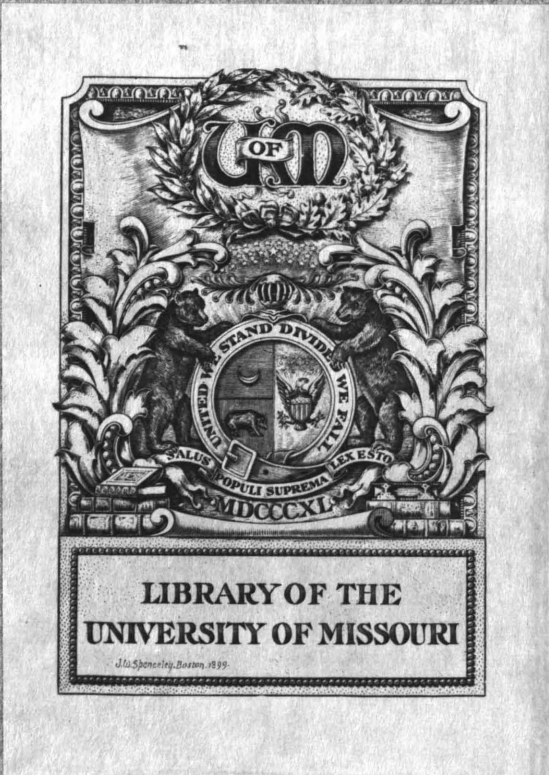


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OUTDOOR RELIEF
"
BY THE COUNTIES OF MISSOURI

by

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INTRODUCTION.

Scope.

In the following pages the results of a somewhat isolated study of outdoor relief are presented. The general value of the study probably lies in the novel view it affords of a public relief system in the earlier stages of its development. Though sufficient facts have been learned to give a comprehensive idea of the situation, certainly no claim can be made of statistical completeness and minute analysis. To accomplish the latter for a public question, involving an entire state, would require the cooperation of many public officials in recording data - the ordinary method of a state statistical bureau. The results here given were obtained through private inquiry, supplemented only by very meager and disappointing public records. But as a type-study of outdoor relief it may be the more valuable by reason of its limitations. For ordinarily the operations of a public system are not known until it is far enough advanced to have a fairly complete statistical organization, while in this instance, to borrow the language of another science, a cross-section of the embryonic form has been made.

Practical

As a more immediate outcome, it is desirable that this and future inquiries into the subject may open the field for the operation of a conscious state policy. At present outdoor relief in Missouri is

just passing from the stage of neighborly help to that of public concern for the poor. As the control of this development is almost entirely in the hands of local authorities, it is not surprising that evil practices and false conceptions of relief should have come into existence. The facts form an irrefutable argument for conscious social control of the situation, whatever be the means adopted to that end. But conditions may in some respects be commendable in spite of a crude system, or even the spirit which allows the crudity may work good in other ways.

The Historical Viewpoint. In considering this subject, which is so closely related to the principles of democratic government, it is desirable that the historical viewpoint be at all times maintained. It is said that Cromwell fed at his gate twice every day, with bread, meat and drink, two hundred poor people, "as all prelates, noblemen, or men of honor and worship, his predecessors, had done before him". Since the public assumption of responsibility for the poor after the passing of the feudal regime, outdoor relief has been one of the most important subjects of English legislation. Outdoor relief in other foreign countries not only corresponds to national characteristics, but has kept pace in its development with their changing ideas of government. The principle of decentralization in American poor relief has operated to produce disorganization and the retarding of scientific study and

control. But there is a recent tendency for local relief agencies to cooperate. And there are many indications that the former spirit of almsgiving is being superseded by the conception of public outdoor relief as a measure of prevention and of social reconstruction.

General
Sources.

One of the most valuable contributions that can be made to the cause of efficient poor relief within the next decade is a comprehensive study of the practices and results of outdoor relief in the United States. On account of an almost universal inattention to statistics by those who have in charge the giving of public outdoor aid, the United States Bureau of the Census has entirely abandoned treatment of the subject. In a few instances* state bureaus have undertaken to gather statistics on the question, but here peculiar forms and general statements are apt to give but a poor idea of existing conditions. A general treatment may be gleaned from the proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Correction in the all too infrequent papers on outdoor relief that are read before that body. The reports of the charity organization societies of the great cities, which, of course, are only semi-public in their nature, are usually based on good statistics. But these reports are often brief, the mass of statistics being compiled only on the more important points. A few private

*Massachusetts, New York and Indiana are the only states which are known to have published any valuable statistics on outdoor relief.

inquiries of limited scope, and occasional references to the subject at state conferences complete the list of general sources.

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Location of state institutions which receive paupers, of 17 counties in which intensive study was made, and of 17 counties which had no almshouses in 1906.

Map No. 2, opposite page 43.

Total cost of relief to counties of Missouri compared with their taxable valuation of property and population.

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Average division of relief expenditures for outdoor relief, the almshouse and state institutions in 111 counties.

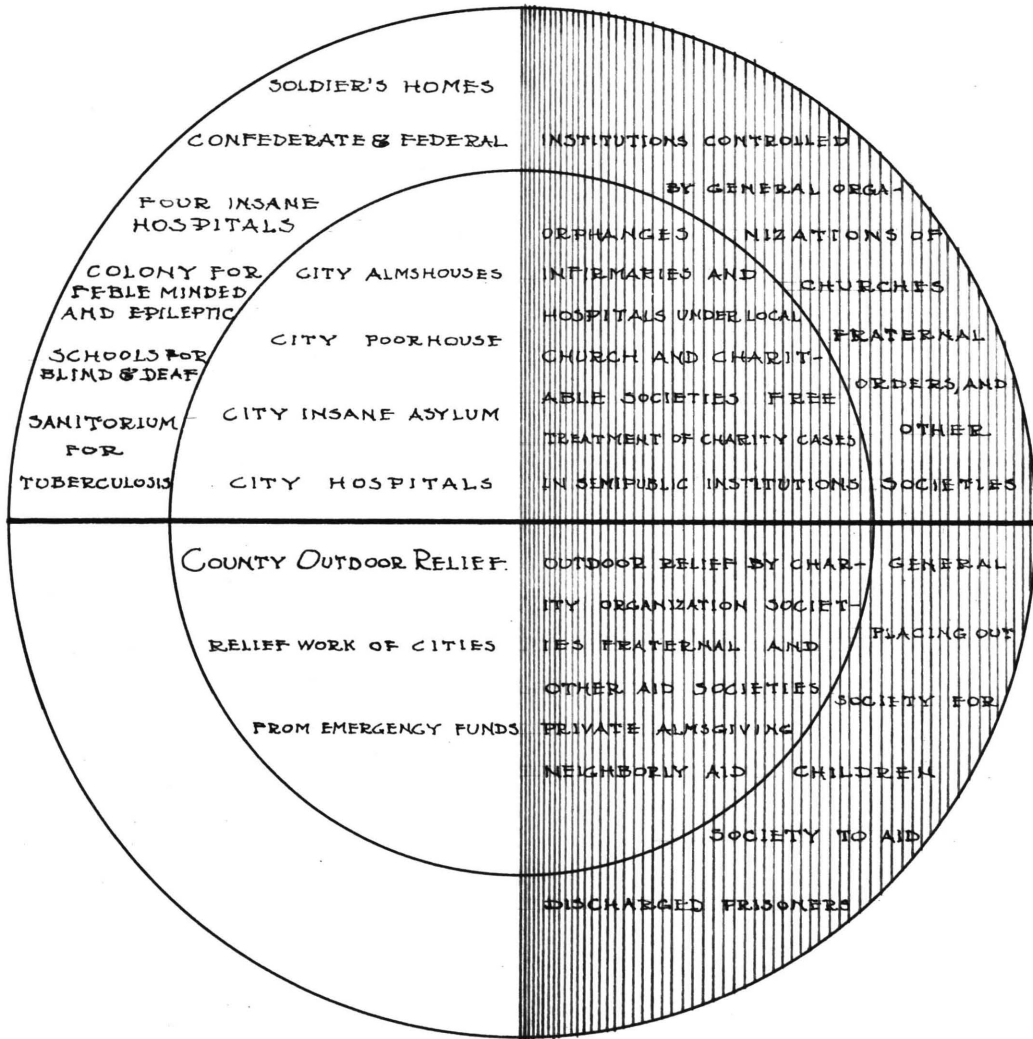
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AGENCIES OF POOR RELIEF IN MISSOURI



Explanation:

Shaded hemisphere, private relief; white, public relief. Upper hemisphere, institutional care; lower, outdoor relief.

Inner circle, local agencies; outer circle, state and general agencies.

Note:

All agencies named are not exclusively poor relief agencies.

No attempt is made to show relative amounts of the different kinds of relief.

OUTDOOR RELIEF BY THE COUNTIES OF MISSOURI.

PART ONE: DESCRIPTION.

Chapter I.

The Relief System in Missouri.

Three
Main
Divisions. Before entering upon the study of outdoor relief as it is given by the counties of Missouri, one should get clearly in mind the relation which the subject sustains to the entire system of poor relief. As there are various degrees and aspects of poverty whose interrelations are almost inexplicable, so there have developed a number of agencies to care for the poor whose relations to each other are very complex. Charitable agencies may be controlled by and derive their support from either private or public sources. The former preceded the latter in the field of relief-giving, but now sustains more of a supplementary relation to it. Again, charities may be merely local in their scope and as regards their source and control, or in their operation they may be described as general agencies. A very important principle is involved in the differentiation between local and general, or central, agencies. Finally, indigent persons may be cared for in institutions, or the aid may be given them individually, to be consumed usually in their homes. This presents the problem of indoor versus outdoor relief.

Their
Signifi- These are the three main lines of demarcation in any relief system. A number of minor divisions

cance. might also be made. But to apply all these interrelations to the list of charitable agencies operating in Missouri would involve so lengthy a description that the expedient has been adopted of reducing them to the form of a diagram, which appears on page 1. The diagram is self-explanatory. Any existing agency for assisting the poor in Missouri should find ready classification in one of the quadrants, but it must be remembered that the form would probably have to be changed for any other state. For example, where the space for state outdoor relief in our state is blank, one of the most important divisions of her relief system would have to be supplied for Massachusetts. The importance of the division between outdoor and indoor relief, as well as between local and state agencies, will be sufficiently emphasized in the treatment which is to follow. One general point of contrast should be noted as regards public and private agencies: private charities require no express legal authorization, hence their development is haphazard and their relations to the general system irregular; while public charities, under the burden of final responsibility for all classes of the poor, have developed more uniformly, appearing as a complete charitable system.



Definition. Of this general system of public charities, county outdoor relief is a clearly defined, very important part. It consists of all the aid given

to poor persons under the authority of the county government and not administered to them in any permanently organized institution. It is important because it is the most common entrance of paupers to the public relief system, and because of the opportunities which it holds of summarily retrieving the poor to their lost independence.

MAP NO. 1

LOCATION OF STATE CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS AND INDICATION OF THE COUNTIES HAVING NO ALMSHOUSES IN 1906, ALSO SEVENTEEN COUNTIES (Underscored) SELECTED FOR DETAILED STUDY.

- FULTON - State Hospital No 1.
- ST. JOSEPH - " " " 2
- NEVADA - " " " 3
- FARMINGTON - " " " 4
- ST. LOUIS - School for Blind
- FULTON - " " Deaf
- MARSHALL - Colony for Feeble-minded & Epileptic
- ST. JAMES - Federal Home
- HIGGINSVILLE - Confederate Home
- MT. VERNON - Sanatorium for Tuberculosis

 No Almshouses
 Having Almshouses.

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Chapter II.

A Field Study of Outdoor Relief.

Attention will first be directed to the facts of outdoor relief, exclusively. To simplify the treatment an account will be given upon the basis of conditions observed in a small number of counties in Missouri, in seventeen of which extensive statistical and field study was made. The location of these counties is shown by the accompanying map. After this detailed study the question of outdoor relief in the entire state will be considered.

Method of
County
Relief.

County outdoor relief in Missouri is carried on under the general legal authorization that, "Poor persons shall be relieved, maintained and supported by the county of which they are inhabitants".* The relief organization is the county court, two members of which are elected from corresponding districts and a third, the presiding judge, is chosen from the county at large. The process of relief consists of an order by the county court for the payment of money to poor persons, or to physicians or others who have aided or are expected to aid them. The payment may be made from a definite "poor fund" set aside from the regular county funds by the court, or it may be distinguished in no way from the ordinary contingent expenditures of the court. Action in the matter may be taken at any of the sessions of the court, although it is more

*R. S., 1899, sec. 8993.

frequently done at the regular quarterly sessions. Sometimes provision is made for the giving of doles to the poor in the interim of the court sessions by authorizing the county clerk to make such payments, or by tacit understanding between the court and certain persons, frequently sheriffs, that the latter will be reimbursed for any small expenditures they may make for the purpose. It is customary for poor persons to make written application to the court, though many cases have been observed where this requirement is not made of pensioners of long standing. It frequently happens, however, that some reputable citizen, a friend of the pauper, acts as his sponsor before the court. Certain fixtures on the list of beneficiaries are noticeable,- regular pensioners, or cases of disease which a physician is paid to attend through a long period.

Adminis-
tration.

In a description of general conditions, however, something should be said from the standpoint of administration. The support of pensioners, for instance, depends nearly altogether upon the policy of the court. In one county there was but one pensioner through a long period of time, the bulk of the outdoor relief in this, as in several other instances, being occasioned by the irregular occurrence of emergency cases. It was found that one or two county courts had accepted it as a general policy not to give outdoor relief, at all, though the rule was not strictly applied. As one might expect, county courts

find it difficult to drop the support of paupers, once it has been assumed, and hence they are wary about assuming new burdens. This explains the tendency to inelastic fixation in county outdoor relief, as well as the deepening of the rut when a certain number of new cases are found unavoidable. In a very few instances evidence was found of more or less constant supervision of cases whose support had been assumed. In a few counties lists of paupers are kept and frequently revised. However, an instance was discovered where a county court had been appropriating money for an imbecile girl several months after the child had died. The troublesome problem of supervision is usually solved by a division of the field among the judges, judgment on a case being left by "senatorial courtesy" to the one in whose district it occurs. As to cooperation with and financial support of other relief agencies, a few courts distribute relief in cities within the county through local charity organization societies, and one county court employs three outdoor relief commissioners to take entire charge of the work. Almshouse superintendents, on account of their knowledge of the entire pauper population, are frequently of service in getting relief for poor persons.

Amount of Relief. The table that is given herewith shows the total amount of expenditures for outdoor relief in the 17 counties that were selected for special study for

each of the five years, 1903-1907. Both in the totals and in the average yearly expenditure per county there is seen to be a remarkably regular increase

Amount of Outdoor Relief in 17 Counties during Five Years.		
Year	Tot. 17 Cos.	Av. per Co.
1903	\$ 17,390.99	\$ 1,022.99
1904	17,438.89	1,025.82
1905	18,286.69	1,075.69
1906	18,603.14	1,094.30
1907	18,828.23	1,107.54
Tot.	90,547.94	1,063.27

throughout the period. This is illustrated by the graph accompanying the table. On the whole, these counties spend less than the average amount for outdoor relief, as the average for 1906 obtained for the 114 counties of the state will later be found to amount to \$1,264.63 (p. 36). It cannot be ascertained with any sufficient degree of accuracy from the statistics at hand whether the actual amount given for outdoor relief by the entire state is increasing. But the appearance of these figures, obtained for a very representative portion of the state, justifies the statement, at least tentatively, that public outdoor relief in Missouri is increasing. Further study of the increase in expenditures of the individual counties in this group shows the variations to correspond generally with the history of local relief conditions.

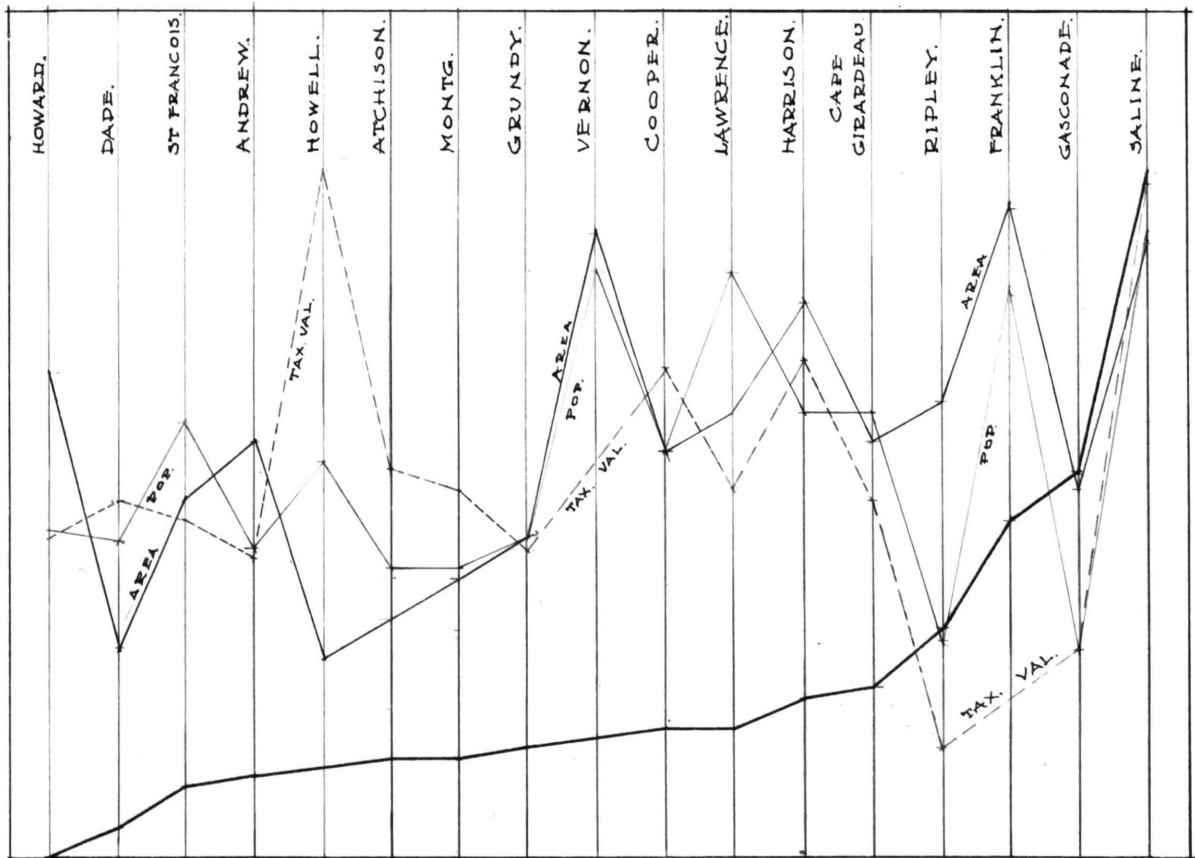
Averages of Counties. A valuable type-study is furnished by a comparison of the average amounts of relief given by each of these counties for each of the five years.

These averages are as follows:

Average Amount of Relief per Year in 17 Counties.					
Howard	\$	182.00	Cooper	\$	855.07
Dade		337.74	Lawrence		865.55
St. Francois		551.36	Harrison		1,022.94
Andrew		608.17	Cape Girardeau		1,087.46
Howell		633.70	Ripley		1,326.62
Atchison		696.23	Franklin		1,878.47
Montgomery		715.53	Gasconade		2,144.79
Grundy		757.96	Saline		3,632.27
Vernon		813.75	Average,		1,063.27

But a better idea of the relation between the various counties in this matter is to be obtained by observation of the heavy line in the graph which is given below.

Graph Showing Relation of Outdoor Relief Expenditures in 17 Counties, with Lighter Lines Inserted to Indicate Relation of these Counties in Taxable Valuation, Population and Area.



It is here seen that only five of the seventeen counties give more than the average, \$1,063.27. But

these counties, especially two of them, give in such large amounts as to offset the entire remaining twelve. The variation among the smaller amounts, even down to the pittance that is given by Howard county, is, on the other hand, by very small degrees. This graph shows something very characteristic of the outdoor relief budgets of all the counties of the state,- uniformity among a majority of them which give less than \$1,000, and an erratic tendency among the others to give very large amounts. The occurrence of Ripley and Gasconade among the five counties of this group which give above the average is no doubt due to the fact that they have no almshouses. It is significant to note that the other three counties occupy this extreme position because of the practice of pensioning large numbers of outdoor paupers. And, besides, they all have well-filled almshouses.

Reason for The map that is inserted opposite page 43
 Variations. shows a general correspondence throughout the state
 between total amount of all poor relief expenditures
 and taxable valuation and population of the counties.
 The three lighter lines in the above graph are drawn
 to show that no such correspondence occurs in the
 exclusive field of outdoor relief. Taxable valuation,
 population and area are seen to correspond in most of
 the seventeen counties, but outdoor relief cannot be
 said to vary according to any one of these three
 points of comparison. It has been observed that
 large expenditures for outdoor relief are not due to

the presence of large numbers of poor persons in particular counties. Therefore such variations must be occasioned very largely by the policies of individual county courts.

Purposes and **The general purposes for which outdoor relief**
Forms of **is given in this state are four: (1) to furnish sub-**
Relief. **sistence, wholly or partially; (2) to provide medical**
 attention; (3) to pay burial expenses; and (4) to
 give transportation to the pauper, usually out of the
 county. The form of relief for each of these four
 purposes except the first is comparatively simple, so
 far as the county is concerned. But maintenance
 relief is found to be given in six different forms:
 fuel, food, clothing, house-rent, board and cash
 contributions. In the following table the amounts
 given in 17 counties during the five year period,
 1903-1907, according to each of the subdivisions just
 named, are shown.

The blanks in the table are the first thing to attract attention. Of the four main purposes of outdoor relief only one fails to receive attention during the five years in any of the counties studied: Cape Girardeau county gave no money for the purpose of "shipping out" paupers. However, four other counties in the list gave less than nine dollars during the period, and it is found that there were years during which they gave no transportation at all. Pauper burials are seen to be a very constant source of expense to the counties, and medical aid almost equally so.

TOTAL RELIEF GIVEN IN STATED FORMS IN FIVE YEARS IN SEVENTEEN COUNTIES OF MISSOURI.

	Fuel	Food	Cloth	Rent	Board	Medic.	Bur'l.	Trans.	Cash	Total
Andrew	\$53.55	\$548.58	\$14.11		\$118.75	\$311.28	\$229.50	\$11.67	\$1752.95	\$3040.83
Atchison	106.44	247.69	20.45	\$32.00	730.30	1098.70	340.79	40.46	864.30	3481.13
Cape Girardeau		13.95	2.85		178.00	297.00	448.48		4497.00	5437.28
Cooper	235.90	188.36	13.83	13.00	45.75	230.25	494.35	179.96	2873.95	4275.35
Dade	2.00	85.38			400.90	565.32	365.82	14.23	255.05	1688.70
Franklin	6.00	47.77	5.75	71.50	599.15	219.35	266.25	46.56	8130.00	9392.33
Gasconade					7402.47	713.85	435.57	5.00	2167.05	10723.94
Grundy		1017.28			839.55	317.60	292.75	8.55	1314.05	3789.78
Harrison		135.63		18.00	406.50	718.67	311.50	40.38	3484.00	5114.68
Howard	4.05		8.20		422.50	82.50	333.75	31.50	27.50	910.00
Howell	9.80	672.49	31.92		228.95	1046.87	161.90	333.87	682.70	3168.50
Lawrence		38.30			773.85	181.85	714.10	5.35	2614.30	4327.75
Montgomery		368.78			1041.39	438.70	149.75	6.50	1572.55	3577.67
Ripley	3.00	718.19	127.02	4.00	2541.70	1307.83	374.63	117.25	1439.49	6633.11
St. Francois		141.20			922.50	575.27	462.08	71.25	584.00	2756.80
Saline		48.04	25.25		263.52	315.47	744.50	54.00	16710.54	18161.33
Vernon	20.35	245.57	28.60		354.05	746.25	279.85	202.12	2191.97	4068.76
TOTAL	441.09	4517.21	278.42	138.50	17269.83	9166.76	6405.57	1169.15	51161.41	90547.94
AVERAGE- PER YEAR COUNTY	5.19	53.14	3.28	1.63	203.17	107.84	75.36	13.77	601.89	1065.27
AVERAGE AMT. OF PAUPER WARRANT	5.14	7.79	4.97	6.27	13.19	16.57	9.10	6.89	7.70	8.95*
PER CENTS OF TOTAL	.49%	4.99%	.31%	.15%	19.07%	10.12%	7.08%	1.29%	56.50%	

*\$8.99 when allowance is made for single warrants issued for more than one form of relief.

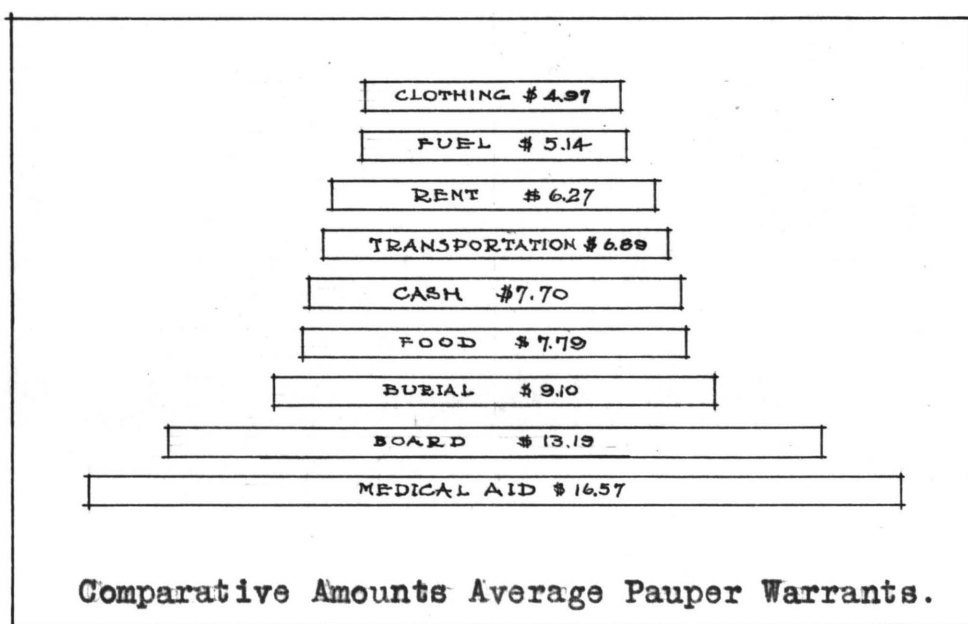
But the greatest irregularities occur among four of the six forms in which maintenance aid is given,- fuel, food, clothing and rent. This group constitutes what is usually termed relief in kind. Indeed, Gasconade county gave nothing in any of these forms during the five years. Very little money is spent in buying fuel for paupers, except in Cooper and Atchison counties. Food is a more important item, as it is seen that a majority of the counties spent a considerable sum in buying grocery orders for paupers. But clothing, again, is a very irregular form of relief in kind, while rent dwindles to an inconsiderable amount, indeed. However, the other two forms of maintenance relief are the most important divisions in the table. The two largest amounts given in payment for board of paupers occur in Gasconade and Ripley counties, neither of which have almshouses. The large amount of cash given in Saline county is occasioned by an unusually long list of pensioners. On the other hand, it is worthy of note that Howard county gave only \$27.50 in cash to paupers in the five years.

Averages.

Attention is next called to the "average per year per county", which, better than any other figures that might be given, shows a composite picture of the expenditures of a Missouri county for outdoor relief. The total, \$1,063.27, is slightly lower than the average per county for the entire state (see p. 36). But in a general way these figures show what a typical county

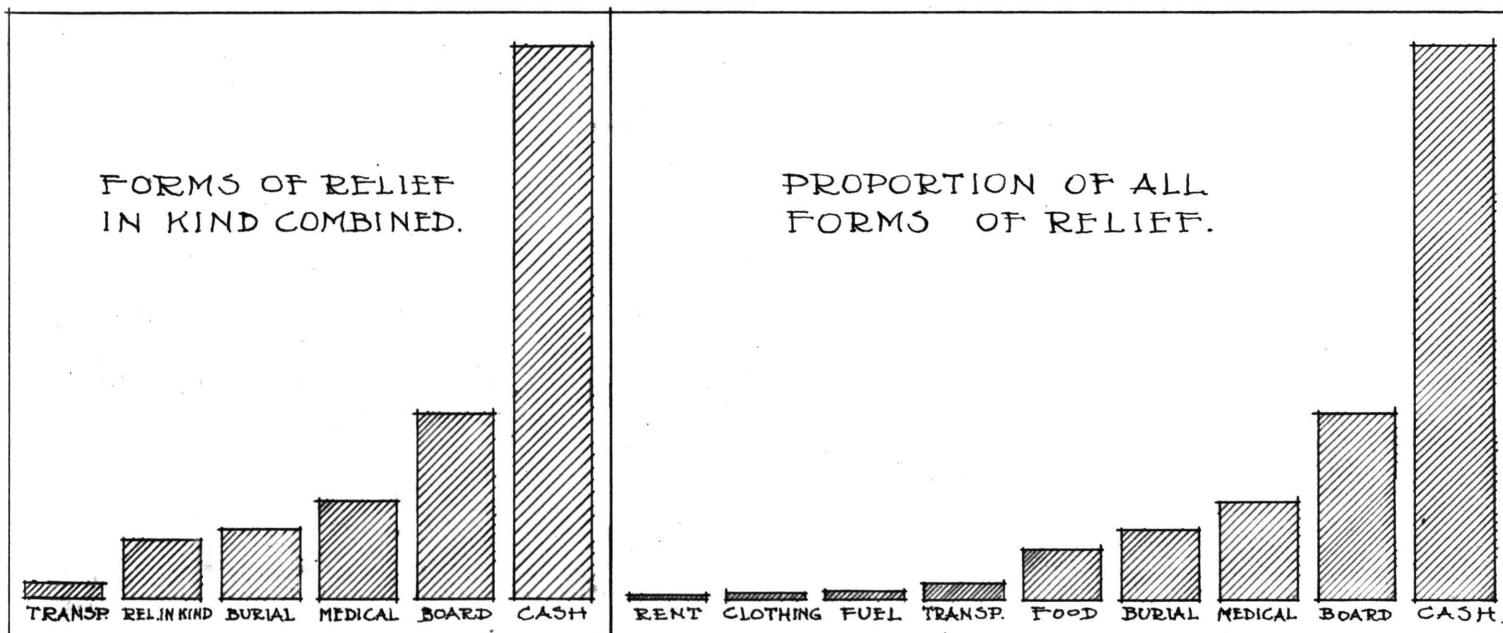
in the average year spends for these purposes.

The "average amount of pauper warrant" answers the question, how much does the county court usually give a successful applicant for aid in any of the enumerated forms of relief? It is important both from the standpoint of efficient relief and of economy to the county treasury. The accompanying illustration shows more clearly the relative size of these average warrants.



Among other points of significance in these averages are the fact that the average transportation warrant is not large enough to ship very many persons very far, and the fact that warrants for relief in kind are the smallest in the list. The general average, \$8.95, is especially significant, for it is much higher than the average single expenditure for aid where outdoor relief is better organized.

There is one important fact to be shown by the percentages which indicate the proportionate values of the different forms of outdoor relief in the 17 counties. The relative merits of each kind of relief are laid aside, and the question asked: to what extent is relief in each form given? The varying proportions may be indicated as follows:



Comparative Importance of Forms of Outdoor Relief in 17 Counties of Missouri.

From this it can readily be seen that, were all the forms of maintenance-aid - cash, board, and relief in kind - combined, the remainder would be very small.

Another interesting division of the amounts that have been classified for the seventeen counties is the average amount of relief that is received by a pauper case during the year 1906. To obtain this the total amount of relief (see p. 8) and the number of beneficiaries (p.) are used. The resulting average

per case is \$28.84. This is very much larger than the average amounts given per case by city outdoor relief agencies, or even by the rural authorities in another state where such conditions have been observed.*

It indicates that outdoor relief is less of a temporary provision under the Missouri system than elsewhere.

Quarantine Relief. The support of persons under quarantine, while not always given to paupers as such, has been included in the statistics gathered in so far as it could be separated from the ordinary board of health expenditures. It cannot be classified as either outdoor or institutional care, nor does it represent exclusively a pauper problem. From the accompanying

Total Quarantine Relief Given during Five Years by 17 Counties of Missouri.				
Gasconade	\$	-----	Howell	\$ 169.39
Howard		20.00	Montgomery	212.13
Grundy		53.15	Ripley	213.75
Atchison		105.10	Cooper	238.39
Cape Girardeau		148.95	Saline	238.57
St. Francois		151.90	Andrew	311.55
Lawrence		154.30	Vernon	352.85
Franklin		162.97	Av. per Co.,	\$ 235.00

table it is seen that the amount spent for quarantine relief is over four per cent of the amount spent for ordinary outdoor relief (p. 8). An examination of each year the percentage given on this account indicates that the amount of quarantine relief is decreasing. But the results shown in this table must not be taken as an absolute criterion for the whole state, as the conditions of contagious diseases are likely to vary so widely in different localities.

*In connection with the investigation upon which this study is based an extensive examination was made of the operation of the outdoor relief system of Indiana.

Chapter III.

Field Study Continued: The Outdoor Pauper Population.

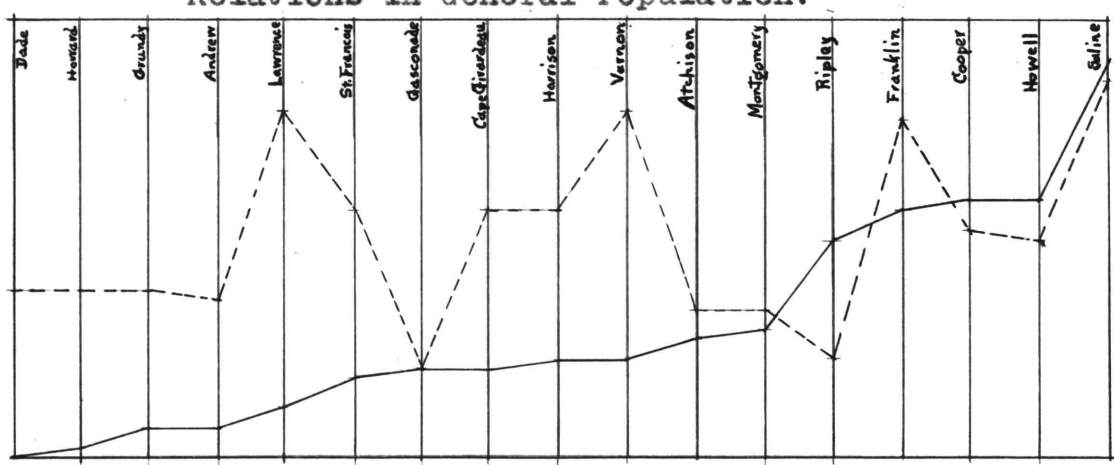
Number. There were 1,702 different persons and families who received outdoor aid during the five years, 1903-1907, from the seventeen counties under consideration, as indicated by the accompanying table setting forth the results for each county:

Number of Separate Beneficiaries Recorded in 17 Counties of Missouri during Five Years, and Average Number of Years They Remain on Record.								
County	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	Total	Sep. Ben.	Av. Apr. in Yrs.
Andrew	20	18	18	20	23	99	51	1.94
Atchison	21	23	23	28	42	137	94	1.45
Cape Girardeau	46	42	45	40	43	216	82	2.63
Cooper	71	60	43	43	50	267	163	1.64
Dade	6	9	7	6	17	45	37	1.22
Franklin	78	80	69	72	80	379	158	2.40
Gasconade	40	42	34	40	43	199	78	2.55
Grundy	22	17	20	21	21	101	50	2.00
Harrison	40	38	43	30	24	175	84	2.07
Howard	9	16	11	4	6	46	40	1.15
Howell	39	44	36	46	52	217	168	1.30
Lawrence	25	31	34	21	24	135	60	2.25
Montgomery	32	43	31	40	28	174	98	1.78
Ripley	36	35	45	52	31	199	146	1.36
St. Francois	13	14	13	23	32	95	76	1.25
Saline	117	120	127	133	126	623	233	2.67
Vernon	26	31	28	26	13	124	84	1.48
Total:	641	663	627	645	655	3,231	1,702	1.90

This is an average per county per year of 38. If the pauper list were recounted every year the total would be 3,231. It is seen that there is no such steady increase of the number aided by these counties from year to year as was discovered in the amount they paid out for such relief (p. 8). In the graph which follows the counties have been arranged in order according to

the number of different cases they aided during the five years. It is seen that the number of outdoor paupers does not vary uniformly with the general population, there being some wide divergences. But it is true in a number of instances - notably the first four counties in the list - that counties similar in population are also similar in the number of outdoor paupers they support.

Relative Importance of 17 Counties in Number of Outdoor Paupers Compared with their Corresponding Relations in General Population.



Although the average of the number of warrants

these cases draw each year is 1.9, those counties where only temporary cases are given outdoor relief - as Howard, Dade and St. Francois - have an average much below this. On the other hand, those which have large pension lists (among them those indicated on page 10) give the highest number of warrants to each pauper per year. St. Francois has a very commendable county relief system, and the figures for this county indicate that, while aid is given a comparatively large number of the poor, very few of them are assisted more than

once. Within this period it is found that there was a total change of 1,056 of the 1,702 cases. This represents a shifting of 211.4 per year, or 32.67% of the average number of beneficiaries. So it is very probable that there is an annual shifting of about one-third of the outdoor pauper population of Missouri.

Total Number* of Beneficiaries of Specified Kinds of Poor Relief during Five Years in 17 Counties of Missouri.										
	Fuel	Food	Clo.	Rent	Board	Med.	Bur'l.	Tran.	Cash	Tot.
Tot. Ben.	89	374	55	12	490	570	711	174	2137	4612
Av. per Co. per Yr.	1.05	4.40	.65	.14	5.76	6.71	8.36	2.05	25.14	
Per cent Tot. Ben.	1.9%	8.1%	1.2%	.3%	10.6%	12.4%	15.4%	3.8%	46.3%	100%

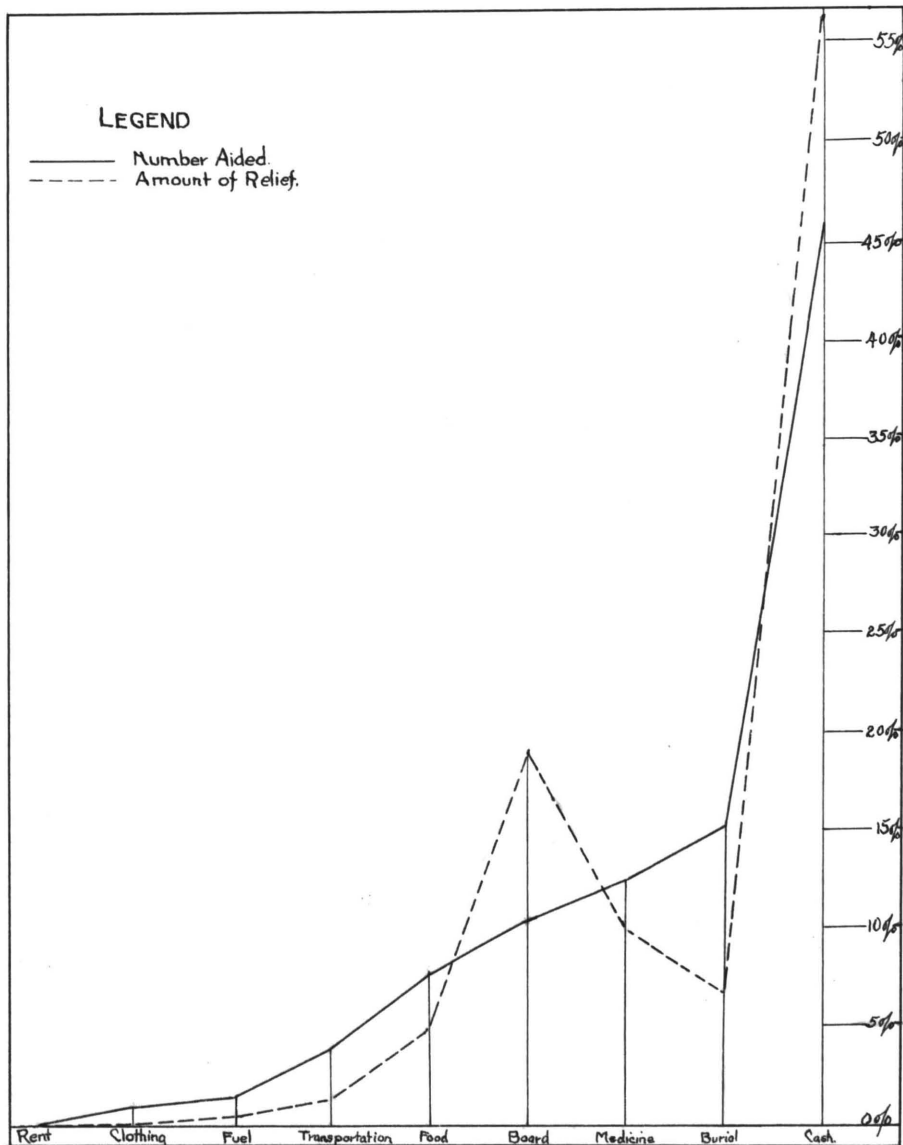
As it is not necessary to make a detailed study of the counties in this list with regard to the number of beneficiaries receiving the several different forms of aid, only a treatment of the totals is made in the above table. In the graph which follows the forms of relief are arranged in order to correspond to their importance as to the number receiving aid (heavy line). The preponderance of recipients of aid in cash is especially emphasized. Another noteworthy point is that, while but little more than one per cent of county outdoor aid is used for transportation, nearly four per cent of all those given county aid are "shipped out" of the county. There has also been placed with this curve of increasing importance of the forms of outdoor relief in number of persons aided a lighter line indicating the relations of these forms

*Recounted each year.

when amount of relief is considered (see p. 15).

This comparison shows that if the number of recipients of relief in cash and as board allowance were considerably reduced and the number of pauper burials increased slightly, the relation of the number aided and the amount paid in these different forms would correspond very closely.

Relative Importance of Different Forms of Outdoor Relief in Number Aided and in Amount of Relief.



Conditions

But what kind of people are these, whose of Poverty conditions demands such minute diagnosis, and where are they to be found? In the present study the condition of the poor was discussed with many persons who knew them, and extensive data recorded concerning two hundred and six beneficiaries of outdoor relief in seventeen counties who were visited in their homes. The nature of poverty in the rural districts of Missouri differs in no essential way from that which exists in cities, which has been brought to public attention by such descriptions as, "How the Other Half Lives". The main distinguishing features are the different immediate circumstances of the life of the rural pauper, and the peculiar agencies which have developed for supplying his wants. It cannot be said that poverty is essentially a city problem, for many cases are known in which farmers and farm laborers have become dependent. However, there is a tendency for such instances not to become matters of public knowledge and concern because of the spirit of neighborly help which abounds in the country. But it can be claimed with considerable degree of truth that pauperism tends to become a city problem exclusively. This is merely saying that poor persons who have become charges upon public charity are oftenest found in towns. Paupers living in the country constitute but a small minority of those whose names appear on the registers of the Missouri counties.

This fact finds explanation both in the differing economic standards of city and country and in the social aspect of poverty.

Habitations The rural pauper does not live in a tenement of Paupers. cellar or in the scarcely less transient condition of the city vagrant, - unless it be true that a vermin-infested hovel is a tenement. Both in the country and in the small cities the pauper is apt to be well known and firmly established. On more than one case the investigator has remarked, "Old fellow is quite a character about town". Most of the families visited were living in rented houses, and many of them had small tracts of land to cultivate. However, a majority of those living in the country were farm hands, and occupied shacks belonging to the men for whom they worked. In a few instances the paupers were merely poor relatives living with people who had a fairly good competency. Perhaps the most significant feature about the home situation of the cases studied is that some of them were found to be the owners of the places where they lived - in one instance a small farm, although there was usually a mortgage on the place. Many of the beneficiaries of county aid have well-to-do relatives living in other places. But the majority of cases were found to be in quite destitute circumstances. The comparatively more substantial situation of the rural pauper is probably due to cheapness of rent and low cost of living more than to any other cause.

Degeneracy.

The field study brought to light the same progressive degeneracy among paupers that has been noted in other places. Perhaps the first assistance is secured from the county by a friend who conceals the source of the aid for fear of offending the pride of the man in distress. But frequently the pauper is a degenerate both physically and mentally, and it does not take long for such a case to develop indifference to publicity concerning the relief. Although a brief examination of conditions is not apt to result in the discovery of large, interrelated pauper family-groups, several indications of their existence in Missouri appeared. This potential poverty of the individual, however, is not entirely characteristic of the cases studied, for frequently ambition and independence of spirit are kept alive until the poor person is able to support himself again. The negro is found to constitute a peculiar problem in this regard. Accustomed from slave times to look to the white man for support, it is very easy for him to drop to the status of a dependent, and it is very hard to train him back into the ways of a self-supporting individual. And the tolerant spirit of his white friends makes the situation the more embarrassing.

**Relief
Groups.**

Some of the information gathered with regard to the 206 cases does not lend itself readily to statistical treatment. It was found that in very few cases did persons outside the immediate family of the pauper share the relief he got from the county. There

is possibly a degree of error in the statistics in this respect, though, for among the most profligate the family group is very variable. Prodigal children or distant relatives are apt to make "extended visits" to the more thrifty (?) members at any time. The Occupation. question as to occupation was found to be somewhat paradoxical. Scarcely any of the paupers had been skilled laborers, although a few were found to have earned high wages earlier in life. An attempt was made to learn whether guardianship of outdoor paupers was practiced to any considerable extent in Missouri,--such, for example, as exists under the Elberfeldt system in Germany. County records on this point are unreliable. But in a large per cent of the cases persons who received the relief for the pauper were members of his immediate household, or accepted it as board-money. In a few cases country storekeepers were instructed by the court to make judicious distribution of food among poor families in their neighborhood, and one instance was discovered where a grocer had voluntarily cut off the supply because his charge sold the goods for drink! It is not uncommon for substantial citizens, in no official capacity, to be entrusted by the court with the care of certain poor persons living near them. But such complex relationships are not the rule, as is evidenced by the fact that 39% of the warrants issued in five years in seventeen counties were received directly by the paupers themselves.

Duration of Cases. No very definite statement regarding the length of time cases receive outdoor aid can be made. Sixty four per cent of those studied were at the time still being helped by the counties, and no estimate can be made of the length of time they will continue. Thirty five years is the longest that any one was found to have remained on record, but even so remarkable a case as that seemed destined to be an outdoor pauper for many years to come. However, there were not many who had been receiving outdoor relief for more than ten years, the ordinary case lasting from one to five years. The lower extreme, of course, is where relief is given but once, but cases of this kind are rather infrequent. The average for the 206 cases is five years and two months,- but as was explained above, this is necessarily below the true average duration, and represents merely the minimum below which the true average cannot fall. In many instances the county relief was found to be intermittent, the pauper's name disappearing from the record for a year or so, and later reappearing.

Disposition of Cases. The annual shifting of the outdoor pauper population was found above (p. 19) to be nearly 33% of the entire number of beneficiaries. By examining the 36% of the selected cases which had disappeared from the records, some idea can be gotten of what usually becomes of these people who have been helped by the counties. It will be better to eliminate, also, from consideration the cases which were sent to state

institutions. Then, of the cases that remain it may be said that 50% became self-supporting or got help altogether through private agencies; that 23% died while receiving county aid, probably of the disease or infirmity which occasioned their pauperism; that 17% were transferred to the almshouse, and that 10% were dropped from the records on account of their removal from the county. These figures, however, can be accepted as no more than an indication of the disposition of outdoor pauper cases. In general, they are substantiated by the personal observations of the investigators.

Migration From a consideration of the migrations of the of Paupers. recipients of outdoor relief it does not appear that they constitute a transient or roving element in the population. The average term of residence within the counties of the cases that were investigated was 38.4 years. 46% were born in the county which was giving them aid. Of those not born in the county then aiding them, all but 6% had resided there five years or more. Of those that had moved into the assisting county, a little more than one fourth, 26%, had made their last move from some other county within the state; while a little larger proportion, 28%, had moved from another state. In nearly all cases these immigrants came from neighboring states, no one state appearing as a particular source of our paupers. In but few cases had the beneficiary recently come into the county. It must be remembered, however, that this entire state-

ment in no way applies to the problem of vagrancy, for a case study of tramps who had been "moved on" by the counties was impossible.

Nativity and Color. Of the 206 cases studied, 81.55% were American and 15.54% were foreign born or native born of foreign parents. Of the latter there were 38 cases, 24 being German, 8 Irish, and 6 of other nationalities. It would be interesting to know what proportion of the outdoor paupers are negroes, especially in Missouri. In the field study an attempt was made to include a number of negroes according to their proportion in the entire pauper list. From this it appears that about 80% were white and 20% negro. In connection with this attention may be called to the fact that, according to the census of 1900, the corresponding proportion for the general population of Missouri is 94.8% white and 5.2% negro.

Supplementary Aid. In this survey of public outdoor relief the fact must not be lost sight of that the activities of the county on behalf of the poor appear against a variable background of private charities. Private aid is usually the first to supply the wants of the poverty-stricken. It is characteristic of paupers that they solicit and receive aid from any available source. It sometimes happens that as many as four agencies are at one time helping one poor person of family. The significant facts with regard to aid from other sources than the county which was received by the 206 cases investigated are brought out by the

following table. Special attention is called to the fact that sixty four per cent of the cases were re-

Supplementary Aid. (206 Cases)		
	Number	Per cent.
Receiving Supplementary Aid	133	64
From one other source	94	71
From two other sources	36	27
From three other sources	3	2
Sources of Supplementary Aid		
Neighbors and Friends	85	49
Relatives	44	25
Churches	32	18
Organized Charities	10	6
Municipalities	4	2

ceiving such additional aid, and to the preponderance of neighbors and friends over relatives as a source of supplementary relief.

Individuals and Families The general problem, how to care for the ordinary case of poverty, is to a greater extent modified by the question whether the case is that of a single individual or of a family than by any other one fact. For this reason the three remaining points to be brought out in our study of cases - their age and sex and the reasons for aiding them, will be discussed first as regards conditions found among the individual cases investigated, and then as to the family cases.

According to the figures obtained, family cases do not receive as much relief as individuals. Of a total of \$34,403.93 given to the 206 cases from the time of their first appearance on the records of the county courts, \$18,948.50, or 54% of the total, has been given to individual, or single, cases. Yet

of the 206 cases only 91, or 44%, were individuals and 115, or 56%, were families. It therefore appears that the 44% individual cases were given 54% of the money paid out for relief, while the 56% family cases got only 46% of the amount. The relation is more simply shown by the statement that the families received an average of \$138.31 each for the period they were on the records, while the individual cases received \$203.28 apiece, which is 47% more. This situation is to some extent explained by the fact that the duration of the individual cases is longer, owing to their frequent occurrence as pensioners of the courts, as well as to the fact that the family cases that are treated as outdoor paupers seem to have greater powers of recovery.

(a) The Single Cases.

Sex and Age. The study of the three questions, sex, age and reasons for relief, is very much simplified in respect to single cases. A table is herewith presented of the sex and age of the 91 single cases studied in Missouri. Of the entire number, 39% were males

Age Grouping of Outdoor Paupers (Single Cases)					
Age groups	50 & over	21-49	14-20	5-13	Under 5
Males					
Number	24	9	2	0	0
Per cent	27%	10%	2%	0%	0%
Females					
Number	44	7	3	2	0
Per cent	48%	8%	3%	2%	0%

and 61% females. Considering that there are fewer females than males in the general population, this reversal of relations may mean either that there is

greater dependency among the female population, or that the greater tendency of male paupers to establish family relations and the attitude of relief officers toward caring for women paupers throws more of the latter into the group under consideration. Dividing the cases into age groups, it is most interesting to note that three fourths of them are past fifty years of age. Almost two thirds of this group consists of women, so it may be said with considerable accuracy that of all the single cases aided one half are aged women and one fourth are old men. Nearly all the remaining cases are distributed about equally between men and women of the ages from 21 to 50 years.

Reasons
for Aid.

The reason for giving relief is largely determined by the sex and age of the pauper. A brief comparison of the following table with the one just

Reasons for Aid of Outdoor Paupers (Single Cases)					
	No.	%		No.	%
Unemployment	1	1	Insanity, idiocy	7	8
Sickness, burial	14	15	Blind, deaf, cripp.	14	15
Old age	43	48	Transportation	0	0
Widow., non-sup.	10	11	Miscellaneous	2	2

given indicates how closely the burden of importance in the matter of relief corresponds to the age and sex divisions. For example, old age is the most important explanation of the existence of so many paupers more than fifty years old, but by no means the only cause. Furthermore, "widowhood and non-support" applies only to women, and hence is important in

explaining the preponderance of females over males.

(b) The Family Cases.

The Pauper
Family.

The study of age groups among pauper families is not so fruitful as the study of the ages of individual cases, for pauper families differ so much that it is difficult to imagine a typical one. The 454 persons studied in Missouri were found in 115 family groups, an average of 3.95 persons per household. This average of about four persons is merely a group, not necessarily including the parents and all their children, nor excluding grandparents or other relatives. But the average in this case is not very useful, for the pauper families observed were more usually either an old couple or a younger family containing several children. Very frequently it was only a nucleus of a family; sometimes aged parents abandoned by or bereft of children, sometimes an abandoned or widowed mother and her small children, and sometimes inefficient parents with a fast-expanding group of small children who would abandon the group as soon as they became able to earn a living. Pauper families are too often hopeless fragments.

Age
and Sex.

Attention is called to the results given

Age Grouping of Outdoor Paupers (Family Cases)					
Age groups	50 & over	21-49	14-20	5-13	Under 5
Males					
Number	46	46	41	55	23
Per cent	10%	10%	9%	12%	5%
Females					
Number	62	77	33	54	17
Per cent	13%	17%	8%	12%	4%

in the accompanying table. That nearly a fourth of the families contain old men and women more than fifty years of age, is probably due to the number of aged couples, deserted by their children, who come to want. That between the ages of 21 and 50 years almost twice as many women are dependent as men, is due to the number of young mothers who have been widowed or deserted, as well as to the number of female defectives who fail to marry and hence to leave the family group. It will be noticed further that both among males and females there are nearly as many between the ages of 5 and 13 years as in the groups under the age of 5 and between 14 and 20 combined. It was found that just 50%, almost evenly divided between males and females, were under the age of 21 years. This 50% comprises the large majority of the children in the pauper homes.

Reasons
for Aid.

Reasons for Aid of Outdoor Paupers (Family Cases)					
	No.	%		No.	%
Unemployment	0	0	Insanity, idiocy	6	5
Sickness, burial	38	33	Blind, deaf, cripp.	13	11
Old age	27	24	Transportation	0	0
Widow., non-sup.	23	20	Miscellaneous	8	7

The foregoing table indicates the reasons assigned for the relief of the 115 cases studied. The shifting of causes of relief as compared with individual cases (see p. 30) is quite significant. Here sickness, temporarily disabling the breadwinner, or sometimes attacking the whole family, and death, requiring the unusual expense of burial, prove the most constant enemies. Most of these families contain

children under 14 years of age and a large number of them, aged persons - age groups in which the morbidity and mortality rates are high. Old age decreases in importance from 48% among individual cases to 24% among families. The third of the main reasons, widowhood and non-support, causing 20% of the relief, is almost twice as important as among single cases,- which is merely evidence that widows without children are more frequently able to earn their living. The other causes do not require especial consideration.

On the whole, personal observation of the pauper families that have here been treated statistically indicates that they form as complex and important a problem in outdoor relief as do poor families in large cities. And there is just as much need in the rural situation of applying effective methods, conducive to the maintenance of an integral family group if possible.

Chapter IV.

Conditions of Outdoor Relief for the Entire State.

The foregoing treatment of outdoor relief as it was found to exist in seventeen representative counties of Missouri both serves to illustrate the general situation in detail and furnishes a basis on which to interpret certain totals and extensive observations which apply to the state at large.

City and
Country.

No statistical comparison can be made between the relief work of cities and that of the counties, but both these units of government are active in the field of outdoor aid. The larger cities of the state, except St. Louis, which has a mayor's emergency fund, have poor relief funds. In Kansas City this is administered in cooperation with the local provident association, and in St. Joseph by a salaried superintendent and an unsalaried advisory board. In some cities much of the outdoor relief is given through the city physician. But the organization of associations for outdoor relief is characteristic of the cities. An example of this is the Provident Association of St. Louis, which is of a semi-public nature, and which administers the larger proportion of outdoor relief given in the city. The corresponding agencies in the small cities are the church aid societies, or the relief departments of local lodges. But even in the rural districts, while neighborly aid, which is indi-

vidual relief work, is more characteristic, many instances have been observed where the individual beneficence is only the outcome of community interest. The rural situation simply does not favor organization.

Sectional Differences While Missouri's few large cities are the greatest cause of variation in the practices of outdoor relief, certain sectional differences can be noticed, especially as between the northern and southern portions of the state. The counties in the north oftener build good almshouses, refuse to give extensive outdoor aid, and give it then more frequently as relief in kind. While the southern counties give a larger per cent of outdoor aid, supervise the poor less carefully and have more pensioners on their pauper lists. This rule, however, cannot be closely applied, and where it holds true it is largely explained by the difference in density of population. But the negro question is more prominent in the south, and the presence of negro paupers seems everywhere to add to the problems of outdoor relief. Again, the prevalence of malarial disease in the swamp sections of the southeast burdens those counties with frequently unavoidable doctor bills. In mining sections industrial troubles frequently make outdoor relief - either public or private - necessary. Differences of nationality that exist in certain sections do not appreciably affect the problem.

Total Outdoor Relief. In securing extensive statistics for the entire state the only available material was found to be the financial statements which are made annually

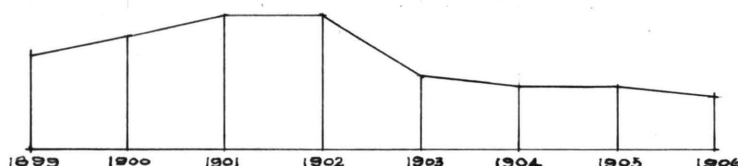
by the county clerks. These could not be obtained for some years in case of some of the counties. So in determining the proportionate distribution of poor relief between the three general public agencies, the state institutions, the county almshouses and outdoor relief, it was found to be more accurate to take as representative the figures of seventy counties which gave practically complete returns. Accordingly it is discovered that in the year 1906, the last for which statistics could be gathered, 17.83% of the entire relief funds of the counties was used for the purposes of outdoor relief. In nearly every instance it was possible to get a statement of the total amount a county spent for all purposes of relief. So if the grand total for the 114 counties be divided according to the proportion just given, it will be seen that in 1906 there was spent for outdoor relief in the entire state, \$144,168.38. This amount for the state makes an average per county of \$1,264.63 as the cost of outdoor relief in that year,- an item at least worthy of the attention of most county courts.

Decreasing Proportion. However, it is interesting to note further that this \$144,168.38 spent for outdoor relief in 1906 represented a smaller proportion of the entire poor relief cost to the counties than had been spent in the preceding seven years. The percentage valuation of outdoor relief each year from 1899 to 1907 is herewith presented:

Proportion of Total Cost of Poor Relief in 70 Counties
during Eight Years Occasioned by
Outdoor Relief.

Year	1899	1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906
Per cent	21.83	23.57	26.46	26.42	20.22	19.41	19.28	17.82

These varying proportions are brought out more clearly by the following graph:



Yearly Variation in Proportion of Outdoor Relief.

Outdoor relief is here seen to have reached the maximum of its importance in the relief system of the Missouri counties in the years 1901 and 1902, when it represented considerably over one fourth of the entire expenditures. Thereafter it exhibited a steady decline, until now it constitutes but a little over a sixth of the amount.

Number of Outdoor Paupers. This total of \$144,168.38 is again useful in estimating the number of poor persons who received public outdoor aid from the counties during the year 1906. For if the average cost of an outdoor pauper case to the county was in that year \$28.84 (see p. 15), This total amount must have been used to help about 5,000 pauper cases. This estimate is, of course, based on conditions found to exist in 17 counties. But the counties were in many respects representative, and the treatment of their records was so thorough that we feel warranted in making a further deduction,

based on the average number of persons per pauper case, or group (see p. 31). If the average number of persons per pauper case is 3.95, then these 5,000 beneficiaries must stand for a total pauper population of something like 13,741 persons. One in every one hundred ninety-seven citizens of our commonwealth received aid as an outdoor pauper in 1906,- a very considerable army, indeed, were they to be gathered from their humble abodes in the small towns and rural districts of the broad state.

General Owing to the meagerness of the records, Conditions nothing further can be shown statistically with regard of Relief. to these thousands of paupers and the relief that is given them. The field study was made to supply this deficiency of records, and on account of its extensiveness the statistics of local conditions that have already been presented may be accepted as at least furnishing a faithful picture of the way in which these 13,741 paupers are relieved. An examination of the financial statements of all the Missouri counties for a period of eight years discloses a general correspondence to the counties treated intensively. There are, to be sure, certain wide variations among the 114 counties. Relief in the form of transportation was not given by more than 88 counties, and even then it did not appear regularly through the eight years. Burial expense was found to be very constant. Even the customary hire of the "grave digger" is about the same in all sections of the state. The widest varia-

tions of system between counties occur in the matter of furnishing medical attention to paupers. Sometimes no medical relief at all is given; at others, the doctor is paid grudgingly for a few "charity cases", while a number of counties pay a fairly good salary to a county physician to care for their outdoor paupers. Maintenance relief is, of course, the most regular form of expenditure, and is, in total, the most important. These generalizations, however, cannot be substantiated by accurate figures because of the unusable character of some of the financial statements.

Chapter V.

State System of Provision for Dependents.

A Complex Subject. County outdoor relief in Missouri is not seen in its true proportions, however, until there is balanced with it the amount which is at the same time being given by the other method of charity - indoor relief. It has been stated that about 18% of the relief funds of the counties is used for outdoor aid. What is the importance of the forms of indoor relief - the county almshouse and the special institutions of the state - that they should receive the remaining 82%? Are not outdoor relief expenditures to some extent affected by the general question of a particular county's attitude toward all forms of poor relief? On the whole, do not the three agencies group themselves naturally about the single problem, public care for the poor,- and, if so, what is the relative value of their operations?

The importance of these other forms of relief will be shown with as few figures as possible, in order that the underlying question - their bearing upon outdoor relief - may be kept the more clearly in mind. The general relations of the three different classes of poor relief agencies has already been indicated (p. 1). A comparison of the total amounts given through each of them furnishes a comprehensive view of the poor relief situation in the state that can be supplied by no amount of intensive study.

Total Paid An analysis of the financial statements of
by Counties the 114 counties* of Missouri shows that the counties
paid for the support of the poor both within their own
borders and in the state institutions the sum of
\$809,025.68 for the fiscal year coinciding most close-
ly with the calendar year 1906. The taxable wealth
of the state outside the city of St. Louis was, in
1906, \$887,229,484.00. In that year, therefore,
the counties expended nine hundredths of one per cent
of the taxable wealth of the state for the support of
the poor,- or the equivalent of a direct levy of nine
cents on the hundred dollars' valuation.

Total Bur- But the whole story of the cost of pauperism
den of in Missouri is not told by the total of direct payments
Pauperism. made from county treasuries. When to the amount
spent by the counties as such for the poor there is
added that portion of the state appropriations for the
maintenance of the state charitable institutions which
may most reasonably be charged to the presence of the
county indigent inmates†, the result is a grand total
of \$1,459,266.41,- which is sixteen hundredths of one
per cent of the total taxable wealth of the state.
In other words, if a direct levy were made upon the
taxable wealth of the state for the support of its
paupers - not counting funds necessary for building

*St. Louis city has been omitted from the compi-
lation for the entire state because its inclusion would
unduly emphasize the problem of outdoor relief in the
large city, and because reliable statistics were not
readily obtainable for St. Louis.

†There is considerable margin of error, owing to
the difficulty of uniformly interpreting reports of
state institutions.

and improving the state institutions, the rate of taxation would be about sixteen cents on the hundred dollars' valuation. This is one mill greater than the rate for state revenue, but one mill less than the total revenue and interest tax for that same year, and is over an eighth as much as was paid for the maintenance of rural, grade and high schools. The statistics make their own argument for strict methods of accounting and for a carefully organized and supervised system of poor relief administration.

Annual Variation. Returning, however, to the consideration of expenditures made directly from the county treasuries, it may be seen that the grand total is by no means constant from year to year. The table and graph herewith presented show the variations that have taken

Year	Amount	Year	Amount
1899	\$627,286.83	1904	\$ 795,727.53
1900	686,068.40	1905	797,522.39
1901	783,276.60	1906	809,025.68
1902	767,305.29	Tot.	5993,562.02
1903	727,349.30	Av.	749,195.25

place during the eight years, 1899-1906. The table shows, on the whole, an increase during the period of nearly 29%. The irregularity of the increase is brought out more plainly by the graphical illustration. The appearance of this graph for the first three years shows from how small beginnings the work of public poor relief in Missouri has developed. The depression for the next two years is difficult to account for, but there is observable a tendency to very regular

MAP NO. 2.
 Comparison of the Total Amounts Expended
 by the Counties of Missouri for Poor Relief
 with their Taxable Valuation of Property
 and their Population.

LEGEND

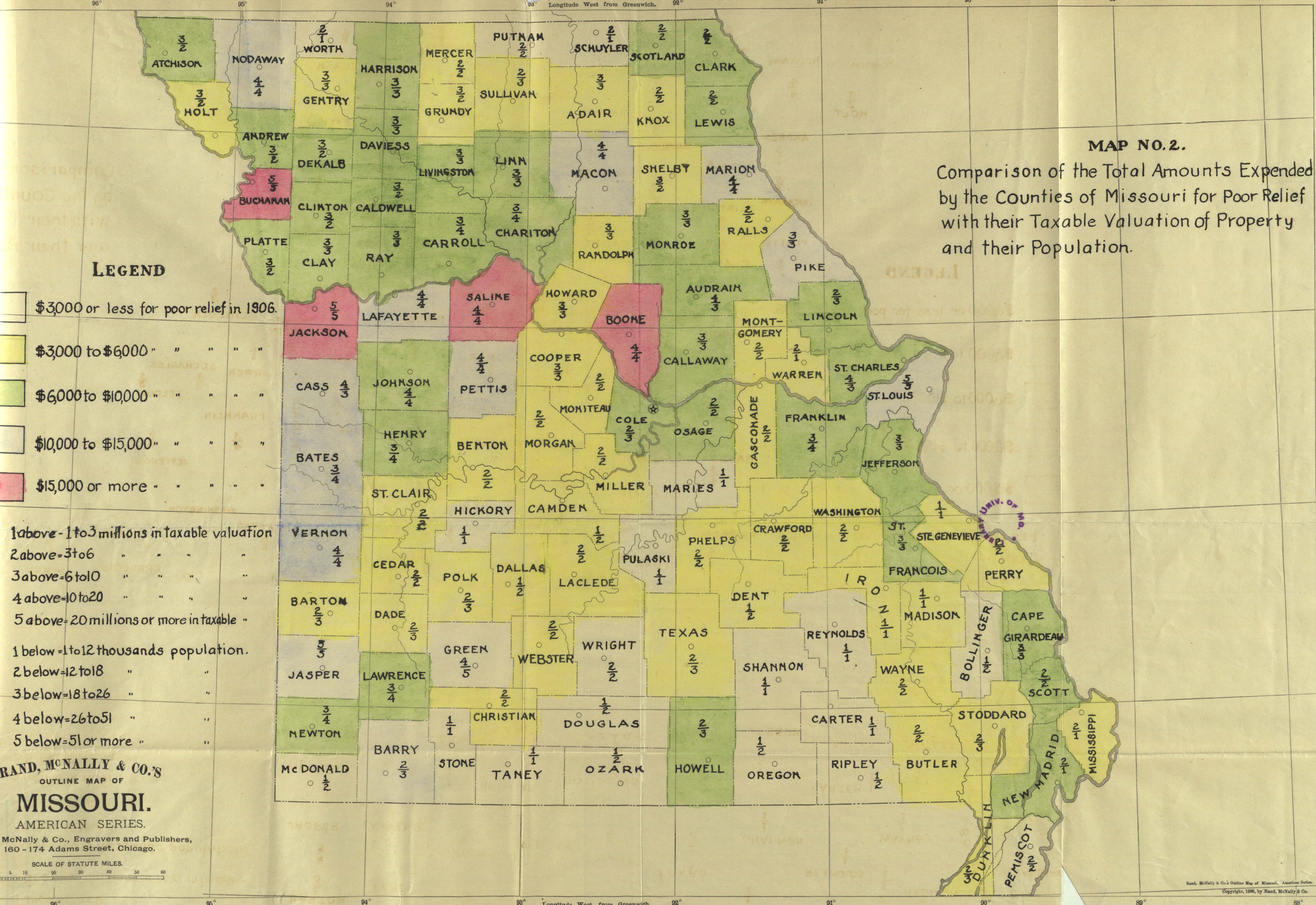
- \$3,000 or less for poor relief in 1906.
- \$3,000 to \$6,000 " " " "
- \$6,000 to \$10,000 " " " "
- \$10,000 to \$15,000 " " " "
- \$15,000 or more " " " "

- 1 above = 1 to 3 millions in taxable valuation
- 2 above = 3 to 6 " " " "
- 3 above = 6 to 10 " " " "
- 4 above = 10 to 20 " " " "
- 5 above = 20 millions or more in taxable "
- 1 below = 1 to 12 thousands population.
- 2 below = 12 to 18 " " " "
- 3 below = 18 to 26 " " " "
- 4 below = 26 to 51 " " " "
- 5 below = 51 or more " " " "

RAND, McNALLY & CO.'S
 OUTLINE MAP OF
MISSOURI.
 AMERICAN SERIES.

McNally & Co., Engravers and Publishers,
 160 - 174 Adams Street, Chicago.

SCALE OF STATUTE MILES.
 0 10 20 30 40 50 60



increase in the total poor relief budget of the counties during recent years.

Local

The local aspect of the situation is disclosed by a study of the variations of total amounts of poor relief between different counties and sections of the state. Map No. 2 divides the counties of the state into five poor relief groups according to their total expenditures in 1906. From this it may be seen that only four counties, not including the city of St. Louis, gave as much as \$15,000. They are Jackson and Buchanan, containing the second and third largest cities of the state, and Boone and Saline, two of the richest agricultural counties of the state, containing no large cities. Thirteen counties gave between \$10,000 and \$15,000; thirty-five gave between \$6,000 and \$10,000; forty-three gave between \$3,000 and \$6,000, and nineteen gave less than \$3,000.

This map is intended to show, not alone the concentration of relief-giving in certain sections - explained as it may be by such irregular causes as the existence there of large cities, or inequalities between rich and poor, or merely the generosity or loose administration of public relief authorities, as these causes may be known to one acquainted with the localities. But there is also a general correspondence in regard to two other matters, the population and the taxable wealth of the counties. To show this, two figures in the form of a fraction have been written on each county. The upper figure indicates to which

Map 2

of five divisions in regard to taxable valuation the county belongs, the lower figure, to which of five divisions of population. The divisions in these latter two respects were so made that each contained as nearly as possible the same number of counties as the corresponding division first made according to amount of poor relief given. Studying the map again, with this added data, the correspondence of the three groupings is seen to be general. But it is further discovered that total amount of poor relief varies more directly according to wealth than according to the population of the counties. Sectional description of the state is scarcely necessary. But one specially interested in the subject may find from detailed study of this map a wealth of illustration and suggestion as to the connection between poor relief and the development of the communities.

General Divisions. This much of the conditions of poor relief in the state may be told in totals of the disbursements reported by the county clerks. But it is possible, further, to divide these totals according to the amounts spent for poor relief within the counties and for indigent wards of the counties in state institutions. The average of the proportionate values of each of these kinds of relief for the year 1906, as they occur in the financial statements of seventy counties whose reports are the most regular, is given in the table which follows. In the second column are given the totals corresponding to these percentages into which

the grand total of \$809,025.68 paid out by the 114 counties may be divided. The method is to substitute for the result that might have been obtained by the addition of a number of questionable amounts, a division of the grand total that cannot be questioned according to a reliable ratio shown by seventy counties.

Percentage Distribution and Corresponding Division of Amount of County Poor Relief, 1906.		
	Amount	Per cent.
Outside Almshouses	\$ 144,168.38	17.82%
In County Almshouses	235,992.79	29.17%
In Hospitals for Insane	420,369.74	51.96%
In School for the Deaf	7,362.13	.91%
In School for the Blind	485.42	.06%
Colony F-M. & Epileptic	647.22	.08%
Total,	\$ 809,025.68	100.00%

The per cent and total amount given for county outdoor relief ("Outside Almshouse" in table) has already been treated (p. 36). Taking the dotted line in the table to indicate the division of county expenditures between agencies within the counties and those entirely under state jurisdiction, it may be noted that a little over one half of the total poor relief paid for by the counties is administered through the state institutions. It is not surprising, further, to discover that the great bulk of this state-administered relief is the work of our four crowded insane hospitals. This extraordinarily large proportion, however, should not lead to a wrong impression of the importance of other state institutions. The discussion now relates to expenditures of the counties exclusively, and counties are required to pay board for their indi-

gent wards in the hospitals for the insane,- a provision which applies to none of the other state institutions. This proportion of 53% for state institutions, it may be remarked, exhibits a tendency to increase during recent years,- an attestation to the fact of the increasing importance of state care of pauper defectives in Missouri. Of the remaining 46.09% of relief administered entirely within the county, 29.17% is given to the support of almshouses. The relation of these two forms of intra-county relief will receive special consideration later (p.47).

Local

To give a more adequate idea of the relations Variations.of these three main divisions in the relief schemes of the several counties than may be conveyed by the foregoing tabular treatment, and at the same time to present material for an indefinite amount of study of local conditions, a map is herewith inserted which indicates these proportions by a graphical device. The relations are shown for all the counties of the state with the exception of three. For these counties (Benton, Mississippi, and Montgomery) the reports were in such form that no reliable division could be made. In contradistinction to the method by which the proportions for the seventy counties given above were secured, the ratios indicated by these circles are based upon the expenditures of these counties during the years 1899-1906, or as many of those years as reports could be secured for. The variations indicated by each of these circles are too complex for brief treatment. Indeed,

they suggest, not so much a field for theorizing, as a program for central supervision of local relief policies.

The proportionate importance of the two forms of relief within the county - outdoor relief and maintenance of the almshouse - have been left for special consideration. On the foregoing map the whiteness of any circle indicates the degree of specialization in public care of paupers native to the county where the circle appears. A large amount of black in the circle means that the paupers of the county receive to that extent only the general assistance afforded by outdoor relief, scarcely distinguishing them from their self-supporting neighbors. The shaded sector indicates to what extent the pauper population is segregated in almshouses, giving them, as it does, a distinct, though very general, form of institutional care. It is now proposed to take the two (lighter) portions of the circles for special consideration, because they represent the first two steps in this scheme of specialization which take place entirely within and under the control of the counties (see diagram, p. 1). They constitute the element of decentralization in the system of public relief.

darker

Relief
within
County.

From the table given on page 45 it is evident that, of the relief administered within the county, slightly over one-third (36%) was, in 1906, given as outdoor relief. So, on the basis of the results from seventy counties it may be asserted that almshouse

relief is nearly twice as important in Missouri as outdoor relief. It is interesting to note further the relations of these two kinds of relief through the period of eight years, 1899-1906. Beginning in 1899 with a difference of only 9% of the total poor relief expenditures of the counties, the amounts given for outdoor and for almshouse relief within three years became practically equal. Since 1902, however, there has been a rapid, though tolerably regular, divergence of the per cents given to the two purposes,- the proportion of outdoor relief decreasing and that of almshouse support increasing. But the decrease in outdoor relief has been more rapid than the increase of almshouse cost,- a fact which tallies with the slight decline in importance of both forms of county relief which is observable. These facts are of vital importance to an understanding of the poor relief situation in Missouri. The entire contribution of counties to poor relief is steadily increasing (p. 42). An increase very closely corresponding is noticeable in the payments of county courts to both state institutions and county almshouse support - the two forms of indoor relief. Very little increase in actual amount expended in outdoor relief is possible, and, as here indicated, the proportionate value of outdoor aid in the scheme of relief within the counties is rapidly decreasing.

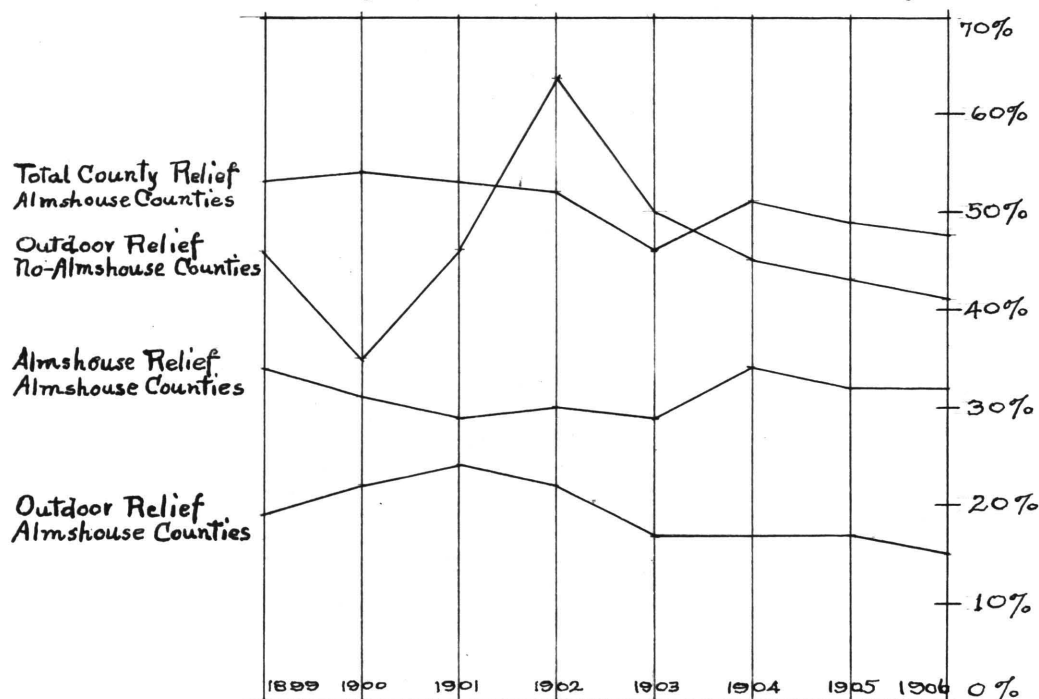
Counties So far only the normal condition of county
without relief has been treated. There were, however, in
Almshouses. 1906, at least seventeen counties in the state which

were not maintaining almshouses. These counties* were: Benton, Camden, Carter, Douglass, Gasconade, Hickory, McDonald, Maries, Miller, Oregon, Ozark, Pemiscot, Ripley, Shannon, Taney and Worth. Two of these have since purchased poor farms and three others are contemplating doing so. With the exception of Worth, all the counties named lie south of the Missouri river, and most of them are in the sparsely settled, poorer sections of the state. The more primitive practices of relief-giving are to be observed in these counties. Most of them "board out" the paupers who would otherwise be sent to the poor farm, and in many ways they approximate conditions characteristic of an earlier stage in the development of poor relief. This situation, though, is exceptional in Missouri. To compare the development under an exclusively outdoor relief system with that where the county also maintains an almshouse, the annual variation of expenditures in seven counties having no almshouses is shown graphically together with the variation found in sixty-three counties which maintain almshouses. (p. 50).

This comparison is based upon percentages of total amount of relief spent for the two forms of aid within the county, as a study of the amounts themselves would require an examination into the relation of the groups compared in the matter of wealth and population. The radical variation of the line representing outdoor relief in counties without almshouses

*For location, see Map 1, opposite page 5.

is partially explained by the small number of counties used. From this graphical illustration it may be



Annual Variation of Proportions of Relief within the County in 63 Counties with Almshouses and in 7 without Almshouses.

concluded: first, that the forms of relief within counties having almshouses receive but a slightly larger portion of the total county relief budget than does merely outdoor relief in counties without almshouses; second, that the annual variation of this proportion for the last three years closely corresponds in the two groups of counties; and, third, that the proportion of outdoor relief in the seven counties without almshouses is decreasing a little more rapidly than outdoor relief in the sixty-three counties which maintain almshouses.

PART TWO: CRITICISM.

Chapter VI.

Principles of Relief.

Before attempting a criticism of the facts which have been presented concerning outdoor relief in Missouri, it is desirable that a brief statement be made of the principles upon which judgment is based.

Development It is very evident from the methods and the of Classi- writings of those who have had long experience as fications. relief officers that what are called the principles of relief are not the formulae of an abstract philosophy, but are the embodiment of the results of many experiments in aiding the poor. It is by this process that the most common customs and institutions of relief have developed. The almshouse, for example, was instituted because the counties found they could give better and less expensive care to certain general classes of paupers than they could pay others to furnish. The paupers, themselves, have come to receive a more or less definite classification,- occasioned both by the kind of care that is usually given them and by a certain rough correspondence of type. To illustrate, those merely in temporary distress are ordinarily treated as outdoor paupers; while aged persons with no means of support are typical subjects for almshouse care, and paupers needing treatment in any of the special state institutions for defectives are to be listed with this third, and most advanced, class. However, many cases

are so complex in their nature as almost to defy classification. A recent classification of types within the field of outdoor relief is the following:*

(1) the widow type, (2) temporary difficulty, (3) non-support, (4) man physically or mentally inefficient, (5) old age, (6) motherless children, and (7) miscellaneous.

I. Outdoor
and Alms-
house
Relief.

While no principle of classification will be stated except in connection with the criticism of conditions observed in Missouri, attention should be called to the fact that a very important division is that between cases treated as outdoor paupers and those supported in the county almshouses. It is evident that every one of the types of outdoor paupers just named has its counterpart in the average poorhouse. The tendency is for the almshouse to receive the more permanent cases of dependency. It is altogether a question of judicious administration on the part of county authorities. But it is an important matter of discrimination, because to transfer a case to the almshouse may mean a saving to the county, while in the opposite direction it may make the rehabilitation of the poor person more hopeless.

II. Poverty

Who are the poor? Upon this question the whole program of the relief system depends. Because most poor persons lack worldly goods, poverty has been

*Types among 500 families under the care of the Charity Organization Society of the City of New York. Study by Miss Caroline Goodyear.

treated by some as if it were a sort of deficit to be filled, or at least to be made less appalling. This accounts for the miscellaneous, careless "donations" that are often doled out to the poor man as if they were the natural diet of his species. A more enlightened view of poverty is that which considers it as a relative condition. Poor persons or families are like other members of society, except they have not developed sufficiently, or have lost, certain characteristics and powers which enable the others to maintain their economic equilibrium. This affords a much more reasonable and hopeful conception of the purpose of relief-giving. It is not simply a sympathetic generosity which "keeps the wolf from the door" of the poor from day to day, nor a duty of the pious to give alms; but the ultimate purpose of poor relief is to bring the dependent portion of the population back to the normal of self-support. Plainly, non-conformity to this principle would be but fostering the conditions which make relief-giving necessary.

III. The

Relief Process.

According to the principles just stated, the process of outdoor relief falls into three large divisions. The first of these is knowledge of each case treated. Authorities have no right to give relief to persons of whose nature and conditions of environment they are ignorant. Poverty, like physical disease, is difficult to cure, and likewise it requires careful diagnosis before applying the remedy.

In the second place, the determination of the character of relief is a matter for mature and purposeful consideration. And this is to some extent conditioned by the last stage in the relief process, the application of the remedy - the personal act of giving the aid to the pauper. The practical questions relating to each of these stages are, briefly, as follows:

1. Investigation of Cases. Before the granting of aid, the prospective recipient of county relief should be visited in his home by the court or its expressly authorized representative, who should give a specific account not only of the statements of the poor person and his neighbors, but of his home conditions, which might operate to determine the matter of relief. In emergency cases investigation should be deferred only until direst distress has been relieved.

2. Adaptation of Relief. Upon the specific report of an investigator, together with his personal recommendation, the court should judge: (a) whether the case should receive county aid; (b) whether outdoor relief is the best method of reclaiming the case from dependency; (c) for how long a period the court expects to give assistance; (d) which kind of relief is best for the pauper, money or material aid; (e) if money, in what amounts and how frequently shall it be given him; (f) if in kind, exactly what kind of material aid will be the most useful.

3. Distribution of Relief. Under this heading it is required to determine who shall give the

relief to the pauper and what shall be his method? Instead of being an insignificant detail, it is, under the more efficient outdoor relief systems, the most important part of the process. In the practical situation under consideration, the question is: shall the relief be distributed by one of the county judges, by the clerk of the court, by a politician-friend of the pauper, by his neighbor, or by an agent of the court who has special ability in making the relief effective? The ideal is the personalization of the office, since the poor ordinarily lack training more than they do actual goods.

IV. Right to Relief. The principle of settlement is important in the Missouri situation, although its operation is chiefly negative. Especially in the New England states is there still an insistence upon the fact that it is not the duty of local units of government to care for poor persons not native to or long residents of the community. By a "blanket" clause in the Missouri law* this matter is practically left to the discretion of the county courts. In practice it is of no considerable effect, except it be in respect to the problem of transients, who are by many counties regularly "moved on". The principle most commonly adhered to is that the poor in distress are entitled to relief from the county in which they at the time reside. This right of the poor to public relief is the last of four circles of ever-widening responsibility which operate to keep the poor man from "coming

*R.S. 1899, sec. 8997. See also secs. 8993-8998.

upon the county,⁹⁾ and which may be represented thus:



V. Comprehensive System. As a consequence of this ultimate right of the poor to public relief the principle obtains, that a public scheme of relief to be just must be comprehensive. This involves the entire relief system of the state, even to the extent of central supervision of local agencies. In our more restricted field, it requires that county outdoor relief be organized and conducted upon a definite plan for the betterment of the conditions of the poor. And from this, in turn, it devolves upon the county scheme to provide for official competence and responsibility in poor relief administration, and against the use of neglectful and harmful methods.

VI. Record and Publication. There is one other principle involved in the subject of this study. To secure wholesome progress in working out a problem of such general, as well as local, interest as public outdoor relief requires the keeping of complete records by relief officers, and the publication and criticism of the main facts of the system from time to time by public officials having expert knowledge of the subject. Accurate and uniform

records, describing specifically the treatment of local cases, are their own reward to relief officers in working out and maintaining an efficient policy. Public interest in public affairs demands the use of such statistics in a way that will guarantee progress throughout the state.

Chapter VII.

Criticism of Existing Conditions.

A criticism of the county outdoor relief system of Missouri should be based, not so much upon the statistical study that has been made as evidence, as upon the groundwork of principles of relief. The former is descriptive and is to be judged according to the criteria of the latter. For this reason, the general form of the preceding section will be followed here point by point.

I.

Almshouse
versus
Outdoor
Relief.

Is the distinction at present made between outdoor and almshouse relief by the county authorities efficient? Following this question, attention may be confined to the field of outdoor relief, exclusively.

Manifestly, immediate economy to the county treasury should never be the dominant principle in determining which of these two methods should be used. County courts, however, are more apt to err in the other direction. For while they often appear to be parsimonious in making provision for almshouse care, the personal element so enters into their judgment of cases that they will pension them through long periods of time rather than submit them to the humiliation of the poorhouse. This, though the institutional form of treatment may be cheaper in the long run and may be far more effective as a cure of pauperism. More-

over, it is only too true that for county courts to apply correct principles of discrimination between outdoor and almshouse charity would require, first, the renovation of many of the present poorhouses. They are poor houses, indeed, which consist of barns and smoke-houses, or remodeled residences intended for single families; where even the primary segregation of sex and color is impossible; where the superintendent's battle with vermin is necessarily a losing one, and where inmates suffering with chronic diseases can expect only the infrequent attention of a farmer with broad acres to care for. But, granting the existence of an efficient almshouse service, as occurs in many counties, what general rules of discrimination are applicable?

There is a noticeable tendency for courts to send to the almshouse those cases which may be described as the hopelessly poor. Seldom is it better, either from scientific or financial reasons, to pension such cases as outdoor paupers, even though they might get slight assistance from outside sources. With but little exception, cases whose worthiness is doubtful should be given no alternative but care in the almshouse. The treatment of such cases under strict discipline is a very important function of institutional care, and the application of such a rule would cut off a great number of impostors who are now receiving county outdoor aid. Even temporary sickness may often best be cared for in a good almshouse.

County home, infirmary, poor farm - these common names all suggest both the ameliorative and the reconstructive work of this form of county institutional relief. Under a good system, ordinarily, there seems to be little need of a proportionately large number of outdoor paupers. Treatment through outdoor relief is normally either a "detention ward" where permanent cases await assignment to specialized methods of care, or it is a free dispensary where incipient cases may, at small expense, be corrected.

A word should be said as to the constantly recurring question, shall outdoor relief be given by public agencies, at all? An examination of the county system of Missouri suggests the answer: it should be given as a temporary measure, sometimes, and as an expedient in emergencies; but it should be difficult to secure upon the general pretexts by which it is now being given, and the official organization should be such as to create a tendency toward its elimination as a method of public relief. This is not saying that it should be made hard for the right person to get county outdoor relief. The growing tendency for outdoor relief to be left to private organizations in cities forces the question upon public attention. The constant corruption of a public system dependent so largely upon local authorities, and the fact that public institutions are so nearly adequate to handle the situation, make strong argument for the abolition of public outdoor relief. But organization of private

agencies so as adequately to occupy the field is not feasible in the rural districts. For this reason, though there will probably be a tendency to follow the leadership of the cities in this matter, it is wise to maintain a certain kind of county outdoor relief.

II.

Does the
Relief
Help?

Is the present scheme of outdoor relief in the counties of Missouri solving the fundamental question of poverty in the field in which it operates? Are outdoor paupers being re-habilitated as efficient citizens? It is impossible to produce statistics as to the increase or decrease of the outdoor pauper population. But the question is rather, even if more people should be getting outdoor relief every year, are a larger per cent of them being discharged cured year by year? Beyond this the question branches into one of the efficiency of officials, the efficiency of the outdoor relief scheme, and the maintenance of effective relations with the forms of indoor relief. From personal observation one would conclude that men who had been re-habilitated on account of the ministrations of the county outdoor relief system were scarce. The public scheme seems rather to be a financial adjunct, the real work of spiritual re-habilitation being done by private parties. But the financial adjunct may be indispensable, even if it does work clumsily. At any rate, this is a question for much profitable reflection.

III.

Process
Crude.

How do the conditions observed answer the questions of efficiency as to the three divisions of the relief process?

1. Investigation of Cases. It may be said to the credit of the system that probably in a majority of cases one of the county judges has first-hand knowledge of the applicant for aid. Of course the decision depends upon his judgment, which is usually not based consistently upon a series of specific facts which he has noted concerning this and other cases that have come before the court. But this takes no account of a large number of cases which are taken upon the appeal of others in behalf of persons whom the court never even sees. With both classes, but especially in the latter instance, the judgment is apt to be based largely upon personal appeal, not upon specific evidence,- and there is where much of the mischief in the loose public system lurks.

2. Adaptation of Relief. County courts do not usually give much consideration to the six natural questions (see p. 54) at this stage in the relief process. In general, they have too little regard for the importance of the particular method they adopt. They do not ask, how long do we propose to continue this treatment? They give the less serious cases outdoor relief, and choose the method which will be the least troublesome to administer, and the cheapest. Not infrequently is the hope entertained that something

will simply "happen" to take the case off the county's hands. In case of vagrants, the way of escape is clear. Pensioning is not considered an inherently bad practice. The size of the warrant and the frequency of its issue are not the results of a study of its effects upon the pauper. And the value of relief in kind seems to be little appreciated.

3. Distribution of Relief. But brief criticism should be made upon this point. Much of the adverse criticism of the adaptation of relief to particular cases is due to a poorly arranged system, and the woful deficiency in this final stage of the relief process may be credited to the same fact: the law makes no provision for efficient distribution of relief. The drawing of warrants by paupers, themselves, (see p. 24) is a pernicious practice, for it puts the court in the attitude of a public paymaster whose favor is to be sought by every inducement possible. Moreover, what is the incentive to careful study of the form of relief to be given when the one who administers it in but few cases ever sees inside the home of the subject of his ministrations? Constant supervision of cases is a cardinal principle of relief, but there is no provision for it in the county outdoor relief scheme of Missouri.

IV.

Right not
Abused.

Is the right of the poor person to public relief working to his advantage in rural Missouri? Reference has already been made to the lax operation

of the principle of settlement. Only a few county relief authorities were found who entertained any doubt as to the equal right of all comers to relief. Unless special state provision is to be made for vagrants, it is only desirable that the principle be extended in its application to stop the harmful practice of "shipping out". On the general question under discussion, it may be said to the credit of the Missouri system that comparatively few of the rural paupers feel their rights before the law to such an extent as to become the more profligate thereby. Such an unfortunate condition would be the outcome of too great advertisement of the legal provision among the poor and of too great readiness on the part of the relief agency to give aid. True, the common experience of poor relief agencies has been that the "get-poor-quick" kind, too, are characteristic of American life. But the occurrence of an average amount of relief per pauper per year as high as \$28.84 (see p. 15) for Missouri gives an encouraging aspect of stability of relations between the poor and their communities which simplifies the problem of pauperism.

V.

System Is the county outdoor relief system adequate
Inadequate. and sufficiently comprehensive in the field of its operation? This involves the question of official competency. Under the third general division (p. 62) the form of administration at present provided in our county government was shown to be in nearly every

respect incompetent to carry on efficient poor relief. No thought is more foreign to the average voter's mind in selecting a county judge than the question of his candidate's fitness to be a poor relief official. And when the county court meets but for a short period four or five times a year, little wonder is it that, with half a dozen other judicial and administrative duties to attend to - of a nature foreign to poor relief - this last public duty gets but slight attention. This opens up the question of official responsibility for efficient poor relief. If pauperism is to be cured, who is responsible for its accomplishment? The failure to fix responsibility for the success of the plan is a vital defect of the system under consideration.

Again, as a general proposition, is the public policy of outdoor relief meeting the needs of the poor? Of all the cases treated in the field study, twenty-two per cent were judged by the investigators to be undeserving of the relief they were receiving. The important question, however, is, how many are not receiving relief under the system who should be? This does not involve the question of how many are being aided privately who are more deserving than the public pauper. Private aid is a welcome auxiliary in the field. No conclusive statistics can be produced. But from what has preceded it is evident that some neglect must result from the hit-and-miss methods that are employed. Moreover, territorial neglect is una-

voidable, for this one central relief-agency, the county court, has on the average an area of over six hundred square miles in which to administer aid. And, finally, if a comprehensive system be considered, there are neglected classes among the recipients of outdoor relief. This criticism applies chiefly to the lack of provision for dependent and neglected children. While in other states extensive provision is made for the proper care of these future citizens, under a general or state system of outdoor relief, in Missouri no organized effort is being made to meet their needs.

VI.

No Special Record. As a question relating merely to convenience in administration, what can be said of the statistical provisions of the county system? There is no case record of an investigator made and preserved. There is no record of the judgment of the court upon the case, with the reasons therefor. No attempt is made to classify the case, or to define the intentions of the court in assuming its support. Nor are any returns made by a relieving officer as to the application of the relief and the development of the case. Merely the name of the beneficiary is entered upon the court record in the list of warrants ordered, as: "Sallie Sullivan, aid, \$10.00." Sometimes the word, "aid", is omitted, thus making no distinction between this and any other expenditure of the court. Sometimes only the name of one who regularly takes the

money to the beneficiary is entered. For example, the records of one county were searched for a period of ten years to find the name of the real beneficiary who had during that time been having a friend bring her money to her. Practically, there are no distinctively poor relief records in Missouri. Little wonder is it that the State Board of Charities can give no statistics on outdoor relief. This exceptionally decentralized system is operating entirely in the dark.

Chapter VIII.

Plan of Improvement.

The preceding criticism, much of which is, regrettably, unfavorable, has been made at every point a judgment upon the efficiency of the county outdoor relief system in Missouri. If it fails to conform to any of the cardinal principles of relief, the first step toward remedy is to discover the exact nature of the defect. Recognizing the wisdom of slow development in matters of public policy, the plan to reconstruct the system which is to follow will be made only as a suggestion, the more immediate demands, alone, being emphasized.

Deliberate
Action.

The advantage of deliberate action, based upon thorough inquiry and understanding of defects, is too often forgotten in schemes of public reform. The slow development of the great poor relief system of England should serve as an example in this instance. There is danger both of creating artificial forms of aid, and of making a great problem of public relief where in the beginning there was but a small one. Comparison with other states shows that the conditions of poverty in Missouri are simple, therefore simple arrangements for their alleviation are proper. It is reasonable to suppose that the amount of outdoor relief given in the state could actually be reduced, and yet the efficiency of the system in meeting the needs of the poor doubled. The funda-

mental criticism is that the present plan merely lacks direction. However, no great change should be made in the operation of the system, except it be based on long experience with the present forms of administration as relief agencies, and upon a more complete study of facts than is now possible.

Legal Regulation. The most obvious lack in the outdoor relief situation is that of statutory provision. There is no specific authorization of outdoor relief in the law, much less are there any regulations regarding the method by which it is to be given. In the first place, legal provision is a matter of general expediency. On other important matters of county expenditure there are strict legal rules, with penalties attached for their violation; while in this more personal use of public funds, officials are left entirely free. In the second place, the establishment of general rules is necessary to secure ^{the} uniform adoption of correct methods, and this can be done in no way but through the law. Moreover, those states which have the best systems have strict provision for the same in the law. It is difficult to make minute, and at the same time sufficiently elastic, legal rules for outdoor relief. But this is not necessary, as a central supervisory board could be empowered to make the more detailed application of general statutory regulations governing the question.

State

Supervis-
ion.

The establishment of a central supervisory agency would, likewise, be a means of improving the present conditions of outdoor relief. This central authority should, properly, be the present State Board of Charities and Correction, which has never been sufficiently empowered to exercise such supervision of county charities as is needed. As its name implies, this Board should have a much wider field of activity than merely the supervision of outdoor relief: but no other department needs its attentions more, and ample argument may be found in the limited range of this study to justify the broadening of the scope of the Board. In its operation the outdoor relief system is highly decentralized. It is in the hands of 114 different independent authorities, each tending to develop peculiarities from his differing local surroundings, none of them having much time to devote to improving the efficiency of their local practices, and no tendency operating toward improvement of local conditions through cooperation of county courts with one another. The result is the chaos of methods and practices which has been described in this study. Not to mention the immensely larger sums handled in other departments of charitable and correctional work, nearly \$150,000 is being spent annually (see p. 36) for outdoor relief, alone. Moreover, the entire budget of poor relief is steadily increasing from year to year (p. 42). On purely business principles,

it is undoubtedly a wasteful arrangement when the only central auditing authority for this vast system is the General Assembly, which meets biennially. But it has been shown (p. 66) that not even a formulation of the county expenditures for outdoor relief for the enlightenment of the legislature is possible under the present regime. No better evidence could be produced that outdoor relief is a state, not a local, problem than the manifestly harmful practice of "moving on" paupers from county to county. So, from an abundance of proof, the conclusion necessarily results that there is immediate demand for substituting for the existing "laissez faire" policy in county outdoor relief the wholesome, sympathetic supervision of a central authority.

Organized The need of immediate action along one other
Publicity. line is clear. The first step toward improvement of
a public system and the best guarantee of its continued efficiency is organized publicity. The important facts concerning a subject involving the work of so many local authorities as this does cannot be obtained save by their constant cooperation. The barest record, uniformly kept, of the most important points in the giving of relief is all that is required. By the use of printed forms this has been found elsewhere to require but a minimum of time on the part of local officials. Indeed, it facilitates relief work by giving it method. By this simple process not only is local relief put on an organized basis, but reports can at

any time be readily compiled from local records to answer the question: What is the effect of county outdoor relief in the several communities, and what wrong tendencies exist that need correction? With a uniform system of reporting, a central supervisory board should at frequent intervals issue bulletins setting forth the main facts of outdoor relief (together with other statistics of charitable and correctional work in the state) as a matter of public concern and as a guide to local authorities. The importance of the problem makes such organized publicity necessary.

Questions

Of these three parts of a plan to increase for Furtherthe efficiency of county outdoor relief, the latter Study. two are matters for immediate action. There can be little doubt of their ultimate good effect. Under the suggestion, "legal provision", also, certain general statutory regulations may with safety be made. Beyond this, the more specific legal rules should grow out of experience with the present forms of administration and the trial of improved methods,- not out of theory or of practices in other states where conditions are inherently different. Decentralization - the placing of responsibility for the success of relief upon local authorities - is a very important principle. Strong central supervision of local relief policies is likewise a prime requisite for a good system. The proper balancing of the two opposing principles is to be obtained only through legal definition, based upon extensive experience and study.

Regulations requiring careful distinction between the use of outdoor relief and the almshouse, and governing commitment to state institutions, have been made the subjects of legislative action elsewhere.* The same is true concerning the curbing of bad practices of pensioning, and the coordination of the relief work of cities with that of the counties is much to be desired.

Smaller

There is one open question with regard to

Unit

the plan of county outdoor relief in this state.

Necessary. To be successful, outdoor relief must be very carefully

administered. If such is not the case, the counties should follow the leadership of the cities in abolishing outdoor relief, for it is fostering - not curing - pauperism. County courts, with their numerous other duties, are not adapted to the performance of this personal service of ministration. Furthermore, no one county official can efficiently administer outdoor relief over the extensive territory of a county. The required local care is sometimes supplied in the form of neighborly aid in the rural districts of Missouri, - but there is no regular, nor even conscious, cooperation with such private agencies on the part of county courts. The unit of administration must be made smaller if public outdoor relief is to become successful as a system. In states having township organization this is accomplished through the creation of township overseers of the poor, the county authorities acting merely as a board of control. But, lacking full township

*See especially the legal provisions of Indiana.

organization in Missouri, can there be a successful organization about local relief agencies in the towns within the counties? The idea seems impracticable. Can either of the two regularly elected township officials (justice of the peace and constable) in the county organization scheme of Missouri be adapted to the special work of outdoor relief? Or shall a special office be created? The latter plan seems scarcely warranted by the amount of relief given per township at present. The plan of using one of the existing township officers at least requires mature consideration. Attention is called to the fact that under the present law (R.S. 1899, sec. 8996) the condition of poor persons may be brought to the attention of the county court upon information of a justice of the peace. The need of better outdoor relief is certainly an important reason for the adoption of the township organization scheme, which is optional with the counties of Missouri.

Progressive In conclusion, let it be said that the im-
Adminis- provement of county outdoor relief in Missouri is
tration. largely a question of progressive public administra-
 tion. The immediate legislative action that has been
 suggested is necessary, but it is merely an auxiliary
 to make improvement of the public scheme possible.
 It is the work of the State Board of Charities and
 Correction, a representative body having as the primary
 purpose of their organization the improvement of the
 charitable and correctional agencies of Missouri, to

make any law that may be adopted effective in its application and, through helpful advisory relations with relief officials, to develop a proper elasticity within the legal restrictions. Nearly all the minor defects in the present system exist in only a portion of the counties, and the very commendable progress of a few could be used to great advantage by a supervisory officer constantly coming in contact with county authorities to make the improvement general. The employment, upon a sufficient salary, of an expert secretary of this Board to have immediate charge of the development of the system is the best possible guarantee of its success.

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