health', says Dr. Arthur Salter, M.P. for Bermondsey, 'is caused not only by overcrowding per house, or per room, but also by overcrowding per acre. I think you will find that it is universally the case that death-rates, zymotic rates and infantile mortality rates are higher in tenement areas where the population is housed more than one hundred and fifty to the acre than in cottage estates where the population is seventy or eighty or less to the acre. Directly you get to districts where, owing to the high blocks of flats, the population density reaches three hundred or four hundred per acre you will find that all these rates and others are higher than in the rest of the township where the density is under one hundred.'

'The flat', says Mr. E. Maxwell Fry, A.R.I.B.A., 'is logical only under the conditions imposed by the development of industry and transport and the absence of domestic service. Our present system of development is heaping up trouble for us in the future. Flat life as known in London fails to recognise the existence of children and denies the proper entry of sun and air. To live in boxes lifted off the ground and away from contact with the earth is not the life of a free man.'

Lord Horder, who concedes that some of the huge blocks are 'really excellent', nevertheless argues: 'Of what use is it that the doctrinaire reformer should plan and build large blocks of flats, equipped with the latest gadgets, if the doctor finds that the higher rents have resulted in malnutrition from food parsimony and in depression through the unfriendliness and lack of social intercourse in the barrack type of living? . . . All the same, "we have a little house of our own, with a garden" . . . when this can be achieved it is often the remedy for a heap of evils the doctor cannot cure.'

The same point is made in an article in *The Times* entitled 'From Slum to Flat'. Having conceded that some L.C.C. flats halve the work for the housewife, the writer continued:

'But anything savouring of a dictatorial attitude is resented, and such rules in L.C.C. flats as those forbidding the keeping of a dog, knocking nails into the wall, and holding late parties without obtaining permission are borne with an ill grace. Yet these would be dismissed as the minor trials of life if the husband's greatest wish could be granted. He feels repressed at not having a house of his own. Above all, he yearns for a little garden to himself. When cottages have been built these have been an unqualified success.... It is pathetic to see envious eyes look down upon the gardens of ground-floor tenants in blocks of flats.'

The most complete case against flat development yet offered is that by Steen Eiler Rasmussen in his book, *London, the Unique City*. Mr. Rasmussen, a Copenhagen architect, town planner and sociologist, says that London has become panic-stricken and has abandoned the English tradition. Two things have upset them: the uncanny increase in traffic is one; the other, the slums. 'Something must be done at all costs, and they choose a means which is no means and begin to build flats for people who otherwise would be living in cottages.' And he points out, what is often missed by certain schools of thought, that high building increases rather than diminishes traffic problems. Plenty of room in the home, he insists, is an absolute necessity for health and human dignity.

'It is expensive and yet unsatisfactory', writes Rasmussen, 'to try to make up for the want of space by ingenious equipment. It is useless to invent furniture so artfully devised that more people can sleep in the same room than would otherwise do so, when it is in itself a danger for so many persons to be permanently in the same room. It is not a question of how many bodies can be kept in a dry and quiet place, but of living beings, who need an opportunity of satisfying their need for exercise, of meat and drink, of a healthy sexual life and of sleep.... It is worst of all for the children who are forced to live their lives in the same room as the grown-up people, who have different habits and keep different hours. They cannot play in the daytime, and they cannot do homework or occupy themselves in their leisure hours; they cannot sleep in peace

at night; they gain at too early an age sexual experience, which has too strong and disturbing an influence on their development.

'Now all these disadvantages of overcrowding are terribly increased in blocks of flats with many rooms under one roof, in large buildings with far too many inhabitants. The condition of nervous people and irritable people grows worse and worse. The sleepless hear noises from every quarter: those suffering from infectious diseases become a greater danger to others. All facilities for games are denied the children, who are unprotected against the influence of the nervous, the sick, the morally or mentally deficient. The curse of poverty and of the want of space in the home increase when the complaint of despairing fellow-sufferers echoes from every side.'

It would not have been necessary to argue at this length against the pre-1914 tenements which everyone to-day confesses to have been bad—but it should be remembered that in their day they were considered to be great contributions to the housing problem. A 'gaunt seven-storey structure of unparalleled hideousness' is the description given to a block of dwellings at Ancoats, Manchester, which 'appears at the time to have been considered a satisfactory philanthropic effort'. Most of the occupants of these dwellings, and of similar dwellings in London, Glasgow, and elsewhere, considered that the mere fact of living in them was a social stigma. 'Prisons', 'barracks', were the kindest terms used of them by their occupants. The sharing of water-closets, lobbies and sinks was a constant cause of friction—the lack of privacy a constant annoyance. Perpetual noise added to the difficulties. Outside stairways produced discontent: a little more satisfied were those tenants of blocks with internal stairways. The tenants universally condemned the tenements as totally unsuitable for children. The paved courtyards were pandemonium and were only for the older children. The younger children found the stairways an insuperable obstacle, while, if that could have been overcome, then they were completely outwith parental supervision when at play. Complaints were frequent that the 'girls see too much', and generally that it was impossible to 'keep the children right'. Elderly couples and single

persons were probably the most satisfied tenants, except that the noise made life at times intolerable for them.

It should be conceded at once that the blocks erected by local authorities since the war do not possess some of the disadvantages of the pre-war tenements. But in the main the difference is simply between unhygienic and hygienic conditions. The new blocks are sanitary, while the others were not. At the same time they lack privacy. They are designed as imposing buildings rather than as houses for people to live in: 'an appearance of domesticity within the limits of economy.' Perambulator sheds count as perhaps the chief amenity. The noise problem has not been overcome: nor is it likely that it will be overcome. 'It was interesting', says the Manchester University Settlement report, 'that whereas a non-resident official stated that there was no trouble to tenants from noise, both the tenants themselves and the superintendent living in the block said that the noise through walls and floors was at times almost intolerable.' Usually there has to be a choice between gardens fenced off to prevent the children getting into them and asphalted playing spaces which greatly add to the noise.

There is no comparison between the luxury flats of the well-to-do and working-class flats. Working-class families have to seek their family life in their own homes and at their own doorstep, and the amenities which are provided in some of the luxury flats of London are well outside the range of working-class incomes and the finances of local authorities. There is abundant evidence also that the well-to-do with families prefer living in houses to flats.

The cost of land for flat development is infinitely higher than that for cottage development. Cottage land is usually obtainable at £150 per acre. Tenement land may cost as much as £20,000 per acre and in London averages over £10,000 per acre. In addition, except in Scotland, where there is a tenement tradition—to which the people would not return if they could—flats are more expensive and less spacious than cottages. Even when a lift has been installed —and that means additional expense, too—a flat is still a flat, an inconvenient and inadequate substitute for a house.

The folly of this expensive method of rehousing may be seen from the consideration of the following analysis of the promotion costs of municipal housing in Welwyn Garden City:

'The promotion costs or initial losses of the Welwyn scheme are seen in fairer perspective if considered in conjunction with housing subsidies. The majority of houses in the town have been built under the Housing Acts and are let at weekly rents. Including the 1938 schemes, the number of such houses built and building is 2,742. Of these 1,518 have been subsidised by the Exchequer, under the 1919, 1923, and 1924 Acts. The capital value of the Exchequer subsidies is, in round figures, £200,000. The amount written off capital account by Welwyn Garden City Ltd. was £375,000. Much of this was in respect of a fall in the values of the housing schemes. In many other towns losses due to the reduction of rents during the same period fell on the rates; the Welwyn Garden City rates incurred no such loss. To-day the rate charge for housing is only £550 per annum, or 1·38d. in the £, and current schemes are self-supporting. If the Exchequer subsidies and the Company's loss are added together, the unremunerative expenditure in getting Welwyn Garden City established may be stated at £575,000 plus some loss of interest. Compare this with the current cost of housing in great cities, with no complication of a deflationary change of values. To get 2,742 dwellings built on expensive sites in great city centres will cost the Exchequer in subsidies, on the average, £41,130 per annum for forty years, plus a local rate subsidy of £20,565 per annum. Capitalised at twenty-two years' purchase this represents an Exchequer loss of £904,860, or a total loss of £1,357,200. And this expenditure has not the merit, as the Welwyn expenditure had, of placing future development on its own feet.'

Finally, the flat does not solve the problem it pretends to solve—the problem of the congested central areas of cities. On the contrary it perpetuates the very evil for which it is claimed it is a solution. It makes the replanning of central areas impossible. The flat represents a deterioration of the standards of working-class

housing only attained by a century of struggle. There is no member of a local authority who should be unaware of this, and anyone who continues to pursue a policy of tenement development is deliberately sinning against the light.

Housing is not merely a question of sanitary accommodation. It is not even a question of sanitary accommodation plus gadgets. It is a question of providing homes for the people—homes which enable every member of the family to live a happy, full existence. The flat cannot provide such opportunities. It cannot provide the amenities which our twentieth century knowledge and material resources make possible. At the best it is a second best. The towering block of flats is an admission of defeat—a sign to heaven that many local authorities and national governments are overwhelmed by the problems which face them and are lacking in the courage necessary to overcome the difficulties and to plan our country so that it serves the needs of every member of the community, whether he lives in town or country.

Chapter VIII

TOWNS FOR HEALTHY LIVING AND INDUSTRY

A metropolitan 'wen', as Cobbett was already calling the relatively tiny London of his day, is no longer an organic whole, no longer exists as a community, in whose life individuals can fruitfully participate. Men and women rub shoulders with other men and women; but the contact is external and mechanical. Each one of them can say, in the words of the Jolly Miller of the song, 'I care for nobody, no, not I, and nobody cares for me.' Metropolitan life is atomistic. The city, as a city, does nothing to correlate its human particles into a pattern of responsible, communal living. What the country loses on the swings, the city loses all over again on the roundabouts. To compel a rational and planned decentralisation of industry is one of the legitimate, the urgently necessary functions of the State.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

In 1898 a little book was published by the London firm of Swan, Sonnenschein & Company, entitled *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform.* Its author was an obscure, almost completely unknown, law courts reporter named Ebenezer Howard. It might easily have fallen still-born from the press. Its simple message might quite easily have been ignored by a world so caught up in the wheel of circumstance that its attention was not easily to be directed to simple cures for ancient ills. The book itself made no claim to be read as literature—although it is rather surprising how well it wears and how easily it may be read even to-day—it was simply a straightforward account of an idea which had occurred to the author and which had been developed by him into a fairly water-tight theory. Yet it is a book which must take its place with that small number of books whose contents have shaped men's beliefs, given new impetus to their idealism, and profoundly affected the lives of countless thousands who know nothing of

Howard. It takes its place with *The Wealth of Nations*, *The Origin of Species*, *Progress and Poverty*, and some half a dozen other volumes which but to read is to absorb (in part at least) and to condition one's future thinking and action.

A little book, some hundred and fifty demy octavo pages, it dealt clearly with a problem which other reformers had touched upon but vaguely—namely the problem of the nature of a town. It advocated, to put the central idea as clearly as possible, the creation of garden cities: 'Towns designed for healthy living and industry; of a size that makes possible a full measure of social life, but not larger; surrounded by a rural belt; the whole of the land being in public ownership, or held in trust for the community.'

Howard noted that there was a considerable body of agreement among public men as to the undesirability of a continual migration of people from the country to the great towns. He quoted Lord Rosebery, who, speaking as chairman of the London County Council, said:

'There is no thought of pride associated in my mind with the idea of London. I am always haunted by the awfulness of London: by the great appalling fact of these millions cast down, as it would appear by hazard, on the banks of this noble stream, working each in their own groove and their own cell, without regard or knowledge of each other, without heeding each other, without having the slightest idea how the other lives—the heedless casualty of unnumbered thousands of men. Sixty years ago a great Englishman, Cobbett, called it the great wen. If it was a wen then, what is it now? A tumour, an elephantiasis sucking into its gorged system half the life and the blood and the bone of the rural districts.'

Sir John Gorst was quoted as saying that 'the interest and safety of the towns themselves are involved in the solution of the problem', while Dean Farrar avowed that 'we are becoming a land of great cities . . . (which) tend more and more to become the graves of the physique of our race. . . .' Newspapers of every political persuasion were alive to the urgency of the problem. The *St. James's Gazette* referred to it as 'the greatest danger of modern

existence': *The Star* declared that 'how to stem the drift from the country is one of the main problems of the day'. Trade union leaders uttered the same warning, while Mr Tom Mann, that perfervid revolutionary, declared that congestion in the metropolis was mainly due to the influx from the country of those who 'were needed there to cultivate the land'.

Howard argued that people went to the towns because of the attractions of the towns, like so many needles to a magnet. What was therefore needed was a counter-attraction. To provide such an attraction it was necessary to disprove the fallacious idea that there were only two choices, either town life or country life—the choice that Elizabeth Barrett Browning envisaged in *Up at a Villa, Down in the City*—that, if men willed it, there might be a third choice, a choice combining the advantages of town life and country life.

The idea was just as simple as that, but it was an idea which had not occurred quite clearly to anyone before Howard, and which curiously is not yet clearly seen by responsible men and women in charge of national and local government to-day, let alone by the mass of people in this country and abroad. Howard illustrated his idea by the now famous diagram of the 'Three Magnets'—Town, Country, and Town-Country.

'The Town magnet,' wrote Howard, 'it will be seen, offers, as compared with the Country magnet, the advantages of high wages, opportunities for employment, tempting prospects of advancement, but these are largely counterbalanced by high rents and prices, its social opportunities and its places of amusement are very alluring, but excessive hours of toil, distance from work, and the "isolation of crowds" tend greatly to reduce the value of these good things. The well-lit streets are a great attraction, especially in winter, but the sunlight is being more and more shut out, while the air is so vitiated that the fine public buildings, like the sparrows, rapidly become covered with soot, and the very statues are in despair. Palatial edifices and fearful slums are the strange, complementary features of modern cities.

'The Country magnet declares herself to be the source of all beauty and wealth but the Town magnet mockingly reminds her that she is very dull for lack of society, and very sparing of her gifts for lack of capital. There are in the country beautiful vistas, lordly parks, violet-scented woods, fresh air, sounds of rippling water; but too often one sees these threatening words, "Trespassers will be prosecuted". Rents, if estimated by the acre, are certainly low, but such low rents are the natural fruit of low wages rather than a cause of substantial comfort; while long hours and lack of amusements forbid the bright sunshine and the pure air to gladden the hearts of the people. The one industry, agriculture, suffers frequently from excessive rainfalls; but this wondrous harvest of the clouds is seldom properly ingathered, so that in times of drought there is frequently, even for drinking purposes, a most insufficient supply. Even the natural healthfulness of the country is largely lost for lack of proper drainage and other sanitary conditions, while, in parts almost deserted by the people, the few who remain are yet frequently huddled together as if in rivalry with the slums of our cities.

'But neither the Town magnet nor the Country magnet represents the full plan and purpose of nature. Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together. The two magnets must be made one. As man and woman by their varied gifts and faculties supplement each other, so should town and country. The town is the symbol of society—of mutual help and friendly co-operation, of fatherhood, motherhood, brotherhood, sisterhood, of wide relations between man and man—of broad expanding sympathies—of science, art, culture, religion. And the country! The Country is the symbol of God's love and care for man. All that we are and all that we have comes from it. Our bodies are formed of it; to it they return. We are fed by it, clothed by it, and by it are we warmed and sheltered. On its bosom we rest. Its beauty is the inspiration of art, of music, of poetry. Its forces propel all the wheels of industry. It is the source of all health, all wealth, all knowledge. But its fulness of joy and wisdom has not revealed itself to man.

Nor can it ever, so long as this unholy, unnatural separation of society and nature endures.'

There is no need to follow Howard throughout his argument; the reader should take an early opportunity of making himself familiar with this little book which was to have such an enormous effect on all future planning. Howard in the last chapter envisages the complete reconstruction of London—even then to contain only one-fifth of the population—but concludes with a plea for the practical solution of a simpler problem.

'One small Garden City must be built as a working model, and then a group of cities such as that dealt with in the last chapter. These tasks done, and done well, the reconstruction of London must inevitably follow, and the power of vested interests to block the way will have been almost, if not entirely, removed. Let us, therefore, first bend all our energies to the smaller of these tasks, thinking only of the larger tasks which lie beyond as incentives to a determined line of immediate action, and as a means of realising the great value of little things if done in the right manner and in the right spirit.'

Eight months after the publication of Howard's book the Garden City Association was formed with Mr. F. W. Steere, a barrister, as its first honorary secretary. In May 1900 the association resolved to form a limited liability company called the *Garden City Limited* with a share capital of £50,000, of which £5,000 was to be a first issue, with a cumulative 5 per cent dividend. In 1901 Mr. Ralph Neville, K.C., became chairman of the council and Mr. Thomas Adams the first full-time secretary. Conferences, eagerly attended by hundreds representing borough and district councils, co-operative and friendly societies, and most progressive organisations, were held at Bournville and Port Sunlight, as well as in London. As a result of the apparent enthusiasm to give practical expression to Howard's idea, in June 1902 a meeting was held in the Crown Room, Holborn Restaurant, with Earl Grey in the chair, at which approval was given to the formation of a *Pioneer Company* with the objects of preparing a scheme for the develop-

ment of a garden city and of securing a site. In July 1902 the Garden City Pioneer Company was registered, with a capital of £20,000. First Garden City, Ltd., the company which owns and has developed Letchworth, was registered on 1st September, 1903, under the Companies Act. In the same year, through the late Herbert Warren, the company purchased the Letchworth estate in Hertfordshire, and a total of 3,826 acres was purchased from various owners at a cost, including legal and preliminary expenses of £160,378, or an average of £42 an acre.

The site for the new town was certainly not ideal from the commercial point of view. 'The group who started Letchworth in 1904', says F. J. Osborn, 'were so confident of the essential soundness of the Garden City idea that, in selecting the site, they gave the enterprise no adventitious advantages of any kind. Indeed, they may be said to have carried the scientific spirit of their experiment so far as to load the dice against it. They chose a remote site, not on any main railway line or arterial road, where there was no tendency whatever to spontaneous development. The object was a national demonstration of the Garden City method of town development.'

The demonstration succeeded. Barry Parker and Sir Raymond Unwin, as the authors of the site-plan, made Letchworth a name to conjure with wherever the new science of town-planning was discussed. As consultant architects they had further opportunities of translating their blue-prints into reality. The fact that the busy industrial town of Letchworth to-day is a place of 'sweetness and light' is, perhaps, as much due to the work of these two men as to Howard himself. Where Owen and James Silk Buckingham met with partial success, Letchworth achieved complete success. Letchworth's pleasant boulevards and parkways, its tree-lined streets, its beautiful gardens—so prolific that Letchworth as a town grows more food than the whole site did when devoted exclusively to agriculture—its swimming pool, its handsome public buildings, churches, schools, cinemas, its opportunities for every kind of healthful recreation, make it not merely a town where all

ordinary amenities exist, but one in which every citizen is able to indulge his desire either for the cultural things of town life or for the contact with unspoiled countryside which all need from time to time. To-day the area of Letchworth is 4,562 acres, of which 1,528 acres are devoted to residence, commerce and industry. The town has a resident population of 20,000 inhabitants, and its 216 factories—ranging from heavy industries to a corset factory employing over a thousand girls, a confectionery works, and a baby-carriage factory—give employment to 14,000 workers, some 6,000 of whom come from the surrounding villages. It has 4,959 houses, 192 shops and 6 hotels. Some 300 acres are devoted to parks, commons, playing fields, sports grounds, etc., and there are 81 sports clubs. It has 41 miles of road, and along its streets are planted 7,000 trees. There are 18 churches and 3 cinemas. It has 12 elementary and secondary schools. There is a museum and a library supported by the Urban District Council. A modern well-equipped hospital is supported by voluntary contributions. The green belt, devoted to agriculture and recreation, still remains inviolate. The social life of the town is astonishingly good.

Letchworth, too, now pays its maximum permitted dividend of 5 per cent, and paid off £20,000 of arrears of cumulative dividend accruing before 1923. The town is therefore a financial success: planning has survived the supreme test of the twentieth century—it pays. It pays, however, with this qualification—that the time which must elapse before the capital outlay becomes remunerative tends to put the creation of garden cities, like the provision of houses for the working-class, outside the normal range of private commercial enterprise. The time-lag has other results too. Any private enterprise attempt to establish a new town—unless the scheme is financed by a millionaire, and the creation of new towns ought to be the exhilarating pastime of millionaires—must pass through pioneering stages when the town is primitive, devoid of most of the amenities of life, of proper shopping facilities, without cinemas, sometimes even without schools and hospitals. That in itself is a factor which must make for slow development. The

creation of new towns—if these great handicaps are to be avoided —becomes therefore a matter for Government and for the great local authorities, the great municipalities and county councils.

Nevertheless, and again on the personal initiative of Howard, a second experiment was begun at Welwyn, also in Hertfordshire, in 1920. Welwyn Garden City is twenty-one miles from London, but still completely detached from the sprawling development of the metropolis. No enterprise could have been begun under much less favourable circumstances. Building prices were abnormally high, and to that initial difficulty there were added those caused by the succession of tiny booms and deep depressions which were the disturbing feature of economic life in the between-the-wars period. The original site of the town comprised 2,378 acres, costing with timber, and after payment of legal expenses, the sum of £105,804, an average of £44 10s. per acre. Profiting from the experience of Letchworth, Welwyn is regarded as even superior to the first garden city in town-planning development (the site-plan by Louis De Soissons is a most distinguished essay in town planning), and is regarded as a model by town-planning technicians throughout the world. To-day Welwyn has a population of 21,000, and its eighty factories—including radio, breakfast food, grinding wheel, vitamin and other factories, as well as a first-class film studio—employ 5,400 workers, of whom 1,254 come to Welwyn from the surrounding area. An additional 2,000 persons are employed in trades and occupations indirectly connected with local industry. There are 4,396 houses in the town and 36 shops, excluding the great departmental stores (Welwyn Stores, a unique achievement in communal trading), which cost a quarter of a million pounds to build and has eighty departments, as well as magnificent restaurants and concert halls. There are twelve churches, one theatre and one cinema. Some 600 acres are zoned as recreation grounds, and there are 28 sports clubs. The town has four elementary schools and one secondary school. In Welwyn, too, the green belt remains, despite some slight encroachment on Sherrards' Wood, which was compensated for by the purchase of

additional land on the periphery, a source of pleasure and recreation for the inhabitants and a guarantee of the self-contained character of the town as a piece of physical planning.

Neither Letchworth nor Welwyn are in any sense dormitory towns; the overwhelming majority of the population in each both live and work in the town. They represent a very considerable realisation of all the aims originally put forward by Howard—a realisation such as very few reformers are fortunate enough to see in their own lifetime.

Yet it should not be forgotten that these towns were intended as demonstration new towns, intended to prove to private enterprise, the State and the large local authorities that here was a precedent worthy of imitation and emulation.

Manchester Corporation, thanks largely to Sir Ernest Simon, Lady Simon, Alderman Jackson and M. A. B. Simon, alone among the great municipalities took heed. The creation of Wythenshawe, Manchester's satellite, although too near to the parent city to fulfil completely Howard's ideal, represents the boldest and most imaginative enterprise carried out by any municipality. It has already proved its worth in the enormously better health and lower mortality rates enjoyed by the inhabitants (transferred, as many of them were, from the worst slums of Manchester), while it represented an enormous saving to the corporation over the rehousing of the same number of people in flats, without any of the amenities of Wythenshawe, on expensive central sites. When completed Wythenshawe will have 25,000 houses, of which 20,000 will be twelve and ten to the acre.

In the United States, the Roosevelt administration planned the creation of four green belt towns, falling short of the garden city ideal only in their failure to provide for industry, and work has actually begun on three of these. In Scotland the Corporation of Aberdeen, thanks to the enthusiasm of a former Lord Provost, the late Sir Henry Alexander, is proceeding with the creation of the smaller satellite unit of Kincorth.

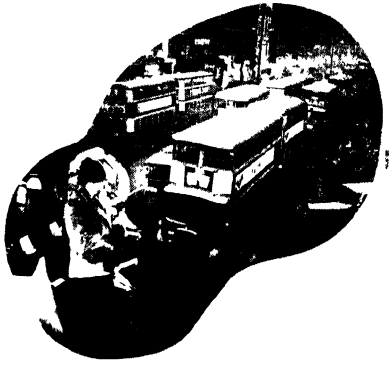
But in the main the problem for which Howard sought a solu-

CENTRALIZATION MEANS

THAT PEOPLE MUST SPEND HOURS TRAVELLING

FROM THIS

TO THIS



IN THIS WAY

LONDONERS SPEND £40,000,000 A YEAR IN LOCAL FARES ONE TENTH OF LONDONERS LIVE BY CARTING OTHERS ABOUT

THE MEANING OF CENTRALIZATION

Exhibition screen designed by Rose Gascoigne for the Town and Country Planning Association

tion remains the same to-day as it was forty years ago when he began his great work. In spite of and very largely because of the enormous housing enterprise undertaken by State and local authorities since the war, our great urban aggregations continue to swell, increasingly divorcing their inhabitants from the countryside at the same time as they swallow up in the most shameless fashion some of the loveliest tracts of country. In six centres of population, London, Glasgow, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle, one-third of the inhabitants of Great Britain live. In one of these, Greater London, one-half that number, 8,401,000, live. In twenty centres 20,547,000 out of the 45,401,000 people in this country live. Great Britain is well on the way to becoming a nation of bus-catchers and strap-hangers. London doubled its area in the period between the wars. So, too, did Edinburgh. As buildings go up in the centre people seek the countryside or as near an approach to it as the suburbs permit. And there lies the most curious paradox: that it is the upward tendency and the increased congestion in the centre which cause the suburban sprawl. That paradoxical fact is the complete reply to those who urge the creation of towering tenements as a means of preserving the countryside.

There has been an abundance of lip-service to the garden city movement but responsibility for the creation of new towns has been passed shuttlecock fashion from local government to national government and back again. The reasons are simple, if not highly creditable; questions of rateable value and the transfer outwith their area of voters naturally absorb the thoughts of members of local authorities. The State never takes the initiative in an important reform of this kind without considerable insistence from public opinion.

Nevertheless many factors combine to direct the attention of those in authority to the urgency of the question. The incessant propaganda of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association (now the Town and Country Planning Association), combined with the practical demonstration of Letchworth and Welwyn, had their effect, especially as the association could claim in this matter

that they reflected the considered views of town-planning technicians and architects, not only in this country but throughout the world. The increasing and wanton spoliation of large areas of the country by ribbon and scattered development and suburban sprawl aroused public opinion to innumerable protests. The increasing concentration of factories upon the Greater London area represented a menace to the amenities of the Greater London area itself at the same time as it was symbolic of the industrial deterioration of other parts of the country, to which in time were given the names 'distressed' and, later, 'special' areas. People became more and more fretful about the increasing muddle as it became clear that the workers transferred to new suburban estates by their municipalities were suffering from malnutrition partly as a result of having to sacrifice some part of the family income in payment for fatiguing journeys to and from work. The divorce of factories from residence and of both from the amenities equally of nature and of urban civilisation was complete. Then, after a decade and a half of disturbed peace, Europe was once again alert to the dangers of a world conflagration, with new and horrifying terrors from the skies. The fact that London represented the most vulnerable target to air attack anywhere in the world was plain for all to see. Manchester, Glasgow, and other urban agglomerations were scarcely in better case. A new and powerful argument was added to the thousand more positive ones in favour of the decentralisation of large towns into new garden cities and satellite towns: mankind, slow to be impelled by reason, was presented with an antique but dynamic motive once again—the motive of fear.

Chapter IX

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

Simply to register what is taking place, correcting some minor abuses, and label it town planning is worthless. . . .

PATRICK ABERCROMBIE

'English legal planning', Professor Patrick Abercrombie noted, 'started with a clean sheet.' There was no tradition to observe, for it had no real history. There was no complexity of machinery, for such powers as did exist were vested in the Local Government Board, and later, its successor, the Ministry of Health. Between the Government department and the local authority there was no intervening committee or administrative body. The local authorities comprised the county boroughs and the county councils, which included municipal boroughs, urban district and rural district councils. The only authority indeed to cut across the powers of the Ministry of Health was the Ministry of Transport, which in conjunction with the county councils could, for a time, consider the question of main roads outside the big towns solely as a means of facilitating transport and without relation or regard to other social factors. This defect was later remedied, but the fact that it existed accounts for some of the uncontrolled building which defaces main roads to-day and impedes traffic upon them.

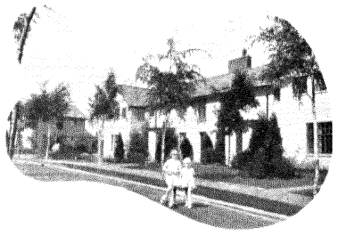
Legislation began to make significant marks upon the clean sheet as the second part of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909, which conferred upon local authorities the right to prepare schemes for the development of particular areas under their jurisdiction and to control development for the general benefit of the community. The town-planning part of the Act was applicable to any borough, urban or rural district, and powers were given to prepare

schemes for areas either in course of development or likely to be developed. The approval of the Local Government Board had to be obtained before a local authority could prepare or adopt a scheme. This Act was amended by Part II of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919, and that in turn by the Housing, etc., Act, 1923. The 1919 Act conferred greater powers on local authorities and removed the obligation to obtain the Ministry's sanction before preparing or adopting a scheme. This condition was repealed, however, in 1932. The Housing, etc., Act, 1923, made it a statutory duty of every borough or urban district with a population of more than twenty thousand to prepare a scheme, but this provision, too, was repealed in the 1932 Act. It also enabled local authorities to establish joint planning committees. Meantime Section 10 of the Housing (Additional Powers) Act, 1919, made provision for the acquisition of land for the purpose of developing town-planning schemes, while Section 7 of the Housing Act, 1921, authorised advances for the development of garden cities.

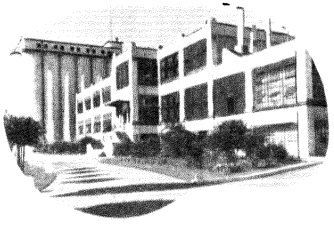
The first Act of Parliament devoted exclusively to town planning was the Town Planning Act, 1925, which consolidated previous legislation, and empowered any local authority to prepare and enforce schemes in accordance with the Act, to acquire land by agreement or compulsorily, with the approval of the Ministry of Health, to pay compensation or to claim betterment and to check contraventions of the schemes. A local authority was empowered to act jointly with other authorities, and to delegate powers to a joint committee. It reinforced the obligation to prepare a scheme laid down in the 1919 Act, and it gave the Minister of Health power to require the preparation of a town-planning scheme and adopt and execute a scheme in default of the local authority. The Local Government Act, 1929, extended the powers of county councils to take part in the preparation and administration of town-planning schemes and to be represented on joint town-planning committees. County Councils could become the responsible authorities for the observance and execution of a scheme either by the relinquishment

DECENTRALISATION MEANS

REAL HOMES
FOR FAMILIES

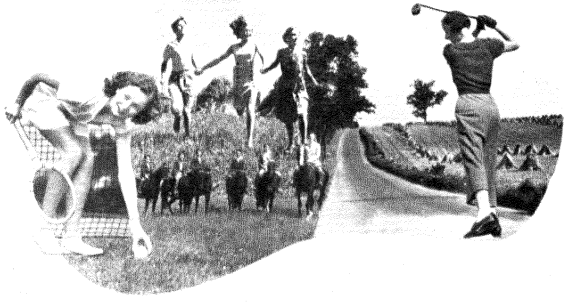


WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF PLEASANT WORK PLACES



AND OF

PLAYING FIELDS
& COUNTRYSIDE



THE MEANING OF DECENTRALIZATION

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of functions by other local authorities or by order of the Minister. In addition to these Acts, however, the Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, conferred the force of law upon certain regulations made by the Minister of Health under the Act. The most important of these are the Ministry of Health (Town and Country Planning) Regulations, 1933, and the Town and Country Planning (General Interim Development) Order, 1933.

The Town and Country Planning Act, 1932, which embodies the Town Planning Act, 1925, together with the town-planning sections of the Local Government Act, 1929, was introduced in Parliament by the Minister of Health, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, on 22 March 1931. It reached the Report Stage in the House of Commons by November 1931, when Parliament was dissolved. It was reintroduced by Mr. Greenwood's successor, Sir E. Hilton Young, and received the Royal Assent on 12 July 1932.

It is described as 'An Act to authorise the making of schemes with respect to the development and planning of land, whether urban or rural, and in that connection to repeal and re-enact with amendments the enactments relating to town planning: to provide for the protection of rural amenities and the preservation of buildings and other objects of interest or beauty; to facilitate the acquisition of land for garden cities; and to make other provision in connection with the matters aforesaid.'

The fact that the Act is a Town *and Country* Planning Act is emphasised by the dropping of the phrase 'town planning scheme' in favour of 'planning scheme', and the first section provides that: 'A scheme may be made under this Act with respect to any land, whether there are or are not buildings thereon, with the general object of controlling the development of the land comprised in the area to which the scheme applies, of securing proper sanitary conditions, amenity and convenience, and of preserving existing buildings or other objects of architectural, historic or artistic interest and places of natural interest or beauty, and generally of protecting existing amenities whether in urban or rural portions of the area.'

Under the Act the central authority is the Minister of Health, acting through the Housing, Slum Clearance, and Town and Country Planning Division. In 1934 the Minister of Health appointed an advisory committee to consider general questions relating to the administration of Town and Country Planning in England and Wales. Local authorities under the Act are the councils of county boroughs and county districts, while for the City of London, the Common Council, and for the County of London, the London County Council act.

Joint committees may be formed to administer a scheme and may co-opt members, provided that at least three-fourths of the joint committee shall be persons who are members of a constituent authority of the joint body. Power is given to the Minister to compel the combination of authorities for the preparation or adoption of schemes, while Sections 3 and 4 provide for the preparation of regional schemes by a joint committee.

A local authority or a joint committee may by resolution decide to prepare a scheme with respect to any land within or in the neighbourhood of the district of the authority, or the districts of the constituent authorities. When this has been approved by the Minister (who may vary the extent of land to be included in the area to which the resolution is to apply), the local authority or joint committee may proceed to prepare a scheme for dealing with the area to which the resolution applies, or the aggregate areas to which the resolutions apply, or prepare different schemes for different parts of the area or aggregate area.

When the resolution has been approved by the Minister, the local authority or joint committee must publish a notice in the *London Gazette* and in a local newspaper at least once in each of two successive weeks, and within six months serve a similar notice upon the occupiers and/or owners of every hereditament. The notice must contain a concise statement of the effect of the resolution and say where a map of the area may be inspected.

When a scheme is prepared or adopted by a local authority or joint committee the Minister's approval is required, and the

Minister may approve a scheme with or without modification provided that a draft scheme has been adopted by a local authority at a meeting of which special notice has been given before submission to the Minister. The Minister before modifying a scheme notifies the authority of the proposed modification, and the Minister is bound to hold a local inquiry into the matter within twenty-eight days if the authority or committee require him to do so.

When a scheme has secured the approval of the Minister he must cause it to be laid forthwith before both Houses of Parliament, when it will come into operation unless either House resolves, within twenty-one days, that the scheme or some provision of it ought not to come into operation, or the Minister undertakes to modify the scheme.

Having secured the approval of Parliament, the next stage is for the local authority or joint committee to publish in a local newspaper a notice concerning the scheme and naming a place where a copy of the scheme and any map referring to it may be seen at all reasonable hours. Any person aggrieved by the scheme, desiring to question its validity, may within six weeks of the publication of the notice apply to the High Court, which may by interim order suspend the operation of the scheme or may quash the scheme. Subject to this proviso the scheme becomes operative at the expiration of six weeks from the date on which the notice is published.

Schemes deal with the following matters: streets, roads, buildings, open spaces (private and public), the reservation of sites for places of worship, the reservation of sites for aerodromes, the prohibition and regulation of the deposit or disposal of waste materials and refuse, sewerage, drainage, and sewerage disposal, lighting, water supply, extinction or variation of private rights of way and other easements, power of the responsible authority to remove, alter or demolish any obstructive work, power of the responsible authority to make arrangements with owners, and of owners to make agreements with one another. Section 12 of the Act provides for prescribing the space about buildings, limiting the number of

buildings, regulating, or enabling the responsible authority to regulate, the size, height, design and external appearance of buildings, imposing restrictions upon the use of buildings and prohibiting or regulating building operations.

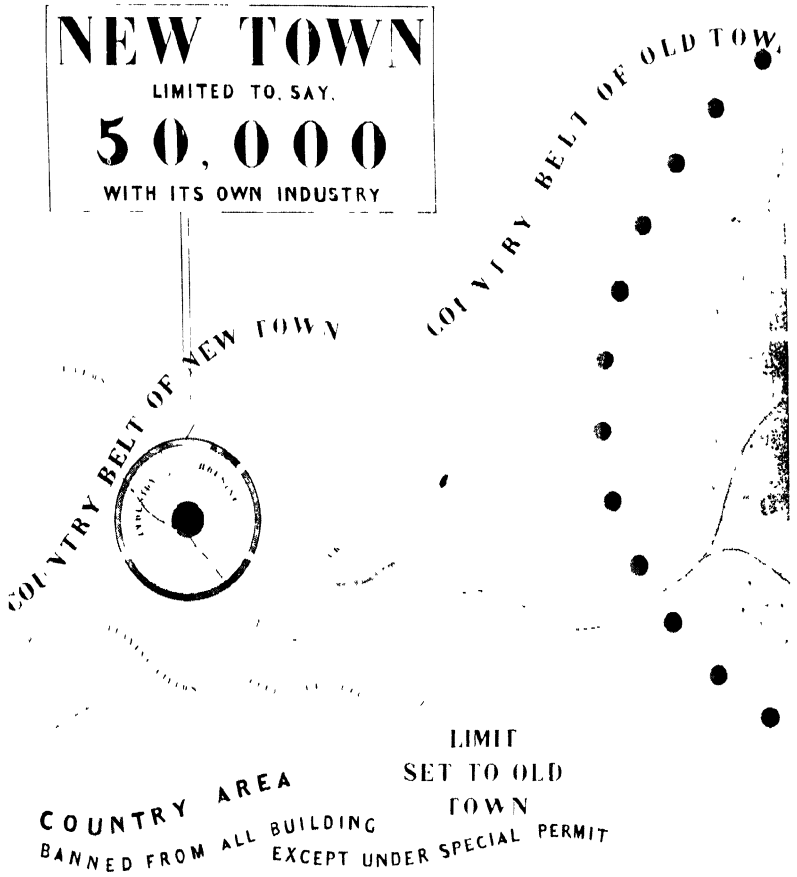
Detailed rules for carrying a scheme into effect are laid down in Section 13, which empowers the responsible authority to 'remove, pull down, or alter, so as to bring into conformity with the provisions of the Scheme, any existing building which does not conform to those provisions', and to prohibit the use of any building or land in a manner contravening the provisions of the scheme.

Sections 15, 16 and 19 are designed to help preserve the countryside against sporadic and scattered building development. 'Building operations', says J. J. Clarke, 'can be prohibited or restricted permanently, without compensation, where they would be likely to involve danger or injury to the health... (and) when they would be likely seriously to injure the amenity of the locality.'

Regional schemes, that is to say schemes made by joint committees, avoid most of the details mentioned, and include the following: zoning for predominant use, main communications by road, rail and inland water, regional open spaces, other reservations for amenity and water catchment, aerodromes and airports, regional sewerage and land drainage.

On 31 March 1939, 26,438,652 acres of land in England and Wales were under planning control, an increase of two and a quarter millions as compared with the previous year. Schemes approved by the Ministry relate largely to urban areas, and the majority of them follow the course appropriate to the control of suburban development, namely the allocation of land to residential zones at varying densities and to small shopping and business centres—with control of the appearance and siting of buildings erected; industrial zones; the reservation of open spaces and allotments; provision for new roads (including one or two new major by-passes) and the improvement of existing roads; the preservation of trees; and the control of advertisements. Resolutions covering extensive areas of land, such as that adopted by the Mid-

DECENTRALIZATION



BEAUTIFUL, FULLY EQUIPPED MODERN TOWNS . . . BETTER TO LIVE IN. . . . MORE EFFICIENT FOR INDUSTRY. . . ACCESS TO PLAYING FIELDS & OPEN COUNTRY, ROOM FOR GARDENS, NO NECESSITY FOR BAD FLATS & SLUMS WITH HIGH DENSITIES . . . NO WASTEFUL DAILY JOURNEYS, BECAUSE WORK WOULD BE WITHIN WALKING OR CYCLING DISTANCE OF HOMES

DECENTRALIZATION

Exhibition screen designed by Rose Gascoigne for the Town and Country Planning Association

Northants Joint Committee covering 357,895 acres, are important. The resolution by the Isle of Wight Planning and Development Committee covers the whole of the island, and covers therefore a number of well-known holiday resorts and beauty spots. Many of the schemes submitted to the Ministry include wide areas of agricultural land, downs, sea-coast and moorland. In order to preserve these areas the planning authorities propose various types of zoning and reservation.

A scheme promoted by the Hailsham Rural District Council secured the complete preservation of the South Downs within the rural district. This is an important pioneer scheme and illustrates what planning can do for the English downlands. The Rural District Council secured the co-operation of the County Council, which appointed the Hailsham planning officer to its staff and offered to bear the cost of all approved preservation of downland in excess of the capitalised value, spread over thirty years, of a farthing rate in the district. The scheme had five distinct features: (1) It preserved 'in its natural state' downland up above the 300 feet contour, and on the seaside, coming right down to the cliff edge —at Birling Gap to the shore. It is interesting to note that the great majority of the landowners agreed to forgo any claim to compensation. (2) The lower land round Jevington and the hinterland of Alfriston towards Lewes was zoned at an average density of one house to three acres. (3) Land in Cradle Valley was compulsorily reserved as a private open space. This land contained a collection of unsightly shacks which destroyed a fine position, and the authority adopted this unusual procedure with the intention of clearing these shacks completely, time being allowed for the owners to move. (4) Over a small area occupying a commanding position behind Wast Dean movable dwellings were completely prohibited —normally this form of development is dealt with under the Public Health Act, 1936. (5) Control of development in the downland area was relinquished to the county council.

The Minister of Transport, in his first review (August 1937) on decisions given on appeals made to him under Section 7 (4) of

the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act, says that highway authorities are severely limiting the right of access to service roads. Nevertheless, highway authorities are often content to set the ribbon development back behind the service road, but the Ministry of Health urges that, wherever the planning authority knows that the highway authority intends to limit access, they should consider the possibility of getting rid of the ribbon effect altogether. Ribbon development can be prevented completely on occasion without payment of compensation by the strict application of the temporary restriction of general development.

Compensation and betterment provisions are contained in Section 18 of the 1932 Act, as such provisions have been included in all Town Planning Acts. The net effect remains the same—that compensation is frequently paid, betterment seldom collected. At the same time betterment and compensation occasionally equalise and cancel one another out. If the method of compensation betterment, however, is to solve one of the main problems of planning—the question of land ownership—obviously as far as planning is concerned single ownership is much the best, for then planning resolves itself very largely into a question of convenient and harmonious grouping—then it requires application on a more positive basis. If compensation is to be paid where an owner is prohibited from developing his land, then a fund should be collected from the realised increased value of the land on which building is permitted. Professor Abercrombie suggests that as compensation would be claimed at once and betterment only gradually realised, a national loan would have to be raised upon which betterment might pay interest.

As soon as the 1909 Act was passed the Local Government Board was busy preparing regulations, while a few local authorities, notably Birmingham and Ruislip-Northwood, began the preparation of schemes. In October 1910 the Royal Institute of British Architects organised a Town Planning Conference and Exhibition, and from this grew the Town Planning Institute. The first scheme approved was the City of Birmingham (Quinton, Harborne, Egbas-

ton Town Planning Scheme, 2,320 acres) on the 31st of May 1913. The East Birmingham scheme followed on the 18th August 1913, and the Ruislip-Northwood scheme, covering 5,906 acres, on the 7th September 1914. The City of Birmingham scheme provided for covering new streets and widenings, required a proper pattern of estate development, building lines, street cross-sections, recovery of street-making costs at a flat rate of £3 10s. per yard frontage; the number of houses per acre was controlled with reference to a Land Unit; it provided for character zoning; not more than eight dwelling-houses in a block, with a minimum break of five feet between; no building wall or erection must stop or impede ventilation; it provided for the reservation of open spaces, while it laid down that private gardens, private open spaces or private allotments were to be kept in such a state as not to be a nuisance or annoyance to neighbours or to persons using the highways; and for the adjustment of the boundaries of private estates to secure a proper lay-out or development of the street plan, in addition to empowering the corporation to remove works in contravention of the scheme.

Since then, although the work was considerably interrupted by the world war, many schemes have been adopted. The table (from the Twentieth Annual Report of the Ministry of Health, 1938–39) on pages 152–3 shows the position at the 31st of March 1939:

The facts contained in the above table are taken from the Annual Report of the Minister of Health, who in 1924 began the practice of publishing separately a section dealing with town planning. The reports contain a review of progress during the previous year and give information on points of interest which have arisen, with notes on decisions on appeals and interesting features of approved schemes or preliminary statements.

A year earlier, the first set of *Model Clauses* for use in the preparation of schemes, with explanatory memorandum attached, was issued by the Minister of Health (revised edition, 1938). The clauses deal with diversified subjects, including new streets and widenings; submission of schemes of development of estates; relaxation of by-laws for non-through-traffic streets in residential

Position of Scheme	*Number of Schemes, Preliminary Statements or Resolutions*	*Number of Resolution areas covered*
1	2	3
1. *Schemes*		
(*a*) Approved and operative	116	185
(*b*) Approved but not yet operative	27	69
(*c*) Submitted but not yet approved—		
(i) Re-submitted after revision under Act of 1932	—	—
(ii) Submitted under Act of 1932	194	572
(*d*) Requiring re-submission under Act of 1932 but not yet re-submitted	12	13
2. *Varying Schemes.*		
(*a*) Approved and operative	19	—
(*b*) Approved but not yet operative	1	—
(*c*) Submitted but not yet approved	3	—
3. *Draft Schemes*		
(*a*) Adopted for local deposit but Schemes not yet submitted—		
(i) Re-adopted after revision under Act of 1932	5	12
(ii) Adopted under Act of 1932	168	473
(*b*) Requiring re-adoption under Act of 1932 but not yet re-adopted	7	9
4. *Draft Varying Schemes.*		
Adopted for local deposit but Schemes not yet submitted	1	—
5. *Preliminary Statements.*		
(*a*) Approved but Draft Schemes not yet adopted or Schemes submitted	81	106
(*b*) Submitted but not yet approved	1	18
6. *Resolutions.*		
(*a*) Resolutions to prepare Schemes which have taken effect, but Draft Schemes not yet adopted—		
(i) Resolutions or Authorities under Acts prior to Act of 1932	515	531
(ii) Resolutions under Act of 1932 approved	418	627
(iii) Resolutions under Act of 1932 deciding to prepare Varying Schemes	7	—
(*b*) Submitted under Act of 1932 but not yet approved	1	5
(*c*) Passed under Act of 1932 but not yet submitted for approval	3	3
TOTALS	1,579	2,623

Number of Authorities who have taken action at stage specified			*Total number of Local Authorities whose districts are wholly or partly subject to planning*	*Acreage covered*
Local Authorities	*Joint Committees*	*County Councils*		
4	5	6	7	8
84	3	—	114	338,779
18	3	1	45	660,027
—	—	—	—	—
115	37	3	279	4,022,486
9	—	—	9	4,822
9	1	—	11	—
1	—	—	1	—
3	—	—	3	—
4	1	—	7	17,621
97	40	2	251	4,645,876
7	—	—	7	17,972
1	—	—	1	—
62	1	—	76	260,894
—	1	—	8	32,641
277	7	1	334	4,565,843
232	56	3	517	11,714,442
4	—	—	4	—
—	1	—	5	157,249
3	—	—	3	—
625 (net)	123 (net)	6 (net)	1,175 (net)	26,438,652

areas; adjustment of boundaries of streets; diversion or stopping up of highways; building lines; primary and supplementary zoning for character and density; plot plans; height of buildings in relation to angle from centre of street; breaks in buildings; reservation of public and private open spaces; safety of traffic by preventing obstruction of view at corners; preservation of trees; control of advertisements; tidy maintenance of private gardens; adjustment of boundaries of estates; contraventions of scheme; appeals, etc.

In 1924 was published a comprehensive civic survey, begun five years earlier and prepared by Professor Patrick Abercrombie for the Corporation of Sheffield in collaboration with the chief municipal officials.

Joint town planning was made possible by the Act of 1919, and the first Joint Town Planning Conference was held at Doncaster in January 1920. At the 31st of March 1938 there were 101 joint town planning committees, covering about one-third of the country, and four county councils acting as the responsible authority. They are mainly advisory and are appointed by the constituent councils to prepare regional plans and report. Some 138 are executive and prepare statutory schemes on behalf of the constituent councils. Action has been taken by joint committees or county councils on behalf of 524 local authorities.

It is as easy to underestimate as to overestimate the results of the work of these committees and of the legislation which has given rise to them. But it is claimed for town planning that it has resulted in the acquisition of many public open spaces—the City of Leeds, for example, attributes its high rate of one acre of open space to every 150 persons to the results of town planning; it has also resulted in the reservation, through the co-operation of various landlords, of private open spaces; agricultural reservations have also been made in a similar way; considerable numbers of new streets have been constructed and extensive road-widening schemes carried through; building lines laid down in schemes have been conformed to, even while schemes were in course of prepara-

tion; many residential areas have been saved from the intrusion of shops, factories, and garages; on the other hand, industrial areas have been kept free from the encroachment of dwelling-houses; the example of Letchworth, and the embodiment of some part of its ideals in legislation, resulted in the application of town-planning principles to the lay-out of many cottage estates, including hundreds of the estates created by local authorities since the war. Even private builders, who at first considered that town planning tended to restrict their business, soon appreciated the value of it, and quite often tentatively submit their proposals before formally submitting their plans. It is also claimed with reason for town planning that it has effected considerable economies for those local authorities which have adopted schemes: not only has the opening of new routes often saved time and money in transport and travel, but statutory undertakings such as gas, electricity, water, are able to foresee future requirements and arrange their services accordingly.

The existing legislation has, therefore, been of great benefit to the community, as indicated above. It has also served to create in the course of three decades a strong body of trained technical town planners who rank second to none among the public servants of this country in capacity and in zeal.

Yet when full praise has been given it would appear to be true that town-planning practice is still in its infancy. New legislation, new powers are needed—above all, national planning is needed to complete the statutory planning scheme. 'In our good old English way', observes Mr. G. L. Pepler, 'we prefer to reverse the order of logic and to work up to the general from the particular.'

The key to the whole question is, of course, the location of industry. This has been slowly realised, but the accentuation of trends which have come to be considered evil from the point of view of national industrial welfare has made it abundantly clear.

It is still argued in certain quarters that any measure of control or guidance of industrial location would be fatal to industry. It is

argued that in some mysterious way industrialists always choose the best, the optimum, sites for their factories. That theory does not stand examination, for it is clear that even if a site were the best to begin with, other industrialists—operating the same *laisser-faire* system—might place their factories in turn in inconvenient proximity and thus destroy the optimum quality of the first location.

In any case very little consideration has been given to a closely related problem, namely, the optimum size of towns and cities. It is certain that in the development of a town there comes a point when the *per capita* cost of services increases out of all proportion to the increase in population. It may therefore be undesirable for a town to welcome any new industry which cares to settle within its borders (or worse, on its outskirts), since it hems in existing factories and makes necessary the provision by the local authority of expensive street widenings, rehousing schemes, etc., etc. The excessive growth of towns, indeed, appears to arise from the conviction that it is inevitable, and that mere size is something to be proud of irrespective of the conditions of life for the citizens.

Transport costs, in the sense of goods transport costs, are often, at present, the determining factor in the siting of industry. Rarely is the cost of travel to and from work on the part of the workers taken into consideration, and yet the goods transport costs are very small proportionately, and very small indeed when compared with the expenditure incurred by State and municipality in housing the employees in dormitory housing estates (whether cottage or tenement) divorced from the industry; the average cost of travel per head per year often amounts to £15, while the State and municipal housing subsidy reaches £39 per annum.

In the meantime Planning Acts only have a slight check on the development which results in the conurbations of London, the Midlands and the industrial belt of Scotland, and on the large-scale movements of industry and population which result in the deterioration of agriculture and the depletion of the agricultural

population. Between 1932 and 1936 there was a net increase of 481 factories in the whole of Great Britain. The net increase in the Greater London area was 479, therefore the net increase for the rest of Great Britain, excluding Greater London, was only two. In the ten years from June 1924 to June 1934 the number of industrial workers employed in London rose by 389,634, while in the whole of the rest of the United Kingdom they rose only by 22,434. If the figures for the increase in the Midlands are added to those in London, then the industrial population of the rest of Great Britain decreased by 70,871. The shifts of population represented by these figures have greatly accentuated the concentration of population. Greater London itself absorbed an additional population of over 1,000,000 between 1921 and 1936, while London and South-east England increased its population by 1,750,000 out of a total increase of under three millions in Great Britain in the same period.

It is quite obvious that such enormous shifts of population and industry are beneficial neither to the areas to which the workers and factories go nor to the areas from which they come. It results in problems such as the unsolved London transport problem on the one hand, the problem of the special areas on the other. It is obvious, too, that there are harmful economic results from the point of view of national and local funds, and even more harmful effects from the point of view of home, health and happiness. It is certain that an attitude of nineteenth-century *laisser-faire* whereby the industrialist—very often a first-class man in the conduct of his own business, but naturally with limited experience in the once-in-a-lifetime task of selecting a factory site—alone determines the location of his manufactory, is a policy out of touch with modern and national requirements. It is held by the advocates of national planning that manufacturers would gain if, in choosing a site, the manufacturer's own knowledge of his needs were supplemented by the more extensive knowledge of public administrators and town planners. It is not a question of saying to a manufacturer that here is a site on which he must build, and that if he does not build there

no other site will be available to him, but rather of saying that of, say, fifty possible sites on which he might build, three or four are barred to him.

The policy put forward by the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association to the Royal Commission on the Geographical Distribution of the Industrial Population outlines a scheme such as is likely to be adopted whenever the public conscience is roused sufficiently to demand effective planning. The proposals are summarised as follows:

(I) NATIONAL PLANNING.

1. National Planning Authority to be set up to give general guidance to town and country development. Board to have, in addition to survey and advisory functions, powers under statute:

(*a*) To restrict new industries and businesses (except under permit) in overgrown agglomerations and in agricultural areas generally.

(*b*) To schedule existing developments eligible for the further encouragement of industrial and other development, such as:

(1) Suitable towns in the special areas.
(2) Suitable small towns.
(3) Existing and new garden cities.
(4) Trading estates capable of being formed into suitable towns.

(*c*) To select sites for new satellite towns or garden cities.

(II) NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT.

2. Central body to be set up to acquire sites and to promote and provide finance for the actual building of garden cities and satellite towns on sites indicated by the Planning Board, through the following agencies:

(*a*) Large municipalities or county councils, whether alone or in conjunction with adjoining authorities.

(*b*) Authorised associations formed by private enterprise, by one or more local authorities, or by a combination of both, or by the central body.

3. Some extension of statutory powers for these purposes will be necessary.

4. Adjustment of housing subsidies to favour new towns and towns scheduled as desirable for development.

5. Existing villages or small towns to be used as the nuclei of garden cities or satellite towns, in addition to the new towns.

6. All Departments of State to co-operate in fostering, and anticipating needs for services in, new towns and towns scheduled as desirable for development.

(III) Re-development in Large Towns.

7. Clearances and re-developments in large towns to provide for a substantial reduction of number of persons per acre and for provision of more open space.

8. State subsidy for housing on expensive sites to be diverted to building new towns, paying removal expenses of factories and businesses displaced and moved to satellite towns, temporary travelling expenses of workers, and provision for social amenities in new centres.

(IV) Statutory Planning and By-laws.

9. Policy in administering Town and Country Planning Acts and By-laws to support the above measures by:

(*a*) Static zoning of residential areas in town centres to prevent further encroachments of industry and business.

(*b*) Prohibition or drastic restriction of extensions of existing industries and businesses in town centres or of increases in bulk on rebuilding.

(*c*) Revised and more consistent policy of controlling height and coverage, or bulk, of buildings, so as not to favour excessive central density.

(*d*) Adoption of more consistent standard of maximum housing density, applicable to all towns, and based upon consideration of health and amenity. Such standards to be expressed, if possible, in

terms of persons per acre, and not to favour either high or low buildings.

(*e*) Specific reservations of town rural belts, rural stretches, or agricultural zones. This matter is so urgent as to justify attention to the difficult problem of securing a fund for any necessary compensation for building values cancelled.

Other proposals of a similar character have been put forward by other organisations, including the Town Planning Institute, and when the proposals are embodied in legislation it is naturally to be expected that there will be modifications of various kinds. It is reasonably certain, however, that the broad outline will remain: that there will be a national planning authority drawing up a skeleton plan for the whole country: that there will be regional planning committees drawing up more detailed plans, and that local authorities will be required to fit their developments into these schemes. Only in this way will the land of the country be rationally utilised, whether in terms of urban amenity or rural preservation, whether in terms of industry or of agriculture (an important but neglected part of industry).

Chapter X

NATIONAL PLANNING

I see a beautiful city and a brilliant people rising from this abyss, and, in their struggles to be truly free, in their triumphs and defeats, through long long years to come, I see the evil of this time and of the previous time of which this is the natural birth, gradually making expiation for itself and wearing out. I see the lives for which I lay down my life, peaceful, useful, prosperous and happy, in that England which I shall see no more.

CHARLES DICKENS

The Royal Commission on the Geographical Distribution of the Industrial Population began its work when the hopes of mankind that peace might be maintained had not quite vanished. Its report was published while the guns boomed sporadically in Europe as the armies waited behind the Maginot and the Siegfried lines for the spring and the offensive. Appointed on 8 July, 1937, the Commission was distinguished and representative in its membership. Sir Montague Barlow was appointed chairman. Its members included Sir W. A. Robinson, Sir Francis Joseph, Sir William E. Whyte, Professor L. Patrick Abercrombie, Mr. Ernest Bevin (later, on his resignation, his place was taken by another trade-union leader, Mr. H. H. Elvin), Mr. F. D'Arcy Cooper, Mrs. W. L. Hichens, Mrs. A. V. Hill, Professor J. H. Jones, Mr. G. Parker Morris, Mr. S. A. Smith, and Mr. G. W. Thomson.

Its terms of reference were:

To inquire into the causes which have influenced the present geographical distribution of the industrial population of Great Britain and the probable direction of any change in that distribution in the future; to consider what social, economic, or strategical disadvantages arise from the concentration of industries or of the industrial population in large towns or in particular areas of the

country; and to report what remedial measures, if any, should be taken in the national interest.

The Commission's inquiry led to the submission of evidence forming the most comprehensive survey of the problem ever attempted in any country.

The report, finally published on the 31st of January 1940, was based on the evidence submitted by many Government Departments, by local authorities, by transport and by industrial interests, by the principal town-planning organisations, by Dr. W. A. Robson, perhaps the foremost authority on local government in Great Britain to-day, and by the then doyen of the town-planning movement, the late Sir Raymond Unwin. The experience of the Ministry of Health, the Board of Trade, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Labour, the Scottish Department of Health, and the Registrars-General was placed at the disposal of the Commissioners. The Electricity Commission, the London Passenger Transport Board, the principal regional development boards, the Railway and Road Associations, and the Federation of British Industries, gave the views of experienced industrialists. The Town Planning Institute presented the common measure of agreement on planning matters reached by professional town planners. The evidence of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association prepared by its honorary secretary, Mr. F. J. Osborn, was presented to the Commission by Mr. Cecil Harmsworth (now Lord Harmsworth), and its author. The evidence challenged the view that 'continued town-growth is in the order of things, that it is dictated by forces of irresistible authority, forces too complex to be analysed and too sacred to be questioned'. The main proposals made by the association exercised a profound influence on the Commission, which finally concluded:

'It is not possible from the evidence submitted to us to avoid the conclusion that the disadvantages in many, if not in most, of the great industrial concentrations, alike on the strategical, the social, and the economic side, do constitute serious handicaps and even

in some respects dangers to the nation's life and development, and we are of the opinion that definite action should be taken by the Government towards remedying them.'

The Commission accepted nine principles:

1. That in view of the urgency of the problem, national action is necessary.

2. That a national central authority is necessary.

3. That the national authority should have greater powers than those held by any existing Government Department.

4. That the national authority should proceed with:

(*a*) The re-development of congested urban areas.

(*b*) The decentralisation or dispersal of industries and population from such areas.

(*c*) The securing of a balance of industry between regions and of diversity of industry within regions.

5. That the movement of population to London and the Home Counties is a matter requiring immediate attention.

6. That the national central authority, whether advisory or executive, determine immediately:

(*a*) what congested urban areas should be decentralised; and should decide, where decentralisation was considered desirable,

(*b*) whether to develop: garden cities or garden suburbs; satellite towns; trading estates; existing small towns or regional centres; or to use other methods.

That, whatever kind of development should be decided upon, provision should be made for: (1) the economic needs of industry; (2) the avoidance of unnecessary competition; and (3) the requirements of national defence.

(*c*) That time was important with regard to (*b*). That municipalities should be encouraged to establish satellite towns, trading estates, etc., on a regional rather than on a municipal basis, and with financial assistance from the Government especially in the early years.

7. That the national authority should have the right to inspect all planning schemes, and to consider, in co-operation with the

Departments concerned, whether they should be modified in, or brought into harmony with, the national interest.

8. That the national authority should study the location of industry in order to prevent the development of areas of depression and in order to maintain the balance and diversity of industries.

9. That the powers of the national authority should include: the collection of information of the location of industry; the conduct of research into natural resources; the giving of advice to Government, local authorities and industrialists on location; and the publication of reports.

The report was divided into three sections: that presented by the Majority: the views of the Reservationists (three members of the Majority—Professor J. H. Jones, Mr. G. W. Thomas, and Sir William E. Whyte): and the Minority Report, signed by Professor Patrick Abercrombie, Mr. H. H. Elvin, and Mrs. W. L. Hichens. Professor Abercrombie submitted a 'Dissentient Memorandum on Planning in Relation to the Location of Industry', while two appendices comprise a Memorandum on the Location of Industry by Professor J. H. Jones, and a Memorandum on Planning in Other Countries by Mr. G. L. Pepler.

The view of the Reservationists underlined the urgency and the scale of the problem, and proposed to apply the same control to other areas as was anticipated for London and the Home Counties. They favoured the setting up of regional bodies at once, and urged that the national authority should be instructed, rather than merely empowered, to formulate proposals for both positive and negative planning on a national scale. They suggested that the powers of the Commissioners for the Special Areas should be transferred to the new Board, which should consist of a full-time chairman and five other persons instead of three.

The Minority Report favoured much more forthright action and took the view that the proposals of the Majority were not sufficient to meet the needs arising from the nine principles upon which all were agreed. They urged the creation of a new Department of State under a Minister of Cabinet rank who would take

over the planning powers of the Ministry of Health together with the functions of the Special Areas Commissioners. The new Ministry, they suggested, should not only have advisory powers but positive control over all new factories and factory extensions throughout the country, and that the country itself should be divided for industrial purposes into three classes: (1) areas of free entry; (2) areas of prohibition; and (3) areas of consent. A Research Commission should be established to prepare for the Minister an outline of national development. The Minister should have power to assist by loans and grants the establishment of new towns and the development of small towns, regional centres, trading estates, and national parks. Finally, they suggested that if the formation of a new Department should be considered impracticable, the central national authority should have all the powers suggested for the Ministry.

The difference between the two reports, as Dr. W. A. Robson has pointed out, is a question of the relationship of means to ends. 'The aims of those responsible for the two reports', he points out, 'are really secreted in the means they propose. And that should be the key to the reader's reaction. Those who feel strongly that the waste, inefficiency, and muddle of the past and present should be promptly, effectively and decisively ended, will have no hesitation in supporting the Minority Report and urging its immediate adoption. Those who prefer to hasten slowly, to tolerate a period of transition, lasting probably many years, before the full force of planning on a national scale is imposed on the public, and meantime educating opinion gradually by means of reports, research, etc., will doubtless favour the Majority Report. But it would be a mistake to entertain any illusions as to the implications of the two Reports.'

In planning circles there were no illusions. The Majority Report was regarded as excellent so far as it went. It was admitted on all hands that never before had the issues involved been so remorselessly analysed. Despite the period that elapsed between the creation of the Commission and the issue of its Report, the Commissioners

had not wasted time. Many interests, many organisations, many individuals had views, based on long experience, deep research, and, indeed, on the practice of planning within the framework of existing legislation, which had to be considered closely by the Commissioners. No-one who saw the Commission at work, who heard the chairman, Sir Montague Barlow, with infinite skill and with a background of knowledge and experience, cross-examine witnesses—at times with the utmost sympathy, at others as a devil's advocate—could doubt that the Commission had rendered a service of the utmost importance to the nation. But that the recommendations of the Majority were characterised by a certain timidity was admitted by Sir Montague himself when, addressing the Grand Council of the Federation of British Industries in the spring of 1940, he said: 'It may seem curious to be discussing such a topic as this at a time when all our energies are directed to winning the war; but location will be a matter of first importance when our attention is turned to post-war reconstruction. In the last war the Cabinet began to study reconstruction more than two years before the armistice, and we owe the Forestry Commission, the Electricity Commission, and many other developments to the thoroughness with which that work was done. I am not at all certain whether, when the pressure of reconstruction is upon us, new forces may not be heard to demand more far-reaching measures than any so far contemplated.'

The truth is that the tide of informed opinion in favour of positive planning had already overtaken the Commissioners. The first Commissioner for the Special Areas, Sir Malcolm Stewart, in his third report, described Greater London, as a 'national menace', and urged control to secure 'a better distribution of industrial activity'. Sir George Gillett, his successor, was equally outspoken. 'The Government', wrote Sir George in his first report as Commissioner, 'cannot, in my view . . . evade responsibility for the location of industry . . . it seems clear that social and strategic as well as purely economical causes will drive the Government of this country also to abandon the *laisser-faire* attitude which was the

prevailing doctrine up to a recent date. The all-important question of the location of industry . . . lies very near the root of the problem of the Special Areas.'

Long before the *blitzkrieg* was launched against London on the 7th of September 1940, long before the war began, town planners were alive to the strategic dangers of the great urban agglomerations, to the fact that the presence of one-fifth of the nation's population in one crowded metropolitan area was an unparalleled weakness from the point of view of national defence. It was not to the danger of attack that the early town planners appealed for support for their views. They pointed out that the great conurbations—to use Sir Patrick Geddes's unlovely word—menaced the health, fitness, trade, happiness of the nation. The bomber only added a new and sinister argument. It became abundantly clear that the conditions which made for health and happiness in peace-time were equally those which made for safety in war-time. That 20 per cent of the people of England and Wales should live in 1 per cent of the total area of the country was a fact fraught with the utmost danger for national defence. The overall density of the County of London was 58 persons per acre, rising to 147 persons per acre in Southwark, while the Bressey Report pointed out that the policy of building tenement flats was leading to densities of over 200 per acre. The overall density of Berlin, on the other hand —despite the fact that, according to the Germans themselves, Germany stood second only to England in its vulnerability to air attack—was 20 persons per acre, rising to 140 persons per acre in the Horst-Wessel Stadt area. Aware of the danger, the authorities in Berlin had made their plans before the war for the reduction of the more densely populated areas of Berlin to 60 per acre. Poland, preparing for the inevitable war, ordered that the ratio of the industrial area of a town to the remainder should not exceed 1 : 7. In Germany, zones of great danger (defined as including civic centres, munition and armament factories, chemical works, food storage depots, public supply services, and important traffic junctions) were declared and the erection of new buildings in danger

zones of the first degree was forbidden. An examination of the mass of literature dealing with air-raid precautions in this and other countries made it abundantly clear—even before the war—that danger is in direct ratio to concentration of buildings and population, and that danger increases proportionately as density increases. Long before the war the present authors urged the adoption of a four-point policy, including:

(1) A complete ban on the peripheral or vertical expansion of all large towns and cities.

(2) The planning of all future development in satellite towns of low density.

(3) The provision of real green belts round every big town.

(4) Until measures of large-scale replanning are envisaged for each of the large towns, all congested areas cleared of slums or other property to be left as open spaces.

Until the very outbreak of war, however, the population of London continued to swell: new towering blocks were thrown up for factory, office and domestic use, increasing densities, increasing traffic congestion, increasing vulnerability. The outbreak of war produced panic decentralisation, both of population and industry. The deceptive lull in aerial activity which lasted over the first twelve months of war induced many of the evacuee population and many of the evacuee firms to return to the danger zones, despite the insistent warnings of the Government. Some of the firms, indeed, had found that decentralisation—carried out in a hurry with little thought—had affected their business adversely. That should have been anticipated. Decentralisation to be effective must be planned decentralisation.

But the bombs have finally banished the last arguments against decentralisation. No longer will economists argue that industry inevitably seeks the optimum location. The bomb, knowing nothing of economics, has proved these arguments pure illusion.

But it is characteristic of the spirit of man that great disasters arouse him to great achievements. Not since the Great Fire of London—in which only six people lost their lives—has there been

such an instant desire to see a new London, more spacious, more beautiful, more worthy of the heroic people who inhabit it arise from the desolation. Coventry was no sooner bombed than the City Architect produced his plans for a new city. The havoc wrought in Manchester and Liverpool, in Sheffield, Southampton and Bristol has equally aroused the inhabitants to look forward to the post-war world in which cities will be designed for healthy living and industry, and designed, too, for beauty, for beauty which refreshes the spirit and kindles men's minds to new and higher purposes. To all who live in the deadening slums, to all who waste their years in the swollen city, to all who spend their lives tilling the soil and yet are bereft of the amenities of civilisation, planning offers the opportunity of a fuller and more satisfying life. Out of death and destruction, out of ugliness and despair, a new spirit is born, the spirit of creation, which will free men and women and children from the abyss, bringing with it a promise that soon earth will be fair and all men glad and wise, and bringing, too, a vision of noble towns planned against a background of green, unspoiled countryside.

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