

Royal Commission on Old-Age Pensions

Fortieth Day

Wednesday 14th February 1894

In the Queen's Robing Room, The House of Lords, Westminster, SW

Present:

The Right Hon. Lord Aberdare, G.C.B. *Chairman*

H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, K.G.

The Right Hon Lord Playfair, K.C.B

The Right Hon Joseph Chamberlain, M.P.

Mr. J.J. Henley

Mr. Albert Pell

Mr. W.A. Hunter, M.P.

Mr. A.C. Humphreys Owen

Mr. C.S. Roundell, M.P.

Mr. C.S. Loch

Mr. Charles Booth

Mr Henry Broadhurst

Mr. J. J. Stockall.

Mr. Austin Browne, *Secretary*

Viscount Morpeth, *Assistant Secretary*

Mr. Thomas Pitkin of Swanbourne, Buckinghamshire called in and examined.

<u>Chairman</u>	<u>Thomas Pitkin</u>
How old are you?	Sixty seven last birthday, my Lord. 68 on the 2 nd of next April
Where are you living now?	Swanbourne, Bucks.
In the County of Bucks?	Yes, my Lord.
Are you living in a cottage?	Yes my Lord.
Have you any land attached?	There are about 10 poles or something like that; it is a nice little garden.
About an acre?	No, about 10 poles, it is a garden, just a nice little garden.
<u>Mr Booth</u>	
Is that a quarter of an acre?	No 40 poles is a quarter of an acre; no it is only about one sixteenth of an acre, it is something about that, that is what I judge it at, I have an acre of ground besides.
What do you pay for the cottage and land?	£3
<u>Lord Playfair</u>	
The landlord compounds?	I pay the rates myself and then deduct back out of the rent.
<u>Chairman</u>	
Then your rent and rates altogether come to 3l. Is that it?	Yes, my Lord.
<u>Mr Booth</u>	
Does that include the allotment?	No, Sir.
<u>Chairman</u>	
During your life what wages have you been able to earn?	Well, at one time it was very low, as low as 8s a week at one time it was, but it has gradually risen up now to 13s.
Do you get any extras to the 13s?	Well, there is something in hay time and harvest.
Is that the only occasion when you get some addition?	Those are the only occasions.
How much additional do you think you get?	Well they get about 4s a week for two months, 4s a week for a month in haytime, and 4s a week for a month in harvest. 4s a week each time, that makes 16s each month.
How long ago was it that you were getting 8s a week?	Oh, it is 40 years, I dare say: I cannot say exactly, my Lord, just now: it is a long while.
You were a grown man, were you?	Oh, yes.
And then they gradually rose?	They gradually rose up until they have got to 13s at present; that is the regular pay about our place.
And what work were you doing then?	I was at agriculture; I used to do a deal of threshing in my young days.
Threshing?	Yes, when the flail used to be used, they used to thresh in the barns.
Did you get anything extra for that?	I used to work piece work; sometimes we used to thresh by the quarter; so much a quarter, sometimes I could get 1s or 2s, and sometimes I could not.
Did you learn to read and write?	A bit; just a little; I was friendless brought up; I had not any friends in my young days, and what education I got I had to look out for myself.
How old were you when you married?	Twenty-one.

And you married upon 8s a week?	Yes. It might have been almost nothing at that time; it was a very bad winter, and we hardly got anything that winter.
Was your wife able to earn anything?	No, very little.
I suppose a little in hay time and at harvest time?	No, she did not use to go out.
How many children have you had?	Eleven; bred up 7 out of the 11.
Have you anything to help you besides your wages and a bit of land?	No, I have not anything; I have got an acre of ground.
You have got an acre of ground?	Yes; of course, I keep a pig or two upon the proceeds. I use my own proceeds, what the land produces.
Do you pay rent for your acre of land?	Yes.
How much?	Well, I pay 30s an acre on three roods, and the rates; on one rood, one 40 poles, I pay 15s for the 40 poles, that is 3l an acre. It all belongs to Lord Cottesloe. The last 13 years that I worked, I worked for the late Lord Cottesloe.
That is not included, I suppose, in the rent and rates that you told us of; the 3l?	Oh, no.
It is outside that?	Oh, it is outside that.
You are still working?	Well, I am working on my land a bit, and catch a few odd jobs. I left Lord Cottesloe's about two years last Michaelmas. I used to look after the cattle, and I thought a young man would do it better, and so I left it, and worked on my land. I have done a little on the bye road this winter, and now at the present time I am agent for a seeds merchant, and sell a little seed. I sell a little garden seed and such things at the present just for two or three weeks.
Have you ever received any parish relief?	Well, I received a little once. I was taken very ill with the influenza.
How long ago is that?	I think 40 years ago, it was when I had a small family about me, and I think I received altogether..... I found my own doctor. I was in a Club at that time. I think about 13s as near as I can guess. I was ill a month, and that was about all that I received: since then I have received nothing.
You have supplied your own doctor?	Yes.
And you own medicine?	Yes, I had the club doctor at that time, and they gave me this from the parish, this that I have been mentioning; I had 8s a week from my club.
And were you getting something from the parish as well as from the club then?	I think I received altogether during the month about 13s.
But were you at that time receiving also the 8s a week from the club?	Yes, for that month.
<i>Mr Booth</i>	
At that time your wages were only 8s a week?	It was about that same time; I cannot say just exactly the time now.
The money received from the club was about the same as your regular wages?	Something like that, they gave me a little for a fortnight; I think it amounted to something about 13s, to the best of my remembrance.
<i>Chairman</i>	
Is your acre of land an allotment?	Yes, my Lord.
Do you pay rates for that?	Yes, I pay them direct.

How much?	Well, it depends on what the rates are, some times more and sometimes less.
Well, generally, what does it come to?	Fourpence in the pound, I think it was at that time, I think that was it.
<i>Mr. Humphreys Owen</i>	
How many rates in the year?	Two rates in the year; but I think there is an extra one this time coming in.
<i>Mr. Pell</i>	
Do you get off for 8d in the pound	Yes, that is it, I think that was it.
<i>Chairman</i>	
Well, now, have you any children living with you?	No, my Lord; I live by myself.
Have you any living near you?	I have one daughter; that is all I have.
Have you received any help from any of them?	No; I have had to help them when I can. They have got large families, most of them. I do what I can in that sense. I do not get anything from them any way. The daughter that I have lives about the length of this room, perhaps, from me, and she looks after my house.
How many children have you got living?	I have five now; four sons and one daughter.
What as the sons doing?	One, the youngest, is a caretaker. Over a Board school in Oldham, in Lancashire. He lives on the premises, and looks after a large school; that is the youngest son; and the others are agricultural labourers. There are three agricultural labourers, and one is in the Board school in Lancashire.
Have you any relations in receipt of parish relief?	Not that I know of. If I have, they are very distant.
Have you any friends in the workhouse?	Not any relations.
Have you had any?	Well, in fact, I was in once myself for a little while when I was a lad; about three weeks, I think.
Have you any friends?	No, I have not anybody in there. There is one man from our village; but, in fact, he would be either there or in the asylum. He had nobody to take care of him; and I consider that he is in the best place you know. There is not anybody else in from our village.
What is the population of Swanbourne?	A little over 400 – about 430 I think, or something like that.
Are there some receiving outdoor relief?	Yes, there are some.
What sort of people are they?	Very old people.
Do you know what sort of relief they are receiving?	About 3s a week is the price I think.
Had they, like yourself, belonged to clubs?	Some of them have.
Some of them have?	Yes, Well, there was one. Now the club has just run out with him. They have 8s a week for six months, and then, after the six months, they have 4s; and then after that six months has gone, they have no more. They are run out. That is how the clubs are.
I suppose none of these people have been able to lay by anything except what they gave to the club?	No, I do not think so.
I suppose their rate of wages was very much the same as yours?	Yes, about the same; Oh yes, there was no difference in that that I know of. Of course, that is the wages of regular men; jobbing men, as we call them, would get what they could, sometimes their earnings do not average so much, I daresay.
Have they got allotments like yours?	Well. These old men that are on the parish have not; not now.

They have not?	No.
Have they ever?	Yes, they have had them, but they have got past it.
They cannot cultivate it?	No.
I suppose that helps to keep men off the parish, does it not?	A good deal, it does; oh, yes, it is a great help to our parish, these allotments.
It does not appear that your wages are very flourishing now but they are very much better than they were in the past altogether?	Oh, yes.
You say for 40 years you have received no assistance?	No.
I suppose during that time you have had very hard times to go through?	Yes, my wife was ill for six years, and could not walk without being led.
How did you manage to get on then?	Well, I do not know how I did get on, I was nearly starved.
Now what do you say to the question whether children should be called upon to assist their parents, or not?	Well, I think in some cases, it ought to be done, and in some cases it is a great hardship on the people.
What are the cases in which you think they ought to be compelled to assist their parents?	Well, there are sometimes young men who have no wives at all, and there are young men married and no families at all; I think in such cases as that they ought to do what they can.
But where they had children you think that their children have a first claim upon them?	Well, I had thought it over in this way, my Lord: I do not know whether my own ideas are correct; so long as a man is compelled to do so, so long he will have to do it, because it would go on perpetually. If I had to bring up my family and I had to help to support my friends, my children would have to support me on the same system, because I could not support my friends and labour for myself. How could I when a young man if he is breeding up his family, and he pays his club, provides his own doctor, and in our place now generally there is the Prudential, most of them try to insure their children, so that they should not be a burden, and when they have done all these things, there is not much to spare out of 13s.
Were you called upon to assist your parents?	I had not had any; I was left friendless; I have had no friends to help me since I was eight years old, I think.
Have you known in your immediate neighbourhood and from your own knowledge cases that you consider hard cases where men have been obliged by the magistrate to support their parents?	Yes, the greatest thing that I have noticed is this: I have known cases where some that have been well able to keep their friends have been let off, if they have been in favour with the guardians or the relieving officer they have been passed by. I can state cases to you that I know. I know two brothers.
I do not want to go into that, but you have known cases?	Yes, I have known cases.
You have known cases where men who in your opinion ought to have been compelled to assist their parents were not, through favour, as you think?	Yes, I know.
And have you known others who were compelled to support their parents, although, in your opinion, they ought not to have been so compelled?	Yes, I have known that case, and I know some to-day.
And you know some at this time?	Yes, I know some today.

Now about this 3s a week, which is the outdoor relief; how do persons having only 3s a week contrive to live?	I cannot tell how they contrive it.
They must get assistance, I suppose, from some source or other?	Well, they do get assistance somewhere, I suppose, because I look at it on my own account; the rent of my house is the general rent of the houses; there are some rather less, but 3l is the average, and three guineas is about the average, and I look in this way at it, that I pay 1s to be looked after for my bed-making and my washing, and so on, and 1s firing, and about 3l or 4l for my rent there is over the 3s gone. I have not a halfpenny to live.
These people do live?	They do live in some way.
Can you not make a guess how they contrive to live?	No, I cannot; I do not know how they live; it is a puzzle to me, and always has been. I never can imagine how they live; they do live; they get on someways, but it is a very poor living; it must be; I don't know how they live.
Did you ever belong to a club for old age?	Not an old age club; I belonged to a club, but they broke up, the members ran old and the funds ran out, and I was too old to join another, so I have not been in one the last few years.
<i>Mr Roundell</i>	
How many years were you in that club?	I do not know; it was a club, chiefly old men were in it, and it lasted a time, but it ran out and I was too far.
<i>Mr Pell</i>	
It met at the public-house, I suppose?	Yes, that one did; that was at Winslow; that was at a public house; it did not make any difference to me, though.
<i>Chairman</i>	
Do you know anything of the treatment of the poor in the workhouses?	Well, I do not know a great deal, only what I have been informed.
By the inmates themselves?	By people, yes, I know, there is a great deal of dread of going in.
But when they are once in?	Well, I don't know; there is nobody wants to go in twice.
What are the sorts of complaints now that are made to you if there are any complaints made to you, when they once get in, besides that dislike that all men have?	I think the greatest complaint is – I do not know that there is a great deal of fault about the food and about the clothing, but it is the confinement that is the greatest evil.
Do you know, at your union, how long they are allowed to go out?	No, I do not know exactly.
Do you think, if they were allowed to go out every day, that they would make a bad use of the permission?	Yes, I think so; I think if they were allowed to go out on a Sabbath day, they would, if they were allowed to go to church or chapel where they thought proper, I believe it would be a great improvement.
I want to ask you, suppose they were let out for a few hours every day, do you think they would make a bad use of it?	I do not think so.
About the clothing, have you ever heard them complain that the clothing was insufficient?	Well, not exactly. I have heard – well, there was one man told me that his clothes were not right, but I enquired of the guardian, and he said he was generally on the grumble.

When he said they were not right, did he say they did not fit?	Well, he said his shirts and that they were very short, and did not keep him warm.
They did not keep him warm?	That was what he told me. I mentioned it to the guardian. I knew the man, and I did not take a great deal of notice of him. I asked the guardian, and he said he generally was upon the complain.
<i>Mr. Henley</i>	
Was he an old man or a young man?	An old man.
<i>Chairman</i>	
I suppose you know most of the people from your part of the world who are in the workhouse?	Yes.
What sort of people are they?	That are in the workhouse, my Lord?
Yes, those that you know.	This man that I was telling you about, I think he ought not to have been there if he had looked out. Well, he was a man that was given to drink in his young days.
He was there you mean by his own fault?	Yes, they think so.
Now about the women who are there?	Well, I do not know but very little of the women who are in there now; but I know the case of a good many young women who were in there when they have not been what they ought to have been.
But about the old women?	I do not think there are very many old women in; only about 28, I think; I do not know exactly how many women there are in.
Do you know who wait upon the sick?	Well, I have been informed during the last few weeks they have appointed somebody to help the matron because they should not have any complaint that those in were cruel.
You mean somebody to help the matron; a trained nurse do you mean?	Somebody independent; something of that kind.
Somebody from outside?	Yes, independent of inmates, yes, that is how I understand it.
Well, you do not think as far as you can gather that the nursing was properly conducted when it was done by the inmates?	I have been informed so, my Lord. Another complaint I have heard a good deal about it that they have been hustled together too much. Some people were rather – well, we ought all to be seriously concerned. There is a good deal to be put up with, you see, when they are put in, they are somewhat a kind of rabble, swearing and singing, and all these things, while there are other people who do not wish to hear any such things, and of course, people who have been used to being by themselves a bit get depressed a good deal.
You would like to see the decent people separated from the rabble?	Yes, I should.
Have you ever heard of any scheme for assisting people to provide against old age?	Well, I have seen several schemes, and I could not see hardly my way with them how it could be done well. The cheapest scheme that I have read was Mr. Chamberlain's, and I could not see in what way a young man could pay in the way he pointed out.
That is to say you could not see how a man in your condition of life with your low rate of wages?	Yes, to pay 5l at 25 years old; and then there was something else I looked at, I could not see what those were going to do who had got advanced in years.

Mr Chamberlain proposed that people would begin young.	Yes, I know that.
And, after subscribing towards an old age pension that they should receive as much from the State as they had subscribed themselves.	Yes.
Well, now, what is your objection to that scheme?	I do not think that they would be able to pay it, not while they were breeding up a family.
There is one question, being able to; but do you think that young men generally are willing to make that provision against old age?	I think not; I have heard a good many say a good deal contrary to it.
I suppose, as an old man, you would not have been sorry if there had been some such scheme when you were young?	If there had been a scheme, my Lord, I never could have paid it.
You had not the money to pay it?	I never could have done it; I am sure it would have been impossible for me to have done it.
Well, I gather from you that you consider that if outdoor relief is given at all it ought to be given more liberally than it is now?	Yes, my Lord, I do think so. If you will excuse me, I was reading a discussion on the proposal to send so many from London to Winslow Union, about six or eight weeks ago, I think it was, and they estimated the cost at 8s 6d a week. I said well, I thought it was very strange if they gave 8s 6d inside, they could not give a poor man 5s out. It seemed strange to me, that did. One of the guardians told me that some of the guardians put it down at 9s a week.
You have found decent old people who, after the club had ceased to pay them, were obliged to go into the workhouse who did not like being called paupers?	Yes, I have my Lord.
Can you think of a name to call them?	No.
If you called them poor, why a great many men are poor who do not get anything from the State; is there another name, do you think, that they might have which would not hurt their feelings?	Well, I like the name of aged poor best of all.
Aged poor?	Yes, I think that is more; of course I do not know what it should be. I do not know what the meaning of a pauper is, I am sure. I have been told that it is not an English word at all. I do not know, I do not study the dictionary much, but I have been informed so; I know it is a word very much disliked.
<i>H.R.H. the Prince of Wales</i>	
I think you said you began in life earning 8s a week, did you not?	Yes, Sir.
How long did it take you to rise to 13s?	It used to rise and sink very often at that time, according as the markets were. Sometimes we would get 8s in the winter and 9s in the spring time; as soon as the spring time came on; but wages have always been rather better since the railway was cut through our place; they began to rise.
When did you get to 13s permanently?	I should think we have had that 17 or 18 years now, something like that.
Seventeen or eighteen years?	I think so.
<i>Mr Henley</i>	
When you were working for Lord Cottesloe as cowman did you work seven days or six?	Seven days, but I considered the 13s for the week.

You worked the seven days for the week?	Fourteen shillings for the seven days.
And you are working on the road now?	No, I am not working at all only on my own now, Sir.
I think I am right in saying that there is some allotment in the parish belonging to a charity, some 18 or 20 acres, at Swanbourne?	No, there is not above 9 acres.
Who holds these 9 acres?	It is a long way from home and that is let to a man, and the money is distributed at Christmas according to what it makes. That is about two miles from home, this bit of land, and it has fell down, I might qualify, it has gone out of cultivation almost.
It is not occupied as allotments now?	No, it is not occupied.
I think a great majority of the old people at Winslow who are destitute get out-door relief, do they not?	A great many of them get out-door relief from Swanbourne, at least.
Taking the people who are over 65 years of age, in the return I have before me, I see there were only eight people over 65 years of age altogether in the workhouse?	Yes, Sir.
Some of these no doubt are sick and some are imbeciles like the man you spoke of?	I know there are not many in.
Well, there five men and three women.	Yes, Sir.
Would it not be a little difficult to overcrowd three women; I mean you spoke, and spoke very properly, that they sometimes heard language and associated with people that they did not much like?	Yes, I know I did, Sir.
How could they when there were so few people in there?	It is very short now, but it has been; I know it has been, Sir.
And at the same time there were 131 old people over 65 years of age receiving out-door relief?	In the Winslow Union, Sir? I did not know of that.
So it is quite clear that the workhouse at Winslow is not pressed with the aged poor?	Oh no.
With regard to the administration of outdoor relief, does the relieving officer take the relief to the different parishes?	Yes, Sir
And does he deliver it?	Yes; he goes to a certain cottage and they go there for it.
A pay station?	Yes.
He is furnished with a horse and cart, I think?	Oh, yes, Sir.
So he takes it round?	Yes.
Have you ever heard any complaint against the relieving officer in the way he administers the relief?	I have heard a good deal.
What sort of complaints?	Well sometimes he has not been civil to them, I have heard them say at certain times.
And anything else?	No, I do not know that I have heard of anything else. Well he is an old man, you know, and I daresay he is like some of the rest of us, he is a little touchy sometimes; you see he is getting towards eighty years old.
I did not quite catch what you said the ordinary relief was for an old man, out-door relief?	Three shillings.
I see your scale is 3s 6d?	Three shillings and sixpence in the winter; in the winter seasons they give them an extra 6d to help them buy a bit of firing.

What do the old people get, married couples, the old people?	I think it is 5s in the summer and 6s in the winter.
<i>Mr. Pell</i>	
You say you think that some children should be compelled to assist their parents, if their parents are in want?	Yes, Sir.
But not all?	Not all, Sir
I suppose you would agree with me that all are not compelled?	I suppose not.
Do you know that no child can be compelled to assist its parents by the board of guardians; that boards of guardians have nothing to do with it?	I do not know.
You do not know that?	That is how it is generally carried.
Therefore that no child can be compelled to maintain its parents, except upon evidence taken upon oath before the magistrate; you are aware of that?	Yes, I understand you.
I do not complain of your evidence upon that point at all.	No.
With regard to the out-door paupers, we will take your parish only; can you call to mind any that are out-door paupers there now?	Oh, yes, I know.
Do any of these people work?	No, they dare not.
Never mind about dare not; some of them do, do they?	No, they do not go to work.
They remain in total idleness?	They might work a little bit in the garden.
They do not work for wages?	No, they do not go to receive any wages.
Is it the practice in your parish, and therefore in the union, for the old people to go to the relief in the winter and then to come out and work for the farmers in the summer?	It has been sometimes.
Not so much now?	No: sometimes men, if they have been able to do a little in the summer, have come out, they have chosen to do it.
We will take the case of an old widow woman who is having out-door relief; does she never do a little charing?	No, Sir.
Never assist in taking in washing?	No; nothing of the kind.
Really they are very strict about that?	Yes.
<i>Mr. Roundell</i>	
If you had your present wages, 13s a week, when you began life, should you have been able to lay by at all?	Well, I did lay by a bit, or else I should not have been in the position that I am now.
I thought you told us that you did not work now?	No, Sir.
Then, is the land you occupy sufficient to keep you going?	The way I did this was this; I put by 10l (£10) - I will tell the truth as near as I know – I put by 10l in the Savings Bank, and when I got the land I put that out on the land, and the land pays me a very good return.
And enables you to get on?	I get on with my land and a little work; and as I say, at this present time of the year I sell a few garden seeds to help, and try and get on as well as I can, and am very comfortable as far as that goes.
Your vegetables and things, are they grown for your own use or to sell?	For my own use; I consume most of them.

<i>Mr Pell</i>	
Are you selling seeds as an agent?	As an agent, yes, for a few weeks just now.
Not grown on your allotment?	Oh, no, Sir
You have got an agency?	Yes.
<i>Mr. Roundell</i>	
One other question: you have told us about workhouses, and the way in which decent people are mixed up with others.	Yes.
And they have no liberty to go out?	Yes.
If it were so arranged that the decent people could be kept together, and that there was more liberty to go out, do you think that that would lessen the objection to the workhouse?	I do think so.
You do think so?	It is the confinement that causes the great dislike as much as anything.
<i>Mr Broadhurst</i>	
You spoke of the recent addition to the staff for nursing?	Yes, Sir.
And that the object of it was to secure more attention?	Yes, Sir
Had there been – had you heard rumours of neglect or cruelty to the people inside?	Not of late years I have not, but I do not know what the reason was. One of the guardians told me that they had added to the staff.
Do you know whether it is a certified nurse that they have sent?	I do not know, Sir.
You say you consume the whole of the produce from your acre?	Yes, generally I do; I sell a few potatoes when I can.
But you consume it by feeding pigs, I suppose?	Yes, I do as much as I can possibly.
Several pigs a year?	Yes, I generally keep two, and I feed them with my own produce.
And they pay?	And I find that pays better than selling it, a lot.
You can sell it better in the form of bacon than you can in the form of cabbage?	Yes, I can sell it better in the form of bacon better than I can in the form of cabbage, as you say; that is it, Sir.
And do you think that the labourers generally could meet the demands of the pension scheme?	I do not think so.
Not at their present wages?	No, I do not think so.
Is 13s a week the lowest wage paid now?	It is about the average in our place.
It is about the average for winter?	It is about the average for winter, and it is a little extra in the summer; this summer there was not any extra.
Why?	Because there was not much to do.
You think that a person earning good wages, and having no wife, or a wife and no children, might fairly be asked to make a contribution to his aged parents?	Yes, I have no objection to that; not the least.
But you object in the cases where they have a family of their own to bring up?	Yes, I do object to that. I have thought that there would not be much objection to a young man trying to give his parents something, if that was added to the 3s a week, instead of taking one off, and giving less in consequence. That is what they grieve about in a general way; you see, it is making their friends no better; not the least.
They would not object so much of their contribution was an addition to the parish relief?	Yes, Sir, that is what I mean.

Do you think the people in your part would much prefer a system of pension paid unconnected with the association of pauperism, and to remain outside the workhouse rather than go in?	Yes, I think they would like outside the best; in fact I know they do.
You think that would be a popular thing to do?	Well, I think if there could be a scheme got up, Sir, to make any provision that it would be right, but, for my part, of course, I cannot say myself.
In your opinion do you think it would be more just towards old people who are poor, through no fault of their own?	Yes, I think so; that is my opinion on it, if a scheme could be brought out. On children having to keep their parents, I know that it causes a great deal of ill feeling among their wives and that, and causes things very unpleasant.
Family bickerings?	Yes, it does, Sir
And you are of the opinion that in some cases money so forced from the workman is money much wanted for his own family?	Yes, I am Sir, and I know cases where they are able, and have been able to pay, and I have had it from the men's own lips, where I has not been forced on them.
<i>Mr Booth</i>	
Then you would like out-door relief, or pensions in some way to come in addition to what might be obtained from children on small earnings?	Yes, Sir, if there was a little more paid to the club money, in that kind of way, I think it would be a good deal better.
So that you would usually have to get it more generally, that all who are badly off should have it irrespective of their particular circumstances?	Yes.
With regard to your three sons who are agricultural labourers, do they live near you?	About three or four miles away.
Are they married men?	Yes, Sir.
With children?	Yes, Sir.
You say that so far, it has rather been your part to help your children than to ask help from them?	Yes.
But if unfortunately it were otherwise, would they be in a position to help their father?	Not a bit; two of them have seven children each, and one has four; I do not see how they could help me.
<i>Mr. Humphreys-Owen</i>	
If you were a magistrate, and a man were summoned before you to contribute to the maintenance of his parents, and it was found that he had fairly good wages, but that he was paying into a club, would you force him to contribute to his parents at the risk of having to drop his subscription to his club?	No, I should not like to do that. Sir.
You think that a subscription to a club ought not to be counted as part of the man's income?	No, I think not.
Now you are getting on in years; may I ask you how you contemplate providing for yourself when, as I fear may be the case, you would hardly be able to cultivate your allotment?	No. I have no idea whatever of the idea that I have. There will be a time, perhaps, but I cannot say anything about that, what will happen. I am in great hopes that it will not come for a year or two; for two or three years.
At all events, so far as you can see, it may be necessary?	I shall never be able to get enough to carry me through I do not expect; I do not know how I can, but I shall keep on as long as I can; I want to be independent as long as I can.

Now, I daresay, you know a certain number of elderly persons amongst your neighbours who are in the same condition as yourself; that is to say, they possibly will have nothing to live upon in their old age, when they have nothing to support themselves, but they have been brought to that condition not simply by inability to work, but in consequence of misconduct in their youth?	Some have, I daresay.
Well now, how would you discriminate between them and a person like yourself?	I could not; you see we could not turn them up and say "You shall not have anything"; you cannot do so.
A person who has worked all his life, and has helped the community in the way you have, does require different treatment from a man who has wasted all his substance; you could not help us in any way as to how you could distinguish between those two?	I cannot see how a line could be drawn. You see a man, as I have known cases; I know men who do strive hard, and I know some that do not try.
Would you think that it would be unfair to refuse to relieve men of the undeserving class except in the workhouse?	Well, I know cases where there is one, for instance, that I knew well, died in the workhouse about a month ago; that man never could have done with outside, he was so fond of drink, and his son told me himself; he said "My father has no business in there at all, and provided he had looked after himself he need not have been there."
Do you think that the certainty of having to end one's days in the workhouse would deter a young man from living riotously in his early life?	I do not know that it would; that anything will deter them when they are taken wild.
But persons of that sort do not look sufficiently far forward.	No, they do not, Sir.
What club were you in?	I was in one at Winslow.
It was not an Oddfellows or Foresters club?	No, Sir.
Only a common village club?	Only a common village club.
<i>Mr. Henley</i>	
A public-house club?	Yes, it was.
<i>Mr. Humphreys-Owen</i>	
What was it patronised by? Was it much patronised by the gentry?	No, it was not patronised at all.
<i>Chairman</i>	
I have heard that you have been a teetotaller for a good many years?	Yes, my Lord.
How long?	Fourteen years.
What made you become a teetotaller?	Well, I did it for example more than anything else.
You did not want it for yourself?	I did not want my sons to drink, and I did not want my neighbours, and I thought I would show them an example.
<i>Mr. Chamberlain</i>	
Do you think that all the old people who go to the workhouse go there because they have misbehaved themselves?	Not all of them; there are some cases where there are not friends to look after them, Sir.
You yourself have said that if your life is spared for a good number of years you might be forced to go to the workhouse?	I do not know but what I might.

Do you think there are many people, of those people at Winslow, of whom there are 131 who are receiving outdoor relief, and eight who are in the workhouse, how many of them do you think are in that condition owing to their own fault?	I cannot say, Sir.
Do you think there are any of them who really have not been faulty?	Well there are some, no doubt; I have known some from Winslow that have been in through their own faults; I do not know any today that I know of; in fact, I do not know who they are that are in just at present.
Do you think that the majority, that the greater number of the old people who have to ask for relief after they are 65 years of age, have brought it upon themselves by misconduct?	No, not the majority, I think, Sir.
Not the majority?	No, there is now and then a case in which it is so, but not the majority.
Do you think then that the greater majority are really brought there by poverty which is beyond their own control?	Yes, I do think so, Sir.
Those people, you would think, are more deserving of assistance than the people who have come here through their own fault?	I should think so, but then at the same time, as I have said, Sir, I do not know how a line can be drawn; not in that case.
Could not the officers of Board of Guardians – do they not know what the history of these people is; could they not tell that a man was there because he had been a drunken man all his life?	Oh, yes, they know that.
Or whether he was there in his old age simply owing to illness, or simply because he could not support himself?	Yes.
If you came to ask them for relief they would know all about you?	Yes.
They could distinguish between you and the man who died a month or six weeks ago who had been drunken all his life?	Oh, yes.
Do you think they ought to make some difference between a person like yourself, if you had unfortunately to ask relief, and a man like that who had been drunken?	Well, selfishly, I think so.
But speaking for others, would you not say there was a clear line to be drawn between a man who was known to be respectable all his life and a man who had been drunken all his life?	Well, anybody would think they ought to be treated differently, you know, but I do not know how you could; you could not be inside except you were classified inside the house, if that is what you mean, Sir.
Do you think that people who have been respectable all their lives in that way should not be forced into the workhouse?	I do think so.
You think they ought to have outdoor relief?	Yes, Sir, that is what I think if they have any friends at all; some people you know have not any friends.
You mean they might have to go into the house because they could not be taken care of outside?	Because they have not any friends outside.
But if they could find a home outside you think that people who have been respectable ought to have outdoor relief?	Yes, I think so.
And that outdoor relief ought to be sufficient to enable them to live?	Yes, Sir, I do think so.

Very well, then, when they come into the house again you would like to see some distinction made in the treatment of those who have been respectable and those who have not been respectable?	Yes, I do, Sir.
With regard to married people, are there any married people in the house, do you know?	I do not know that there are.
What do you think ought to be the amount of outdoor relief; what is the lowest sum that is necessary in order that a man should be able to live?	Well, I have thought 5s you know.
You think 5s would be a fair sum?	Yes, I think so.
And if every respectable working man who required relief were offered 5s outdoor relief you would have nothing to complain of the Poor Law system?	No, I should not.
What age were you when you married?	Twenty-one Sir – nearly 21; 21 the next birthday.
What was the amount that you paid weekly to that friendly club?	Eighteen pence a month, I think it was.
At what age did you join the club?	I was getting into years when I joined the club.
That was 4½d a week then?	Yes
And when did you lay by the money you spoke of?	Well, I was working for Lord Cottesloe.
What age were you then?	It was the last 13 years of my life – well 15 years now. I left two years ago, and it was thirteen years before that.
Therefore you were not able to save anything while you were a young man?	No, I was not; and my wife was very ill, and I had a large family, and I could hardly get food, and it took me a long time before I could save a pound – a long time, it did. My wife was so ill, and altogether that pulled me right down to a thread, as the saying is, in body and everything else, and it took me a very long while before ever I could recover it.
You say you have made yourself acquainted with what is called my scheme, Mr Chamberlain's scheme?	Yes, if you are Mr. Chamberlain; I did not know, Sir.
Have you seen it? Do you know actually what it is, or have you only got general ideas about it?	Well, I have read of it.
Did you look at it from your own point of view to see what it would do for you?	Well, I could not see that it would do anything.
No, you are perfectly right, it does not do anything for those who are already advanced in years?	For those who are already advanced in years.
Now I want you to think of what it might have done for you if it had been in existence when you were a young man?	Yes.
Do you know that one of the proposals is, that if you had been able to save 2l 10s, before you were 25, and to pay afterwards ten shillings a year, which is only twopence a week, you know, it would have given you a pension of five shillings a week now?	Yes Sir.
Do you not think that you might have – you must have been very thrifty from what you have told us – do you think you might have been able to save 50 shillings by the time you were 25?	I do not know whether I could or not. In my young days, food was very dear. When I married, food was very dear, very dear indeed and was for several years; the price ran up to 11½d for the quartern loaf at one time. The gentleman that I worked for sold wheat at 3l a sack; 15s a bushel at that time; just after I was married.

Perhaps I might put it to you now: do you think that now-a-days the young men are better off than they were in your time?	Oh, yes, of course they are.
Do you think now that your sons could manage to save 50 shillings before they were 25?	Well, I do not know, they might have done, I daresay.
If they had been thrifty?	Yes, I daresay they might.
Do you think they could pay twopence a week?	I do not know I am sure whether they could or not; they pay their clubs and keep on in that way, their insurance you see; I do not see how they could meet all those things; you see all these little goings out soon wastes 13 shillings, and you have got house-rent to pay, and firing to buy, and three or four children to keep out of 13 shillings; I hardly know how you could spin it out.
Are your sons agricultural labourers?	Yes, Sir.
Do they not get now and again a good haul at the time of harvesting?	No, not in our country they do not, 16 shillings each month, that is 32 shillings for the summer.
Do they not get any piecework for mowing or anything of that kind?	No, it is done by machinery now; there is not much piecework for mowing now; almost every farmer has a machine for hay time and harvest both, there is not but very little piecework, Sir.
<i>Mr. Broadhurst</i>	
On the turnip hoeing?	No, there is not very much.
<i>Mr. Chamberlain</i>	
But if you were able, without any assistance at all, to bring up a family and keep a sick wife upon 8s a week, which only became 13s a week very recently, do you not think that they who begin with 13s a week could save twopence a week out of it?	I do not know.
They are 5s better off than you were, are they not?	Yes.
And you lived upon 8s, you would have been able to save 5s a week out of it?	Well living, it was not living at all, it was not a living, Sir, it could not be called so.
I do not say that you would have saved the whole of the 5s, or that it would have been right to do so, but if you could manage to live as badly as you did live upon 8s a week, surely a healthy young fellow now, who gets nearly double, could save twopence a week?	Oh well, he might do so, I did not say that they could not. My ideas are that when a man has a family, and I cannot alter my opinion on that, because I have proved it, and I know what it is, I cannot see how he can make provision in every way. You see, if they make provision while they are young, they pay into their club to maintain themselves while they are young if they are ill, or for accidents, or anything of that kind, and pay for their doctor, and a great many of them insure their children. There are all these twopences going out, you know, for those things.
What do they pay to their clubs?	Well they pay a shilling a month or fifteen pence a month. There is a great many in the Prudential, making provision for their children in that way.
What is the provision which they make for their children?	Well, they pay so much a week, it is provision if they die, or anything of that kind.
Yes, it is a provision for death, it is not a provision for the children if they live?	One of my sons has insured me, my son who lives in Lancashire, he is rather in a better position than the others; he has insured me that I would not be any burden; he has insured me for 10l., I think and he pays it. I do not pay it. He pays it for me.

Where a poor man who is over 65 comes to the parish, and they find out that he is getting something from his club, do they take that into account in making him an allowance?	Very little allowance, they make very little indeed. I have known people who have been ill for weeks, and have not had a penny, only their 8s a week; they have not had a penny extra from anywhere, only their 8s a week from their club, if that is what you mean, Sir.
What I mean is this, that supposing a man has, we will say, 3s from his club, and he cannot live upon that?	No
And therefore he comes to the parish and he asks for assistance?	Yes
Would they give that man the same assistance that they would give to a man that had nothing?	I do not know that I have heard of any case where they have gone to try; they have 8s, and when that runs out they have 4s, and when the 4s is out, they go on for assistance; I do not know that they go any other way, I do not know of any in my parish doing it.
You do not know of the two things running on at the same time?	No, I do not, Sir. I know that while they continue the 4s a week they are not a burden on anybody else.

The Witness withdrew