UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

A GUIDE TO PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

A Guide to
PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

What they are: How to find them: How to use them

BY

P. FORD
Professor of Economics

AND

G. FORD
University of Southampton

BASIL BLACKWELL
OXFORD
1956

First printed in 1955
New Edition 1956

Printed in Great Britain for Basil Blackwell & Mott, Limited
by A. R. Mowbray & Co. Limited in the City of Oxford
and bound at the Kemp Hall Bindery

TO
ELEANOR
AND
JOHN

CONTENTS

PART I

WHAT THEY ARE

PART II

HOW TO FIND THEM

PART III

HOW TO USE THEM

A GUIDE TO PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

PART I

WHAT THEY ARE

THE term 'Parliamentary Papers' is sometimes used broadly to cover everything officially published which concerns Parliament and its work, from the record of its proceedings and debates, the reports of its own committees and of outside bodies on public affairs to documents officially issued by Departments in connection with their routine business. But it also has a narrower and more precise meaning, referring only to particular groups of papers coming before the House and included in one of its numbered series. The popular term 'Blue Book' used to refer to these 'Sessional' papers, and arose in the nineteenth century when the printer used a blue cover on most of them, especially the larger ones, though many had buff covers, and some no covers at all. A 'White Paper' is thus a blue book without a blue cover, but the term is also used with an additional meaning to refer to a particular kind of paper, such as a short statement on Government policy of the kind we have been so familiar with since 1945.

The best method of classifying Parliamentary Papers must depend on the questions asked about them. Students of procedure, and officers of the House or of Her Majesty's Stationery Office will naturally want to know the source from which they are derived, and by what authority they are prepared, printed and presented or not presented, to Parliament. Sir T. Erskine May's discussion of them in *Parliamentary Practice* and Lord Campion's in *An Introduction to the Procedure of the House of Commons* are naturally written from an 'inside the House' point of view. They draw attention particularly to the origins of the papers, and the terms used to describe them are those familiar to the officers of the House and are significant to the student as he becomes acquainted with

its procedure. But students of public affairs or history may be more interested in the contents of the various papers and the way in which they may be found than in the detailed processes and authority by which they are issued. From this point of view the following groups can be distinguished:

I. Papers relating to the agenda, proceedings and debates of the House.

II. Papers giving Parliament information and other material bearing on questions of policy, administration and other matters which it may have to consider.

Papers in the second group may be said to come from two different sources:

(a) House Papers. These arise inside the House itself in the form of the reports of its own Select Committees, or as a result of its own request for or insistence upon being given information, such as reports it has specifically called for or has required by statute.

(b) Others arise outside the House, i.e. from the activities of Royal Commissions or Government Departments. Some of these, whether reports of inquiries, statements, or annual reports, may be brought to the notice of Parliament by being 'Presented' to it as Command Papers. Others may be published with the authority of the Departments and not formally presented to Parliament.

House and Command Papers, together with Bills, form the Sessional Papers, i.e. Parliamentary Papers in the narrower sense already mentioned.

The distinction between these three groups,—House Papers, those arising outside and 'Presented,' and those arising outside and not 'Presented'—is an important one, not only because of the different procedure by which they come into being, but because the arrangement of the papers and the steps which must be taken to find them are affected.

I. PAPERS RELATING TO THE AGENDA, PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE HOUSE.

(a) *Procedure Papers.* In order to organize its complicated business thoroughly, Parliament of necessity provides its members with an elaborate and comprehensive series of procedure papers in the form of minutes, agenda papers, notice papers, etc. Some of these are of ephemeral interest only, while others are of more importance

as a source upon which other and more valuable records are based. The *Blue* Paper is of the latter kind. It deals with the daily proceedings of Parliament, the most important items being:—(1) the Votes and Proceedings of the previous sitting; (2) Notices given at the previous sitting of Questions, Motions and Amendments for future sittings; (3) the agenda for the day; (4) the proceedings of recent sittings of Standing Committees; (5) collected and marshalled lists of Amendments to be proposed to bills soon to be considered; (6) Division lists.[1] The first group, Votes and Proceedings, is a record of all that was, or was deemed to be *done* by the House on the previous day. It ignores everything that is *said*, unless it is specially ordered to be entered. Since 1680 the entries have been compiled on the responsibility of the Clerk of the House by the Votes and Proceedings Office, mainly from the entries in the minute books of the Clerks at the Table, and are printed and circulated to Members on the authority of the Speaker. It also gives the minutes of proceedings of the Standing Committees, which include the results of divisions and the names of Members voting in these committees. On the other hand, the *White Paper* (*Notice Paper*) which contains certain portions of the Blue Paper and relates to the current day's sittings, and the *Order Book*, which is available each day and shows the programme, so far as modified, of the future business of the session, are of the former group.

(b) *The Journals*.[2] The Journal is compiled each day by the Journal Office from Votes and Proceedings and the minute books of the Clerks at the Table and is mainly for the use of the Officers of the House, whose reference book it is for those precedents of the House required by the Speaker when ruling on points of order. The first Journal, known as the Seymour Journal, was written in 1547 by a clerk in the House. The continuity of style has been preserved through the centuries, and in spite of protests about the difficulty of reading it, it is still 'an elaborate translation of twentieth century facts into eighteenth century fiction',[3] so that on matters of precedent it is an unsafe guide to anyone not familiar with its conventional language. But it is invaluable as a mine of information

[1] S. Gordon, *Our Parliament*, 4th ed., 1952, p. 218.

[2] See Memo. by the Librarian on *The Printing of the Journals of the House of Commons* in *Publications and Debates*. Sel. Cttee. Rep.; 1914–16 (321) iv.

[3] See evidence qq. 520–563 by Sir Courtenay Ilbert, *Official Publications*. Sel. Cttee.; 1906 (279) xi.

for scholars, not only because it is a record of the activities of Parliament for over four centuries, but because many reports of Committees, etc., are preserved in the body of the Journals before the nineteenth century, and in Appendices from 1800–1835.[1]

(c) *The Debates* (*Hansard*). Since 1909, when the House of Commons set up a reporting staff of its own, the Debates have been the official records of things *said* in Parliament. They are substantially verbatim and in the first person. From 1803 to 1909 some speeches were given in full, the rest being abbreviated accounts, and the record is in a mixture of the first and third person. Originally the Debates were published as a private venture by William Cobbett, and were designed to form a continuation of *The Parliamentary History* from 1066–1803, of which Vols. I to 12 are entitled *Cobbett's Parliamentary History*, and Vols. 13 to 36 *Parliamentary History*. They are commonly referred to as *Hansard* because Thomas Curson Hansard, who was printer for the first volume of the *History* (1806) and the tenth volume of the *Debates* (1808), took over both projects after Cobbett sold out his interests in them in 1812. In the 'Advertisement' in the 1813 volume of each series Hansard announced that they were 'published under the superintendence of T. C. Hansard' and from 1829 printed on the title page of the Debates, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*. At different times there had already been published many separate series of histories either of Parliament, or the proceedings of Parliament or the Debates of Parliament from 'original sources', and these were used by Cobbett and Hansard, together with 'original sources', to do what T. C. Hansard described as 'completely superseding' other collections. A note on the methods of compilation, accuracy, style and length of the Debates is given in Appendix II.

(d) *Standing Committee Debates*. Standing Committees representative of the whole House are appointed each Session to deal with Bills after the second Reading. 'All standing committees have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the minutes of their proceedings and any amended clauses of bills committed to them. The minutes are printed and circulated after each sitting of a committee and at the conclusion of the consideration of each bill are reported to the House by whose order they are reprinted and published as a parliamentary paper.'[2] A shorthand note is taken

[1] They also record papers printed and unprinted laid on the Table.
[2] Erskine May, pp. 626–640.

of the debates in standing committees by the official reporters. It is usual to publish an official report of the debates on a Government bill, but in the case of an unofficial Member's bill, a report is published only when the chairman of the committee considers that it is required in the public interest.

II. PAPERS GIVING PARLIAMENT INFORMATION AND OTHER MATERIAL BEARING ON QUESTIONS OF POLICY, ADMINISTRATION, AND OTHER MATTERS IT MAY HAVE TO CONSIDER.

(a) *House of Commons Papers.* These are the papers which arise out of the deliberations or are needed for the work of the House and are *Ordered by the House of Commons to be Printed.* The first order to print is recorded in the Commons' Journal in 1641[1]; and although from that date the papers have been affected by changes in Parliament's methods of acquiring them and in the scope of its work, the feature which distinguishes them is the 'order to print.' They consist of the following groups:—

Bills
Reports of Committees of the House
Returns
Act Papers

(i) *Bills.*—Bills are of two classes—public bills and private bills. The former relate to matters of public policy and are introduced directly by Members of the House. The latter are bills for the particular interest of individuals, public bodies or local authorities, and are solicited by the interested parties. Bills are printed on their introduction into either House, and are usually reprinted, with the amendments made during the course of their passage through Parliament, Commons' bills being arranged and numbered as a separate series. Public and General bills are printed by the Queen's Printer; bills dealing with private or local interests are printed by the promoters and not officially printed until they have received Royal Assent as Acts.

(ii) *Reports of Committees.*—Proceedings of committees of the

[1] Vol. 2, p. 230. See also L. G. Hansard's 'Statement of the Practice of the Printing, Publishing and Sales of the Votes and Parliamentary Papers from the earliest period of record, 1641–1777,' in the Report from the Sel. Cttee. on *Publication of Printed Papers.* App. 3; 1837 (286) xiii.

whole House,[1] i.e. the whole House sitting as a committee. This type of committee arose in the seventeenth century during the period of the struggle between Crown and Commons. It was a device to allow for an informal discussion on a particular issue; the mace is taken from the Table, a chairman appointed to take the place of the Speaker and the rules of procedure relaxed. It was also used for inquiry, e.g. hearing evidence on petitions relating to interruptions to trade during the Napoleonic wars as a result of the Orders in Council,[2] and in a quite different field, evidence on a bill to disfranchise East Retford and to enable Birmingham to elect two representatives instead.[3] To-day, this form of committee is not used for inquiry, but only for deliberation.

Reports of Select Committees.—As the name implies, Select Committees are not committees of the whole House, but consist of Members of the House of Commons (or the House of Lords) chosen as representative of the parties and shades of opinion of the House. A Joint Select Committee consists of Members of both Houses. Each Session a number of Select Committees, known as 'Sessional Committees,' are appointed to deal with matters of a particular class arising during the course of a Session; of these, the Select Committee of Privileges, the Select Committee on Publications, and the Select Committee on Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms are examples. The rest are appointed to deal with particular subjects as they arise and make reports by the end of the Session, but if a committee has not finished its work by then, it may present any material, e.g. minutes of evidence, it has collected, and advise the House to re-appoint a committee in the following Session to complete it.

Before, and well into the nineteenth century the Select Committee was the chief means by which Parliament conducted its investigations. This is seen by an examination of the (Alphabetical) *Index to Reports from Select Committees, 1801–1845.* The Select Committee is still an important investigating instrument of Parliament, but the number appointed and reporting declined as more

[1] J. H. Wilcox, *Some Aspects of the Early History of Committees of the Whole House*, Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. VII, No. 4, 1954, p. 409. Lord Campion, *Introduction to the Procedure of the House of Commons*, 2nd. ed. 1947, pp. 25–29.

[2] Orders in Council. Mins. of ev.; 1812 (210) iii.

[3] *East Retford Borough.* Mins. of ev.; 1828 (80) iv.

and more of the work of investigation was undertaken by the Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees.

The reports of Select Committees have special features which arise from the fact that they are reports of committees to the House which appointed them. They therefore contain (i) the report on the subject referred to them; (ii) a record of the proceedings of the Committee day by day, which normally includes the text of any draft report submitted by the chairman, together with any amendments proposed, and a record of the voting; (iii) the minutes of evidence, if any, taken by the Committee. The House is then fully informed of what took place in the Committee and the record of proceedings is sometimes a valuable guide to the trends of opinion in the committee. In this respect those documents differ from the reports of Departmental Committees, referred to later, which do not report proceedings and need not publish the evidence taken.

(iii) *Returns.*[1]—A Return is a term used inside the House for those papers Parliament requires from the Departments in the course of its work. When calling for these papers the House uses an historical formula which it faithfully observes. Papers other than those on financial matters required from those Departments which grew out of the Royal Household, e.g. the Treasury, the Home Office, are called for 'By Humble Address to the Crown.' But when information is wanted from those Departments created by statute, e.g. the Local Government Board, it is called for 'By order of the House.' This method of extracting information was used considerably in the nineteenth century for obtaining reports from what in fact were departmental committees. The appearance of an increasing number of Committee, as distinct from Select Committee Reports as House Papers, indicated Parliament had asked for them as Returns and Parliament had ordered them to be printed. These reports are distinguished by the legend they bear, for example: *Return: Mercantile Steam Navy*[2] is the title printed on the cover; on the title page it is 'Return to an order . . . Copy of a Report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Ordnance to inquire into the Capabilities of the Mercantile Steam Navy for Purposes of War.' The Legal Business Committee[3] was called a Departmental Committee, but its report became a 'Return' to an order and is a

[1] This must not be confused with the term 'Return' used outside the House for papers, e.g., of a statistical nature.

[2] 1852–3 (687) lxi. [3] 1877 (199) xxvii.

House Paper. The use of the 'order' became of less relative importance as Departments thought it necessary to present their printed reports, or as more papers came to the House automatically through a statutory requirement. The following is an example of the kind of information which Parliament might require at any time. It arose out of a public discussion on the alleged forcible feeding of a suffragette:—'Return to an address of the Honourable the House of Commons for Correspondence of the Home Office with the Royal College of Surgeons and Sir Victor Horsley with regard to the case of Lilian Lenton.'[1]

(iv) *Act Papers.*—The 'Act Papers' which are amongst the House Papers are those which an Act of Parliament has required should be laid before the House and which it has ordered to be printed. Nowadays the order to print is given only for the more important of them. Examples of such papers are the annual reports of the British Transport Commission, the National Coal Board, the British Electricity Authority, and of the New Towns Corporations. An examination of any recent Sessional Index of House Papers 'By Act' will show that many of them are Financial Reports and Accounts.

(b) *Papers Arising Outside the House.*

These are first, the reports and papers of Royal Commissions, which are appointed by Royal Warrant. The second group consists of Departmental Papers, i.e. those issued on the authority of a Government Department. They include the reports of committees set up by Departments and of Departmental officers, annual reports of *ad hoc* bodies, statistical returns, etc.

Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees or other investigating bodies report to their appointing authority, that is, to the Crown or the Minister, and not to the House. Their reports and papers can be brought to the notice of the House by being presented to it 'By Command.' Command Papers differ 'from House Papers because of the constitutional form[2] that instead of being 'Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed' they are (technically) 'Presented by Command' of the Crown. That the reports of Royal Commissions will be presented by Command is obvious. Some of the Departmental reports and papers are also

[1] 1913 (190) lii.

[2] For the form observed in presenting papers, see Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice*, p. 259.

presented by Command, but others are not and are issued on the direct authority of the Department and not through the House. Thus there are reports of committees set up by Departments which are presented, and reports which are not, Act Papers which are presented, and Act Papers which are not. Since 1921 the principle has been that only those Departmental Papers are presented which are likely to be the subject of early legislation or which may be regarded as otherwise essential to Members of Parliament as a whole to enable them to discharge their responsibilities. Though this principle, which was laid down by the Treasury, seems clear' in practice it has not been fully adhered to and in any case, as will be explained later, it has not in fact meant that those 'not presented, are necessarily less important for public policy than those 'presented.' It is therefore convenient to begin by thinking of the various types of investigating bodies and of the different kinds of papers arising outside the House,—both those of Royal Commissions and Departmental Papers—whether they are presented or not.

(1) *Reports of Royal Commissions.*—The Royal Commission of inquiry consists, in constitutional form, of a body of persons appointed by the Crown to inquire into the subjects named in the Royal Warrant. In fact, of course, the persons appointed and the terms of reference are the result of ministerial advice. Unlike the Select Committee, which is composed entirely of Members of Parliament, and whose life does not exceed one Session, unless reappointed, and whose findings are printed by order of the House, a Royal Commission may be composed of people whom the Minister considers to be experts in the subject to be investigated, or of experience in public affairs generally, and who need not necessarily be and mostly are not Members of Parliament. Further, where the time is needed to finish an investigation, a Commission's inquiries may last over a number of years. Another advantage over a Select Committee is that it need not stop its work when Parliament is not sitting and if need be it can send all or some of its members abroad to take evidence; for example, the Royal Commission on the Natural Resources, Trade, and Legislation of Certain Portions of His Majesty's Dominions, 1912–18, sent some of the members to take evidence in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Canada. For these reasons it has proved to be a more high-powered, as well as a more flexible instrument of

investigation than the Select Committee. Normally, the Commissions report within two or three years, though some may sit for four or five. Occasionally a commission of inquiry may have a special task or develop a special task, and what began as a commission of inquiry becomes, in fact, a permanent body. One example is the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, which now publishes periodical or annual reports.

This form of investigation suited the needs of the Government in the nineteenth century, when investigations took on a much wider and complex form, especially after the reform of Parliament. Originally, however, Royal Commissions had no connection with Parliament, but came into being through the exercise of the Royal Prerogative in appointing officials to perform duties on behalf of the King. After falling into disuse—though they did not disappear[1]—in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the Select Committee seemed to suffice for such investigations as were made, they became the most adaptable means for the inquiries of the nineteenth century. To-day only the more complicated investigations or those which are the result of wide public demand are conducted through the machinery of the Royal Commission.[2]

(2) *Departmental Papers.*—As Parliament extended its supervision over the economic and social life of the country, the work of existing Departments grew and new Departments were created, and there was a corresponding development of new forms of investigating committees sponsored by the Departments themselves. These include Departmental Committees, Advisory and Consultative Committees and Working Parties. Unlike Select Committees but like Royal Commissions, these committees may or may not include Members of Parliament, and they may extend their inquiries over a considerable time and outlast any given Parliament. They report not to the Crown or to Parliament, but to the Minister. Unlike a Select Committee or a Royal Commission, reports from them may or may not include any evidence they have

[1] H. M. Clokie and J. W. Robinson, *Royal Commissions of Inquiry*, 1937, p. 55.

[2] Royal Commissions appointed since 1944:—Equal Pay, 1944. Population, 1944. Justices of the Peace, 1946. Awards to Inventors, 1946. Press, 1947. Betting, Lotteries, Gaming, 1949. Capital Punishment, 1949. Taxation of Profits and Income, 1952. Marriage and Divorce, 1952. Scottish Affairs, 1952. Civil Service, 1953. Law Relating to Mental Illness and Mental Deficiency, 1954.

taken—in these days very often they do not. Nor do they include any record of proceedings, as does a report of a Select Committee. If a searcher wishes to find out what went on in a committee the document, other than in Reservations or Minority Reports, will tell him little or nothing.

(i) *Departmental Committees.*—The description of 'Returns' already given makes it plain that reports, first of 'committees' and then of 'Departmental Committees', as distinct from Select Committees, appear first as House Papers and then as Command Papers. This indicated that the Minister was using a more elastic method for investigating problems, especially those of purely Departmental origin, and that he did not have to set in motion the historical paraphernalia which surrounded the setting up of a Royal Commission. In fact, just as the Royal Commission had taken the place of the Select Committee, so the Departmental Committee replaced the Royal Commission in all but what might be described as the major investigations.

(ii) *Advisory and Consultative Committees.*—The Advisory Committee is mainly a departmental invention, though some have been created by statute. Examples, like that on *Commercial Intelligence* set up in 1900, are to be found in the early part of the century, but work of the Ministry of Reconstruction during the First World War gave this form of committee an impetus, and this was added to by the recommendation of the Haldane Committee on the *Machinery of Government* that Departments should make fuller and more frequent use of them.[1] In general, their members are persons of special knowledge, and such a committee provides a Minister with a body of experts to whom he can refer problems in a particular field of his Department's work as they arise. He is saved the trouble of finding the experts he needs for a particular investigation, and he can establish a continuity of expert knowledge and experience and thereby anticipate the problems of his Department before they become matters of public policy in Parliament. Or they may provide him with expert assistance in the administration of Acts of Parliament. That their terms of reference often take the form not of 'to enquire into' but 'to consider and advise' is itself significant of their character and function. Thus, the Salisbury Advisory Panel on Housing was asked to report on the emergency

[1] Paras. 34–37; 1918 Cd. 9230, xii. See also *Poor Laws*, R. Com., Minority Rep., p. 1209; 1909 Cd. 4499, xxxvii.

housing problem at the close of the First World War, and the Women's Housing Sub-Committee played a considerable part in the discussion on housing standards and requirements. In the light of later problems of hospital organization under the National Health Service, the report of the Consultative Council on the *Future Provision of Medical and Allied Services* of 1920 is a notable document.[1] The outstanding example is the Consultative Committee of the Ministry (Board) of Education, set up in 1900 by statute, with the provision that not less than two-thirds of its members were to be persons qualified to represent Universities and other bodies interested in education. The influence it has exerted on educational policy and administration, through its long series of reports, such as the Hadow report on the *Primary School*,[2] the Spens report on *Secondary Education*,[3] needs only to be mentioned. It is noteworthy that whereas in the nineteenth century the great reports on education were those of Royal Commissions, in the twentieth they have been rather those of the Consultative Committee.

(iii) *Working Parties.*—'Working Party' is a military term, the use of which spread during the war (1939–45) from the Services to other Government Departments as a name for small groups and committees charged with the investigation of some problem or the preparation of some scheme. As the name implies, a Working Party was usually small, less formal in its proceedings, and its members were expected to take an active part in the work. Working Parties therefore shed some of the paraphernalia of committee procedure in much the same way as the Departmental Committee shed that of the Royal Commission. Quite apart from the fact that during and immediately after the war everybody was so busily occupied that the time-consuming process of formal hearings of evidence was not always practicable—the suspensions and difficulties referred to in some of the reports of committees issued during 1915–19 exemplified this—some problems were more appropriately handled by a small group of persons already well acquainted with the subject, pooling their experience and obtaining any information they needed in varied, but less formal ways. Occasionally, a Working Party was provided with a 'Steering Committee', often of

[1] 1920 Cmd. 693, xvii.
[2] 1931 Non-Parl. Bd. of Education.
[3] 1938 Non-Parl. Bd. of Education.

important officers, which the Working Party might consult on various aspects of its problem as occasion required.

It is not surprising, then, that Departments should see the advantages of this form of inquiry, especially for investigating matters demanding personal knowledge, and they quickly began to make free use of it for normal 'civil' questions. Thus the problems to be faced and the reorganization required by certain industries after the war were eminently suitable for investigation in this way. After the First World War this work was done by Departmental Committees, which reported on the position of the Textile Trades, Iron and Steel Trades, Electrical and Engineering Trades, and the Shipbuilding and Housing Industries. But from 1946, when the first report by a Working Party was published, to 1948, sixteen such inquiries were carried out by Working Parties appointed by the Board of Trade. The Working Party form of inquiry was rapidly taken up by other Departments, by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education in particular. While some of the questions referred to them lay in some fairly narrow or technical field—one, concerned with *School Construction*, being expressly called a Technical Working Party—others dealt with matters which earlier had been assigned to Departmental Committees. Of these Working Parties on the *Recruitment and Training of Nurses*, on *Midwives*, on *Police Pensions* and on the *Employment of Blind Persons*, are examples.

This development has thus been recent and rapid—forty-nine Working Party reports were published between 1946 and 1952—and it is not yet finally clear what difference in subject matter and circumstances determine whether a Departmental Committee or a Working Party is set up. The position seems not to have been clear to the Working Party on *Film Production Costs*.[1] The Working Party on *Furniture* consisted of ten members, but that on *Lace* rose to sixteen—that is, comparable in size to a Departmental Committee. The membership of some has included 'outside persons' unconnected with the industries, etc., under discussion, just as Departmental Committees normally do, though these persons often had other kinds of technical knowledge. Thus the Working Parties on the various industries were 'tripartite', the third party including an independent chairman and, say, a professional economist. Some

[1] Rep., para. 2; 1949 Non-Parl. Board of Trade.

have taken 'evidence' from outside bodies and persons, and heard witnesses, but others have appointed sub-groups or sub-committees, which co-opted outside persons and presented reports for the consideration of the main body, as in the case of the Working Parties on *Furniture, Boots and Shoes*, and *Cotton*. The *Cotton* Working Party had three such committees on which sixteen co-opted members served. Occasionally outside persons or firms helped with the drafting of parts of the report. (Report on *Pottery*, p. 1.) That they should be 'informal' and 'working' was part of their virtue; yet the Ministry of Housing and Local Government appointed an *Informal Working Party*, expressly so called, as if they had tended to become formal. And the 'industry' series of inquiries began in 1946 with a Working *Committee* on *China Clay*. No doubt some of these are differences on matters of detail rather than substance, but it is clear both that a new and flexible instrument of inquiry has developed and that experience has not yet shown precisely the relative fields of the Departmental Committee and the Working Party.

The variety of subject matter and method naturally affects the nature and structure of the documents, and some care should be taken in examining them. Up to 1952 only two had been presented as 'Commands'. Sometimes the membership of the Party and of its various sub-committees is stated at the commencement of the report; at others they are to be found only in the signatures at the end. Evidence, even if taken orally, is not published, but the reports often contain important memoranda and other documents which should not be overlooked. The report of the Working Party on *Cotton*, with its reservations, memorandum of dissent, note, etc., seems very little different from that of a Departmental Committee.

(iv) *Annual Reports and Statistical Series.*—The annual reports of various Departments and bodies created by Parliament are the chief, indeed the indispensable sources of information on the particular fields they cover, not least because they form a running series over a period of years. Some of them, as we have seen, are required by statute to be laid before Parliament. Others are presented to it 'by Command': for example, those of the Commissioners of Customs and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, of the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health and its Chief Medical Officer, the British Broadcasting Corporation, and the National Assistance Board. Others are not brought to the House, but published by departmental authority. These include the reports of

the Council of Industrial Design and of the Agricultural Improvement Council for England and Wales. Some of these series have been in existence for many years, sometimes unchanged in name, sometimes with such alteration of name as was required by the change in the title of the Ministry or Department responsible. That of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue has been issued for nearly a century, of the Commissioners of Customs for half a century, those of the Inspector of Factories, the Ministry of Health (formerly Local Government Board) and its predecessors for over a century. Some of them are statistical, like those of the Registrar General, the Statistical Abstract and the Annual Statement of Trade, whose great merit is that they provide continuous records for over a century. (A list of the most important of these series in the nineteenth century and their appropriate paper numbers is given in Ford's *Select List of British Parliamentary Papers, 1833–1899.* App. IV.)

It should not, however, be assumed that the value of annual reports is limited to their statistics, or to the record of the work of administration; on the contrary, they may contain supplementary reports, or accounts of special investigations of importance not only in a particular scientific and technical field, but also in public policy. Of this, two examples widely separated in time will suffice. The first consists of two memoranda, vital in the public health campaign, by Dr. Southwood Smith in 1837–38 and 1839 on *Physical Causes of Sickness and Mortality to which the Poor are particularly exposed* and *Fever in Metropolitan Unions*, in the Appendices to the fourth and fifth annual reports of the Poor Law Commission; the second is the great paper on the organization of a national health service by Dr. Arthur Newsholme in his annual report as Chief Medical Officer to the Local Government Board, issued as a supplement to that Department's annual report.[1]

(v) *Other Official Papers.*—Besides the reports of these committees of inquiry and the annual reports, there are a large number of other Departmental or official publications, some of them forming a considerable series. They include: (i) The published awards of the Industrial Court, the National Arbitration Tribunal and the Industrial Disputes Tribunal on Wages disputes, as well as the larger reports of the Courts of Inquiry into major industrial disputes.

[1] 1918 Cd. 9169, xi.

They also include selected decisions of the Umpire on appeal cases brought before him on insurance claims and disallowances. (ii) Similar to these, in a different field, are selected decisions on income tax cases. (iii) Large numbers of Statutory Instruments (or Statutory Rules and Orders, as they were formerly called). These arise from the delegated powers of legislation, i.e. the authority to make orders having the effect of law on particular matters, which Parliament has granted to various Departments. Papers in group (i) and some in group (iii) arise from State activities which did not exist in the nineteenth century. (iv) Other information papers. There is a steady stream of information papers proceeding from Government Departments and other bodies. They include reports on special studies arranged by the Medical Research Council, technical reports made by the Building Research Station and the Forest Products Research Laboratory, and by the Ministry of Agriculture. The publicity departments of the separate Ministries issue in the form of pamphlets and individual reports a wide range of informative material of factual, scientific and general value, for example: *Living in Flats*; 1952 Non-Parl. (Ministry of Housing and Local Government.): *Feeding the One to Fives*; 1950 Non-Parl. (Ministry of Health.): *Poultry on the General Farm*; 1953 Non-Parl. (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.) These are designed to bring first-class information from the Departments to the factory, farm and home, but important and essential though this growing volume of literature is, and though it may arise from bodies Parliament has set up, or instructions it has given, it is obviously different in character from those printed Papers which are the documents necessary for the work of Parliament itself.

(c) *Command and Non-Parliamentary Papers.*

We have seen (p. 8) that some of these classes of Departmental and official papers are formally presented to Parliament as Command Papers and that some are not. This distinction of form has a profound effect on their arrangement. Before 1921 Parliamentary Papers included nearly all documents of importance; few of those which were significant for policy were issued as Non-Parliamentary documents. The official description of Non-Parliamentary papers was then simply '*Official Publications*'. Since 1921 there has been a fundamental change in the situation. The immediate cause of this was the difficulties which arose from the Free List. The House and Command Papers, known together as the *Sessional*

Papers, were distributed free to Members and to a number of bodies and organizations both at home and abroad, and the expense of this practice had engaged the attention of many committees on Printing and Publications. This was brought to a head in the economy campaigns of the Government after the 1914–18 war, when the Treasury issued the important Circular No. 38/21. This instructed Departments to modify their practice of issuing Departmental Papers as Parliamentary ones, and as we have seen, directed that henceforth papers were not to be presented by Command unless the matter dealt with was likely to be the subject of early legislation or the papers were otherwise essential to Members of Parliament as a whole to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.

The initial decision in each individual case was left to the Departments and the result was greatly to reduce the numbers of Departmental papers presented and therefore going on to the Free List. The immediate effect was to transfer a number of papers such as Colonial reports, certain annual reports of Departments and *ad hoc* bodies, such as the Board of Control, the Development Commission and the Mint, statistical returns, census reports, and the Annual Statement of Trade, as given in the list submitted by the Controller of the Stationery Office to the Select Committee on *Publications and Debates, 1923*.[1] But the long-run effects were more far-reaching and went beyond what seems to have been originally contemplated, for not only were regular and routine reports of the kind included in the Controller's list affected, but also policy documents of major importance. For the Treasury rule had to be interpreted and applied to the greatly increasing flow of reports from these outside investigating bodies—the Departmental, Advisory and Consultative Committees, etc. The result has been greatly to reduce the proportion of Departmental Papers presented and to increase the number and proportion not presented. Thus an interim report of a Consultative Council on the *Future Provision of Medical and Allied Services*, 1920, was presented and so were similar reports of the Welsh and Scottish Councils of the same year, but in 1933 a report by the Consultative Council on *Hospital Services in Scotland* was not presented. Reports from an Advisory Housing Panel and an Advisory Council on Housing in 1918 and

[1] 1923 (140) viii.

1919 were presented; but a report in 1932 of the Consultative Council on *Steps Necessary to secure that State Aided Houses will in Future be let only to persons of the Working Classes* and two reports by the Central Housing Committee in 1936 and 1937 on *Rural Housing* were not presented. All this meant a change in the balance between the Parliamentary and the Non-Parliamentary group, and the change in the character of the Non-Parliamentary group as a whole. Classes of papers which had been 'official' before 1921 remained 'official', and the new work of Departments to which we have referred increased their number, as in the case of Wage Awards and Statutory Rules and Orders. But apart from this, the Non-Parliamentary group now consisted of more than official papers and included reports on public policy, made after careful and elaborate inquiry, which would have been Parliamentary but for the economy rule. The old term 'official' was thus an inadequate description and the negative term 'Non-Parliamentary' came into use to describe them.

A change of this kind at a given date, even if inconvenient to a researcher, may be intelligible if consistently carried through. But it could hardly be expected that the Departments' interpretations of the rule would be consistent or uniform; at best, it would not always be possible to foresee at the time of publication whether a paper would become the 'subject of *early* legislation', but some of the inconsistencies are remarkable. The first Report of the Onslow Commission on Voluntary Hospitals (1925) was published as a Command Paper, but in 1926 the Commission was informed that financial circumstances would make it impracticable to find the money required for the proposals. The Committee therefore made a final Report in 1928. This was published as a Non-Parliamentary Paper, a somewhat literal if formally correct interpretation of the rule, since it is therefore not to be found with its fellow either in the Bound Sets or the Sessional Index. The first of three reports on *New Methods of House Construction* issued in 1924–25 is Non-Parliamentary, while the others were presented as Commands. Sometimes the community, through Parliament, the Departments and various Committees is really working at a vexed problem over a number of years, yet some of the reports on the subject are Commands, others are Non-Parliamentary, so that the series cannot be found as a whole either in the Sessional Papers or in the Sessional Indexes. Thus of the papers on

Water Supply issued between 1917 and 1939 six are Command Papers, three are House Papers and six are Non-Parliamentary Papers. Other examples of the same kind are given in the Introduction to Ford's *Breviate of Parliamentary Papers, 1917–1939*, pp. xi, xii.

A further complication arises from the treatment of minutes of evidence. As we have seen, Select Committees and Royal Commissions print their evidence, i.e. the formal hearings, but the Treasury rule has been applied so that the report of a Commission may be presented as a Command while the evidence on which the report is apparently based is Non-Parliamentary, and in such cases the report is to be found in the Sessional Papers and Indexes, but the evidence is not.

The combined effect, then, of the development of the work of Departmental investigating bodies and of the Treasury rule has been to introduce a great deal of confusion into the arrangement of Parliamentary Papers. A smaller and smaller proportion are presented to Parliament as Commands, and more and more have become Non-Parliamentary. The Sessional Bound Sets—Parliament's own papers, if one may use the term,—once regarded as containing all the necessary papers on public policy, have declined in relative importance. The purchase by libraries of the Bound Sessional sets used to guarantee that they had almost the complete documentation. That is no longer true.

Not only has the position and completeness of the Bound Sessional sets been weakened by these circumstances, but from the point of view of the scholar, in another important way Parliamentary Papers in the wide sense now compare unfavourably with those of the nineteenth century. Departmental Committees, or the Departments which appoint them, have freely exercised their freedom not to publish their evidence, so that there may be no printed public version obtainable. But the evidence on which a report is based may be at least as valuable as the report itself; and it may be important to know what evidence was taken and rejected or ignored, and even to know what available evidence was not taken or considered at all. One may ask what our view of history would be like if we did not have the evidence heard by the great nineteenth-century inquiries on the Factory Acts, on Trade Unions, or on Sweating? Or if all we had of the Sankey Commission's inquiry into the Coal Industry were the comparatively short reports

of its members, and we were without the voluminous and important evidence? It is difficult to believe either that the full effects of the Treasury rule of 1921 were foreseen when it was made, or that the significance of the Departmental practice of not publishing evidence has been fully realized.[1]

[1] There ought surely to be some via media between the vast documentation of the Labour Commission and the Poor Law Commission and the Commission on Canals and Inland Waterways, some of which could have been dispensed with without damage, and publishing nothing. It ought not to be impossible to devise a system which would avoid the extravagance—and abuse—of the old Free List, with a more liberal attitude on these points.

PUBLICATIONS OF NATIONALIZED INDUSTRIES AND GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

Recent developments have led to the publication of papers which are neither Parliamentary, nor in the sense defined above, Non-Parliamentary. Just as the growth of new forms of departmental activity gave rise to Departmental and Advisory Committees, so the extension of State functions has led to the establishment of State institutions and undertakings which make inquiries, issue and publish reports and papers independently of H.M.S.O. Some of these institutions are not new, e.g. the museums and the Ordnance Survey, but the matter has been brought to a head by the establishment of nationalized industries which have independent trading functions and do not come within the scope of H.M.S.O. for their publishing needs, save in respect of annual reports they may be required by Statute to present to Parliament. The material thus published varies from maps, museum guides and reproductions and technical publications to documents concerning the high policy of a great industry, such as *Plan for Coal*, and the Transport Commission's reports on the *Electrification of Railways* or on *Canals and Inland Waterways*.

Some of these policy documents, such as those named, are neither printed, published, nor sold by H.M.S.O., and do not appear in the Consolidated Lists. A small number, such as the Fleck Report on the *Organization of the Coal Board*, are published independently but sold through H.M.S.O., and are entered in its lists with a note to that effect. Few would be willing to quarrel with the arrangement that publications designed to sell goods and services or dealing with technical processes should be published independently. But the practice of nationalized industries may result in taking some of their important papers out of the series of the Nation's Papers, either Parliamentary or Non-Parliamentary, and therefore out of the indexes and lists. The information about them in the annual reports of these bodies varies, some giving only a brief general account of them, some details on selected ones, others a more extended list. It ought not to be impossible to arrange that documents of this class should find their way into the main body of papers, if not by presentation, then by being published or at least sold by H.M.S.O.

PART II

HOW TO FIND THEM

GROUPS of Parliamentary Papers are bound together to form separate series of volumes. These series differ from one another in size and arrangement according to the nature of the contents and to the historical processes through which they came to be preserved.

I. PAPERS RELATING TO THE AGENDA, PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE HOUSE.

(a) The papers on the procedure of the House are issued separately. In the British Museum they are bound up as follows: (a) Votes and Proceedings; (b) Divisions; (c) Notices of Motions; Questions and Orders of the Day; (d) Private Business.

(b) *The Journals.*—The Journals are printed at the end of each Session, together with a Sessional Index. Since 1880 this index has also been consolidated into separately issued decennial ones. On a recommendation from the Select Committee,[1] 1803, the Journals, Vols. 1 to 52,[2] were reprinted. Up to 1836 they are in double folio and after that date they are in folio. Some of the early volumes contain the Journals of more than one Session. The volumes are numbered in an unbroken series throughout.

The General Indexes for the Journals of the eighteenth century were compiled by five men: Cunningham, Flexman, Forster, Moore and Dunn, four of whom worked individually on a particular period, producing four different types of alphabetical indexes. The fifth, Dunn, followed Moore's index, with certain exceptions. The periods covered by these indexes are:

1547–1659	vols. 1– 7	Cunningham's Index.
1660–1697	vols. 8–11	Flexman's Index.
1697–1714	vols. 12–17	Forster's Index.
1714–1774	vols. 18–34	Moore's Index
1774–1800	vols. 35–55	Dunn's Index.

[1] *State and Condition of the Printed Journals.* Sel. Cttee. Rep.; 1803 Journal, Vol. 58, p. 653.

[2] Vols. 53–56 were also reprinted. See Librarian's Memo. p. 82; 1914–16 (321) iv.

In 1818 John Rickman began supervising the production of the indexes, using Moore's index as the basis for his plans, and all succeeding indexes were uniform in construction. Two volumes of revised indexes were published to bring the earlier ones into line with the nineteenth century ones. Those of Cunningham, Flexman and Forster were revised in one volume covering the period 1547 to 1714 and the two indexes by Dunn in one volume from 1774 to 1800. Before the regular decennial indexes beginning in 1880 there were five general indexes for the nineteenth century:

1801–1820
1820–1837
1837–1852
1852–1865
1866–1879

There is thus a set of uniform indexes to the Journals. Where, however, libraries possess only the first group of indexes, named above, for the Journals before the nineteenth century, the reader must be aware of the differences in compilation so that he is not confused in moving from one to the other.

(c) *The History of Parliament and the Debates.*—There are thirty-six octavo volumes of the *Parliamentary History*, 1066–1803, and five series of Debates covering different periods. Each volume is numbered in the series to which it belongs.

			Title Page, and dates of change of title or series
1803–20	41 vols.	1st Series.	Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates.
			Parliamentary Debates (1812. Vol. 23.)
1820–30	25 ,,	2nd ,,	Parliamentary Debates. (Accession of George IV.)
			Hansard's Parliamentary Debates. (1829. Vol. 21.)
1830–91	350 ,,	3rd ,,	Hansard's Parliamentary Debates. (Accession of William IV.)
1892–1908	77 ,,	4th ,,	Parliamentary Debates (Authorized).
1909 continuing		5th ,,	Parliamentary Debates (Official).
			Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) (1945).

The Debates are now published daily and weekly, and at the end of the Session are bound in Sessional volumes. Each volume has an index of its own, but the last volume of the Session is a complete Sessional Index.

In 1919 there began an annual supplementary series of volumes containing the Official Reports of Debates in Standing Committees.

II. HOUSE PAPERS AND COMMAND PAPERS. SESSIONAL PAPERS.

(a) *Collections and Indexes, 1641–1801.* Before the nineteenth century there was no systematic way of preserving the papers, so that the records and the collections which have come down to us cannot be regarded as complete. Many papers must have passed out of the custody of the House before efforts were made to preserve them. The three official sources for such as were preserved are the Journals, the First Series, and the Abbot Collection.[1]

(i) *Reports and other Papers in the Journals.*—Some of the papers were printed in the body of the Journals,[2] and references to them are to be found in the indexes under the headings of 'Printing' and 'Reports of Committees' and 'Accounts and Papers'.

(ii) *The First Series, 1715–1801.*—This Series comprises a reprint of a selection of the reports which had been printed in the Journals, or had been printed separately. There are fifteen volumes, together with an index.[3] The index contains a list of the Reports of Committees which were inserted in the Journals but not considered of sufficient importance to be included amongst the reprints.[4]

(iii) *The Abbot Collection, 1731–1800.*[5]—The collection comprises one hundred and eleven volumes of separately printed papers which were in store at the time of the reprint which formed the First Series. Charles Abbot ordered that they should be gathered together, and bound. These were arranged in three groups—Bills, Reports, Accounts and Papers, each group being arranged in chronological order with a serial numbering of each paper. There is an index to this collection entitled '*Catalogue of Papers Printed*

[1] Unofficial versions may sometimes be found in the *History* and *Debates*.

[2] From 1800 to 1835 the Reports were transferred from the body of the Journal to an appendix. The selection was made by the Speaker. This practice was discontinued on the grounds of the expense caused by duplication in printing. See note on papers in House of Lords Record Office, p. 31.

[3] For more details of the First Series, see App. I, pp. 51–2.

[4] Hansard included this list in his *Breviate 1696–1834* (Ford's Reprint, Blackwell, 1953). The earliest reports he cited were the '*Inquiry into the matter of complaint touching the coinage of halfpence and farthings.*' Cttee. Rep.; 1696. Journal, Vol. II, p. 545, and *Abuses of Prisons, and Pretended privileged places. Fleet and King's Bench.* Sel. Cttee. Reps.; Journal, Vol. II, pp. 641, 675.

[5] For more details of the Abbot Collection see Appendix I, p. 53.

by Order of the House of Commons, 1731–1800', 1807 (reprinted H.M.S.O. 1954). Besides the sets of volumes in Parliament, there is one set in the British Museum and an incomplete set at University College Library, London.

(b) *Bound Sessional Sets, 1801—continuing.* From 1801, at the end of each Session the papers which had been before Parliament were bound into volumes to form a series which has become known as the Bound Sets of Sessional Papers.[1] Each Session's papers are arranged in four groups—Bills, Reports of Committees, Reports of Commissioners, and Accounts and Papers, the papers within each group being bound in alphabetical order. These papers now bear one of three series of numbers.

(i) *House Paper numbers.*—A fresh series of numbers is started each session. From the commencement of the bound set, in 1801, a 'printer's number'[2] was placed in the 'bottom-corner' of all House Papers; and when the first alphabetical index was printed for the Session 1814–15, this number was inserted in round brackets (possibly to distinguish it from the pagination of the bound volumes) and was used as the sessional index reference number to the paper in the bound sets.[3] For example, 1814–15 (119) vii, 117 indicates the session, the paper number of the session, the bound volume number and the manuscript page within the bound volume.

(ii) *Command Numbers.*—Historically, 'By Command' signified that the Crown had exercised its right to command its Commissioners to present a document to Parliament or that it had commanded it to be presented in response to a petition from Parliament for information. Papers now presented 'By Command' bear both a legend to that effect and a serial Command number, and are listed in the Sessional Indexes as Command Papers. But while a fresh series of House Paper numbers is started each Session, Command numbers extend over many Sessions. Owing to historical circumstances, for a period in the nineteenth century this simple plan was not followed and the situation was confused, in that for many years although Command Papers were given Command

[1] Between the years 1833–1910 the reports from the Sel. Cttee. on *Petitions* are bound in a separate series. See Bound Volumes in the British Museum.

[2] See Hansard's 'Explanation', *General Index 1801–1832*, p. 1.

[3] Bills were first numbered with the House Papers. In the Sessional Index 1854 they were listed separately with their own sessional numbers.

numbers these numbers were not printed on the papers. Some papers one would have expected to be 'Presented by Command', such as a report of a Royal Commission, were 'Ordered by the House to be printed'. The situation seems to have arisen in the following way. In the second report of the Select Committee on *Printed Papers* in 1835,[1] there was a recommendation to the effect 'that a Committee should be set up to assist the Speaker as to the printing and delivery and proper classification of the Papers', and in the Sessional Index for 1836 sixty-seven reports of Commissioners from 1833 to 1836 are separately listed as Command Papers. Faced with the problem of classification, those responsible chose to make the point of commencement the first Session of the reformed Parliament in 1833. Papers which bore the legend 'Ordered by the House of Commons to be Printed' had already been given House Paper numbers, but those with the legend 'By Command' had been left unnumbered.[2] These sixty-seven were assigned Command numbers [1] to [67]—the square brackets possibly being used to distinguish them from the round brackets of the House Paper numbers. Since the papers had already been issued, the numbers were not on them, and unfortunately the practice of not printing the Command number on them was continued until 1869, so that up to that date it is not possible to identify a Command Paper simply from the Command number given in the index.

An interesting example of how this works is shown by the numbering of the reports of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws. They were ordered to be printed in 1834 and have the House number (44). The First Report and Apps. A and B of the Royal Commission on the Irish Poor Laws were ordered to be printed and have the House Paper number (369) whilst the rest of the papers had the legend 'Presented by Command' and were given Command numbers in 1836. And for the same reasons the papers of the Royal Commission on Municipal Corporations, England and Wales, 1835–37 have the House Paper number (116) whilst the Irish and Scottish Royal Commissions have Command numbers.

As the Command Papers had been first numbered serially through three Sessions, this numbering was continued through the succeed-

[1] 1835 (392) xviii.

[2] Before 1833 Commands were ordered to be printed; from 1801–36 Hansard numbered those he printed, but the 67 printed for H.M.S.O. were unnumbered. See evidence of Church and Clowes.

ing Sessional Lists until 1869. In 1870 the number was printed on the paper; a code C for Command was added to the square bracket, and a new series of numbers begun. There are now four series:—

1833–1868–9	[1] to [4222]	Not printed on the papers.
1870–1899	[C.1] to [C.9550]	Number printed on the paper and C added as an extra code.
1900–1918	[Cd.1] to [Cd. 9239]	Marks the beginning of the century to the end of the First World War. Code changed to Cd.
1919	[Cmd.1] Continuing.	Marks the beginning of the inter-war period. Code changed to Cmd.

The form of reference in the indexes to the Command Papers is the same as for the House Papers, e.g. 1900 [Cd. 40] v, 240.[1] In 1922 the square brackets ceased to be printed on the paper, and in 1950–51 they were omitted from the Sessional Index. They really became redundant in 1870, when the use of the letter C. began.

(c) *Indexes to the Bound Sets of Sessional Papers.*

(i) The *Sessional Index* is the last volume of the Sessional Bound Set and is the chief means of access to the bound volumes of the Session until it is consolidated into a decennial index. Except for such changes as developed with the passage of time these indexes contain:—

List of the Bound Volumes
Numerical List of Bills
Numerical List of Papers
Numerical List of Command Papers
Alphabetical Index

(ii) *General Alphabetical Indexes.*—Except for the interruption in the war years of 1914–1918 and 1939–1945 there have been decennial indexes since 1870. Before that date they were published at irregular intervals,[2] but they were consolidated into three volumes covering 1801–1852, and one volume for the period 1852–53 to 1868–69. There is a General Alphabetical Index for 1852–1899, but its usefulness is limited, since by an error on the part of the compilers, the references to the paper numbers were not included. The indexes of most general use are the three volumes for the half

[1] See Explanation, *General Index* 1832–44, 'where papers are presented to the House in a printed form, thus [149]', and the *General Index* 1852–53 to 1868–69, 'Papers Presented by Command are distinguished thus [3212].'

[2] See App. I, p. 66.

century, the volume for 1852–53 to 1868–69, and after that date the decennial ones.

A little difficulty is sometimes experienced in the use of the three volumes for 1801–1852, when a search is being made for reports. This is because Vol. II, entitled 'Reports' deals with the reports of Committees, but reports of Commissioners are listed separately with the Accounts and Papers in Vol. III, so that if one is not sure whether the report required is from a Committee or a Commission, both volumes must be consulted.[1] In all the other Alphabetical Indexes, the entries under the subject headings are arranged in the four groups corresponding to the arrangement of the papers in the bound volumes—I. Bills, II. Reports of Committees, III. Reports of Commissioners, IV. Accounts and Papers. While this method of arranging the entries has obvious advantages, nevertheless a little care is necessary to ensure that the searcher is looking in the right group. Papers for Scotland and Ireland are listed separately under each heading.

Indexes compiled at different dates over more than a century-and-a-half naturally show some differences in the way they are made up and these may sometimes trouble the user, but the general plan is much the same throughout. In structure they are really a mixture of an alphabetical and a subject index, but this arises partly from the nature of the documents, for Parliamentary Papers normally have no 'author' and many of them no 'title' in the ordinary sense of these words, and the 'titles' themselves may be misleading.[2] Thus papers on educational subjects are entered under 'Education'. But papers on Election Petitions appear under 'Elections' in one index and under the respective boroughs in another. These variations reveal the style of the compilers of the different dates and show the contemporary emphasis on a particular group of papers on a particular subject, but they provide no fundamental obstacle to the use of the indexes.

(iii) *The Consolidated Lists.*—The Annual Consolidated List is the sales list of Her Majesty's Stationery Office; the first part deals with Parliamentary and the second with Non-Parliamentary

[1] *The Select List, 1833–1899* brings together the reports on the various subjects, whether those of Committees or Commissions.

[2] For further details, see Introduction, *Select List*, pp. ix-xi.

Papers.[1] Lists are issued daily and monthly and at the end of the year are consolidated into the annual list. In it the Parliamentary Papers are arranged as in the Sessional Indexes, and it therefore provides access to them until they are bound and the Sessional list is in print. Since the papers have to be collected into the appropriate volumes and paginated, the lapse of time between the papers issued early in a Session and the issue of the Sessional Index may be one to two years. It should be noted that whereas the Sessional Indexes relate to the *sessional* dates, the Consolidated List refers to the *calendar year*.

III. NON-PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.

The Annual Consolidated List is the only index for the Non-Parliamentary Papers. In it the papers are now arranged under the Department of origin and the Departments are arranged in alphabetical order. There is a separate section listing Royal Commissions, which includes the information regarding their minutes of evidence and other papers which have not been presented to Parliament as Command Papers. Each Consolidated List contains an alphabetical index based on the key words in the titles of the papers. These indexes are now being bound in five-yearly volumes which perform the function of an index key to five annual lists. Such is the general lay-out of the Consolidated Lists since 1921. Parliamentary Papers were put on sale from 1836,[2] and sales lists go back to that date.[3]

The references to Non-Parliamentary Papers given in the lists are H.M.S.O. code numbers only. There are no official bound sets of Non-Parliamentary Papers, and in view of their range, variety and volume, this is scarcely surprising; when they consisted of

[1] Since 1949 the Non-Parliamentary section has been enlarged into a Classified List to include also Parliamentary Papers, other than Acts or Bills.

[2] *Publication and Sale of Printed Papers.* Sel. Cttee. Rep.; 1835 (61) (392) xviii.

[3] The British Museum's copy, printed in 1854, gives the papers back to that date. In 1882 the present arrangement of the list began to emerge in two lists entitled '*Official Publications*' and '*Parliamentary Papers*', and by 1894, when they took the form of Quarterly Lists, the general arrangement of the Non-Parliamentary Papers under the Departments of origin was established. Since 1922 it has been called the *Consolidated List.* The title Non-Parliamentary appears in the Consolidated List in 1924. From 1922–1934 minutes of evidence of Royal Commissions will be found either under Department of origin, or under the heading 'Royal Commission' in the 'Miscellaneous' group.

and were correctly described as 'official' papers, this was less serious than it is now, when large numbers of important 'policy' papers are included amongst them. For this reason, and because it is not practicable for libraries to order them 'complete', as they can Sessional Papers, but only individually or in groups, collections of Non-Parliamentary Papers are often deficient and not well-arranged. The British Museum as a 'copyright' library does aim at 'completion' and keeps them in groups under the 'Department of Origin', to correspond with the Consolidated Lists. Other libraries make collections of selected Non-Parliamentary Papers, to include 'policy' and other important papers and, as in Southampton University, keep them for each calendar year to correspond with the Consolidated List groups.

It is necessary to stress once again that much trouble can be saved by being fully aware of the consequences of the Treasury circular of 1921. They are, of course, threefold. First, certain classes of papers which were Parliamentary before that date and were entered in the Sessional Indexes, are Non-Parliamentary afterwards and must be sought for in the Consolidated Lists. Secondly, as we have seen, the papers on a particular topic, and all of them 'policy' documents, may sometimes be Parliamentary, and sometimes Non-Parliamentary. Further, and perhaps this is the most confusing of all, the report of a Royal Commission will, of course, be Parliamentary and be recorded in the Sessional Indexes, but the evidence may be Non-Parliamentary and not so recorded: for this the Consolidated List must be consulted. In addition, while before 1921 it was common practice for the various days of evidence to be collected and presented in a volume or volumes, since 1921 evidence is often printed and issued in separate 'days' and not later collected into volumes. Since such inquiries may spread over two or more calendar years, it may therefore be important to check that one has the complete set of evidence before one.[1]

[1] Ford's *Breviate, 1917–1939* is designed to meet this difficulty by bringing together all the reports and other documents of a particular investigation, whether they are reports or evidence, and whether they are Parliamentary or Non-Parliamentary. It includes some 270 reports, as well as many other papers which, though Non-Parliamentary, are policy documents; but for the operation of the '1921 rule' these would probably have been included in the Sessional sets.

IV. HOUSE OF LORDS' PAPERS.

In this *Guide* attention is directed in the *first instance* to the papers of the House of Commons, for good reasons of convenience. Generally speaking, House of Lords' papers take the same form as those of the Commons—Procedure papers, the Journals, the Debates, House Papers and Command Papers. Its sessional papers were bound and indexed in the nineteenth century on somewhat the same lines as those of the Commons, but fewer sets have been preserved. Fortunately, however, each House 'communicated' documents to the other House, so that a large number of Lords' papers are in the Commons' volumes and have Commons' numbers. Thus it is only for Lords' papers not communicated and therefore not in the Commons' set that the Lords' volumes need be consulted. On the other hand, many of the nineteenth-century volumes contain Command papers also in the Commons' set, but since 1900 these have been omitted and the number of volumes has therefore dwindled. The only duplication now remaining consists of the reports of Joint Committees of both Houses which, as they are appointed by both, naturally report to each House. And, whilst some important investigations on matters of public policy have been made by Lords' Select Committees, such as that on the *Resumption of Cash Payments*, 1819, those on the condition of work of chimney sweeps in the first half and on *Sweating* in the second half of the century (though the reports of the latter were communicated), in the main their work has been concerned with evidence and reports on bills.

Though their detailed history is different, the Lords' indexes follow much the same pattern as those of the Commons, except that from 1900–1920 they contain a fictitious element in that they include references to Command papers presented to the Lords, but not actually bound in their sets. They provide a useful check with the Commons indexes, particularly in identifying those communicated documents which underwent a slight change of title during their passage from one House to another. Occasionally there is an untidiness which can be picked up in the Lords' set. The notorious example of this is Chadwick's famous report on the *Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population*, 1842. Although the title page states that it was presented to both Houses by Command, it is not in the Commons' set or indexes, but is in the Lords' set and index, though without either a Command or House number.

The supplementary report on *Interment in Towns* is included in the Commons' papers, and in error its number is often given as the number of the *General Report*.

The General Alphabetical Indexes to the Lords' papers are as follows:—

1801–1837	*General Index*	
1801–1859	——	(reprinted H.M.S.O., 1938)
1859–1870	——	
1871–1884–85	——	
1886–1920	*Sessional Indexes*	
1921–	*Sessional Lists.*	

The Consolidated Lists enter Lords' papers in a Numerical List and in the Alphabetical Index, thus providing access to them until the Sessional List is printed.

The House of Lords Record Office possesses a collection of papers, printed and unprinted, laid on the Table of that House since the sixteenth century, which is more complete and covers a longer period than the Abbot Collection of Commons' papers. It therefore contains such papers as were laid on the Table of both the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

Bound Sessional Sets

The most complete sets of House of Lords' papers are in the House itself, and in those Government Departments indicated in the *Guide to Government Libraries* mentioned on p. 77. The most complete sets of Commons' papers are in the Houses of Parliament, the Government Departments named in the publication already referred to, and in the British Museum, Bodleian, Cambridge, Edinburgh, and Trinity College, Dublin Libraries.[1] Other libraries with collections of varying degrees of completeness include the London School of Economics, some Universities, and several municipal libraries.

[1] For the recommendation that these should be deposit libraries for Parliamentary Papers, see *State of Printed Reports and Papers*, p. 4; 1825 (516) v.

PART III

HOW TO USE THEM

IT is no doubt true that the best teacher in the handling and use of Parliamentary Papers is experience, but anyone confronted with one of the great Commissions and its volumes of evidence may well wish to be sure that he has picked up all he can of the methods which others have found useful. We shall therefore set out, with the aid of illustrations, the ways in which the papers should be approached, the questions which must be asked, and the points which must be looked at if work on them is to be most informative and fruitful.

I. *Reports.*—The reports of investigating Committees and Commissions vary in size from a terse statement of a few pages to volumes running into hundreds of pages and accompanied by volumes of minutes of evidence, together with appendices containing experts' reports and factual or statistical material which has been collected by or presented to the investigating body to assist them in their deliberations. Sometimes a number of reports will be issued, each with its accompanying and relevant material, sometimes sub-committees will be given a section of the investigation and will make reports which they submit to the main body. The two investigations which published the largest amount of literature were the Royal Commission on Labour, 1892–94, with 67 separately numbered papers and the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, 1909–10, with 53 separately numbered papers. But whether a report is small or very large, a great deal of trouble can be saved if before any attempt is made to read it solidly or to glean information from it, a little time is spent in examining the structure of the inquiry and its documentation.

(i) Terms of Reference.—The authority of a Committee and the scope of its investigations is determined by its terms of reference (in Scottish documents, Remit) which are carefully drafted by the appointing authority. Though usually fairly short, they sometimes include a long series of specific questions to be examined.

Their significance may lie not only in the problems included, but

in the excluded matters which they are not authorized to investigate. A chairman may have to rule that a certain type of evidence offered is for that reason not admissible. An example is provided by the opening proceedings in the report of the Select Committee on the *Port of London Bill*.[1] Occasionally the Committee may feel that it cannot form a proper judgment on the matters put to it without investigating related questions, and the chairman may then be asked to inquire if the Minister will add to or extend the terms of reference. But sometimes limits are deliberately set to the field of inquiry in order to make the task manageable within a reasonable time, or because the Government of the day may wish to reserve some broad question, perhaps involving contentious political issues, for its own judgment.[2] The terms of reference of the Commission 'to inquire into and report upon the duties of the Metropolitan Police[3] in dealing with cases of drunkenness, disorder and solicitation in the streets and the manner in which those duties are performed, with power to make recommendations thereon' gave it great scope. The Commission decided that these terms could be resolved into two general questions. (1) 'What are the duties of the police in dealing with cases coming within the three classes of offence, . . . (2) 'In what manner those duties are discharged by the police.' The terms of the Royal Commission on the *Delay in the King's Bench Division*[4] led to the submission of a great amount of evidence on the radical reform of the whole judicial system, but the Commission thought that neither Parliament nor public opinion would sanction such a revolution in order to remedy the complaints they were to consider.

(ii) Circumstances of Appointment.—A Committee's approach to its problems, the emphasis in its interpretation of its terms of reference and the point of some of the questions to witnesses may often be more clearly understood if the circumstances in which the Committee was appointed are known. These are sometimes given—though unfortunately not always when the information would be appropriate—in the report or its documents. The circumstances which led to the Commission on *Lunacy and Mental Disorder* were that the Commission was set up after an action was brought in the High Court by a patient for wrongful certification,

[1] Chairman's ruling, p. 7; 1903 (288) viii.

[2] See *State Purchase and Control of the Liquor Trade*. Cttees. Reps.; 1918 Cd. 9042, xi.

[3] 1908 Cd. 4156, I. [4] 1913 Cd. 6761, xxx.

though the reference to the particular action is not given.[1] Or they may be found in the proceedings or in an appended paper. The chairman of the Royal Commission on *Police Powers and Procedure*[2] gave them in his opening statement on the first day of the oral evidence. Those for the Inter-Departmental Committee on *Physical Deterioration*,[3] which 'touched off' so many investigations leading to the welfare services, are in Appendix I of Vol. I. The circumstances leading up to the Royal Commission on *Unemployment Insurance* are printed in the first day's evidence[4] given by the Ministry of Labour. A more recent and spectacular case is that of the Curtis Report on the *Care of Children*,[5] which arose out of the O'Neill case,[6] though this is not mentioned in it.

(iii) Membership.—The course taken by an inquiry, the form, content, comprehensiveness or shortcomings of a report cannot fail to be greatly influenced by the personnel of the investigating body, and their personal attitude as well as their special knowledge. The chairman is obviously in a key position; much depends on his capacity to draw his Committee together, the guidance he gives it and his ability to secure an orderly and acceptable report. Though naturally not all chairmen have equally easy or equally difficult tasks or are equally able to meet the demands upon them, the practice of calling a report after the name of its chairman is a recognition of this fact. Obvious examples are, the Haldane Committee on the *Machinery of Government*,[7] the Gladstone Committee on *Prisons*, 1895–98, the Newcastle Commission on the *State of Popular Education*, 1861–62, the Macmillan Report on *Finance and Industry*.[8] Similar observations apply to individual Commissioners or other persons making inquiries on behalf of the parent body. Chadwick's name is familiar; other examples are Tremenheere in the fields of education and poor law, Fox-Wilson in agriculture, and Kay-Shuttleworth in education. For many years J. S. Haldane made scientific investigations for inquiries into the safety in mines. The influence of an individual member may be equally great,

[1] Min. of Health, Ann. Rep., p. 36; 1924 Cmd. 2218, ix.
[2] 1928–29 Cmd. 3297, ix.
[3] Vol. 1, Rep. and App., p. 95; 1904 Cd. 2175, xxxii.
[4] Mins. of evidence. First Day, p. 7; 1931 Non-Parl. Min. of Labour.
[5] 1945–46 Cmd. 6922, x.
[6] Report by Sir W. Monckton on the circumstances which led to the boarding out of Dennis and Terence O'Neill at Bank Farm, Minsterley; 1944–45 Cmd. 6636, iv.
[7] 1918 Cd. 9230, xii.
[8] 1930–1 Cmd. 3897, xiii.

though it is less obvious and may have to be detected in the minutes of evidence. The contribution made by Keynes to the work of the Committee on *Finance and Industry* or by Stamp to that of the Colwyn Committee on *National Debt and Taxation*,[1] even if not perceived in the text of the report, can be gathered from the part each played in the cross-examination of witnesses.

But sometimes the political and other circumstances in which a Committee is set up may influence the selection of the persons appointed to it, so that despite the theory that they should be people of experience in public affairs, and at least open to conviction if not impartial, they may in fact be less individual persons than representatives of the set view of various bodies or interests. This was clearly the case with the Amulree Commission of *Licensing (England and Wales)*,[2] where the points of view represented were so violently opposed that a really satisfactory agreed report was unlikely from the outset. There were not only majority and minority reports, but a number of reservations on substantial points. The Sankey Commission on the *Coal Industry*[3] had a very controversial problem to handle: the nationalization of the industry. In a matter so bitterly contested possibly openminded persons of public influence were not easy to find, but the expedient of adding members whose views on the main issue were already decided could not lead to an agreed report. One of them, Sidney Webb, gave evidence in favour of the principle upon which he was appointed to give judgment. The critical question was what conclusion its very able chairman would come to; he presented a report not signed by the others. The Commission was not therefore valueless, for its hearings as well as its report received great publicity, and there is no doubt that the public was better informed of the facts and the principles involved than it would have been by any other process.

(iv) The structure of the report.—The key to understanding a report and therefore to an easy and efficient mastery of it may often be found by comparing the recommendations made with the terms of reference, since these show what the committee has made of its problems and how they have answered or not answered them. Large reports often end with a summary of the recommendations, accompanied by references to the relevant paragraphs of the text. But in some inquiries the recommendations are just embodied in

[1] 1927 Cmd. 2800, xi. [2] 1931–2 Cmd. 3988, xi.
[3] 1919 Cmd. 359, xi.

the text as they are arrived at, and no summary of them is given. This form of the lay-out of a report seems to have been frequent amongst the Departmental Committees of the period 1900–1917.

(v) The text of the report.—The British people are fortunate in that generally in their orderliness, use of evidence and literary qualities the standard of public documents is very high indeed; and as is, or ought to be expected from our long experience, many of those dealing with constitutional matters possess these characteristics to a high degree. For example, the report of the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee of the Imperial Conference, 1926,[1] on the new relationship with the Dominions and of the Dominions with the Crown shows these qualities at a level worthy of a great State paper. They can be seen in a different way in the careful drafting of the report of the Joint Committee on the difficult problem raised by the Petition of the State of Western Australia,[2] 1935. The reports of the Select Committees of both Lords and Commons, since they now deal mainly with matters of limited scope, are necessarily short; but some are models of terse and skilful drafting. Of the longer reports, those of the Samuel Commission on the *Coal Industry*,[3] of the Colwyn Committee on *National Debt and Taxation* or of the Macmillan report on *Finance and Industry* are examples of work of this high order. But reports are not always so easy to handle. Sometimes the subject matter is very technical or the problem may be an intricate and complex one of economics, law and morals. In other cases the report is clearly the result of an attempt to secure general agreement between the members of the Committee and bears the marks of divergencies of view and compromise. Sometimes a report may be extremely brief: the chairman's (Mr. Justice Sankey's) report on the second stage of the *Coal Industry* inquiry which was concerned with the nationalization problem, is comprised in only ten pages, giving his conclusions on a great body of evidence which included the witnesses' answers to 28,000 questions. Two cases show the difficulties which are sometimes encountered. The first is that of the Committee on *Mental Deficiency*[4] in 1929. It was set up jointly by the Board of Education and the Board of Control. Each had its own problem on which it required information, and it is not always easy to understand

[1] Imperial Conference, 1926. Summary of Proceedings; 1926 Cmd. 2768, xi.
[2] 1934–35 (88) vi. [3] 1926 Cmd. 2600, xiv.
[4] 1929 Non-Parl. Bd. of Education and Bd. of Control.

or even to make consistent some of the statistics given, unless it is realized that in different parts of the inquiry the ground is being gone over from two different points of view. The second example is that of the Beveridge Report.[1] This masterly document, written by an experienced hand, needs close attention because, in effect, it is written in three layers or at three levels, Part I giving a short statement and summary, while Parts II and V set out general principles and proposals in different degrees of detail. Each 'level' could perhaps be read separately; indeed, they were no doubt aimed at the different audiences which would have to consider the plan.

(vi) Majority and Minority Reports, Reservations, Dissents.—Sometimes the only way which a chairman can get his Committee to make an agreed report covering most of the ground is to arrange that individual members may attach reservations or dissents from particular recommendations or from some principle embodied in it or occasionally, on the interpretation which has been placed on the terms of reference. But the disagreements may be too severe for this, and in that case there may be one or more minority reports signed by several members or even by one member only. It does not do to assume that the majority report or, according to one's temperament, the minority report, is the more worthy of attention. Sometimes it is the majority report that has most influenced legislation, sometimes the minority; and on occasion both have been ignored. There are some famous minority reports. Amongst them is the 'Third Dissent' to the report of the Royal Commission on *Trade Unions*, 1867–89, signed by Lord Lichfield, Thomas Hughes and Frederic Harrison, and the Statement signed by the two last named, which argued with understanding and ability the case for trade union legislation. The Minority Report on the Poor Laws signed by four members needs scarcely to be mentioned. Not only was it an able and well-documented report, the product of a coherent social philosophy, but as Mrs. Webb's *Our Partnership* shows, it was 'put across' the public by a vigorous and skilful campaign. Yet in practical recommendations many of its conclusions tallied with those of the majority, and there was a great deal of common ground between them. As we have seen, the report of the chairman of the Sankey Commission was signed only by himself; and in retrospect it is clear that the Minority Report of Sir Arthur Duckham, in its insistence on regional decentralization, was more far-sighted than

[1] *Social Insurance and Allied Services*; 1942–3 Cmd. 6404, vi.

the controversialists of the time admitted. Another example of a far-sighted minority report was that of Balfour of Burleigh, of the Royal Commission on *Local Taxation*, 1899–1903,[1] for in it he made separate recommendations for alleviating inequalities of local rates by the use of a formula for the distribution of grants which took account of the size of population, ability to pay and needs, and anticipated the later proposals of 1928–29. In the field of inquiries into agriculture, the minority report by Macgregor, a member of the *Agricultural Tribunal of Investigation*,[2] is noteworthy for the radical treatment of the subject.

The report of a Select Committee is a report of the Committee as a whole; there are no minority reports. But the record of the proceedings which accompany the report itself will contain the text of the draft proposed by the chairman for discussion, together with any amendments, and the names of proposers, seconders and a record of the voting. The proceedings are often enlightening. Those of the Select Committee on what were called the 'Marconi Scandals' 1912–13—1913 contain a draft chairman's report and two other main drafts. A comparison of the report as adopted with that of the draft and amendments proposed by Mr. Falconer will show how much that member contributed to the final text.[3] The Committee on the *Luxury Duty*,[4] 1918, had many disagreements; the draft report prepared by Mr. Vernon Harcourt was at once critical and constructive, but highly entertaining; perhaps it was the combination of shrewd sense with slight irreverence which led to its not being adopted.

The enlightenment to be obtained by comparing the majority and minority reports, or draft and final reports of a Committee can also be gained by a glance at earlier reports on the same topic, not only for their historical interest, but for the practical one of seeing why it is that the problem comes up for discussion repeatedly. It is often the case that a recommendation of an earlier Committee is repeated by subsequent inquiries and that an earlier proposal which seemed unimportant and was ignored is seen by a later Committee to be a vital one.

(vii) Evidence.—The question is sometimes asked, 'Why bother with the evidence taken by the Committee? It is the report and its conclusions which affect policy.' To this there are two answers.

[1] 1901 Cd. 638, xxiv.
[2] 1923 Cmd. 1842, ix.
[3] 1913 (152) vii.
[4] 1918 (101) iv.

First, no matter how experienced and impartial they may be, the members of a Committee come to their task of inquiry no doubt with open, but certainly not blank minds; they bring to it the pattern of ideas related to their time and derived from their experience, and the more active they have been in public affairs the more likely they are to have some firmly held principles. The report is not just summarized evidence, but evidence as interpreted by the Committee. In weighing a report therefore, a distinction must be made between the evidence upon which it is based and what the members of the Committee have contributed to it. There are cases of reports which seem, because of the strength of view of their authors, to go beyond the evidence. It has been said that the report on *Municipal Corporations*, 1835, was a case of this kind.[1] Certainly there have been examples where some of the conclusions seem contrary to the evidence. Secondly, evidence may be important quite apart from the report. That taken by the early nineteenth-century Committees contains information which has been invaluable to scholars who were not studying the particular problem under review by the Committee, but were interested in other questions.[2]

The evidence presented usually consists of both oral evidence given by witnesses in formal hearings, and of memoranda and statistical tables, etc., though in accordance with common practice, Parliamentary Papers generally limit the use of the term 'evidence' to oral evidence. The distinction is important. Mrs. Webb, in an article in *The Nineteenth Century*, May 1894, and later in her book on *Methods of Social Study*,[3] assailed the Labour Commission for taking masses of oral evidence on the pros and cons of various questions, instead of using the more modern methods of inquiry and analysis, though the Commission was defended by Mr. L. Price in *Economic Science and Practice*.[4] Perhaps it was less the bulk of the evidence, since the Poor Law Commission of which

[1] S. and B. Webb, *English Local Government, The Manor and the Borough, Part Two*, 1908, pp. 721–722.

[2] A classic example is the evidence of Viscount Haldane before the Sankey Commission on the problem of organizing and training a civil service to control a nationalized industry; it remains an invaluable text on the problems of public administration involved. [3] *Methods of Social Study*, 1932, chap. vii.

[4] *Economic Science and Practice*, 1896, chap. vii. On oral and informal evidence see also *Poor Laws*, R. Com. Maj. Rep., para. 24; 1909 Cd. 4499, xxxvii. *Taxation of Profits and Income*, R. Com. Final Rep., p. 3; 1955–56 Cmd. 9474. B. Webb, op. cit., p. 150.

she was so active a member itself issued many volumes of oral evidence, than that it seemed to her to ignore the method of special inquiries, memoranda by experts, etc. What she meant by this is to be found in her description of the methods which she and Sidney Webb used in the preparation of their work on Poor Law and Trade Unionism[1] and she herself produced several memoranda for the Commission. Such methods of special inquiry as distinct from formal hearings were not so new, for they were used by Chadwick in the Report of the *Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Classes.*[2] The Labour Commission, 1892–94, was merely continuing the traditional methods of inquiry used by Select Committees of the House, where the method of formal hearings was the natural if not the only one open to them; and such evidence was reported. This can also be seen in the Report of the House of Lords Select Committee on the *Sweating Industry*, which includes four great volumes of evidence recording the answers to over 32,000 questions and forty-five pages of report. Perhaps the last great inquiry to make generous use of both sorts of evidence, including in that case detailed engineer's plans, was that on *Canals and Inland Waterways*, 1906–11. It must have been extremely difficult for the members of these Commissions to master all this evidence, particularly for the Labour Commission, even though it was aided by volumes of digests of evidence and though many of its members were able and were or became very distinguished in their respective professions. At least a more selective process could have been used.

At the other end of the scale is the Beveridge Report. The appendix volume does not consist of formal hearings but of the memoranda and other documents submitted by various bodies. The Royal Commission on Population has not published any formal hearings. Many of its problems were highly technical and it set up three Committees—Economic, Statistical, and Biological and Medical—and it is the inquiries of these Committees which formed the real work and evidence.

Sometimes oral evidence can be not only important but decisive. Malthus' evidence before the Committee on *Emigration*[3] is one example. It is clear that the conclusions of the Colwyn Committee on *National Debt and Taxation*[4] were greatly influenced by the evidence of Mr. W. H. Coates, Director of Intelligence, Inland

[1] *Methods of Social Study*, pp. 94–96, 160–178.
[2] 1842 (HL —) xxvi.
[3] 1826–27 (88, 237, 550) v.
[4] 1920 Cmd. 615, xviii.

Revenue, as set forth both in the memorandum he presented and in his two days cross-examination. The evidence of Mr. I. G. Gibbon before the Royal Commission on *Local Government*[1] was not only weighty, but remains a mine of information. Evidence given by highly placed Government officials, often early in the hearings of a Committee, are generally first-class guides to the administrative, legal or other aspects of the problem the Committee has before it; for example, that of Sir S. B. Provis, Permanent Secretary to the Local Government Board, before the Committee on *Municipal Trading*.[2] Certainly the impression and conviction produced by the evidence of the Trade Union leaders Applegarth, Allan, Guile, Coulson, and Potter before the Royal Commission on *Organization and Rules of Trade Unions and other Associations*, 1867–69, led to a more understanding and favourable report when the feelings produced by the Manchester and Sheffield outrages might have brought about a very different result. A researcher who reads the evidence given by William Temple, J. Maynard Keynes and Josiah Stamp before the Royal Commission on *Lotteries and Betting*[3] will not be disappointed. Often the evidence presents a vivid picture of personalities, as in the hearings of Keir Hardie and Ramsey Macdonald before the Committee on the *Preservation of Order at Public Meetings*,[4] or of clashes of personality such as that between Havelock Wilson of the Seamen's Union and Mr. Walter Runciman, at the Committee on *The Mercantile Marine*,[5] or between Alfred Marshall as a Commissioner cross-examining Sidney Webb as a witness before the Labour Commission.[6]

There are clearly great difficulties in handling the bulk of evidence provided by some of the great inquiries such as those named, since it is not always possible to go over it all. Apart from 'sample reading', there are two leads into it. It was the practice during the nineteenth century and particularly between 1900 and 1911 for

[1] Mins. of ev., Part I; 1923. Non-Parl. Min. of Health.
[2] 1900 (305) VII.
[3] Mins. of ev.; 1932, 1933. Non-Parl.
[4] Mins. of ev., pp. 56–63; 1909 Cd. 4674, XXXVI.
[5] qq. 16,777—16,830; 1903 Cd. 1608, LXII.
[6] Royal Commission on Labour. Evidence before the Commission sitting as a whole, 8th and 9th Days; 1893–4 C. 7063–I, XXXIX, Pt. I. The Select Committee of 1837 on the Poor Law Amendment Act asked Chadwick to compare his hotel bill of 18s. to 20s. a day with the 6s. a week he advocated for poor relief. 1837 (131) XVII, Pt. I.

reports to be issued with wide margins in which were printed marginal references to the relevant answers in the evidence. This practice, however, was ended on grounds of economy.[1] Some reports, either in appendices or on the contents pages to volumes of evidence, give the list of witnesses and often the body they represent or their profession or other qualifications for submitting evidence. But in any case the information is to be found in replies to the first two or three questions formally put to the witness by the chairman: for example, 'Are you a solicitor in Glasgow and have you been in practice as a solicitor for upwards of forty years?—That is so.'[2]

Evidence other than formal hearings varies widely according to the nature of the inquiry and it, too, may be decisive or invaluable as a source of information, possibly because it has been specially prepared. The memoranda by the Clerk of the House appended to the report of the Select Committee on *Witnesses*,[3] and those by Mrs. Sidney Webb, C. S. Loch, Professor Smart, and Charles Booth, which form part of the documentation of the Royal Commission on the *Poor Law* are good examples of different types. The Select Committee on *Increases of Wealth (War)*[4] was unable to get much further than to conclude that a tax on such wealth was practicable, but the memoranda prepared by the Board of Inland Revenue remain classic papers on the problems and possibilities of taxing increases of capital. Of the other memoranda which had an influence on the conclusions drawn, two may be cited. One was the special *Investigation into the Incidence of Mental Deficiency in six areas* by Dr. E. O. Lewis undertaken for the Committee on *Mental Deficiency*,[5] 1929, the other was an inquiry into what happened in sample areas to men who had been disallowed insurance benefit, made for the Royal Commission on *Unemployment Insurance*, 1931–32.[6] Analogous to these are scientific inquiries or experiments undertaken for the guidance of a Committee. The memoranda submitted to the Barlow Commission on the *Distribution of the Industrial Population*[7] by the Board of

[1] *Swine Fever*. Dept. Cttee. Rep.; 1911 Cd. 5671, ix.
[2] *Land Values (Scotland) Bill*; 1906 (379) x. [3] 1934–5 (84) vi.
[4] 1920 (102) vii and 1920 Cmd. 594, xxvii.
[5] Rep. Part IV; 1929 Non-Parl. Bd. of Education and Bd. of Control.
[6] App. III; 1931 Non-Parl. Min. of Labour.
[7] Mins. of ev., 3rd and 4th Days; 1937 Non-Parl. 10th and 11th Days; 1938 Non-Parl.

Trade (evidence 3rd and 4th days) and the Ministry of Labour (evidence, 10th and 11th Days) were not only basic documents for the understanding of the problem the Commission had in hand, but remain invaluable statements raising questions of principle and providing carefully collected data.

II. *Bills and Acts.*—Of the hundreds of Bills which come before Parliament only a small proportion ever reach the Statute Book. Of those which do become Acts of Parliament a large proportion have been before Parliament in many forms and at different times, sometimes with intervals of many years between them, before it is decided, for example, that the change is needed or the time is ripe, or that the law on a subject should be codified or consolidated. A researcher who is tracing the development of some piece of legislation in detail must necessarily make a study of the clauses and schedules of the relevant bills which led up to the climax of the Act itself. But even for others less interested in details of this kind, the finding of the bill or bills may give a lead to the debates, to entries in the Journals, reports, etc. But bills also provide two other sorts of information. The actual clauses of Tudor Acts of Parliament were often preceded by long preambles stating the reasons for and intended effects of the legislation (as in the Statute of Artificers, 1563, and the Poor Law Act, 1601). At the present time such preambles are not often incorporated in Public Bills, the long title being regarded as sufficient. But they are still used in bills of great constitutional importance, such as the Parliament Bill, 1911, or the Statute of Westminster, 1931, or in bills affecting international agreements. Occasionally the words setting out the aims of legislation have been incorporated with the short enacting formula which precedes the actual clauses, e.g. the Ottawa Agreement Bill, 1932. Next, a short explanatory memorandum, setting out the contents and objects of the bill in non-technical language or explaining its chief financial clauses and implication is often printed with the bill, or in a separate memorandum presented with it. The Coal Industry Nationalization Bill, 1945, the Electricity Bill, 1946, and the Transport Bill, 1946, are examples of the former; the financial memoranda are printed with the National Insurance Bill, 1945, and the Agriculture Bill, 1946, but the explanatory memoranda are issued as separate Command Papers. And generally, a list of bills in any period indicates the problems which were in the minds of the public or a group of Members of Parliament

and were being brought to the notice of the legislature as needing its attention. It is obvious that not only detailed amendments, but important changes of principle of significance for a problem under discussion, may be brought out by a comparison of a bill as introduced with its final form when it has received Royal Assent and has taken its place in the bound volumes of Public General Acts for the Session. The action a Government takes on the recommendation of a committee or commission may, however, not involve legislation but only administrative action. The steps proposed may be announced in the House, in which case the *Debates* should be searched, or set out in a circular, e.g. to local authorities, for which the *Consolidated Lists* should be consulted.

The review we have made of the kind of material to be found in the Papers and the ways in which it can be discovered and handled will indicate how much can be gained from an efficient and understanding study of them. This had been perceived by Henry Taylor, who in his *The Statesman*, published in 1836, gave his prescription for the training of a student aiming at a 'civil career'. The minutes of evidence of a Parliamentary Committee should be laid before him without their report. He was to be required 'to report upon that evidence himself, exhibiting 1st. The material facts of the case as drawn from the evidence; 2d. The various views and opinions which have been or might be adopted in the matter; 3d. The conclusions of his *own* judgment, with his reasons; 4th. If he concludes for legislation, a draft of the law by which he would execute his purpose; 5th. A draft of the speech with which he would introduce his proposed law to the notice of the legislature.' A severe programme indeed, but one implying both the imaginative and critical attitude with which Parliamentary Papers can well be approached. For, he said, discussing the value of this kind of study as compared with 'general history', 'Lord Strafford's despatches and Clarendon's state papers will be studied with more profit to a statesman than any history of the reign of Charles I, and it is the materials of history, rather than the histories themselves,' which are of value to the young prospective statesman.

NOTE ON THE CITATION OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

1 (a) *House and Command Papers. Form of Citation.*—References to Parliamentary Papers should be accurate, adequate and simple. A great deal of unnecessary trouble has been given to readers even of scholarly works because the author's references do not meet these requirements. Yet it is an essentially straightforward matter if heed is paid to the simple scheme which Hansard put forward in his first 'General Alphabetical Index, 1801–1826', in the express hope that it would become standard practice; it has in fact remained the practice of the General Alphabetical Indexes.

The form he suggested for reference to a paper was:—

session paper no. volume no. volume page no.

If the title has not been given in the text, the form should be preceded by the title and description thus:—

title and description session paper no. volume no. volume page no.
e.g.:—Game Laws. Sel. Cttee. Rep.; 1845 (602) xii, 331
London Squares. R.Com. Rep.; 1928–29 Cmd. 3196, viii, 111
London Squares. R.Com. mins. of ev.; 1927–8 Non-Parl.

An examination of the General Alphabetical Indexes will show that the semi-colon is invariably used to separate the descriptive part of the reference giving the title, etc., from the numerical part giving the session, paper and volume numbers and volume page numbers.

For a reference to a statement on a particular page of a paper, the title and description should be followed by the *printed* page number of the paper:—

title, etc. printed page no. session paper no. volume no. volume page no.
Finance and Industry. Cttee. Rep. p. 134; 1930–31 Cmd. 3897, xiii, 219.

All references should be made to the *House of Commons'* Bound Sets, *except* where the paper is in the House of Lords' set only. From this it follows:—

(a) Where the paper is the report of a Lords' Select Committee (communicated to the Commons) it must be marked HL to indicate this and to distinguish it from a Commons' Select Committee:—

Sale of Beer. Sel. Cttee. HL Rep.; 1850 (398) xviii, 483.

(b) Where the paper is in the Lords' papers only, HL should be added to the paper number. This can be done either in the form HL(259) or (HL.259):—

title, etc. session paper no. volume no. volume page no.
Despatch of Business. Sel. Cttee. HL. Rep. p. iv; 1867 (HL. 259) xxvii, 1.

For the reasons given below, the use of the volume page number is not strictly necessary, and may be regarded as optional.

These forms of citation are both adequate and simple, and are recommended as standard practice.

(b) *Explanation.*—The general form suggested by Hansard is self-explanatory, and only two 'rules' or 'conventions' need to be added to take account of the fact (i) that there are two sets of papers —the House of Commons' papers and the House of Lords' papers; (ii) that in some 'official' bound sets, there are two paginations, a paper and a volume pagination; and (iii) that two kinds of reference may be needed, one to identify a document and to show where it may be found, the other to indicate the page of an individual paper which contains a certain statement or figure.

(i) All references should be to the *House of Commons'* sets of papers, except in those cases where the paper is found only in the Lords' papers. The paper number should then be preceded by HL. There are three reasons for this rule. First, it was the practice of each House to communicate important papers to the other; such communicated House of Lords' papers are thus included in the Commons' set, with a Commons' number. All Command Papers are in the Commons' set. Collections of Lords' papers are even scarcer than those of the Commons and are often of the more meagre and sketchy character. Even those of the British Museum, the London School of Economics, the Bodleian and Trinity College, Dublin, are very limited, though there are sets in several Government Departments. For this reason not only are references to Lords' papers unnecessary when the papers are already in the Commons' set, but they are of use for work in the main scholastic libraries only if the imperfect collection should chance to have the particular paper. It is therefore unnecessary to encumber references by giving *both* House of Commons' and House of Lords' references, or by beginning each Commons' reference by 'HC.' It is sufficient to use 'HL.' in those cases where the paper is in the Lords' set only. The rule therefore greatly simplifies the form of reference.

(ii) Page numbers.—Each paper has its own printed page numbering, but the papers are in due course collected together, arranged in groups and bound in Sessional Sets. A certain number of copyright and 'official' sets are then given a continuous pagination for each volume. (a) All references to the text of an individual paper should use the *printed* page number of the paper. This has the advantage not only of following the table of contents of the paper and any page number used by the Committee or author to refer to its own report, but meets the needs of readers who have access only to individual papers or to sets without volume pagination. (b) The volume page numbers are thus of use only for showing a reader where a paper is placed within a known volume. It is these volume page numbers which are given in the Sessional and General Alphabetical Indexes, and they do assist a reader in finding a paper quickly in a set with such page numbers. Nevertheless, their use may perhaps be regarded as optional. They are of no value when the collections are without this pagination, or where, as occasionally happens, a volume has been privately given a MSS. numbering, in imitation of the official one, which is inaccurate. And of recent years, an increasing number of the quarto bound sets not bearing any volume pagination are being acquired by libraries. Though formally accurate, volume page numbers are in the strict sense unnecessary even for sets with that pagination. For each volume has a printed table of contents, which uses this numbering to show at what point in the volume the paper may be found. Session, paper number and volume alone will lead the reader to the right volume, and the table of contents will tell him the rest. It can therefore safely be omitted, and it is a matter of personal preference whether one provides the extra convenience of the volume page numbers.

2. *Non-Parliamentary Papers.*—These are best simply described as 'Non-Parl.' with the calendar year of issue and, where they are not the minutes of evidence of a Royal Commission, the name of the Department issuing the paper. Non-Parliamentary Papers over a certain very low price are given a code number by H.M.S.O. for its own purposes, and this may occasionally serve to distinguish two documents very similar in title. But the Consolidated List is not arranged in a way which would make these code numbers of any

use for finding a document, so that the best form of reference is a precise statement of the type of Committee and document, its title and date of issue.

3. *Titles.*—Care may be needed in the citation of titles, especially those of nineteenth-century papers. See *Select List*, pp. ix, x.

4. *Debates.*—The official method of citation is as follows:—

vol. no. / House / series / date / col. no.

213 H.C. Deb. 5s. 8 Feb., 1928. col. 136.

APPENDIX I

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS OF PAPERS AND THE STORY OF THE INDEXES

Including notes on the work of Abbot and the Hansards

IN the first half of the nineteenth century Parliament ordered the preparation and printing of several collections of Parliamentary Papers, and of so large a number and variety of indexes that it is difficult from the reading of a list to understand the relations between them. The history of this activity shows that they fall into a clear and intelligible pattern. There are three distinct kinds of Indexes to Parliamentary Papers—the Indexes to collections of Papers classified in subject order, the Alphabetical Indexes (bound in subject groups) to individual Papers and the General Alphabetical Indexes to the Sessional Bound Sets. The list below analyses these three different groups.

This large and impressive body of literature, published almost wholly before 1850, is an indication of that concern and generosity of Parliament which made possible the preservation and accessibility of its Papers. The publication at irregular dates of the General Alphabetical Indexes occurred when a further accumulation of Papers made Parliament aware of the need for the consolidation of the Sessional Indexes. 'Every seven years' vaguely influenced the decision to print, but it was not until 1879 that their publication settled down to what became the decennial pattern which, but for the interruption of the 1914–18 and the 1939–45 wars, has continued up to the present time. But the inconvenience caused by a periodic accumulation of Sessional Papers was only one factor influencing the minds of those concerned with this great experimental period of index making.

The work was largely the result of the co-operative efforts of a group of able men. At the beginning of the century the Speaker, the Clerk and the Printer shared an onerous responsibility for the

Papers. In 1818 the first Librarian was appointed, and in 1831 it was proposed at a Select Committee[1]

> that at the commencement of each Session Mr. Speaker should name a Standing Committee of five including himself, to whose direction should be referred all matters relating to the Library, the patronage to remain where it now is.

This Committee issued eleven reports between the years 1834 and 1857,[2] and it is from these that we trace much of the progress of the indexing work of the Papers. In this way work began to devolve on a larger number of people who eventually guided the pattern of activity. The Speakers for half a century gave their sympathetic sponsorship to the experiments. Henry Addington (1789–1801) urged Charles Abbot (1802–1817) to give his attention to the Papers. Abbot, with that passion for order which had already made him distinguished in so many fields, hardly needed this encouragement. John Rickman worked with Abbot as his secretary, and later as Clerk-Assistant to the House (1814–1840); he became responsible for the indexing of the Journals, and gave his expert attention to directing and initiating work on the Papers.[3]

But perhaps it is true to say that the greatest contribution to the indexing of the Papers was made by Luke and Luke Graves Hansard. These two men, father and third son, were personally responsible for the printing, distribution and care of the papers from 1796 to approximately 1844. They were not only craftsmen of the highest repute, but in the course of their work as keepers and distributors of the Papers they developed an academic interest in their contents as well as their use, and were stimulated to exercise personal initiative in making them accessible. Luke Graves Hansard's creative work went on almost up to his death in 1844, in spite of the fact that for years before his end he had been harassed by family disagreements in the printing business, by the growing challenge both inside and outside the House to the 'traditional craftsman' methods of printing by a private firm, and by the result of the Stockdale *v.* Hansard case, which played havoc with his fortunes and damaged his health. For although the question of Parliamentary privilege was involved, Parliament left him to take the financial

[1] *The Present State of the Library of the House of Commons.* Sel. Cttee. Rep. p. 10; 1831–32 (600) v.

[2] Select List, p. 6.

[3] Unpublished diary of Luke Graves Hansard, see p. 55 below.

strain of an action for libel in a Parliamentary Paper which he had been ordered to print and put on sale. When Luke Graves Hansard died the experimental period of index making in the nineteenth century was almost at an end.

The major decisions on the printing of indexes and on making special classifications of the papers other than the bound sets of Sessional Papers were made at three Select Committees.[1] But the story really begins in 1767 when Parliament for the first time voted large sums for the reprinting of a number of Sessional Papers. In the Journal (Vol. 31, p. 412) there is the following entry:—

> Ordered that one thousand five hundred copies of the several Reports from Committees of this House, which have been printed by Order of the House, and are not inserted in the said Journals, be reprinted, by the appointment and under the direction of Thomas Tyrwhitt, Esquire, Clerk of this House . . . be reprinted by such person, or persons, as shall be licensed by Mr. Speaker, and that no other person do presume to print the same.

The cost of this reprinting is not shown separately, but is included with other printing ordered at the same time. The total inclusive sum voted was £5,000. In 1773 a similar entry is found in the Journal (Vol. 34, p. 385):—

> Ordered that one thousand five hundred copies of the several Reports from Committees of this House . . . be reprinted . . .

Again the figure is an inclusive one, this time being £7,500. The reports printed at this date were bound in four volumes double folio and form the first bound collection.

The next entry in the Journals is in 1803 (Vol. 58, p. 653) when Lord Glenbervie reports from the Select Committee[2] 'appointed to inquire into the state and condition of the Printed Journals of this House, and General Indexes thereto, and also of the volumes of Printed Reports'. Appendix I to this Report gives a list of

[1] *The State of the Printed Journals, General Indexes, and Volumes of Printed Reports.* Sel. Cttee. Rep.; Journals 1803, Vol. 58, p. 653. *Committee Rooms and Printed Papers.* Sel. Cttee. Second and Third Reps.; 1825 (515, 516) v. *The Present State and Future Management of the Library and the State and Condition of the Printed Reports and other Papers presented to the House.* Sel. Cttee. Rep.; 1831–2 (600) v.

[2] Not included in the bound sessional sets.

'stock in hand' and for the reprints of the reports ordered in 1773 the entry is '4 Volumes . . . None'. The report runs:—

> 'That it may be proper to print eleven volumes of Reports, in addition to the four which have already been printed; together with a General Index to the whole fifteen volumes of which the series will then consist' (p. 654). '. as there has never been but one impression of the four volumes of Reports, and that impression consisted of 1,500 copies . . . your Committee think that 1,750 copies of each volume of the proposed new selection should also be printed. The value and importance of the Reports contained in the four printed volumes, as well as those specified in the above arrangement is very generally known and admitted but the benefit to be derived from them will be greatly enhanced, if direction shall be given for the preparing and printing with them of a well digested Index of the whole. (p. 653–4)'

For the first time we get an estimate of the costs of this printing separated from the general printing account.

> For reprinting the four volumes of Reports, 1,200 copies of each volume, £5.000 . . . and for printing eleven new volumes of Reports; viz. from Vol. V. to Vol. XV . . . together with a General Index to the whole 15 volumes of Reports:—1,750 copies of each volume £18,000.

Luke Hansard, who made the estimate and presented a plan for the arrangement of the Papers in each volume, adds this in Appendix 2, p. 655:—

> the above may be completed in about seven years; and may cost something more, or something less, than the above estimated sums, according as there may be a fall, or rise, in Paper or in Labour

This set of fifteen Journal size (double folio) volumes and Index is called the *First Series*. It is the work of Luke Hansard and the Index is important because it bears the stamp which marks all his and his son's later index work. In the preface he explains the principles of his alphabetical arrangement, and shows his awareness of the need for accessibility through a subject, as well as an alphabetical order. The table of contents indicates how his mind was working on the various problems of index making:—

> I. Arrangement of the Reports from Committees of the House of Commons, forming the Series of Fifteen Volumes; 1715–1801.
> II. Analytical Table of the Subjects referred to in the General Index.

III. A List of the Reports inserted in the Journals of the House of Commons, but which are *not* included in the Selection forming this Series; with an Abstract of their Subjects. IV. Principal Heads of Reference in the General Index. V. The General Index.

In 1807, four years after the decision was made to reprint the collection of papers which were to form the *First Series*, there appeared a *Catalogue of Papers Printed by Order of the House of Commons 1731–1800*, 1807 (Reprinted H.M.S.O., 1954). This is the Abbot Catalogue to the Abbot Collection of bound volumes of papers. Abbot himself records his work on page 617 of the 'Diary of Lord Colchester'. In a 'short memorandum of my services . . .' both before and during his Speakership, he states

> During Speakership, 1802–1817. 1. Series of printed papers of House of Commons, for nearly the last 100 years collected, methodised, and made accessible to public use . . .

The official record of the work is in the evidence of Mr. Whittam, Clerk of the Journals, before the Select Committee of 1825.[1] In reply to a question about records of papers before 1800 he said

> the room called the warehouse, which extends from the front in Abingdon-street to Sir George Rose's house . . . is appropriated exclusively for the printed Journals and Indexes . . . in the room over that there are complete sets of printed papers, from the years 1731–1800, inclusive, and from the union to the present time; which by the direction of Lord Colchester, when Speaker, are kept in that house, and are inscribed on the first page of each book, to be deposited in the official house of the Clerk of the Journals . . .
>
> Q. Of how many volumes do these before the Union consist?—There are one hundred and ten volumes of the papers before the Union;
>
> Q. Are the old Parliamentary papers to which you have spoken separated into volumes?—Yes; they were separated under Lord Colchester's direction. There are four sets completed; one kept in the Speaker's Gallery, one sent to the British Museum, one deposited in the Clerk of the Journals room at the Journal Office, and the remaining one was directed to be kept by the Clerk for the use of the House. No doubt they are all so inscribed.
>
> Q. These four sets were similarly divided?—Exactly.
>
> Q. They are supposed to be very complete?—There is a collection made of every printed paper then which was extant. (pp. 3, 4)

[1] Second Report, pp. 3, 4; 1825 (515) v.

We can imagine the stocks[1] of papers which would not be wanted quite so much when the First Series came into circulation, and Abbot directing that they should be made into sets. Four sets were to be bound and the rest 'tied into bundles'. The Preface to the Catalogue refers to the 'volumes' and to the 'bundles on the shelves'. The papers in these sets are arranged in the same three groups,—Bills, Committees, Accounts and Papers,—as they are in the Sessional Papers which were bound for the first time in 1801.

The work of the Committee of 1803 was carried further by the Select Committee of 1825 on *Committee Rooms and Printed Papers*[2] which made two major recommendations:—

(*1*) *The Second Series.* The report runs as follows:—

> In obedience to the order of reference, your Committee have proceeded to inquire into the state of the Printed Reports and Papers presented to the House. Referring to the Report made by the Select Committee, appointed for a similar purpose in 1803, they directed an arrangement to be made of Select Reports, similar to that adopted in the collection of fifteen volumes already printed . . . This arrangement will be found in the Appendix . . . The same motives which induced the House in 1803 to reprint a Selection of the Reports then existing, appear to your Committee sufficient to warrant a continuation of the series. But as a very considerable number of copies of these Reports are still preserved in warehouses, your Committee do not feel themselves warranted at the present moment in recommending to the House the commencement of such an undertaking (pp. 3, 4)

The first part of this extract is a recommendation for the continuation of the Series, the last sentence means that they did not recommend the continuation in the form of a reprint of twenty-five years of Sessional Papers. Hansard had been asked to prepare estimates similar to those presented for the 15 volumes, but when the Committee realised that 1750 copies of the proposed set would cost some £45,000, or if printed in folio size, something like £90,000, they looked for alternative methods for making a collection. They questioned Hansard as to stocks in hand and asked him to present a list. Hansard said that to gauge the extent of such a reprint he had already made up from the existing papers one complete set of reports for such a *Second Series* or collection. If this

[1] 'The earliest paper in our store is 1731'. L. G. Hansard. App. 3, p. 79 of the Report from the Select Committee; 1837 (286) xiii.

[2] Third Report; 1825 (516) v.

could be done for the existing papers, then the work could be enlarged. In view of this the Committee went on to recommend

> The classification to which your Committee have referred, applies at present, except in a few instances, to Reports only. It has occurred to your Committee, that a similar classification might with much utility be adopted as to the Papers. (p. 5)

This Second Series finally comprised 56 volumes of Bills, 154 volumes of Reports and 152 volumes of Accounts and other Papers in subject classification. Five sets were made up, one for the Speaker's library, one for the library of the Treasury, one for the Duke of Wellington, one for Sir Robert Peel, and one for the Library of the French Deputies.[1]

The plan for the Series which Hansard presented to the Committee, shows that he was responsible for the subject classification and for the index to the collection, which he called a '*Classification of Parliamentary Papers and a Breviate of their Contents, 1801-1826*'. The following extract from his unpublished diary, for 1829, gives an account of this Breviate and the help he got from Mr. Rickman:—

> Apr. 2.—Completed the abstract of the contents of the Reports of Committees. from 1801 to 1826, and likewise the synopsis of the Arrangement of Vols. of the Reports and Accounts. Sent the MS. to Mr. Rickman, with a memoir explaining the whole, and reporting to the Speaker the completion of the directions of the committee on Printed Papers in 1825. This abstract has been the work of many years; but it may not be thought proper to adopt it as a Parliamentary Paper—will (it) be allowable that it should speak of their contents in any other words than their own? Yet it is only an *Index raisonne*. I have my doubts whether it will be adopted; but having done it, I thought it would be well to let it be seen, as showing the attention bestowed on the Parliamentary Papers.
> May 9.—Recd. a letter from Mr. Rickman with a pf. of my introductory remarks and memoir. Says the Speaker is pleased with the general appearance, but has not yet had time to consider it. Mr. Rickman has made many corrections and improvements; which I am glad of; because it is favourable to be thought worth mending.
> May 23.—Mr. Rickman has sent back the MS. volume, with a strip of paper on which is written 'that he will explain what is to be done with it'.

[1] *State and Condition of Printed Papers*, q. 86; 1831–32 (600) v.

May 25.—Mr. Rickman sent a letter explaining that the Speaker has shown the MS. to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Dawson, with his recommendation that it shd. be printed; which those gentlemen approved of. It is to be done during the recess carefully *for hurry would spoil such a work*; and a covering order will be given next Sessn. as in the case of the Genl. Index. The Index and this work, will show that the printer does not confine himself to the mechanical part of his duties, but is attentive to the intellectual also.

(2) *A General Alphabetical Index.* The Committee[1] also concerned itself with access to the Sessional Bound Sets. They questioned L. G. Hansard:—

Q. Have you taken any steps to combine those Sessional Indexes into one?—Certainly; we have for some length of time combined them, for the general use of our establishment, in order to facilitate the references to the Papers as wanted; we have them combined from 1801 to 1806, and from 1807 to 1812 and from 1813 to 1818, forming a complete general index to all the Papers then printed.

Q. Could there be much difficulty in making one General Index to all the Papers printed from the Union to the present time?—No, I should think not.

Hansard completed this first *General (Alphabetical) Index 1801–1826* at the same time as he completed the subject '*Classification and Breviate*', and he suggested that the two volumes could be bound together to form 'one volume of Helps to Consultors of the Papers'.

The story repeats itself again at the Select Committee in *1831-32*[2] when the same discussions took place over the need for an extension of the subject classification and for more indexes. This Committee recommended that there should be (1) a reprinted Alphabetical Index, extended up to 1832; (2) a Third Series of classified papers; (3) a General Index to the Series; and (4) a set of Alphabetical Indexes to individual Papers. The following extracts from the minutes of evidence show that many of the suggestions were made by L. G. Hansard:—

Q. 83. The classification of Parliamentary Reports, . . . now in your hand, was compiled, the Committee understand, in consequence of a recommendation of the Committee which sat in the year 1825, by you or by your Firm?—By myself, under my Father's directions.

Q. 84. Have you formed any plan for continuing such classification?

[1] *Committee Rooms and Printed Papers*, pp. 7, 8; 1825 (516) v.

[2] *State and Condition of the Library and the Printed Papers*; 1831–32 (600) v.

—It has occurred to me that if the Committee should think proper to sanction the re-printing of the General Index to the Sessional Papers from 1801 to 1826, that it would be very desirable to continue the classification of the Papers from 1826 up to the present time, upon a plan similar to the classification laid down and recommended by the Committee of 1825.

Q. 85. Would you recommend that a second (third)[1] series should be prepared up to the present time, for the use of the Library of the House?—It appears to me that that would be very advantageous; but the second (third) series might not of necessity be considered as a permanent series, but in case in the course of any given time (say seven years) when the Papers are accumulated to a greater extent, and another arrangement might be thought proper, then a permanent classification might be made to take the place of this temporary one, and thus become a permanent second (third) series. The present proposed arrangement, it appears to me, would be useful for the purpose of the Library.

Q. 93. Is the General Index to Sessional Papers one of those now out of print?—It is.

Q. 94. Has it to your knowledge and belief been found of great use, so far as you can infer from the frequency of applications?—Judging from applications made for it, I should conceive it has been found of considerable use. The experience that we have of its utility, is derived from the use which is made of it in forming selections of papers that are required either by Committees of the House, by Members, or by the Public Officers, and persons in Administration. When any subject is under discussion requiring information on any particular point, then applications are made to us for a selection of Papers, either individually or collectively, on those subjects. Without the means which that Index affords, we should find extreme difficulty and great delay in making the selections required; but with that we find the Papers with great facility, and are enabled to furnish them with accuracy and expedition.

Q. 100. In reference to that classification, is there any suggestion which you would desire to submit to the Committee with respect to the compilation of Indexes to any separate Reports, or any other

[1] In the evidence the Series had been wrongly named. Hansard clears this in a letter to the chairman. 'It will be necessary to designate the arranged collections of Reports thus:—*First Series*, containing the Reports from 1701 to 1800, printed in 15 vols. large folio. *Second Series*, being the Reports arranged according to the direction of the Committee in 1825, from 1801 to 1826. *Third Series*, will be a continuation of the last up to 1832, which the Committee now recommend to be prepared as a temporary arrangement till the accumulation of seven years will make it of sufficient importance to be erected into a permanent collection. This will require an alteration in the wording of the Reports, as to the denomination of the *Series*.'

Papers progressively or otherwise?—This classification, and the Breviate of the contents of the volumes, were designed as a substitute for the want of Indexes to the particular Reports which are there enumerated. To the Reports which have been subsequently printed at least the most important of them, separate Indexes have been compiled during the progress of the Session, such as those on the State of Ireland, on East India Affairs, on the Poor Laws and several others. It has occurred to us, that it would be of very considerable advantage if separate Indexes were made to the Reports which are contained in the classification. This might be done progressively, and as opportunities occurred. These would then form one collection of Indexes, giving a complete mode of reference to all the most important matters which are contained in the Reports of this period.

We may now look at these projects in turn:—

(1) The General Alphabetical Index, 1801–1832. The Committee[1] had questioned Mr. Vardon, the House of Commons Librarian, on the possibility of enlarging this Index to include the reports in the Appendices of the papers:—

Q. 51. Have you any Index to the Papers in the Appendices to Reports of Committees and Reports of Commissioners?—We have no Index at all to the Appendixes of Reports, which I think is a great desideratum, for Committees are usually formed of those who understand the subject best, and they generally order those accounts to be laid before them which are of most value with reference to the subject referred to them; these Appendixes are bound up at the end of the Reports; they are at the time seen by the Members who form the Committee; afterwards there is an application made at the Library for what they wrongly, but naturally, call an Account or Paper laid before the House, for which we, having no reference at all to the Appendixes, can search in nothing but the Index to the Accounts and Papers where it is not; it is still insisted on that such a paper does exist, and then, after perhaps a very great deal of trouble, it is found out in an Appendix to a Report; but beyond that there is no means of reference whatever to these Papers. . . .

This Index was ordered to be printed in 1833. In the 'Explanation on p. iv. L. G. Hansard throws light on the difficulties of indexing the reports in the Appendices. He confesses:—

that the great extent of matter that would have required minute examination, in effecting such a purpose, rendered the desired addition to this index impracticable; but the recommendation has been adopted in

[1] 1831–32 (600) v.

the indexes to the Papers since 1832, where the references to such subjects are expressed '(in 747)' when comprised in other accounts and '(in App. to 612)' when inserted in Appendices to Reports. Thus the groundwork will be progressively formed, for any future General Index, with these and any such other improvements as time and experience suggests.

This promise was fulfilled in the General Alphabetical Indexes up to 1857, but it was not repeated after that time.[1] The extra work involved and the swollen size of the volumes must have acted as a deterrent to later compilers.

(2) *The Third Series.* The work on the third series was delayed by the destruction of some of the material in the Fire[2] in 1834. As late as 1845 we find the Library Committee[3] reporting that 171 volumes of the Reports of Committees from 1800 to 1837 had been 'classified in their respective subjects' and that 'we recommend that this should be done for Commissions'. The last volume covered reports on Mines up to 1861. This set comprises 358 bound volumes of papers in subject order and is in the Library of the House of Commons.

(3) *General Index to the Subject Classifications.* The recommendation to make an index to the three collections or series as envisaged by L. G. Hansard, who died in 1844, could not be carried out by him because the series was extended beyond 1837. There is therefore no index to the Third Series. What did happen was that a wide margin was provided in the *Index to the Reports from Select Committees* (1801–1845), where entries of the Papers in the Third Series could be made at the side of the entries for the same papers in the Bound Sessional Sets.[4] L. G. Hansard did, however, on his own initiative, provide a second *Catalogue of Parliamentary Reports and a Breviate of their Contents, 1696–1834* (Ford's reprint, Blackwell, 1953) sensing perhaps that the Third Series would continue indefinitely, and that in order to complete a classified index up to

[1] This form of reference is used in the five General (Alphabetical) Indexes between 1832–1857, but it was not carried forward to the 1852–53—1868–69 index. Although the numbers of entries decreased, it continued to appear in the Sessional Indexes up to 1889 when the reference to them in the Explanation appeared for the last time.

[2] Library of the House of Commons. Standing Cttee. Rep., p. 7; 1835 (104) xviii.

[3] Library Committee, p. 3; 1845 (610) xii.

[4] In the margin of the House of Commons' copy of this index entries have been written in for the papers contained in the Third Series.

the date specified by the Committee he must abandon the idea of indexing a completed Third Series. He made a classification using references to the Journals and the First Series for papers up to 1800 and the Sessional Bound Sets for papers after 1801. He enters in his diary on July 6, 1836:—

> The Catalogue of Parliamentary Reports from 1696–1834 which has cost me so much labour in compiling, was put into circulation. I hope under the blessing of providence it may do some good. I am thankful that I have had health and resolution to complete it—no trifling thing, considering it has been done during the trying period of the last four years.

(4) *Alphabetical Indexes to the Contents of Individual Papers.* There are 191 separately numbered indexes, which are grouped together in a subject order corresponding to the volumes in the Third Series, but the references given for the individual papers are to the Sessional Bound Sets. Some account of the progress made in the compilation of these indexes is given in the Standing Committee Reports.[1]

The purposes of these indexes was first, to supply an index to each report which had been published without one; secondly, to group a set of indexes to be bound up with each subject volume of the Third Series where there were no indexes already; and thirdly, to provide one complete set of subject indexes to be used in conjunction with the Sessional Bound Sets. Pages 63–6 show the numbered series within the whole set. Where these indexes have been bound with the Sessional Bound Sets, the Sessional references are given in the list; where they are not so bound the references are to the composite volume of subjects, and to the groups of subjects.

The experimental period closes in 1856 with the consolidation of the five 'General Alphabetical Indexes' which had been published at irregular dates.[2] The Standing Committee of 1856[3] records that three volumes of the 'General Alphabetical Index', 1800–1852, will be 'delivered to every member' asking for them. From 1852 to 1899 there is one 'General Alphabetical Index' for 1852–3 to 1868–9 and three decennial indexes, but there were no more subject classifications. A fifty years consolidated *General Alphabetical Index* 1852–1899 was published, but it was not discovered until after it

[1] See Select List, p. 6. [2] See p. 66. [3] 1856 (426) vii.

was presented that the reference numbers to the papers had not been given. Some may conclude that the experiments of the first half of the century were too prolific, but this cannot be taken as any explanation for the bleakness which fell upon Parliament's interest in access to the ever-increasing accumulation of papers in the second half of the nineteenth, and in the twentieth, century.

LIST OF COLLECTIONS OF PAPERS, INDEXES AND CATALOGUES

I. Bound Collections of Volumes of Papers other than the Bound Sessional Sets and their Indexes and Catalogues.

1731–1800	Abbot Collection	110 volumes of 'original separates'. Chronological Index—*Catalogue of Papers 1731–1800.* 1807 (Reprinted H.M.S.O. 1954).
1715–1801	First Series	15 volumes of reprinted papers (double folio) Index—16th volume.
1801–1826	Second Series	Reports, 154 volumes. Accounts, 152 volumes. Bills, 56 volumes. Indexes—*Classification of Parliamentary Reports, and a Breviate of their Contents*; 1829 (81) iv. *General (Alphabetical) Index 1801–26*, 1829 (49)—.
1801–1861	Third Series	358 volumes in the House of Commons Library. No Index.

II. Subject Catalogues and Breviates.

		1715–1801	*General Index* to the First Series contains a subject classification.
1829 (81)	iv	1801–26	*Classification of Parliamentary Reports, and a Breviate of their Contents*: likewise Tables of Arrangement in Volumes of the Accounts and other Papers and Bills, o.p. Feb., 1830. (Index to the Second Series.) .
1837 (626)	lii	1696–1834	*Catalogue and Breviate of Parliamentary Papers.* o.p. July, 1837. (Ford's Reprint. Blackwell, 1953.)
(498–I)	„	1835–1837	—— Supplement.

III. Alphabetical Indexes to the contents of individual Papers bound in subject order.

There are three main series of indexes and some separately numbered ones. The following table shows first the three main series and

secondly an analysis of these series, with the separately numbered indexes inserted chronologically. (The small roman numbers indicate when an index is in the Sessional Bound Set.)

1. Main Series

1834 (626)	I	1801–34	Indexes to the Subject Matters of the Reports of the House of Commons. o.p. Aug., 1834. (Number on the document (626A)).
[1837 (498)	,,	,,	—— Supplement (Revised Table of Contents).
1837 (498–II to VIII)			Indexes to the Subject Matters of the Reports of the House of Commons. o.p. July, 1837.
1847 (710–I–XVIII)			Indexes to the Reports of Commissioners. o.p. Feb. 1847.

2. Analysis of the three series, with separately numbered indexes inserted chronologically.

1816	(51)	x	Military Inquiry. Coms. 1806–12.
1826–27	(281)	VIII	Charities in England and Wales.
1834	(626)	I	*Indexes to the Subject Matters of the Reports of the House of Commons.* (No. on the document 626A.)
			—— (626–I) Agriculture and Corn Trade, 1820–34.
			—— (626–II) Colonies and Slavery, 1803–34.
			—— (626–III) Emigration, 1826–27.
			—— (626–IV) Poor, 1813–33.
			—— (626–V) Poor in Ireland, 1819–30.
			—— (626–VI) Brewing, Malting, Distillation, 1804–33.
			—— (626–VII) Weights and Measures, 1814–34.
			—— (626–VIII) Children employed in Factories, 1816–32.
			—— (626–IX) Foreign Trade, 1820–24.
			—— (626–X) Fisheries, 1803–33.
			—— (626–XI) Salt, 1801–18.
1837	[84]	xxx	Excise Establishments, 1833–37

Indexes to Reports of the House of Commons, 1801–34

On the cover of each volume.		On each Index in the volume.	Sess. vol.	
1837	498–IV	498–I	not	Ecclesiastical. 1810–39.
	,,	498–II	bound	Education, 1814–34.

On the cover of each volume.		On each Index in the volume.	Sess. vol.	
1837	498–II	498–III	lii	Civil List. 1801–33.
	498–IV	498–IV	not bound	Finance, Public Accounts, 1807–29.
	498–II (cont.)	498–V	,,	Banking, Coinage, Currency, Exchange. 1804–32.
	498–III	498–VI	,,	Parliament, Privilege. 1815–40
	,,	498–VII	,,	——, Members.
	,,	498–VIII	,,	——, Elections.
	,,	498–IX	,,	——, Proceedings.
	,,	498–X	,,	——, Establishment, Printing.
	,,	498–XI	,,	——, Library.
	,,	498–XII	,,	——, Houses of Parliament. 1831–41.
	,,	498–XIII	,,	——, Reform of Representation. 1830–32.
	498–IV	498–XIV	,,	——, Municipal Reform. 1819–33.
	498–II	498–XV	lii	——, State of Ireland. 1924–32
	,,	498–XVI	not bound	Trade and Manufactures. 1802–35.
	498–VII	498–XVI(2)	,,	Trade and Manufactures. 1801–32.
	—	498–XVII	lii	Bread Assize. 1804–24.
	—	498–XVIII	lii	Medical. 1807–34.
	498–IV	498–XIX	not	Debtor and Creditor. 1816–34.
	498–V	498–XX	bound	Law and Law Courts. 1811–34.
	,,	498–XXI	,,	Seditious Practices. 1812–18.
	,,	498–XXII	,,	Annuities, Usury, etc. Friendly Societies. 1812–29.
	,,	498–XXIII	,,	Commerce and Shipping—Shipwrecks. 1810–34.
	,,	498–XXIV	,,	East India Affairs. 1805–32.
	,,	498–XXV	,,	Steam Power. 1817–34.
	498–VI	498–XXVI	,,	Arts and Literature. 1805–34.
	,,	498–XXVII	,,	Woods, Forests and Land Revenues. 1829–34.
	,,	498–XXVIII	,,	Public Offices. 1810–34.
	498–VII	498–XXIX	,,	Roads and Bridges and Harbours. 1803–30.
	,,	498–XXX	,,	Public Buildings. 1807–33.
	498–VI	498–XXXI	,,	Highways, Wheels and Carriages. 1806–33.

On the cover of each volume.		On each Index in the volume.	Sess. vol.	
1837	498–VII	498–XXXII	not bound	Local Improvements and Taxation. 1809–34.
	498–VIII	498–XXXIII	,,	Public Works, Ireland. 1809–34.
	,,	498–XXXIV	,,	Local Taxation, Ireland. 1815–34.
	498–VI	498–XXXV	,,	Crime, Police, Punishment. 1812–34.
	,,	498–XXXVI	,,	Prisons, Prison Discipline. 1811–26.
	498–VIII	498–XXXVII	,,	Army and Navy. 1805–33.
	,,	498–XXXVIII	,,	Population—Registration. 1830–33
	,,	498–XXXIX	,,	Miscellaneous. 1808–34.
	,,	498–XL	,,	Parliament—Legislative Assemblies. 1826.
1840	(10)		xlii	Post Office and Postage. 1735–1839.
1859	(0.41) Sess. 2.		not bound	Parliamentary Subjects. 1836–58.
	(O.41) Sess. 2.		,,	East India. 1835–59.
1861	(O.41)		,,	Mines and Collieries. 1842–61.

Indexes to the Reports of the Commissioners

1840	(279)	xix Pt. II.	Charities in England and Wales. 1819–40.
1845	(40)	xliii	Poor Law, Ireland. 1835–39.
	(643)	xlii	Education, Ireland. 1814–44.
1846	(673)	xli	Law Courts. 1810–45.
1847	(70)	lviii Pt. I.	Public Accounts. 1800–33.
	(71)	lviii Pt. II.	Roads and Bridges. 1800–46.
	(710–I)	lviii Pt. IV	Emigration. 1828–47.
	(710–I_s)	,,	West Indies and Mauritius (Labour). 1832–47.
	(710–II)	lviii Pt. II.	Railways. 1837–46.

1847	(710–III)	lviii Pt. III.	Public Works (Ireland). 1810–46.
	(710–IV)	lviii Pt. IV.	Colonies. 1812–40.
	(710–V)	lviii Pt. III.	Shannon Navigation. 1832–47.
	(710–VI)	,,	East India. 1806–47.
	(710–VII)	,,	Exchequer Bills. 1811–42.
	(710–VIII)	not bound	Revenue Inquiry. 1822–34.
	(710–IX)	,,	Excise Inquiry. 1833–37.
	(710–X)	,,	Army. 1806–40.
	(710–XI)	,,	Naval Inquiry. 1803–06.
	(710–XII)	,,	Civil Affairs of the Navy. 1801–40.
	(710–XIII)	,,	Agriculture. 1801–43.
	(710–XIV)	,,	Handloom Weavers. 1839–41.
	(710–XV)	,,	Factories. 1833–41.
	(710–XVI)	,,	Customs, Excise, Stamps, Land Tax. 1810–44.
	(710–XVII)	,,	Fees, etc., Public Offices. 1806–37.
1854	(448)	lxviii	Docks, Harbours, etc. 1802–53.
	(448–I)	lxiv	Parliamentary Representation. 1832–54.
	(448–II)	lv	Poor Law. 1835–48.

IV. General Indexes.

1. *Chronological Index.*

			1731–1800	Catalogue of Papers. 1807. (See Abbot Collection.)

2. *General (Alphabetical) Indexes.*

			1715–1801	General Index (see First Series, 1803).
1829	(49)		1801–26	General Index. o.p. Feb., 1829.
1833	(737)	xl	1801–32	—— o.p. Aug., 1833
1840	(11)	xlix	1832–38	—— o.p. Jan., 1840.
1845	(396–I)	xliv	1832–44	—— o.p. June, 1845.
1850	(698)	xlvii	1845–50	—— o.p. Aug., 1850.
1857 Sess. I.	(125)	xvii	1852–53—1857	—— o.p. March, 1857.
1862	(O.55)	lxv	1852–53—1861	—— o.p. Aug., 1862
1870	(469–II)	lxxi	1852–53—1868–69	—— o.p. Aug., 1870
1880	(140)	lxxxiii Pt. I.	1870–78—1879	—— o.p. March, 1880.

1889	(354)	lxxxix	1880–89	General Index. Alphabetical Index. o.p. Aug. 1889.
1904	(368)	cxii	1890–99	—— Alphabetical Index. o.p. Aug., 1904.
1911	(351)	civ	1900–09	—— o.p. Dec. 1911
1926	(169)	xxxi	1910–19	—— o p. Dec 1926
1930–31	(8)	xxxvii	1920—1928–29	—— o p Nov. 1930
1946–47	(1)	xxvii	1929—1943–44	—— o p Nov. 1946
1950–51	(175)	xxxiv	1944–45—1948–49	—— o p. April, 1951

1845	(396–II)	xlii	1800–45	Index to Reports from Select Committees o.p. June, 1845.
1854	(O.8)	lxx	1801–52	General Index. Vol. I. Bills. o.p. 1853.
	(O.9)	xx		—— Vol. II. Reports of Select Committees. o.p. Aug., 1853.
				—— Vol III. Accounts and Papers, Reports of Commissioners, Estimates, etc., etc. (Reprinted H.M.S.O., 1938)
			1852–99	General Alphabetical Index. o.p. Sept. 1909. (No paper numbers.)

APPENDIX II

THE DEBATES

Note on the Methods of Compilation, Accuracy and Style

THE Select Committee on *Parliamentary Debates*, 1893[1] recommended that the proposed official version should be *substantially verbatim* and in the *first person*. This recommendation was the conclusion of a discussion which had taken place in many Select Committees in the nineteenth century, and had arisen as a result of criticism of the methods of compilation. This note sets out some of the evidence given to these Committees on the methods of compilation, accuracy and style of the Debates.

Originally the Debates had been conceived by Cobbett, and then by Hansard, as part of a plan in which they were to be 'continued downwards' from a Parliamentary History. From 1803 to 1829, when the thirty-sixth, and last volume of the History was published, both projects were running simultaneously, and therefore the methods of compilation were somewhat the same; for the History, past records were used; for the Debates, current records.

The Preface to the first volume of the History, published in 1806, and signed by Cobbett, describes his methods of compilation in the following manner:—

> . . . principally from the Records, the Rolls of Parliament, the Parliamentary or Constitutional History, and from the most reputable English Historians. From the Reign of Henry the Eighth inclusive, we have the additional aid of the Journals of the House of Lords; and from that of Edward the Sixth, that of the Journals of the House of Commons. Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal of Queen Elizabeth's Parliaments, has been diligently consulted, and the Debates of the House of Commons in the years 1620 and 1621, published from the Manuscript in the Library of the Queen's College, Oxford, have been carefully incorporated, under their respective dates. The State of the Peerage, and Lists of the Members of the House of Commons have, from time to time, been given: and at the close of the Parliamentary History of each reign, will be found Lists of the Public Acts passed; together with an account of the Taxes imposed, of the Supplies, of the State of the

[1] 1893–4 (213) xiii.

Revenue, and of the Value of Money in relation to the Price of Provisions.

Cobbett goes on to say that the history was intended to supersede other histories which were 'very scarce' or 'excessively voluminous' and cites them in the following order:—

> 'The Parliamentary or Constitutional History', in Twenty-four Volumes; the second, 'Sir Simonds D'Ewes's Journal of Queen Elizabeth's Parliaments'; the third, 'Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons in 1620 and 1621, collected by a Member of that House, and published from his Original Manuscript in the Library of Queen's College, Oxford', in Two Volumes; the fourth, 'Chandler's and Timberland's debates', in Twenty-two Volumes; the fifth, 'Debates of the House of Commons, from the year 1667 to the year 1694, collected by the Honourable Anchitell Grey, Esq., who was thirty years Member for the town of Derby', in Ten Volumes; the sixth, 'Almon's Debates', in twenty-four Volumes; and, the seventh, 'Debrett's Debates' in Sixty-three Volumes.

The first volume of the Debates, for the year 1803, was published in 1804. Seventy-four years later, before the Select Committee on *Parliamentary Printing*,[1] T. C. Hansard, Junior, described the methods of compilation, accuracy, style and length of the Debates, as indicated by the following extracts:—

1. *Compilation and Accuracy of the Debates.*

> *Q. 160.* . . . Before (1832 when Hansard Senior died) the work was compiled by gentlemen of some literary importance, from every source which was at that time available; newspapers, pamphlets, manuscripts, and other very miscellaneous sources.
>
> *Q. 161.* . . . Never by the employment of reporters by Mr. Hansard himself in the Reporters' Gallery?—That is my meaning.

After 1830 T. C. Hansard employed reporters on special occasions:

> *Q. 164.* When you speak of special arrangements and special reports asked for, by whom were they asked for?—By associations or individuals interested in particular subjects then before Parliament.
>
> *Q. 167.* What other means had you for ensuring the accuracy of the report which appeared under your name?—In the first instance, a staff of collators and revisers employed and paid by me. The reports so collated having been got into type, the proofs of the speeches were sent to almost every individual speaker, in slips, with a request that the proof slips should be returned at a proper time.

[1] 1878 (327) xvii.

Q. 194. There are some speeches which occur in Hansard with an asterisk affixed to them; what does that mean?—Those are speeches which are sent to me, and which I carefully examine myself. If I find that it has every appearance of being a *bona fide* report of the speech delivered, although it may evidently not be a verbal report—still, if I am satisfied that it is a *bona fide* report, I accept it, but I put the asterisk to signify that I publish it on the authority of the Member with my own ratification of it.

In 1878 the Treasury made a grant to T. C. Hansard to enable him to report more fully, for which purpose he engaged four full-time reporters.

Q. 252. The arrangement that you now have with the Government is to report specially four things, first, late Sittings after Midnight; then the proceedings in ordinary Committees, the proceedings in Committee of Supply, and the discussions on Private Bills 'by Order'?—Yes, those are the four points.

Q. 306. Do you consider that you have a kind of moral responsibility to the House of Commons to deal with speeches in the manner that you have described, and not to permit unfair alterations?—I consider that I have a moral duty to exercise that power.

Q. 317. Then is it the inference from what you state, that the fact of 'Hansard' being quoted in the House of Commons as almost an official publication arises from the fact, that it was almost the only publication which gave reports of the proceedings in the House of Commons on which Members could rely?—I think so, the authority of 'Hansard' is not, and never has been in any sense official or authoritative; it has rested always upon the confidence placed in the character of those who conduct it.

Q. 448. You have never known any case in which a debate has been entirely omitted from 'Hansard'?—Yes, in early days.

Q. 449. I am speaking of a debate being purposely omitted; has there never been any pressure brought to bear upon 'Hansard', to omit a debate altogether?—Never. In answer to that question, I might say generally that I am treated, and always have been treated by Members, I may say, as a formidable person—I have never been asked to do what you refer to, and nobody seems to dare to ask me.

2. *Style of the Debates.*

Q. 347. I notice in looking over 'Hansard' that the general run of speeches are given in the third person, but some in the first; is that always the doing of the Member who corrects the speeches, or is there a difference made to certain Members by you?—There is no difference made to certain Members as such; no Member is entitled to ask or press

me to report either in the first person or in the third; it depends upon the reporter.

Q. 348. And it is not always the result of the Member's own correction?—Never.

Q. 349. He does not transfer from the third to the first person?—Almost never.

Q. 350. There are many speeches that appear in your publication and occur in a debate which in the newspapers are given in the third person, but in yours in the first?—When they are derived from a source where the speech is given in the first person.

Q. 351. What source would that be?—The special reports for country newspapers and other sources in which the original is in the first person. But more frequently the report in the first person is the speech of some very important Member or Minister whose speech it is desirable to take at full length, and then it is more easy to take it in the first person than in the third.

3. *Length of the Debates: Summary, Full or Verbatim?*

Q. 469. Have you compared the length of the present publication of 'Hansard' not in the present year, but up to this year, when the reports were furnished by collation of newspaper reports; have you ever made any comparison between the length of your reports and the fullest reports of the London papers?—I do not think I have.

Q. 470. They would probably not greatly exceed in length, would they, the reports of the fullest London papers?—Very much.

Q. 473. For that reason, then, should their reports exceed in length the reports in those papers?—My manager informs me that he thinks that the excess of Hansard in past years over the reports of the London journals has been nearly one-half.

Q. 474. When you say the London journals, do you mean the average of the London journals, or the reports of the fullest of the London journals?—They vary so; one of the most important journals gives as a general rule very much longer reports than are given in the others.

Q. 477. Now, is it your opinion or not that the length of a report ought to depend, to a considerable extent, upon the quality of the speeches?—No; I do not know that any one in the office of Hansard is entitled to judge either of the importance of the Member who makes the speech, or of the importance of the subject to which it refers.

Q. 478. Would you apply the same rule to the newspaper, or would you confine it to the official report?—It is universally applicable; I do not think there ought to be any difference.

Q. 479. Has it come within your knowledge that it is possible for a Member to make a very long speech and to repeat the same arguments

very frequently, so that the Speaker of the House of Commons has called him to order on that account?—I have seen it, and heard it.

Q. 480. Do you think that when a man speaks for half-an-hour and repeats the same argument repeatedly, and is called to order by the Speaker for such conduct, he should be reported at length, even in the official report?—If I answered that question without reserve, I might say that which Members when they come to read the report of the proceedings of the Committee might not like.

Q. 481. It is an important question for us to have your opinion upon? I think there should be vested in the hands of the director of the reports a power to report in a more concentrated form those debates which take place in the House late at night, after 12 o'clock, which consists for the most part in repetition of arguments.

Q. 485. Would you not consider that there were a great many debates not of that character in which there is a great deal of surplusage?—That is the business of the House, not mine. If they permit it, it is my business to report it.

Q. 486. Would you consider that a full report of a debate of that character is equally satisfactory to the House?—I would very willingly sift them, but I do not think it is my province to do so.

Q. 492. I want to ask you whether, so far as you know, any of those speeches were sent before they were actually made?—No, never; no such thing has ever occurred upon any occasion.

Hansard had been questioned on whether it would not be better to have official reporters, instead of relying on other sources for material, and the reply he gave expressed the principle which finally determined the length and composition of the Official Debates.

Q. 311. Have you found that there is a general desire for vebatim reporting, or for full and accurate reporting?—I think that while some enthusiasts go to verbatim reporting, the general opinion is for full and accurate reporting; the public do not require verbatim reports.

Q. 312. Then the official reports to which you refer would not be verbatim reports, but full and accurate reports?—They would be full and accurate, but they would not be verbatim in this respect, that certain duplications, and small matters which, as any gentleman in the House of Commons knows perfectly well, are not necessary to the argument or sense to be recorded, would be omitted; otherwise they should be verbatim.

Ten years later the matter came up again before the Select Committee on *Cost and Method of the Publications of the Debates and Proceedings*[1] because of the dissatisfaction felt over the dis-

[1] 1888 (284) x.

proportionate lengths of reporting speeches, etc., compared with those for which Hansard received a grant-in-aid, the cost of the Debates, and perhaps the most important point, the difficulty of understanding how one man could be responsible for the production of the Debates, especially when he had so small a staff compared with the sixteen reporters of *The Times*. The Committee questioned Hansard on these points, and his replies were as follows:—

Q. 18. With whom at present do you consider the responsibility rests for the reports which are contained in Hansard's Debates?—With me entirely.

Q. 19. With you personally?—With me personally.

Q. 27. Do not you think that would cause some difficulty in producing very lengthened reports of debates in Parliament if every word that was uttered in either House were to be officially reported?—I am afraid the mass would be so overwhelming that the public in general would get very tired of Parliamentary institutions.

Q. 127. Did you ever hear of a speech being printed before it was delivered?—I have heard of such things, but I have never used them. I had one narrow escape, certainly, but was wise in time.

Q. 221. You have the report of an important speech taken from *The Times*, or any source you like, and you supply the member with a copy of his speech; he makes a considerable number of alterations; you look at it and sometimes decide that you will not accept his revision; now upon what grounds do you decide: is it by looking at the reports of *The Times* or other newspapers, and seeing whether those are really *bona fide*, a more correct statement of what he said than the one which he has returned to you, or do you not approve of second thoughts being best because, as I should presume, most of those would be *bona fide* alterations?—If I think a speech has been unfairly corrected, I decline to use it.

Q. 222. But how do you arrive at that conclusion; that is what I cannot understand?—I look to the different authorities, and you can tell pretty well whether or not it is new matter which has been inserted.

Q. 223. You would not allow any new matter to be inserted unless it could be shown that it has been inserted in *The Times*, the *Standard*, or other principal newspapers?—Unless it could be supported by collateral authority.

Q. 224. Do you ever send back to gentlemen who send in these revises and ask them for such evidence?—No.

On the costs of producing the Debates more fully the evidence of Mr. Digby Pigott, head of H.M.S.O., was decisive: in qq. 242, 243,

he states that Mr. Hansard had asked for £20,540 for what 'could be done, roughly, for £10,000'. The Committee therefore recommended

> . . . that a Report which might be described as an improved and amplified Hansard should be obtained; that public tenders should be invited for such a Report; that the Contractor should be allowed to procure his Report from any source he might choose, subject, however, to the condition that he should be required to keep reporters constantly present during the sitting of each House to take notes, which would supply any deficiencies or correct any errors in the Reports, that the Contractor should be allowed to exercise his own discretion as to the fulness of the Reports given, subject only to the condition that no speech should be reported at less than one-third of its length as delivered; that the Debates in Committee of either House and Debates on Private Bills should be reported with the same fulness as Debates on public questions, without regard to the hour of the delivery of the speech; . . .

In effect this recommendation was for more 'Debates' for less money, and it cannot be said that subsequent events bore out the confidence of Mr. Pigott and of the Committee as to the cost of getting what they required in length, accuracy and speed. This is clear from the evidence given to the Select Committee on *Parliamentary Debates* four years later, in 1893.[1] It is not surprising, in view of the methods used to select contractors (Pigott, qq. 17–42) that several successive contractors had to be employed in the first ten years, that two went bankrupt[2] and that only after 1899 was it carried on steadily. Mr. F. Hoole, one of Hansard's old reporters, gave some interesting evidence on the cost of proper service, and his estimate was 50 per cent greater than the increased sum being demanded by the contractors (qq. 1123, 1130–1152). The contractors were less experienced and less independent than Hansard, so that extensive corrections of the reports of their speeches by members was not unknown (qq. 672–685, 1121, 1379–1381). And the form of the index changed with the contractor (qq. 1680–1683). The existing contractor (Eyre and Spottiswoode) took occasion to state the advantage of permanence and experience (qq. 399–401). The problem of which T. C. Hansard had complained in his evidence

[1] 1893–94 (213) xiii. It was apparently not part of H.M S.O.'s duty to see that the quality of the reports (e.g. as to length) were as required. See qq. 134–136, 277–280.

[2] Mr. Horatio Bottomley was secretary of one of them. For an account of these and of the ending of T. C. Hansard's connection with the Debates, see J. C. Trewin and E. M. King, *Printer to the House*, 1952, pp. 253–261.

before the Committee of 1888 and which that Committee had failed to understand, was summarized by the 1893 Committee in the following words:—

> The question which first arises is that of the length and character of the Reports. There are three kinds of Reports which have to be considered. The first kind is the strictly verbatim Report, in which every word uttered is recorded, and which may, perhaps, be concisely described as a phonographic Report; the second is the full Report, which, though not strictly verbatim, is substantially the verbatim Report, with repetitions and redundancies omitted, and with obvious mistakes corrected, but which, on the other hand, leaves out nothing that adds to the meaning of the speech or illustrates the argument; the third is the condensed form of Report. . . . recommended that the report to be adopted for the future should be of the second kind, i.e. should be a full report of all speeches alike . . . Also, 'that the Report should (as is usual now with a full Report) in all cases be in the first person. Reports in the third person, however complete, are open to the objection that they substitute a narrative for a speech, and the personality of the reporter for that of the speaker.' (pp. iii and iv, and T. P. O'Connor, q. 1717)

It was another fourteen years before recommendations were made that Parliament should itself take over the full responsibility of the reporting, printing and publication of the Debates. The following extract from the Reports from the Select Committee on *Parliamentary Debates*[1] which made the recommendation shows how the matter was finally settled.

> Your Committee are convinced that great dissatisfaction exists amongst Members of the House of Commons as to the present reporting of Debates, and that this dissatisfaction is justified. They are of opinion that the system of obtaining reports of Debates in the House of Commons by contract has not been a success for the following reasons:—(1) No system can be good under which it is to the interest of the contractor to lengthen or shorten his reports according to the terms he has received. Under the system of granting a subsidy of so much per volume it is to the advantage of the contractor to lengthen his reports and expand the printing if the terms he has received are good, and to shorten them if he has miscalculated and they are unremunerative. (2) It is unfair to Members that a contractor's reporter should be the judge—subject, of course, to the one-third limit of the contract—as to the length at which speeches should be reported, and such a system deprives the reported speeches of much of their historical value. (3) The contract

[1] 1907 (239) vii.

system must tend to the employment of too few reporters, and has in fact had that effect, with the result that the present staff has been seriously overworked, and their work has naturally suffered. In the opinion of your Committee this overwork has been persistent, and in some cases very excessive, as, for example, this Session, when during the Debate on the Army Annual Bill the staff were on duty for more than 20 consecutive hours. (4) A contract like the present one, which permits the contractor to obtain his reports from any source, provided he has a reporter always present in the House, leads largely to the use of newspaper cuttings in the making up of the reports, and, even although the contractor's reporters check these cuttings with their own notes, must tend to destroy the independence of the final version of speeches.

Your Committee therefore condemn the system of obtaining the reports by contract and recommend that the House of Commons should set up a reporting staff of its own.[1]

This vehement condemnation of the system of reporting, etc., by contract vindicated the personal probity of T. C. Hansard in his work on the production of the Debates.

[1] Ibid., para. 7, 8.

LIST OF BREVIATES, CATALOGUES, ETC. OTHER THAN OFFICIAL

Hansard, Luke Graves	Hansard's Catalogue, and Breviate of Parliamentary Papers 1696–1834. Reprinted in facsimile, with an introduction by P. Ford and G. Ford, 1953.
Ford, P. & G.	Select List of British Parliamentary Papers 1833–1899. 1953.
Ford, P. & G.	A Breviate of Parliamentary Papers, 1917–1939. 1951.
Adam, M. I., Ewing, J. and Munro, J.	Guide to the Principal Parliamentary Papers relating to the Dominions, 1812–1911. 1913.
Temperley, H., and Penson, L. M. (editors)	A Century of Diplomatic Blue Books, 1814–1914. 1938.
Jones, H. V. (compiler)	Catalogue of Parliamentary Papers, 1801–1900 with a few of earlier date. [King's List]. [1904]
	—— 1901–10. [1912]
	—— 1911–1920. 1922

OFFICIAL GUIDES TO COLLECTIONS OF PAPERS AND INDEXES

A Guide to Government Libraries; 1952 Non-Parl. Treasury.

Notes on Official Indexes, Lists, Guides and Catalogues. H.M.S.O. 1952.

Guides to Official Sources. General Register Office.

1. Labour Statistics; 1950 Non-Parl.
2. Census Reports of Great Britain, 1801–1931; 1951 Non-Parl.
3. Local Government Statistics; 1953 Non-Parl.

ARRANGEMENT OF UNBOUND AND INCOMPLETE COLLECTIONS OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

Difficulties are sometimes experienced in arranging unbound, incomplete collections of sessional papers, and this note on the methods of dealing with them has been prepared in response to a number of requests.

1. *Commons' Papers*

In general, the decisive means of identifying a paper are its session and House or Command number. From this it follows that any arrangement adopted should be such as can be used with the Sessional and General Alphabetical indexes and with footnote references based upon them. The reader should be able to pass direct from either of them to the document and not be required to go through some intermediate process. They should therefore not be arranged in some individually conceived subject or other order; the rule for guidance is that 'a paper out of numerical order is lost.' Readers requiring such help on subjects can consult Hansard's *Breviate* and Ford's *Breviate* and *Select List*, or similar works, which give the required numbers and sessions.

Unbound sessional papers should therefore be placed in box files in sessional and numerical order, the box files for Bills, House Papers and Commands being arranged in that order for each session. This corresponds with the Sessional Indexes and Consolidated Lists. The paper numbers of all papers in each box should be displayed on the spine of the box files. Searcher or librarian, as the case may be, can then go straight from the indexes or footnotes references to the document.

These arrangements are tidy and make for the effective use of indexes and footnote references. According to the circumstances, certain possible exceptions are suggested by experience. First, annual reports and statistical series, such as the reports of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue and the Statistical Abstracts, can be put separately in serial runs. Secondly, the papers of one or two very large Royal Commissions, e.g. those on the *Poor Laws*,

or *Labour*, if complete, may sometimes be conveniently put together; but such exceptions cannot be multiplied without destroying the simplicity of the whole system.

2. *Accession Lists*

In order to cope with an expanding collection of papers, Southampton has made a complete sessional (numerical) list of House Paper numbers from 1801–1936 and one of Command numbers, from 1833–1936. As papers are added to the collection, either individually or in odd bound volumes, the list is ticked. In this way there is no problem of the list becoming obsolete, and identification is easy.

3. *Lords' Papers. Communicated Commons' documents*

As many House of Commons papers were communicated to the Lords, any such paper can be added to a Commons' collection by finding its Commons' number, placing it in its sessional numerical order and ticking the Commons' number on the Accession List. Odd bound volumes can be also analysed in this way.

Lords' Papers not communicated to the Commons

These can be made easily accessible if, after abstracting all the communicated documents, they are arranged in sessional-numerical order in box files, and an accession list made as for the Commons' papers. In this way Lords' papers are accessible from the indexes, and all the duplication with the Commons' papers, which so increases their bulk, is avoided.

4. *Non-Parliamentary Papers.* See p. 29.