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COST OF LIVING IN BELGIAN TOWNS.

REPORT OF AN ENQUIRY

BY THE

BOARD OF TRADE

INTO

WORKING CLASS RENTS, HOUSING AND
RETAIL PRICES,

TOGETHER WITH THE

RATES OF WAGES

IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS

IN THE PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIAL TOWNS

OF

BELGIUM.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY MEMORANDUM AND A COMPARISON
CONDITIONS IN BELGIUM AND THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



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PREFATORY NOTE.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.

SIR,

THE present Report deals with the cost of living and the remuneration of the working classes in the principal industrial centres of Belgium, and contains information comparable, so far as possible, with that given for the United Kingdom in the Report on the Cost of Living of the Working Classes [Cd. 3864], issued by this Department in January, 1908; for Germany in the Report on the Cost of Living in German Towns [Cd. 4032], issued in the same year; and for France in the Report on the Cost of Living in French Towns [Cd. 4512], issued in 1909. The statistical material contained in these previous Reports related mainly to the same standard date, October, 1905, but in the case of Belgium the difficulties in the way of obtaining sufficiently complete information for that date rendered it necessary to choose the month of June, 1908, as the standard date. For reasons which are fully set out in Part II. of the General Report it does not appear that this difference in respect of dates affects appreciably the validity of the comparative results obtained.

The main subjects of investigation were the principal types of housing for the industrial population; the customary standards of accommodation and the rents commonly paid by working-class tenants; the kinds of food usually consumed by working-class families and the prices most generally paid; and the wages and hours of labour in the principal occupations in each town. In order to arrive at some estimate of the standard of living of the industrial classes of Belgium, over 1,850 budgets showing the expenditure on food by working-class families in a normal week, and representative of numerous occupations and of all grades of working-class incomes, were obtained from various towns, and an analysis of them is included in the present volume.

The general methods of investigation adopted have been fully indicated in the Prefatory Notes to the volumes on the United Kingdom and Germany; and it is here desirable only to express the cordial thanks of the Department to the Belgian Government (and in particular to the officials of the *Office du Travail*), to His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers in Belgium, to the municipal authorities and official Housing Committees of the various towns, to the officials of numerous trade unions, co-operative societies and associations for promoting social welfare, and to a large "multiple" firm and many retail tradesmen for valuable assistance rendered to the officers of the Department in the course of their enquiries.

The General Report which follows this Prefatory Note has been prepared on the same lines as the General Reports contained in the previous volumes of this series; and the same statistical methods have been utilised. In the first part of the General Report the data relating to the three principal subjects of enquiry—housing and rents, food prices, and wages and hours of labour in three comparable trades (building, engineering and printing) carried on to a greater or less extent in all the 15 towns investigated—are summarised, and the towns compared among themselves in respect of each of these matters. It will be observed that a broad distinction can be drawn between the towns, according to the racial characteristics of their inhabitants and the industrial occupations pursued by them. The Walloon towns of south-eastern Belgium contain the principal centres of the Belgian coal, metal, glass and small arms industries; whilst the Flemish towns of north-western Belgium are concerned mainly with the textile industries. The general rent level of the Walloon towns is a little above that of the Flemish towns; the rates of wages, in the industries selected for comparison, are higher—this was to be expected in view of the geographical distribution of industries, which has been mentioned; and the level of food prices is also somewhat higher, whilst, as appears from the analysis of the budgets, there are marked differences between the dietaries prevalent in the two districts.

In the second part of the General Report an attempt has been made, by the use of the same statistical methods, to compare the results of the present enquiry with those previously obtained for England and Wales in regard to rents and prices, and the

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.

SIR,

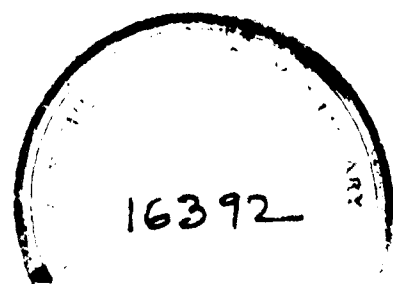
THE Volume which I have the honour to submit herewith is the fourth of a series containing the results of an investigation undertaken by the Board of Trade into certain matters affecting the condition of the working classes in industrial towns in various countries.

The present Report refers to Belgium, and is based upon the results of an enquiry which extended to fifteen of the principal towns in that country.

I have, &c.,

H. LLEWELLYN SMITH.

24th February, 1910.



wages in certain occupations in the building, engineering and printing trades, which are practically identical in character in both countries. The difficulties in the way of such a comparison, and the limitations to which the results obtained are subject, have been fully set out in the Prefatory Notes to the previous Reports; and it is necessary in this place only to emphasise the fact that such results can at best be only approximate, and must be regarded as liable to many qualifications arising, for example, in the case of prices from differences of kind or of quality between the articles consumed in the various countries under comparison, or in the case of rents from differences in the kind of accommodation.

In the present instance, however, this latter limitation scarcely applies. Tenement houses of a large size are infrequent in the Belgian towns, and the predominant type of housing accommodation there, as in England and Wales, is the small self-contained house or cottage, though the number of rooms in such a dwelling occupied by a Belgian family of the artisan class is generally less than in that occupied by an English family of the same class. Large rooms are, however, more prevalent, and rents are much lower; if allowance be made for the element of local rates included in the English rents, the predominant rents paid in Belgian towns are only about three-quarters of those paid in English towns for a corresponding amount of accommodation.

As regards prices, on the other hand, there does not appear to be any such marked difference, the general level in Belgian industrial towns being only slightly below that prevalent in similar towns of England and Wales. Consequently, on the assumption which has been adopted for these international comparisons, it follows that an English workman, with an average family, who should go to Belgium and endeavour to maintain there his accustomed mode of living, would find his expenditure on housing, food and fuel slightly diminished. But at the same time, so far as can be judged from the trades selected for international comparison, he would find his wages reduced by about one-third, in spite of much longer hours.

I have, &c.,

G. R. ASKWITH.

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GENERAL REPORT.

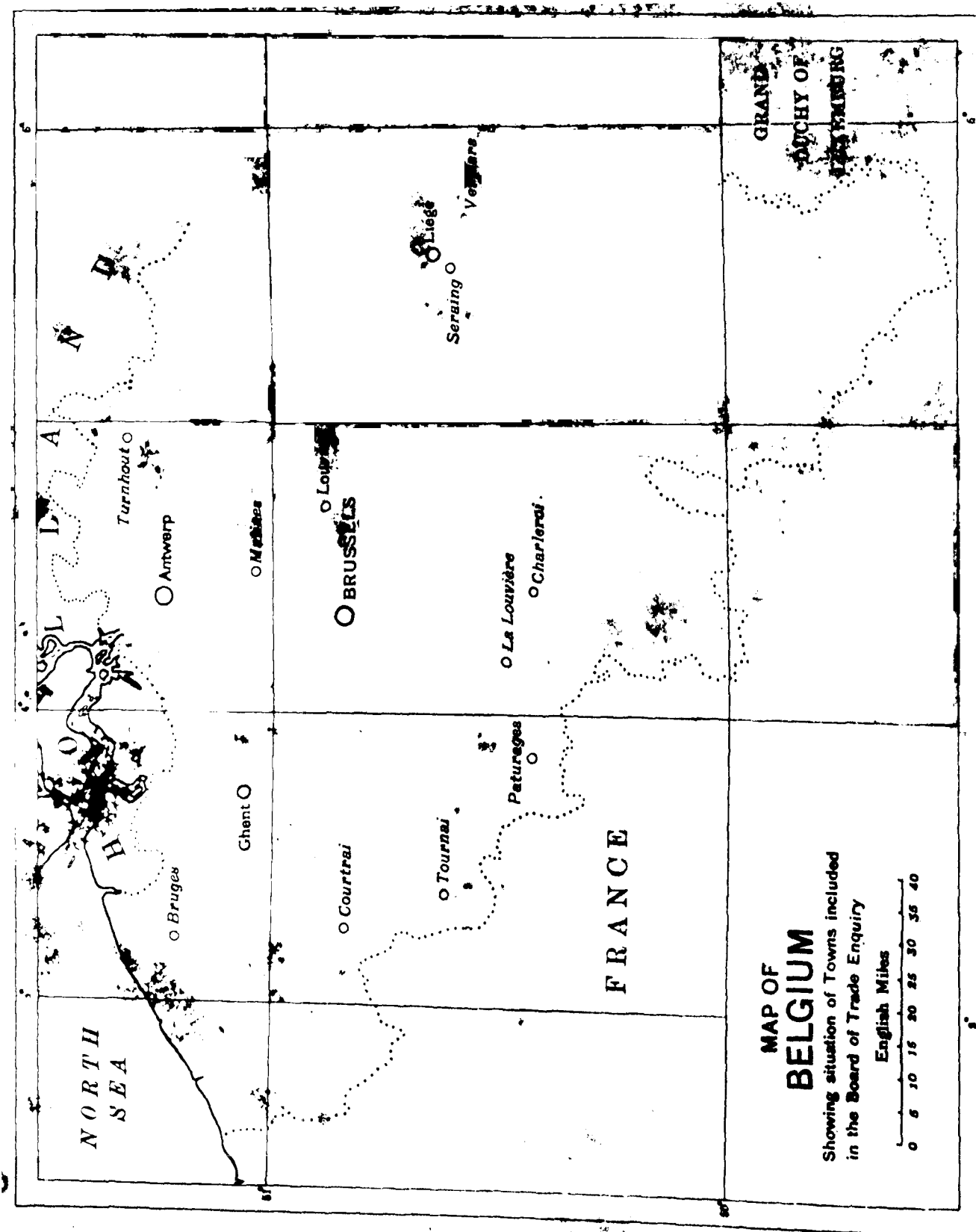
The present volume contains the results of an Enquiry undertaken by the Board of Trade into the condition of the working classes in certain of the chief industrial towns of Belgium, with especial reference to the customary types and rents of working-class dwellings, the prices usually paid by the working classes for food and fuel, their standard of living (as shown by a large number of family budgets), and wages and hours of labour. For the purposes of this enquiry the investigators of the Board visited 15 towns, containing an aggregate of about 1,680,000 inhabitants; the populations range from 630,000 in Greater Brussels and 311,000 in Antwerp to 21,000 in La Louvière and 11,500 in Paturages. But whilst the majority of the towns investigated are comparatively small—besides Brussels and Antwerp only two, Liège and Ghent, have populations exceeding 100,000, and three-fifths have less than 50,000 inhabitants—the numbers stated do not indicate the full extent of the industrial population dealt with in this Report. In several important instances, such as Liège, Charleroi, La Louvière and Paturages, the towns to which the enquiries primarily related are the centres of more or less extensive areas throughout which practically the same economic conditions prevail; Courtrai and Verviers are surrounded by smaller communes engaged in the same industries; and at Antwerp and Ghent there are important suburbs which are only administratively and not topographically or socially distinct.

The large amount of original statistical material relating to rents, prices and wages and hours, which was collected in the course of the enquiry is set out in detail in the reports relating to the individual towns, and is summarised in part in this General Report; but much information was also obtained (and is included in the separate town reports) as to the general conditions of industrial life in Belgium, including such matters as the distribution of occupations and organisation of industry, workmen's associations, co-operative societies, experiments in housing reform, urban sanitation and other public services, vital statistics and local taxation.

The industrial occupations dealt with in the separate reports include coal mining, metal working and engineering, the various branches of the building trade, the textile trades (cottons, woollens and worsted, silk, linen, lace and clothing), the manufacture of small arms, glass making, diamond cutting, woodworking and furnishing, paper making, printing, sugar refining, brewing, the tobacco industry, the chemical industries, dock labour, various municipal employments and miscellaneous occupations.

The present Report is the fourth of a series issued by the Board of Trade, and containing the results of other investigations conducted on similar lines; the volumes already issued relate to the United Kingdom (Cd. 3864; 1908), Germany (Cd. 4032; 1908) and France (Cd. 4512; 1909). In order that the results obtained for the individual countries might be as comparable as possible, the information collected for these three volumes related mainly to the same standard date (October, 1905); but in the case of Belgium it proved impracticable to obtain information for that date of a sufficiently detailed and comprehensive character. Consequently for the investigation in the Belgian towns the month of June, 1908, was adopted as the date to which the information to be collected should relate; but from such evidence as is available it is apparent that in wages and rents the differences between prevailing levels in October, 1905, and June, 1908, were so slight as to be scarcely appreciable. Accordingly the data collected on these heads in Belgium and relating to June, 1908, may properly be regarded as comparable with those collected in the United Kingdom, Germany and France for October, 1905; as regards prices, some caution is necessary, as the prices of some commodities appear to have altered appreciably (*cf.* p. xxxi).

The purpose of this General Report is to summarise the results arrived at in regard to the three main heads of the enquiry—rents, prices, and wages and hours, and to compare the Belgian towns among themselves in these respects, and to make such comparisons as may be possible with the results reached in a similar manner for the towns of England and Wales.



PART I.—REPORT ON BELGIAN CONDITIONS.

(i) HOUSING AND RENTS.

In order to ascertain the rents usually paid for the kinds of dwellings which are generally occupied by the industrial working classes in Belgium, information was obtained from various sources, but the bulk of the rent returns were collected for the purposes of this enquiry directly from the tenants themselves. In each town a number of houses were visited by the investigators of the Board of Trade, in order that some account might be given of the prevalent standard and character of housing accommodation.

The types of housing found in the Belgian towns investigated present on the whole great uniformity, and approximate somewhat closely to those which prevail in English industrial towns; that is to say, the small house occupied by one or two families is the predominant type, whilst tenement houses play only a very small part, and even where they exist, are rarely of large size. In this connexion it must be remembered that the majority of the towns investigated were relatively small, with populations not exceeding 50,000; and that in a number of them, such as Seraing, Turnhout, La Louvière and Paturages, the conditions are still of a semi-rural character.

Tenement houses appear to be of importance only in Antwerp, where there are a number which are considerable in size, in some parts of Greater Brussels, in the centre of Liège, to a small extent at Charleroi, at Tournai, and particularly at Verviers, where this style of building seems to have been determined by topographical conditions, which cause the town to be the only one investigated in which tenement houses containing four or more families constitute practically the sole type of working-class dwellings. Six-roomed houses, divided between two families, are reported to be the prevailing type of working-class housing at Antwerp; four-roomed houses occupied by two families are common in Brussels; at Liège the two rooms forming the upper floor of a four-roomed house are commonly sub-let; but even in these towns the separate house of one or two floors, containing usually from two to four rooms with appurtenances, and in the occupation of a single family, is frequently to be found, and elsewhere it may be regarded as the representative type. Usually such houses have a loft or attic, in addition to the habitable rooms, and a cellar; and in the smaller towns they frequently possess a small yard or garden. It may be remarked that in Paturages, which still retains in its appearance many of the characteristics of a large village, a very considerable proportion of the houses are owned by their occupiers.

As regards the standard of accommodation, as distinct from its kind, in Greater Brussels four-fifths of the dwellings occupied by the working classes consist simply of one or two habitable rooms, whilst in Brussels City nearly one-half are of only one room: one-roomed dwellings are also of some importance at Liège and Verviers. In Antwerp, on the other hand, dwellings containing three rooms constitute the largest class, although those with two and four rooms respectively are also numerous. Two-roomed dwellings are found in large numbers at Bruges, Charleroi, Liège, Louvain, Paturages, Seraing, Tournai, Turnhout and Verviers; dwellings consisting of three rooms are of importance at Bruges, Ghent, Paturages, Seraing, Turnhout, and Verviers; whilst four-roomed dwellings, frequent in Bruges, Charleroi, Ghent, Louvain, Malines, Paturages, Tournai and Verviers, are said to be almost general in Courtrai and La Louvière. Dwellings of even larger size, containing five or six rooms, are found in Ghent and Malines; but they cannot be regarded as in any way typical of working-class housing in Belgian industrial towns.

Whilst, however, the types of housing approximate to those of the English working classes, the sanitary conditions which prevail in the Belgian towns investigated can only be described as unsatisfactory. In the large towns, such as Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent and Liège, and even in such relatively small towns as Courtrai, Louvain, Seraing and Tournai, many small houses are crowded together in courts and blind alleys lying behind the houses which front on to the streets; the small size of the houses prevents some of the worst results of this system from making their appearance, but nevertheless the arrangement is open to obvious objections. Moreover, the equipment of working-class dwellings, in respect of water-supply and sanitary conveniences, is almost everywhere

totally inadequate, when judged by even a moderate standard. Only a very small proportion of them possess a separate water-supply; even at Brussels the inhabitants of working-class dwellings are nearly always compelled to fetch water for domestic use from outside the houses, from pumps in the yards or more or less distant stand-pipes in the streets, and frequently to obtain it from wells; and these unsatisfactory conditions are intensified in some of the smaller towns.

The rents most usually paid in each town for dwellings of various sizes are set out in the separate town reports, and also in Appendix II. (p. 180). From the data given in that Appendix, which are based on rent quotations obtained in this enquiry for about 32,000 working-class dwellings, the following Table has been constructed to show the predominant range of rents for dwellings of the various sizes occupied generally by the Belgian working classes. The rents do not include any element of local taxation, or, as a rule, any charge for water (since it is only rarely that a separate supply is laid on to a working-class house or tenement). The nature and extent of local taxation, so far as it affects the classes to whom this Report relates, will be examined later.

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings in Belgium.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.	Number of Towns to which the figures relate.	Predominant Range of Weekly Rents.	Number of Towns in which the Mean Rent is		
			Within the limits of the Predominant Range.	Below the limits of the Predominant Range.	Above the limits of the Predominant Range.
Two rooms	12	1s. 9d. to 2s. 3d.	6	3	3
Three rooms	11	2s. 2d. to 2s. 10d.	6	3	2
Four rooms	12	2s. 8d. to 3s. 6d.	8	2	2

From this Table it will be seen that the two-roomed tenement was found to be an important type of working-class dwelling in 12 out of the 15 towns investigated, and four-roomed dwellings in an equal number, whilst three-roomed tenements were conspicuous in almost as many towns.

It has already been remarked that in Brussels tenements of more than two rooms are seldom occupied by the working classes; it is, therefore, impossible to compare directly the rents paid for tenements of various sizes in the capital with those charged for similar accommodation elsewhere, except in the case of two-roomed tenements, for which the mean rent in Brussels is 3s. 0½d., and in the rest of Belgium 2s. In the case of Antwerp, however, rents are quoted for working-class dwellings containing two, three, and four rooms respectively, and the difference between the rents prevailing in that city and elsewhere in Belgium is very marked. Thus, whilst the mean rent for two rooms at Antwerp is 3s. 2½d., in the other towns as a whole it is 2s.; for three rooms the respective mean rents are 3s. 9½d. and 2s. 6d., and for four rooms 4s. 3d. in Antwerp and 3s. 1d. in the rest of Belgium.

In order to compare the rent levels of the various towns between themselves, making due allowance for the varying degrees of importance of the different sizes of dwellings, the following method was adopted. The means of the predominant rents for each class of dwellings in the whole of Belgium, given in the Table above, were taken as a base, and the ratios of the mean predominant rents in each town to the mean predominant rents for all Belgium were worked out; the average of the ratios for any town gave an index number for the town as compared with the predominant level for all the towns investigated. The resultant index number for Brussels was then taken as a basis and the index numbers for the other towns adjusted accordingly. In the following Table the index numbers so

calculated are given, showing the relative level of rents in each of the Belgian towns investigated as compared with Brussels, the predominant rents in the capital being taken as the base (=100).

Rent Index Numbers in Descending Order.

Town.	Index Number.	Town.	Index Number.	Town.	Index Number.
Brussels	100	Tournai	74	Bruges	59
Antwerp	99	Louvain	65	Courtrai	58
Liège	88	Ghent	63	Malines	52
La Louvière	75	Verviers	61	Turnhout	44
Charleroi	74	Seraing	59	Paturages	43

It will be seen that there is practically no difference between the rent levels of Brussels and Antwerp, and that rents at Liège, the next largest town, are 12 per cent. lower than at Brussels, but considerably higher than at any of the other towns included in the investigation. At Ghent, which is the fourth town in point of population and only slightly smaller than Liège, rents are low (37 per cent. less than those prevalent at Brussels), and, in fact, except in the three largest towns, there appears to be no relation between the size of a town and its comparative rent level. Thus La Louvière and Charleroi, which are small towns, have high rent index numbers, which may be due to the fact that each is a centre of an extensive industrial area; Bruges and Malines, on the other hand, which are large towns more or less isolated, have relatively low index numbers.

If Brussels and Antwerp be excluded, it is possible to divide the towns investigated in the course of this enquiry into two groups, according to the racial characteristics of their populations, whether Walloon or Flemish. The Walloon country includes south-eastern Belgium, and therefore the towns of Liège, Seraing, Verviers, La Louvière, Charleroi and Paturages (*see* Map given as frontispiece to this volume). Tournai, though situated in what is officially regarded as the Walloon country, is a Flemish-speaking town, and has consequently been included for the purposes of this enquiry in the Flemish country (or north-western Belgium), which includes also Courtrai, Louvain, Ghent, Malines, Bruges and Turnhout. It will be observed that the centres of the metal, coal-mining, glass and small arms industries are in the Walloon districts, whilst the centres of the textile trades are in the Flemish districts, with the important exception of Verviers which is industrially isolated. Antwerp is (so far as the working classes are concerned) a Flemish town, but it is so much larger than any of the other Flemish towns that it appeared advisable to treat it separately; and Brussels, as the capital city, also stands by itself. The rent index number being 100 for Brussels and 99 for Antwerp, the mean index number for the "Walloon towns" is 67, and for the "other Flemish towns" 59.

In connexion with housing conditions and rents, it may be pointed out that, owing to the cheapness of travel both by workmen's trains and on the system of light railways which has been so extensively developed in Belgium, many workmen live at a considerable distance from their place of employment. Thus the greater number of workmen engaged in the building trades in Brussels are said to travel in daily from more or less distant villages, and workmen come in daily even from Louvain, which is 18 miles distant. From Tournai it is reported that these facilities have induced many workmen to settle in the surrounding villages; and at Seraing and Liège there are stated to be large numbers of artisans who are in the towns (living in lodging-houses) from Monday to Saturday, but return to their own homes for the week-ends. In other towns also it is apparent that the provision of cheap means of transit has facilitated the distribution of population over a comparatively wide area.

Housing by Public Enterprise and by Employers.—Under the terms of a law enacted in 1889, and regulations made by royal decree in 1895, Housing Committees (*Comités de Patronage*), consisting of persons nominated by the central and provincial governments, are established in every administrative district to study the housing conditions of the working classes and all matters connected therewith, and to facilitate the construction and renting of healthy dwellings and their sale, either for a single payment or for payments distributed over a series of years. The Committees receive grants of public money, and may also accept gifts and bequests. The Law further provides that the National Savings and Superannuation Fund may invest part of its funds in loans for the construction or purchase of working-class dwellings; but individuals desirous of obtaining loans can do so only through a recognised society established for the purpose (the full text of the Law and of the supplementary royal decree is given in Appendix VII, pp. 197–201). In nearly all of the towns included in this enquiry societies have been formed, sometimes with municipal assistance (as, for example, at Brussels and Courtrai), to take advantage of the provisions of this law: details of their organization and mode of working will be found in the separate town reports; but it will be seen that their operations have not hitherto, as a rule, been on a large scale, Liège (p. 104) being, perhaps, the most conspicuous instance to the contrary. Housing reform enterprises working independently of the Law of 1889 are comparatively rare; they are to be found at Liège, Tournai and Verviers, but in these cases also their operations are very limited.

Housing of workpeople by employers exists only on a small scale. The most noticeable instances are at Seraing, where one large firm has erected a very considerable number of houses, which are gradually acquired by its employees, and another firm lets houses either at very low rents or rent-free to its workpeople, giving those not so provided for an extra allowance as rent-money. At La Louvière there are a fair number of houses owned by the proprietors of collieries and other works, but in other places housing by employers is on so small a scale as to be quite unimportant.

Local Taxation.—The municipal revenues of the Belgian towns are derived mainly from (i) grants by the central government, the principal one being as compensation for the loss of revenue consequent upon the abolition of the *octroi* duties in 1860; (ii.) tolls and dues, rents and proceeds of municipal enterprises where they exist; and (iii.) local taxation. This last is levied (apart from miscellaneous taxes which are in the nature of licences) in the form of additions to certain state taxes—the land tax (*impôt foncier*) on the rental value of land and houses built thereon, and the *contribution personnelle et mobilière*, which is a tax payable by every householder and estimated on the rental value of his dwelling, the number of doors and windows, the value of his furniture, &c. This is, then, a tenants' tax, but the Housing Laws of 1889 and 1893 provide for the exemption from it of all workpeople who occupy, either as owners or as tenants of a non-resident landlord, dwellings whose assessed rental value does not exceed an amount which varies with the size of the town, the maximum being £6 16s. 10d. The relation between the assessed value and the actual rent is not uniform from town to town; but the result of these provisions is that very few working-class occupiers pay any direct taxation at all. Thus in Brussels and Antwerp the great bulk of working-class rents are below the tax limit; at Ghent and Bruges it is stated that all occupiers of working-class dwellings are, in fact, exempt; and in the other towns investigated the proportion of the working classes which pays local taxes is undoubtedly very small. The extent to which the taxes payable by the landlords are shifted on to the tenant is another matter, and one in regard to which it is impossible to form any estimate.

(ii.) BUDGETS AND RETAIL PRICES.

Budgets of Working-class Families.

For the purposes of this enquiry a large number of forms asking for particulars of the weekly income of a workman and his wife and children living at home, and their expenditure on rent and food in an ordinary week, were distributed by means of trade unions, and in other ways, in the various Belgian towns dealt with in this Report. After a certain number had been rejected on account of the insufficiency of the information given, or for other reasons, there remained 1,859 available for statistical purposes. Of these 318 were obtained from Brussels, 367 from Antwerp, 671 from other Flemish

towns, and 503 from Walloon towns. The next Table shows the distribution of these budgets among the various industrial occupations:—

Industry.	Number of Budgets.	Industry.	Number of Budgets.
Metal working and Engineering ...	500	<i>Brought forward</i> ...	1,589
Woodworking ...	227	Clothing ...	47
Textiles ...	156	Paper, Cardboard, Indiarubber ...	19
Building and Works of Construction...	139	Chemicals ...	5
Trade, Warehousing and Commerce...	136	Straw, Feathers, &c. ...	4
Food, Drink and Tobacco ...	113	Factory Hands, unspecified ...	40
Stone, Brick, Earthenware, Pottery, and Glass.	92	Labourers, unspecified ...	68
Printing and Bookbinding ...	89	Others unclassified ...	87
Mining and Quarrying ...	76		
Skin and Leather (including Boots and Shoes and Gloves).	61		
		Total ...	1,859

The next Table shows the distribution of the budgets according to family income:—

Amount of Weekly Income per Family.	Number of Budgets.
Under 20s. ...	315
20s. and under 25s. ...	500
25s. " 30s. ...	362
30s. " 35s. ...	247
35s. " 40s. ...	152
40s. and over ...	283

In order to show the extent to which the total family income is due to the earnings of the husband, and to the supplementary earnings of the wife and children living at home, the following Table gives the average family income in each of the above classes, and the average amount contributed thereto in each case by the husband, wife, and children respectively:—

	Limits of Weekly Family Income.					
	Under 20s.	20s. and under 25s.	25s. and under 30s.	30s. and under 35s.	35s. and under 40s.	40s. and over.
Average number of children living at home.	2.16	2.32	2.52	2.96	3.27	3.94
Average family income:—						
Husband ...	s. d. 15 6½	s. d. 19 5½	s. d. 21 2½	s. d. 22 4½	s. d. 23 6½	s. d. 25 7½
Wife ...	s. d. 1 4	s. d. 1 11	s. d. 2 11½	s. d. 3 4½	s. d. 2 8½	s. d. 2 6½
Children ...	s. d. 0 6	s. d. 1 1½	s. d. 3 3½	s. d. 6 3½	s. d. 10 9½	s. d. 23 10½
Total ...	s. d. 17 4½	s. d. 22 5½	s. d. 27 5½	s. d. 32 0½	s. d. 37 0½	s. d. 52 1½

The joint contribution of the wife and children is thus important throughout, but its proportion to the total family income is most striking in the three highest income classes, in which it ranges from 30.2 to 50.8 per cent. The wife's share ranges from 4.9 per cent. in the highest class to 10.7 in the class with incomes of 25s. and under 30s.: this latter level is nearly maintained in the next higher class also, where it is 10.5 per cent., so that the wife's contribution is both actually and relatively largest in the two middle income

groups. The share contributed by children living at home is just under 3 per cent. in the lowest income group and 5 per cent. in the next; it then rises with great rapidity, being 12 per cent., 19.7 per cent., 29.1 per cent. in the three following groups and 45.9 per cent. in the group with 40s. and over. In this last class, however, the average number of children living at home is considerably in excess of the highest average in any other income group.

The following Tables show the general results of the analysis of the budgets. The first gives the average, for each income class, of the receipts and detailed expenditure upon food by the working-class families to which the returns relate, whilst the second sets out the quantities of the various commodities consumed. All children living at home, whatever their age, have been included.

Average Weekly Expenditure on Certain Articles of Food consumed by Workmen's Families in Belgian Towns, 1908-9.

Limits of Weekly Income ...	Under 20s.	20s. and under 25s.	25s. and under 30s.	30s. and under 35s.	35s. and under 40s.	40s. and above.
Number of Returns ...	315	500	362	247	152	283
Average Weekly Family Income	s. d. 17 4½	s. d. 22 5½	s. d. 27 5½	s. d. 32 0½	s. d. 37 0½	s. d. 52 1½
Average Number of Children Living at Home.	2.16	2.32	2.52	2.96	3.27	3.94
Bread ...	s. d. 2 7	s. d. 2 10	s. d. 3 1½	s. d. 3 8½	s. d. 4 0½	s. d. 4 8½
Macaroni ...	0 0½	0 0½	0 1	0 1½	0 1½	0 1½
Wheat flour and buckwheat flour	0 0½	0 0½	0 1½	0 1½	0 1½	0 1½
Rice, barley, oatmeal, and potato meal.	0 1½	0 1½	0 2½	0 2½	0 2½	0 3½
Potatoes ...	0 11½	0 11½	1 0½	1 1½	1 3½	1 5
Salad ...	0 0½	0 0½	0 0½	0 1	0 1	0 1½
Haricots ...	0 1½	0 1½	0 1½	0 2½	0 2½	0 3
Peas ...	0 1	0 1½	0 1½	0 1½	0 2	0 2½
Other vegetables	0 2½	0 3½	0 5	0 5	0 6½	0 7½
Beef ...	1 1½	1 4½	1 7½	2 0½	2 3½	3 4
Veal ...	0 1	0 1½	0 2½	0 3½	0 4½	0 6½
Mutton ...	0 1	0 1½	0 2½	0 2½	0 2½	0 3½
Fresh pork ...	0 4½	0 7	0 8½	0 9½	0 11	1 3½
Horseflesh ...	0 3	0 3	0 4	0 4½	0 4½	0 4
Poultry ...	—	0 0½	0 0½	0 0½	0 1	0 1½
Rabbits ...	—	0 0½	0 1½	0 1½	0 2½	0 3½
Fish ...	0 3½	0 4	0 4½	0 5	0 6½	0 7½
Charcuterie ...	0 2½	0 4½	0 5½	0 5½	0 6½	0 9½
Bacon ...	0 4½	0 5½	0 6	0 7½	0 8	0 10
Lard, suet, and dripping	0 5	0 5	0 4½	0 5½	0 4½	0 6
Butter and butter substitutes	1 5	1 10½	2 3½	2 7½	3 1	4 3
Olive oil ...	0 0½	0 0½	0 0½	0 0½	0 0½	0 1½
Eggs ...	0 2½	0 5	0 7	0 7½	0 8½	1 3½
Milk ...	0 6½	0 7½	0 8½	0 9½	0 9	1 0
Cheese ...	0 1½	0 2½	0 3½	0 3½	0 4½	0 6½
Coffee ...	0 5½	0 7½	0 8	0 8½	0 10	1 1
Chicory ...	0 1½	0 2	0 2	0 2½	0 2½	0 2½
Sugar ...	0 2	0 3	0 3½	0 3½	0 4	0 5
Other items	0 2½	0 4½	0 6½	0 7½	0 9	0 11½
Meals away from home...	0 9½	1 2½	1 6½	1 9½	2 2½	3 0½
Total (excluding wine, cider, and beer).	11 5½	14 6½	17 5½	19 10½	22 8	29 8½
Wine, cider, and beer ...	0 2½	0 4½	0 6	0 7½	0 8½	1 2½
Total (including wine, cider, and beer).	11 8½	14 11½	17 11½	20 6	23 4½	30 10½

Average Weekly Quantity of certain Articles of Food consumed by Workmen's Families in Belgian Towns, 1908-9.

Limits of Weekly Income ...	Under 20s.	20s. and under 25s.	25s. and under 30s.	30s. and under 35s.	35s. and under 40s.	40s. and above.
Number of Returns ...	315	500	362	247	152	283
Average Weekly Family Income	s. d. 17 4½	s. d. 22 5½	s. d. 27 5½	s. d. 32 0½	s. d. 37 0½	s. d. 52 1½
Average Number of Children Living at Home.	2·16	2·32	2·52	2·96	3·27	3·94
Bread ...	lb. 27·26	lb. 29·57	lb. 32·28	lb. 37·82	lb. 41·18	lb. 48·12
Macaroni ...	0·17	0·26	0·34	0·38	0·49	0·58
Wheat flour and buckwheat flour	0·31	0·55	0·90	0·76	0·86	1·02
Rice, barley, oatmeal, and potato meal.	0·77	1·00	1·20	1·11	1·23	1·66
Potatoes ...	28·99	29·69	30·93	34·14	37·75	42·36
Haricots ...	0·64	0·87	0·98	1·22	1·37	1·48
Peas ...	0·57	0·73	0·81	0·97	1·01	1·52
Beef ...	1·79	2·11	2·53	3·11	3·46	4·92
Veal ...	0·11	0·20	0·27	0·38	0·47	0·68
Mutton ...	0·13	0·23	0·30	0·30	0·36	0·44
Fresh pork ...	0·61	0·87	1·01	1·13	1·34	1·87
Horseflesh ...	0·60	0·57	0·76	0·84	0·79	0·79
Poultry ...	—	0·02	0·09	0·09	0·11	0·19
Rabbits ...	—	0·09	0·22	0·24	0·29	0·40
Fish ...	1·13	1·20	1·30	1·46	1·81	2·17
Charcuterie ...	0·32	0·47	0·58	0·66	0·71	1·06
Bacon ...	0·58	0·69	0·78	0·95	1·03	1·28
Total Meat and Fish ...	5·27	6·45	7·84	9·16	10·37	13·80
Lard, suet and dripping ...	0·66	0·66	0·63	0·75	0·62	0·81
Butter and butter substitutes ...	1·35	1·76	2·19	2·49	2·85	3·96
Olive oil ...	0·03	0·07	0·09	0·10	0·12	0·23
Eggs ...	No. 2·7	No. 5·0	No. 6·9	No. 7·6	No. 8·3	No. 14·4
Milk ...	pints. 6·20	pints. 7·29	pints. 7·83	pints. 8·69	pints. 8·36	pints. 11·11
Cheese ...	lb. 0·24	lb. 0·36	lb. 0·48	lb. 0·55	lb. 0·62	lb. 0·88
Coffee ...	0·74	0·96	1·02	1·14	1·25	1·57
Chicory ...	0·94	0·97	1·00	1·08	1·13	1·31
Sugar ...	0·67	0·96	1·17	1·18	1·33	1·68

The next Table shows the proportions of the family income in each group which are spent on food and rent respectively :—

Percentage of Weekly Income spent on Food and Rent.

	Limits of Weekly Family Income.					
	Under 20s.	20s. and under 25s.	25s. and under 30s.	30s. and under 35s.	35s. and under 40s.	40s. and above.
Percentage of Family Income spent on Food (excluding wine and beer).	66·1	64·8	63·6	62·1	61·2	57·0
Percentage of Family Income spent on Rent	13·2	12·4	11·6	11·2	10·5	8·6

Thus the percentages of family income spent on food and rent both diminish as the income rises, but this decline is very gradual except when we pass to the highest income group. After meeting expenditure on food and rent 20·7 per cent. of the total income remains over in the lowest income group, and the proportion rises gradually to 28·3 in the highest group but one, and to 34·4 in the group with incomes of 40s. and over. It may

be remarked that the percentage of family income spent on food is slightly higher in the Flemish towns (excluding Brussels but including Antwerp) than in the Walloon towns—it is 63·1 per cent. as compared with 60·6. As the percentage spent on rent is also higher, 11·2 compared with 8·9, the margin of income over food and expenditure is appreciably less in the Flemish than in the Walloon towns, 25·7 in contrast with 30·5.

Bread.—Practically only white bread of good quality is eaten by the Belgian working classes; the average family consumption, as shown by the budgets, ranges from 27½ lb. in the lowest income group to 41½ in the highest group but one, and to a little over 48 lb. in the highest group, where, however, the number of children living at home is unusually large.

There is a small consumption of wheat and buckwheat flour, rising from a little over ¼ lb. in the lowest income group to 1 lb. in the highest group; but there is little home baking. In regard to the bread supply an important part is played in many of the towns by the co-operative bakeries, which are noticed in the town reports.

Potatoes.—The weekly consumption of potatoes is exceptionally large, rising steadily from 29 lb. in the lowest income group to 42½ lb. in the highest group. In the two lowest groups it even exceeds slightly the consumption of bread, and in the others it approximates very closely. It is noteworthy that whilst in the Walloon towns the average amount of bread consumed is slightly greater than in the Flemish towns, the position is reversed in regard to potatoes, the average weekly consumption being considerably the larger in the Flemish towns.

Vegetables.—The average weekly consumption of *haricots*, of the hard-dried bean kind, rises gradually from ⅔ lb. to 1½ lb. with the increase in income and in the size of the family; so also does that of *peas*, from a little more than ½ lb. to 1½ lb. The average expenditure on *other vegetables*, for which it was impossible to obtain quantities, is not very large; in the lowest income group it is 2¾d. a week, and it increases to 7¾d. in the highest group.

Meat.—The following Table, based on the budgets, shows the respective proportions of the various kinds of meat to the total of all kinds consumed :—

Percentage of Total Weekly Consumption of Meat.									
Beef.	Veal.	Mutton.	Pork.	Horseflesh.	Poultry.	Rabbits.	Charcuterie.	Bacon.	Total.
40·8	4·6	4·1	15·7	10·1	1·0	2·7	8·8	12·2	100

It will be seen that beef and veal constitute nearly one-half (45·4 per cent.) of the total amount consumed, whilst fresh pork, bacon and *charcuterie* account for more than one-third (36·7). Thus four-fifths of the meat diet of the Belgian working-classes consists of beef, veal and pork, whilst horseflesh constitutes an additional 10 per cent. The insignificant consumption of mutton is very noticeable.

The total consumption of meat of all kinds (including fish, of which the average amount rises from 1·13 lb. to 2·17 lb.), as shown by the budgets, increases from 5½ lb. in the lowest income group to 10½ lb. in the highest group but one, and to 13½ lb. in the group with incomes of 40s. and over, where the number of children living at home is much larger than in any other group, and their ages correspondingly higher.

The percentage of weekly income which is spent on meat and fish is, however, curiously uniform; it is shown in the following table :—

Limits of Weekly Family Income.	Percentage spent on Meat of all kinds, and Fish.
Under 20s. ...	16·1
20s. and under 25s. ...	16·3
25s. " " 30s. ...	16·7
30s. " " 35s. ...	16·6
35s. " " 40s. ...	16·8
40s. and over ...	16·1

The average consumption of meat per head (as indicated in the budgets) shows marked variation from town to town, but nowhere is it very large. The maximum annual consumption, as estimated on the budgets, is 88 lb. at Charleroi and Brussels, 84 lb. at both La Louvière and Antwerp, and 81 lb. at Paturages; it will be noticed that three out of the five towns which are highest in the scale are important centres of

the mining industry. The smallest consumptions shown by the budgets are 43 lb. at Bruges, 60 lb. at Turnhout, 62 lb. at Malines and 63 lb. at Tournai. In the other towns the average annual consumption ranges from 70 lb. to 78 lb.

The highest proportionate consumption of *beef* appears at Paturages, where it amounts to 59 per cent. of the total consumption stated in the budgets; it is 57 per cent. at Bruges, Ghent and Tournai, and 50 per cent. at Turnhout. It is 46 per cent. at Charleroi, and in the other towns the range is from 40 per cent. to 31½ per cent. It thus appears that beef constitutes a relatively more important part of the meat diet of the working classes in the Flemish parts than it does in the Walloon districts. *Veal* constitutes 13 per cent. of the meat consumption at Tournai and 11½ per cent. at Verviers; in no other town does it reach 7 per cent. and at Ghent it is only 1 per cent. The proportion of fresh *pork* is largest at Louvain, where it is 27 per cent., at Ghent it is 25 per cent.; in the other towns the range is from 19 per cent. to 9 per cent. The consumption of *bacon* is relatively greatest at Seraing, where it amounts to 25 per cent.; it is 22 per cent. at Liège, 17 per cent. at Verviers, 16 per cent. at Turnhout, 15 per cent. at Louvain and 14 per cent. at Charleroi; in four towns it is between 13 and 11 per cent., and then drops to 4 per cent. at Ghent, 3 per cent. at Bruges, 2½ per cent. at Paturages, and 2 per cent. at Tournai. On the whole it is much larger in the Walloon than in the Flemish towns. *Charcuterie* (various prepared meats, sausage, &c.) represents 15 per cent. of the total meat consumption at Verviers, and 14 per cent. at Louvain and Seraing, whilst at Charleroi and Antwerp it is 10 per cent.; it then gradually declines until it is only 4 per cent. at La Louvière. The proportion of *mutton* ranges from approximately 8 per cent. at Brussels to 1 per cent. at Ghent and Louvain and *nil* at Turnhout.

The consumption of *horseflesh* reaches its maximum at Antwerp, where it amounts to 19 per cent.; it is 16 per cent. at La Louvière, 15½ per cent. at Malines and 15 per cent. at Turnhout; on the other hand it is insignificant, less than 1 per cent., at Verviers, Tournai and Bruges. In the other towns it ranges from 5 to 10½ per cent. For the best cuts prices from 5½d. to 7d. a lb. are recorded, the lowest price being 2½d. Though the inferior cuts are very cheap, there is no evidence that the consumption of horseflesh is due to this fact to any appreciable extent; it is largely a matter of local custom and taste. *Rabbits* form a somewhat important article of diet at La Louvière, where they form 9 per cent. of the total meat consumption shown by the budgets, and at Bruges (8 per cent.); at Brussels they constitute 5 per cent. and at Malines 4 per cent. of the meat consumed; in nine towns they are 2 per cent. or less, whilst at Seraing they do not appear at all. *Poultry* is quite insignificant, being 3 per cent. at Seraing, 2½ per cent. at Brussels, and in the other towns less than 2 per cent. (in Bruges, Ghent and Louvain it does not appear).

Turning to other articles, it will be observed that the consumption of *butter* (including some amount of *margarine*) rises somewhat rapidly from 1½ lb. in the lowest income group to 4 lb. in the highest group, the expenditure rising in almost exactly the same proportion. The *per capita* consumption of all *fats* (including butter, margarine, lard, suet and dripping) is very much larger in the Walloon than in the Flemish districts, and in the former two mining towns, Paturages and Charleroi, head the list.

The average number of *eggs* per week ranges from 2·7 in the lowest income-group to 8·3 in the highest group but one, and to 14·4 in the group with 40s. and over. In this instance there is a marked difference between the two racial groups, the weekly *per capita* consumption of eggs being nearly three times as great, according to the budgets, in the Walloon as in the Flemish towns.

The weekly amount of *milk* is small, and increases only very gradually with the rise in family income in the four lower income groups, from 6·2 pints in the lowest group to 8·7 pints in the group with incomes of 30s. and under 35s. In the next group, in spite of the slightly larger families, there is a positive decline in the average weekly consumption of milk; in the highest group there is again an advance.

The *cheese* eaten by the Belgian working classes is mainly Dutch, but includes a large number of local varieties. The budget consumption ranges from ¼ lb. in the lowest income group (at an average cost of 1½d.) to about 14 oz. in the highest income group (the average cost being 6½d. for the 14 oz.)

The consumption of *coffee and chicory* combined ranges from 1½ to nearly 3 lb. It will be observed that the chicory (which is very cheap) exceeds the amount of coffee in the two lowest income groups, and in the other groups the quantities of the two commodities are nearly equal. On the whole in the Flemish towns the consumption of chicory exceeds that of coffee, whilst in the Walloon towns the conditions are reversed. In Bruges, chicory is mixed with coffee in the proportion of 2½ to 1, and in Louvain,

Malines and Tournai, it is nearly double the amount of coffee consumed; on the other hand in Verviers it is only a quarter of the total consumption of chicory and coffee combined, and in Liège and Seraing it is less than one-fifth. In the other towns the proportions are roughly equal.

The average amount of *sugar* shown in the budgets is very low; it is only ⅔ lb. in the lowest income group and 1⅔ lb. in the highest.

Finally, it may be noted that the expenditure on "*Other items*" ranges from 2¼d. to 11¼d.; and that "*Meals away from home*" cost on the average 9½d. a week in the lowest income group, the amount increasing gradually to 3s. 0¼d. in the highest group.

Retail Prices.

Information as to the prices commonly paid by the working classes for a number of food commodities, for coal and for paraffin oil, was obtained from a number of shopkeepers in each of the towns investigated, and also from the co-operative societies, where these existed. The predominant prices for each of the commodities in each of the towns are given in the separate reports, and also in Appendix III (pp. 180-2). It must be remembered that the prices therein shown are not necessarily the minimum prices at which the commodities could be obtained—in most cases they are not—but simply the prices which the majority of working-class customers did in fact pay in the month of June, 1908; and where a range of prices is given, it is because two or more prices appeared to be of equal frequency. The differences between one town and another represent therefore in part actual differences in the cost at which identical or quasi-identical commodities were obtainable, and in part variations in local tastes or in local standards of comfort.

The following Table shows the predominant range, for Belgium as a whole, of retail prices commonly paid by the working classes.

Predominant Retail Prices in Belgium in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Number of Towns to which the figures relate.	Predominant Range of Retail Prices, June, 1908.	Number of Towns in which the Mean Predominant Price is		
			Within the limits of the Predominant Range.	Below the limits of the Predominant Range.	Above the limits of the Predominant Range.
Coffee per lb.	15	6½d. to 8½d.	15	0	0
Sugar, Loaf "	15	2½d. " 3½d.	13	1	1
Bacon, Salted "	14	7d. " 8½d.	12	2	0
Eggs per 1s.	15	12 " 14	8	3	4
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	14	7½d. " 9½d.	13	0	1
Butter "	15	1s. 0½d. " 1s. 1½d.	10	3	2
Margarine "	15	7½d. " 8½d.	11	3	1
Potatoes per 7 lb.	15	2½d. " 3d.	15	0	0
Flour, Wheaten "	15	9½d. " 10d.	10	2	3
Bread, White per 4 lb.	15	4½d. " 5½d.	15	0	0
Milk per quart	15	2½d.	13	2	0
Beef per lb.	15	6d. to 7d.	11	2	2
Mutton "	15	6½d. " 7½d.	11	2	2
Veal "	15	8½d. " 10½d.	13	0	2
Pork "	14	7½d. " 9½d.	13	1	0
Coal per cwt.	15	1s. 0½d. " 1s. 2½d.	10	3	2
Paraffin Oil per gallon	15	6½d. " 7½d.	13	1	1

For *coffee* the maximum price recorded, as the upper limit of a range, was 9½d. at Ghent and Paturages, whilst the minimum price was 6d. at Courtrai. 6½d. was quoted as the lower limit of a range in ten towns, and 8½d. as the upper limit in seven towns (whilst at Tournai it was the only price quoted). The lowest ranges were 6d. to 7d. at Courtrai and 6½d. to 7d. at Brussels and Liège.

The maximum price quoted for *loaf sugar* was 4d. a lb. as the uppermost limit at Tournai, whilst the minimum price quoted was 2½d. (the only price at Verviers and the lower limit of a range at Bruges and Ghent). 2½d. was quoted alone at Liège and as the lowest of a range of prices in three towns. 3d. was the only price quoted at Charleroi, Courtrai and La Louvière, and appears as the lowest price in five towns and the highest in three. 3½d. was the upper limit of a range at four towns and 3½d. the upper limit at Louvain and Paturages.

The extreme range of prices for *salted bacon*, the only kind at all generally consumed by the Belgian working classes, was from 6d. and 6½d. (quoted as the lowest prices usually paid at Turnhout and Courtrai) to 8½d. in seven towns.

The prices quoted for *eggs* varied greatly. The number usually obtained for 1s. was stated to be 10 at La Louvière, from 10 to 12 at Seraing and Tournai, and 12 or 13 in seven towns. The maximum numbers were 14 at Ghent, and 16 (either alone or as the upper limit of a range) at Bruges, Louvain, Turnhout and Courtrai.

For *Dutch cheese* the extreme range was from 7d. to 10½d. a lb., though in the case of this commodity there does not appear to be anything approaching to uniformity of quality. 7d. occurs as the lowest price in five towns, and 10½d. as a maximum in Brussels, Paturages and Tournai. It must be remembered that whilst Dutch cheese is the only kind sold in all the towns, except Verviers, and consequently the only one which could be adopted for the purpose of comparing prices, there is a large consumption in the various towns of local makes of cheeses, which differ greatly in quality and price.

The range of *butter* prices is fairly narrow; 11d. a lb. occurs as a minimum price in Louvain and Turnhout, and 11¾d. is quoted as the lowest price in Bruges. The maximum is 1s. 2½d. in Seraing. 1s. 1d. was the sole price recorded as that paid by the majority of working-class customers at Liège, Malines and Verviers, and 1s. 2d. was the only price at La Louvière; whilst in four towns the two prices were stated to be equally frequent. The price of *margarine* varied from 6d. (quoted only at Paturages), 6½d. (only at Ghent) and 7d. (at Brussels, Liège and Verviers) to 8¾d. in eleven towns and 9½d. at Louvain.

The price of *potatoes* was remarkably uniform; 2½d. per 7 lb. was the only price quoted in four towns, and 3d. the only one in eight towns, whilst in the other three towns the two prices occurred with equal frequency. It is customary in several towns for workpeople who inhabit houses having cellars, which can be used for storage, to purchase considerable quantities of potatoes at the seasons when they are cheap.

For *wheaten flour* 9½d. per 7 lb. was the only price reported as being commonly paid by the working classes in five towns, and in seven others it was the minimum in a range of prices. The highest price recorded was 1s. 0½d. at Antwerp, and the lowest 8½d. at Courtrai.

It has been pointed out that the *bread* of the Belgian working classes (like that of the French) consists almost entirely of wheaten bread of good quality. The extreme range of prices per 4 lb. in June, 1908, was from 3¾d. (the minimum at La Louvière) and 4d. (the minima at Courtrai and Ghent) to 5d. in four towns and 5½d. at Turnhout and Verviers.

The very low price of 1¾d. a quart was recorded for *milk* as the only price at Turnhout; but this is quite exceptional. A range of 2d. to 2½d. was found at Malines, but in all the remaining thirteen towns the sole price quoted was 2½d. a quart.

The *meat* consumed by the Belgian working classes is mainly of native production, though a certain amount comes from the Netherlands and there is some importation of live cattle from the United States and of mutton from the Argentine Republic. Judged by index numbers (Brussels = 100), the level of meat prices is highest at Charleroi (103), and next to Brussels come Tournai and La Louvière, each with an index number of 96. At the other end of the scale come Turnhout and Verviers, with 85, and Malines with 84. For the remaining towns the index numbers range from 95 to 89.

The prices quoted for *coal* varied from 8¾d. a cwt., stated to be frequently paid at Paturages (a great mining centre) and 9½d., a common price paid at Charleroi (also a mining centre), to 1s. 2¾d. the highest or only price in six towns, 1s. 3¾d. at Antwerp, 1s. 5d. at Brussels and 1s. 6½d. at Verviers. In the mining districts the miners are frequently allowed a certain amount of coal free or at reduced prices.

Finally, the price of *paraffin oil* is very uniform. The extreme range is from 6d. (only in Ghent) and 6½d. (in five towns) to 7½d. in Louvain and Tournai and 7¾d. in Bruges and Verviers; 7d. was the only price quoted in six of the towns investigated.

In order to obtain for each of the towns an indication of the retail prices of food and fuel there as compared with the other towns, a series of index numbers has been constructed, the level of prices in Brussels being taken as the base (= 100). In order to allow for the varying importance of the different articles, as judged by the normal weekly consumption by a working-class family, recourse was had to "weighting," and for this purpose average quantities were estimated roughly from the budgets of which the analysis has been given on p. xiv. The following are the quantities so estimated:—

Coffee	...	...	1 lb.	Bread	...	...	34½ lb.
Sugar	...	...	1 lb.	Milk	...	...	4 quarts
Bacon	...	...	¾ lb.	Beef	...	...	2¾ lb.
Eggs...	...	...	7	Mutton	...	...	1 lb.
Cheese	...	...	½ lb.	Veal	...	...	1 lb.
Butter	...	...	2½ lb.	Pork	...	...	1 lb.
Potatoes	...	...	33 lb.	Coal	...	...	1½ cwt.
Flour	...	...	¾ lb.				

The retail prices in each town, as ascertained for the various commodities, are weighted in accordance with the above quantities, the total expenditure so arrived at for each town being expressed as a percentage of the corresponding total for Brussels; the results are shown in the following Table:—

Prices Index Numbers in Descending Order.

Brussels = 100.

Town.	Index Number.	Town.	Index Number.	Town.	Index Number.
Brussels	100	Liège	96	Ghent	94
Verviers	100	Seraing	96	Turnhout	92
Tournai	99	Antwerp	95	Courtrai	92
Charleroi	97	Louvain	94	Malines	92
La Louvière	96	Paturages	94	Bruges	89

It will be observed that the range is very limited, the maximum difference being 11 points, or, if Bruges be excluded, 8 points; whilst ten towns (or two-thirds of the whole number) lie within the narrow range of 96 to 92. It is noticeable also that the five lowest towns on the list are all in the Flemish districts; and, in fact, the mean index number for all the Flemish towns (either with or without Antwerp) is 93, whilst for the Walloon towns it is 97, and this in spite of the fact that the latter include all the great mining centres, in which coal (the price of which is included in the above index numbers) is relatively low in price. The coal prices index numbers are: Brussels, 100; Antwerp, 87; other Flemish towns, 82; Walloon towns, 74. If food prices alone be taken, the following Table shows the index numbers for food other than meat, meat alone, and all food.

Prices Index Numbers for Geographical Groups.

Brussels = 100.

Geographical Group.	Number of Towns.	Mean Index Numbers.		
		Food, other than Meat.	Meat.	All Food.
Brussels	1	100	100	100
Antwerp	1	98	90	96
Other Flemish Towns	7	96	90	95
Walloon Towns	6	101	95	100

The range of index numbers for "All Food" for the *Walloon Towns* is from 102 at Charleroi and Seraing to 97 at Liège; in the *Other Flemish Towns* the highest index number is 101 at Tournai, which is in an exceptional position, being a Flemish-speaking town in the Walloon district, but for the other six towns the range of index numbers is from 96 at Ghent to 92 at Bruges.

Co-operative Societies and Multiple Shops.—Co-operative societies exist in practically all the towns investigated, but their importance in relation to the food supplies of the working classes varies considerably from town to town. The Belgian societies present some peculiar features; apart from those formed by, and limited to, the employees in various public services, they are in their origin mostly partisan, being established either as Socialist or as "Christian" (i.e., Roman Catholic clerical) organisations. Several of them—as at Ghent (where the co-operative movement appears to be relatively more important than in any other town), La Louvière, where the movement has developed considerably among the miners, and Antwerp—give, in addition to the ordinary distribution of profits, benefits of various kinds, including medical attendance, grants of bread during sickness and unemployment, and even pensions, to their members. At Seraing and in the surrounding districts there is a curious system of small co-operative groups, which is fully described in the report on that town (pp. 142-3).

There are very few cases of single firms owning many shops—the so-called "multiple shop" system—but one firm has a large number of shops at Brussels, and more than 600 scattered throughout the country (including all the towns covered by this enquiry); and examples on a smaller scale are found at Ghent, Seraing, Verviers, and elsewhere.

(iii.) RENTS AND RETAIL PRICES COMBINED.

The next Table gives for each of the 15 towns index numbers showing approximately the relative levels of that part of the cost of living which is due to expenditure on food, fuel, and house accommodation. In order to allow for the relative importance of the two items of expenditure, prices have been given a weight of 5 and rents a weight of 1 in the construction of the combined index numbers. Any alteration of these weights, *e.g.*, to allow for the renting of more house-room and a consequent change of proportion between the expenditure on rent and food and fuel would vary, more or less, the index numbers obtained.

Combined Rent and Prices Index Numbers in Descending Order.

Brussels = 100.

Town.	Index Number.	Town.	Index Number.	Town.	Index Number.
Brussels	100	Charleroi	93	Courtrai	86
Antwerp	96	La Louvière	93	Paturages	86
Tournai	95	Seraing	90	Malines	85
Liège	95	Louvain	89	Turnhout	84
Verviers	94	Ghent	89	Bruges	81

Brussels heads the list, both prices and rents there being high; whilst the position of Antwerp is due mainly to high rents. Four out of the five lowest towns—all Flemish—on the list are characterized alike by low rents and low prices, whilst the position of Paturages is due mainly to the influence of low rents. The following Table shows the combined index numbers for the geographical groups.

Combined Rents and Prices Index Numbers for Geographical Groups.

Brussels = 100.

Geographical Group.	Number of Towns.	Mean Index Numbers.		
		Rent.	Prices.	Rent and Prices Combined.*
Brussels	1	100	100	100
Antwerp	1	99	95	96
Other Flemish Towns	7	59	93	87
Walloon Towns	6	67	97	92

* In the construction of this index number prices have been given a weight of five and rents a weight of one.

This Table, which emphasizes the higher cost of living in the Walloon as compared with the Flemish districts—calls for no comment. The extreme range of the combined index numbers for the *Walloon Towns* is from 95 at Liège to 86 at Paturages, but four out of the six lie within the narrower range of 95 to 93. The extreme range for the *Other Flemish Towns* is from 95 at Tournai to 84 at Turnhout and Bruges; but the index numbers for six of the seven towns lie within the range 89 to 84.

(iv.) WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

For the purposes of this Report much information as to wages and hours of labour was obtained from a large number of private firms, and also from the municipal authorities in respect of such workpeople (a comparatively limited number) as they directly employed; and the data so collected are set out in the detailed town reports, and also for certain occupations in Appendix I. (pp. 178-9). The system of wages agreements—*i.e.*, agreements made between employers and employed—establishing for a particular industry throughout a prescribed area standard rates of wages (whether "minimum" or other) has hitherto only rarely been adopted in Belgium, though in June, 1908, a few instances were found, such as for building, printing, cigar making, and dock labour at Antwerp, printing at Brussels, La Louvière, and Ghent, and wool scouring and carbonising at Verviers; their scarcity and comparative unimportance may be due to the general weakness of trade unionism, both in numbers and in organisation, except in the coal and glass industries. In most of the towns, however, the municipal authorities stipulate for minimum rates of wages and sometimes for maximum hours of labour in connexion with public contracts—notable examples of this are furnished by Brussels and its suburban communes; and, as a rule, the rates of wages agree closely with those recognised by employers and workmen as being current in the particular trade and district.

Where time rates were not in force, or where a system of combined time and piece-rates existed, employers were asked to give the predominant earnings or range of earnings for each of their principal classes of workpeople in a full week, exclusive of overtime, in June, 1908.

In order that comparison might be made between the towns included in this enquiry, it was necessary to choose trades which are included in all the towns, with the fewest possible exceptions. The only trades answering to this requirement are the building, engineering, and printing trades; and the predominant ranges of earnings in these occupations for the whole of the Belgian towns investigated are given in the following Table (the details—whether predominant time-rates or piece-earnings—for each town will be found in the separate Reports and in Appendix I., pp. 178-9). The figures stated in the original returns have in all cases been converted to weekly rates; the number of hours worked, as will be seen later, varies considerably from town to town in the case of the building and engineering trades.

Predominant Weekly Wages in certain Occupations in Belgium in June, 1908.

Occupation.	Number of Towns to which the figures relate.	Predominant Range of Weekly Wages, June, 1908.	Number of Towns in which the Mean Predominant Wage for the given Occupation was		
			Within the limits of the Predominant Range.	Below the limits of the Predominant Range.	Above the limits of the Predominant Range.
Building Trades:—					
Bricklayers and Masons.	15	20s. 9d. to 24s. 0d.	9	3	3
Stonemasons (Cutters)	11	23s. 5d. „ 26s. 5d.	7	2	2
Carpenters	15	20s. 2d. „ 25s. 3d.	9	3	3
Joiners	15	20s. 5d. „ 23s. 5d.	9	3	3
Plumbers	14	20s. 2d. „ 23s. 5d.	10	1	3
Plasterers	14	20s. 7d. „ 24s. 6d.	9	2	3
Painters	15	18s. 9d. „ 21s. 7d.	9	3	3
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers.	15	15s. 0d. „ 18s. 0d.	9	3	3
Engineering Trades:—					
Moulders	10	20s. 6d. „ 26s. 0d.	6	2	2
Fitters	14	19s. 9d. „ 22s. 10d.	8	3	3
Turners	14	20s. 6d. „ 24s. 4d.	12	1	1
Smiths	11	20s. 1d. „ 24s. 6d.	9	1	1
Patternmakers	13	19s. 7d. „ 24s. 0d.	9	2	2
Labourers	14	12s. 11d. „ 16s. 3d.	10	2	2
Printing Trades:—					
Compositors	13	19s. 1d. „ 22s. 10d.	9	2	2

In the next Table index numbers of wages are given for the 15 towns, which are arranged in geographical groups; the level of wages in Brussels is taken as equal to 100.

Wages Index Numbers.
Brussels = 100.

Town.	Building Trades.		Engineering Trades.		Printing Trades.
	Skilled Men.	Unskilled Labourers.	Skilled Men.	Unskilled Labourers.	Compositors.
Brussels	100	100	100	100	100
Antwerp	92	96	96	93	78
<i>Other Flemish Towns:—</i>					
Bruges	72	67	81	78	76
Courtrai	83	79	95	86	63
Ghent	87	91	84	90	76
Louvain	80	91	82	84	—
Malines	81	76	71	74	72
Tournai	76	76	86	91	74
Turnhout	79	79	84	85	64
<i>Mean</i>	80	80	83	84	71
<i>Walloon Towns:—</i>					
Charleroi	94	94	94	101	86
La Louvière	95	100	111	109	85
Liège	84	84	99	105	91
Paturages	98	95	—	—	82
Seraing	81	91	98	106	—
Verviers	85	89	91	105	77
<i>Mean</i>	90	92	99	105	84

It thus appears that the highest wages in the building trades are found in Brussels; the wages in Antwerp are considerably in excess of those obtained in the other Flemish towns, but are surpassed, in the case of skilled men in three of the Walloon towns and in the case of unskilled labourers in La Louvière only, whilst the general level of the Walloon group as a whole is markedly above that of the Flemish group. In the engineering trades the rates of earnings are in the Walloon towns practically as high for skilled men as in Brussels, and higher for unskilled men, whilst the rates for both classes of workmen are higher than in Antwerp and much higher than in the other Flemish towns; this was only to be expected since the Walloon provinces are the seat of the coal industry, and consequently of the principal iron and steel industries of Belgium. Finally, the rates for compositors are higher in the Walloon towns than in Antwerp or the other Flemish towns, but they fall far below those prevailing in the capital. There is reason to believe that the rates of wages in certain towns (notably Bruges, Courtrai, and Tournai) are adversely affected by the existence of large charitable funds derived from old foundations and widely distributed.

Hours of Labour.—In the next Table are set out the customary hours of labour for each of the occupations selected for the purpose of comparison between the various towns. The details from which the Table is compiled are shown in Appendix I. (pp. 178–9).

Weekly Hours of Labour in certain Occupations in Belgium in June, 1908.

Occupation.	Number of Towns to which the Figures relate.	Number of Towns in which the Average Usual Hours of Labour per Week (excluding intervals) were								
		Over 56 and under 60.	60.	Over 60 and under 63.	63.	Over 63 and under 66.	66.	Over 66 and under 72.	72.	Over 72.
<i>Building Trades :—</i>										
Bricklayers and Masons ...	15	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	5	1
Stonemasons (Cutters) ...	12	—	1	—	2	1	2	2	4	—
Carpenters	15	—	1	—	2	2	2	3	5	—
Joiners	15	—	1	—	3	2	2	2	5	—
Plumbers	14	—	2	—	2	2	—	3	5	—
Plasterers	14	1	1	—	1	3	—	2	6	—
Painters	15	—	1	—	2	2	1	4	4	1
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers.	15	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	5	1
<i>Engineering Trades</i> ...	14	5	2	4	1	2	—	—	—	—
<i>Printing Trades :—</i>										
Compositors	13	6	6	—	—	1	—	—	—	—

It will be seen that in the building trades the number of hours worked varied greatly, from a minimum of 60 or under in a very few cases to a maximum of 72 or even more in a considerable proportion of the towns; the predominant range was from 63 to 72. The engineering trades also showed considerable diversity, but the number of hours worked weekly was considerably less—the predominant range being from 56 to 63. The compositors worked from 56 to 60 hours; in only one case was this latter figure exceeded.

(v.) RELATION OF WAGES TO RENTS AND RETAIL PRICES.

The next table shows for each of the geographical groups already considered the mean index numbers for rents and prices, and for rents and prices combined, together with the mean index numbers for the wages of skilled men in the building, engineering and printing trades.

Geographical Group.	Number of Towns in Group.	Mean Index Numbers.					
		Rent and Prices.			Wages (Skilled Men).		
		Rent.	Prices.	Rent and Prices Combined.*	Building Trades.	Engineering Trades.	Printing Trades (Compositors).
Brussels	1	100	100	100	100	100	100
Antwerp	1	99	95	96	92	96	78
Other Flemish Towns	7	59	93	87	80	83	71†
Walloon Towns	6	67	97	92	90	99†	84†

* In the construction of this index number prices have been given a weight of five and rent a weight of one.

† In each of these cases the number of towns included is one less than the number in the geographical group.

Both wages and the cost of living, so far as regards rent and prices, are highest in Brussels, and are throughout distinctly higher in the Walloon than in the Flemish towns, other than Antwerp.

If, finally, the mean of the index numbers for the three trades (building, engineering and printing) be taken for each group, and the results combined with the index numbers for rents and prices combined, an approximate estimate of the comparative average level of "real wages" may be made, i.e. of the money wages expressed in terms of their purchasing capacity (as shown by the combined rents and prices index numbers). The results are shown in the following table:—

Geographical Group.	Number of Towns in Group.	Mean Index Numbers.		
		Rent and Prices Combined.	Wages of Skilled Men in Building, Engineering, and Printing Trades.	Approximate relative level of "Real Wages."
Brussels	1	100	100	100
Antwerp	1	96	89	93
Other Flemish Towns	7	87	78	90
Walloon Towns	6	92	91	99

Thus, on this estimate, "real wages" are at practically the same level in the Walloon towns as they are in Brussels, and in spite of the higher rents and prices which prevail, they are substantially greater than in Antwerp and the other Flemish towns. Thus a difference in race, in geographical position and, to a large extent, in industrial occupation would appear to be accompanied by an appreciable difference in well-being, so far as it can be judged from the data collected for this Report.

PART II.—COMPARISON OF RENTS, BUDGETS, PRICES, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR IN BELGIUM, WITH THOSE IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

In the following pages the data collected by the Board in respect of the rents of working-class dwellings, the prices paid by the working classes for articles of common consumption, and the wages and hours of labour in the industrial towns of Belgium are brought together and compared with the similar data for England and Wales published in the Report on Cost of Living of the Working Classes in the United Kingdom (Cd. 3864, 1908). As has been pointed out in the previous Reports of this series, international comparisons are full of difficulties arising from differences of national tastes and habits and from varieties of national organisation, and therefore comparisons based on statistical data alone must always be read as subject to limitation by conditions which cannot be statistically measured or described. Accordingly the method of index numbers which has been adopted in these Reports, though affording the most useful and indeed the sole means of making a summary comparison of industrial conditions in different countries, cannot yield more than *approximate* results: the special limitations to its use in each particular case have therefore been set forth fully in the detailed comparisons which follow.

Section (i.) deals with the housing of the working classes and the rents paid by them; Section (ii.) p. xxvii., with budgets and prices; and Section (iii.) p. xxxiv., with the wages and hours of labour in certain trades. In Section (iv.) p. xxxvii., the results are briefly summarised.

(i.) HOUSING AND RENTS.

It will have been evident from the description in Part I. of this General Report that the self-contained cottage is the predominant type of working-class housing in Belgium as it is in England and Wales. Verviers is the only town in which tenement houses inhabited by four to ten families afford almost the sole accommodation for the working classes, though at Antwerp such houses are common and increasing in numbers, while at Brussels, Liège, Tournai and Charleroi the small tenement house is a more or less frequent feature. In England, it will be remembered, the cottage of two floors let in separate flats is characteristic of Newcastle and the Tyne towns generally; the large tenement building and the old single-family house subdivided or let in rooms is typical only of the central parts of London and of Plymouth and Devonport.

While the general style of housing is thus similar to that usual in England, the number of rooms occupied by a family of the artisan class in Belgium is, as a rule, inferior to that rented by an English family of the same class. Evidence on this head is afforded by comparing the number of towns in each of the two countries from which a sufficient number of returns was received to enable a predominant rent to be stated for tenements of one, two, three, four, five and six rooms respectively:—

Table showing the Numbers of Towns in England and Wales and in Belgium, from which sufficient Numbers of Returns for Workmen's Dwellings of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 rooms were obtained to enable the predominant Rents for each class of Dwelling to be stated.

Country.	Number of Rooms.						Total number of towns investigated.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	
England and Wales	1	19	44	73	68	30	73
Belgium	3	12	11	12	2	1	15

It will be seen that rents for four-roomed dwellings were returned from all, and for five-roomed dwellings from nearly all, the towns visited in England and Wales, and these are clearly the predominant types, three-roomed dwellings being the next most frequent and occurring commonly in 60 per cent. of the towns. In the case of Belgium, dwellings of no one size appear to be characteristic of all the towns, but two, three and four-roomed dwellings are typical in three-quarters of the towns which were investigated, and may be taken as the prevailing types in the industrial districts of Belgium as a whole. Roughly speaking, then, the usual dwelling of the Belgian working-class family may be said to

contain about one room less than the dwelling of the similar family in this country. Single rooms are also noted as a common form of working-class accommodation in Brussels, Liège and Verviers: in this country they are typical in the central districts of London only. The average size of room on the other hand appears to be somewhat larger in the industrial towns of Belgium than of England. It is estimated from the data collected by the Board's investigators that the most typical sizes of rooms occupied by working-class families in England and Wales lie between 100 and 150 square feet in area, in Belgium between 100 and 200 square feet. The estimate is necessarily very rough, as the number of rooms measured is limited, but it will serve to indicate the relatively greater prevalence of large rooms in Belgium. If allowance be made for this larger size of room and for the smaller household of the working classes in Belgium (*see below* p. xxvii.) the accommodation afforded by the Belgian dwelling is perhaps not quite so unequal to that of the English family as might appear at first sight. Increase of size cannot however remove, and can only slightly mitigate, the disadvantages of the single-roomed dwelling, and the prevalence of dwellings of one and two rooms in the Belgian towns does not indicate a high standard of comfort.

Notwithstanding the somewhat larger size of room, rents for dwellings of the same accommodation run very much lower in Belgium than in England and Wales. Collating the predominant rents for dwellings of two, three, and four rooms in Belgium, as given in the Table on p. ix. above with those given for England and Wales in the Report on cost of living of the working classes in the United Kingdom (Cd. 3864, 1908, p. xiv.), we have the following comparison:—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings in England and Wales and in Belgium.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.	Predominant Range of Weekly Rents in		Ratio of Mean Predominant Rent in Belgium to that in England and Wales, taken as 100.
	England and Wales (including Rates).	Belgium.	
Two rooms	3s. to 3s. 6d.	1s. 9d. to 2s. 3d.	62
Three rooms	3s. 9d. to 4s. 6d.	2s. 2d. to 2s. 10d.	61
Four rooms	4s. 6d. to 5s. 6d.	2s. 8d. to 3s. 6d.	62
Arithmetic mean			62

It will be seen that the mean predominant rent for each class of tenement in Belgium bears an almost uniform ratio to the corresponding rent in England and Wales, the rent paid by the Belgian tenant being on an average only some 62 per cent. of the corresponding rent in this country.

A comparison made on such lines is, however, as indicated in previous Reports, open to objection on the ground that the several "predominant rents" stated are not founded in each case on all the towns visited, nor on the same towns. A better comparison may be made by reworking all the index numbers for the rents of Belgian towns, as given in the Table on p. x. above, to the basis used for the towns of the United Kingdom, viz., rents in the middle zone of London. This has been done in the following Table, corresponding with the Tables on p. xv. of the English, p. xli. of the German, and p. xxxiii. of the French Report.

Rent Index Numbers in Descending Order.

London = 100.

Town.	Index Number.	Town.	Index Number.	Town.	Index Number.
Brussels	51	Charleroi	38	Bruges	30
Antwerp	50	Louvain	33	Courtrai	30
Liège	44	Ghent	32	Malines	27
La Louvière	39	Verviers	31	Turnhout	22
Tournai	38	Seraing	30	Paturages	22

This Table emphasises and confirms the previous result. Even at Brussels and at Antwerp, where rents are distinctly higher than elsewhere in Belgium, the cost of accommodation is only half that prevailing in London: only 16 of the 73 towns dealt

with in the English report show a lower level of rents. The rents are as low in these cities of 630,000 and 311,000 inhabitants as at Blackburn, Derby, Stockport, Merthyr Tydfil, Warrington, Hanley, Wigan and Chester—to cite them in order of magnitude—towns of 128,000 to 38,000 inhabitants. The rent level at Ghent approximately corresponds with that at Macclesfield—the lowest rented town of those visited in England and Wales, and no towns can be named in England and Wales to compare with Turnhout or Paturages, where the cost of house-room is only some 70 per cent. of that at Macclesfield, the actual predominant rents for tenements of two, three and four rooms being:—

Predominant Rents of 2, 3, and 4-roomed Dwellings in Macclesfield and in Paturages.

Town.	Number of Rooms per Dwelling.		
	2.	3.	4.
Macclesfield	1s. 6d. to 2s. 0d.	1s. 9d. to 2s. 6d.	2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d.
Paturages	1s. 2d. „ 1s. 5d.	1s. 6d. „ 1s. 9d.	1s. 9d. „ 2s. 3d.

The mean index number on London for all the towns investigated in England and Wales is 56·2, for the above Belgian towns 34·5. The ratio of the Belgian to the English mean is 61 to 100, and this will be taken as representing the level of rents for working-class dwellings in Belgium as compared with the level of such rents in England and Wales. The result is sensibly the same as that given by the direct comparison of predominant rents for each class of dwelling.

It will be seen from Part I. of the General Report that the rents paid by working-class tenants in Belgium do not appear to include directly any element of local taxation. In England, on the other hand, while the tenants of larger houses pay the rates for which they are liable direct to the Local Authority, in the case of working-class dwellings the landlord usually pays and recoups himself from the tenant in the rent, and it has been estimated from a special enquiry made by the Board (Report on Cost of Living in Germany, Cd. 4032, 1908, p. xlii.) that 18 per cent. of the gross rents paid in English industrial towns must be credited to such local taxation—excluding the water rate, if any. If accordingly a deduction of 18 per cent. be made from the English rents to render the services for which the rent is paid more comparable in the two countries, the ratio of rents is 61 : 82 or 74 : 100. In other words if local taxation be excluded from both sides of the account and the payments limited strictly to those made for house-room and conveniences only, the Belgian artisan pays some 26 per cent. less than the Englishman for the same number of rooms. In making this exclusion of local taxation, it should, however, be remembered that the item omitted hardly occurs in the Belgian artisan's budget. Certain local taxes are assessed on tenants on the basis of the rateable value of the dwelling occupied, but houses of less than a certain annual value are in most towns exempt (*see p. xi.*) and this limiting value usually covers all houses or tenements at all likely to be rented by a working-class family.

While the rooms occupied by the Belgian tenant are, as stated above, often larger than is usual in England, the general conveniences of the dwelling are on the whole distinctly fewer. In only two or three of the towns visited is water at all commonly laid on to working-class dwellings, and the water carriage system of sewerage is not in general use. Where water is not laid on, the usual source of supply is either a pump in the yard or a stand pipe, often at a considerable distance from the house, in the street. At Charleroi and at Paturages, where the subsoil appears to have been largely drained by mining operations, the inhabitants are to a great extent dependent on rain water collected from the roofs, a condition which does not seem to find a parallel in any of the towns visited in this country; even at Bruges, rain water appears to form an important supplement to the supply from wells. When the dwelling is connected with the town supply, and even in some cases where a tap or standpipe is provided for the use of a number of dwellings in common, an extra charge is made for this convenience in addition to the rent. Gas seems to be rarely provided in working-class dwellings in any town, paraffin being the usual illuminant. The sanitary accommodation is frequently very defective, and one closet may often serve for several, sometimes ten or more dwellings. Rents are usually paid monthly, and not weekly as in England.

The above comparison of rents in the two countries refers, it must be remembered to rents collected for the purpose of the English enquiry in 1905, and for the

Belgian enquiry in 1908, and the question naturally arises how far the comparison may be invalidated by the difference of dates. It is not likely that the difference would have any great effect, as the movement of urban rents, though occasionally rapid in individual small districts, is fairly slow when the average of a number of towns is considered, but in order to obtain some light on the course of rents in Belgium two special questions were inserted in the schedule circulated for the budgets, asking (a) how long the family had occupied its present dwelling, and (b) whether the rent had been raised during that period, and if so by how much. As a result of these enquiries it appears that the rents of 1,859 families, amounting to 7,508 francs, had been raised during the period of occupancy by 126·62 francs, or 1·69 per cent., the average occupancy being seven years. It is evident, from the records of tenancies dating from 1905, that this slight upward movement continued during the years 1905-8, and about half the rise or, say, something under 1 per cent. may probably be ascribed to that period. The difference is too small to affect the comparison very appreciably, and the ratios above stated may, therefore, be taken as sufficiently accurate and approximately true for the period of the Report on the United Kingdom, viz., October, 1905.

(ii.) BUDGETS AND RETAIL PRICES.

Budgets of Working-class Families.

The details of the budgets collected from Belgian working-class families for the purpose of this enquiry have been given in the first part of this General Report (pp. xiii.-xiv.). Particulars of the British budgets will be found in the Report on the United Kingdom (Cd. 3864, 1908, pp. xxv.-xxvii.), and more fully in the original Report thereon (Cd. 2337, 1904, pp. 3-28).

For the reasons already indicated in the Reports on Cost of Living in French and in German Towns, it is not desirable to use the general average budgets obtained in two or more countries as a basis of comparison. In no case can the different grades of income be expected to occur in their true proportions, as the necessary returns are more easily obtained from the higher grades of labour than from the lower, and there is no certainty that this over-weighting of the returns from the somewhat wealthier as compared with the poorer families is the same in each country. Even though every endeavour be made to render the method of collection the same in each case, international differences in the standard of education and of housekeeping ability may affect the final result. It is, however, of interest to compare the budgets obtained from families with approximately the same income in two or more countries, so as to learn how the housewife in each, having a given sum at her disposal, will apportion the expenditure on the different items of food.

In the previous Reports of this series the groups of families with incomes of 25s. and under 30s., 30s. and under 35s., 35s. and under 40s., were utilised for such comparisons, and the same groups will be taken again for the Belgian budgets. From the condensed budgets given on pp. xl. and xli., it will be seen that the average income of the Belgian families from which returns were obtained in each of the three income classes named is not quite identical with the average income of the corresponding families in the returns obtained in the United Kingdom, the latter being in every case slightly the lower of the two; but the differences are only a few pence in each case—not more than 1 or 2 per cent.—and are not sufficient to affect comparisons of the one nation with the other. It should, however, be borne in mind that, especially in the lowest of the three income-classes considered (families with incomes of 25s. to 30s. a week), the average number of children living at home in the Belgian family is less than in the corresponding British family (2·5 children against 3·3), and consequently the household for which the Belgian house-wife has to cater is considerably, say 15 per cent., less than the corresponding British household. In the two higher income classes the difference is very much smaller, though in the same direction, the Belgian household being roughly 5 per cent. and 2 per cent. less than the British in the case of the families with incomes of 30s. to 35s., and 35s. to 40s. respectively. Further, it must be remembered that while the Belgian budgets were collected in the summer of 1908, those from the United Kingdom were obtained in the summer of 1904. No great stress can consequently be laid on small differences in the consumption of single items, especially where marked changes of price may have supervened. The changes in prices during the interval 1905-1908 are briefly discussed below (p. xxxi.).

The percentage of the family income allocated to the purchase of food is seen from the statement below to be slightly lower in Belgium than in this country for each of the two lower income groups, though sensibly the same in the relatively wealthiest class ; in no class is the difference large.

Table showing Percentage of Income spent on Food.

Limits of Weekly Family Income.	Percentage of Income spent on Food (excluding Alcohol).	
	United Kingdom.	Belgium.
25s. and under 30s.	66	64
30s. " " 35s.	65	62
35s. " " 40s.	61	61

While the ways in which the British and Belgian housewives distribute this portion of the available income are broadly similar when regard is had to the larger divisions of the dietary, with respect to the details there are some notable differences. Thus, the expenditure of the English housewife on *bread and flour* amounts, in the lowest income-class considered, to 18.5 per cent. of the total expenditure on food, but falls to 15.8 and 15.1 per cent. as the family income increases ; in Belgium, however, the proportion, which is almost the same as in this country in the lowest income-class, viz. 18.6 per cent., remains at nearly the same level (19.2 and 18.4 per cent.) in the case of the families with higher incomes, and the relative expenditure of such families on these items is consequently considerably in excess of that of families with equal incomes in the United Kingdom. On *meat and fish*, the most important items of the budget in both countries, the expenditure amounts to 26.2 to 27.5 per cent. of the total in Belgium against 27.3 to 28.8 per cent. in Great Britain. As regards *milk* the results are rather curious ; not only is the Belgian expenditure very much lower than the British—3.3 per cent. to 4.0 per cent. against 5.5 to 6.1 per cent., a difference largely due to price—but also the percentage falls as the family income rises, whereas in this country the reverse is the case. On *butter*, *butter substitutes*, *lard*, *dripping*, *olive oil*, etc., on *potatoes* and on *other vegetables and fruit*, the Belgian housewife expends a distinctly larger proportion of the money available for food than the British housewife, but the proportions spent on *coffee and chicory* are relatively smaller than those of the British housewife on *tea* and on *sugar*.

Table showing the Percentage of the whole Amount Expended on Food which is allocated to various items by Workmen's Families in Belgium and in the United Kingdom.

Commodity or Group of Commodities.	Percentage of the Total Expenditure on Food allotted to each Commodity or Group of Commodities.					
	Income 25s. and under 30s.		Income 30s. and under 35s.		Income 35s. and under 40s.	
	United Kingdom.	Belgium.	United Kingdom.	Belgium.	United Kingdom.	Belgium.
Bread and flour	18.5	18.6	15.8	19.2	15.1	18.4
Meat and fish	27.3	26.2	28.8	26.7	28.8	27.4
Fresh milk	5.5	4.1	6.1	5.9	6.1	5.5
Butter, oils and fats	11.7	15.7	11.4	15.9	11.3	15.6
Potatoes	4.5	6.0	4.2	5.8	3.8	5.7
Other vegetables and fruit	3.3	4.4	4.0	4.2	4.4	4.4
Tea, coffee and chicory, cocoa	6.8	4.7	6.5	4.6	6.5	4.4
Sugar	4.7	1.7	4.3	1.5	4.2	1.5
Other foods, and meals out	17.7	18.6	18.9	18.2	19.8	19.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Regarding the several items in greater detail, and comparing the quantities and qualities with those consumed by the families with corresponding incomes in this country, it may be noted in the first place that the Belgian working-class family, like the English, consumes in general white wheaten *bread* : rye bread, or grey bread made of mixed wheat and rye flour, is very little eaten, though a certain amount of buckwheat flour is purchased for making buckwheat cakes. The purchases both of wheat and buckwheat flour for household consumption are, however, extremely small, as will be seen from the budget on

p. xiv., amounting only to some 12 to 14½ oz. per week. As shown by the condensed budgets on pp. xl. and xli., and by the table below, the combined consumption of bread and flour in the Belgian family, including the small amount of buckwheat flour consumed in the latter country, is very much in excess of the consumption in corresponding families in the United Kingdom. The excess runs from 11 per cent. in the lowest income class considered to 40 per cent. in the highest ; remembering the smaller size of the Belgian household in the case of the families with incomes between 25s. and 30s. a week, this means an excess of the *per capita* consumption of 31 to 43 per cent. throughout.

Table showing the Ratios of the Quantities of and Amounts spent on certain articles of Food consumed by Workmen's Families in Belgium to the Quantities of and Amounts spent on similar articles by Workmen's Families in the United Kingdom, possessing incomes between the same limits.

Commodity or Group of Commodities.	Limits of Weekly Family Income.		
	25s. and under 30s.	30s. and under 35s.	35s. and under 40s.
	Percentage of corresponding figures for United Kingdom.		
Bread and flour (Quantity)	111	131	140
Meat (and fish)* "	104	106	112
Eggs "	79	67	69
Fresh milk "	101	88	81
Cheese "	69	70	81
Butter, oils, and fats "	118	125	125
Potatoes "	195	212	238
Sugar "	25	25	26
Vegetables and fruit (Expenditure)	129	100	100
Farinaceous foods (other than bread or flour) "	70	63	70
Tea, coffee and chicory, cocoa, &c. "	69	68	70

* Including an allowance for meat not bought by weight and for fish in the United Kingdom.

As regards *meat* (cf. the Table on p. xv. above) beef is, as in this country, by far the most important item, forming over 40 per cent. of all the meat entered in the budgets. Pork and bacon come next, accounting for 15.7 and 12.2 per cent. of the consumption respectively, and the fourth item on the list is horseflesh, with 10.1 per cent. After horseflesh there follow in descending order of importance *charcuterie* (various prepared meats, sausages, &c.) 8.8 per cent., veal 4.6 per cent., mutton, of which very little is eaten as compared with the consumption in the United Kingdom, 4.1 per cent., rabbits 2.7 per cent., and poultry 1 per cent. The principal points of difference as compared with the average working-class diet in this country lie in the consumption of horseflesh, the relatively high consumptions of pork and veal, and the low consumption of mutton : *charcuterie* in the Belgian household economy only replaces the tinned meats, tripe, liver, &c., so largely consumed in England. The consumption of horseflesh has been dealt with above (p. xvi.), but it may be as well to repeat here that the considerable consumption of such meat in Belgium, as in France and Germany, does not appear to be due to its cheapness alone, nor to indicate necessarily a low scale of living. The meat is eaten in almost the same quantity by the families with higher average incomes and by the poorer families ; it is largely consumed at some places, such as Antwerp and La Louvière, where the working classes are relatively highly paid and the general meat consumption, as indicated by the budgets collected by the investigators of the Board, is large, and little or none is eaten at Bruges, where, on the other hand, wages are low and the meat consumption per head in working-class families is little more than half that at either of the first-named towns. The consumption seems, in fact, to be almost entirely a matter of local custom, for which reasons are usually very difficult to assign. Taking all meats and fish together, it will be seen from the above Table that the consumption of the Belgian working-class family with a given income exceeds that of the British family with the same income, the excess ranging from 4 per cent. in the poorest families considered in this comparison to 6 per cent. and 12 per cent. in the families with higher incomes.

The family consumption of *eggs* is distinctly lower in Belgium than in the United Kingdom, by 20 to 30 per cent. in round numbers, the consumption ranging from 6·9 to 8·3 per week against 8·7 to 12·0. Attention was directed above (p. xxviii.) to the facts respecting the consumption of *milk*. In the lower income classes the Belgian consumption exceeds the British, in the higher classes the ratio is reversed. In view of the very low price of milk in Belgium, about 2½d. a quart against 3d. to 4d. in this country, a high consumption might have been expected in all income classes, and it is not clear why the consumption should increase less rapidly with the rise of family income than it does in the United Kingdom. It will be seen from the condensed budgets that in the case of families whose total income is under 25s. a week, the consumption of milk exceeds that of the corresponding British families by nearly 25 per cent., the actual figures being 6·86 pints per week against 5·54, although the average income and the number of children in the Belgian family is lower. In the next class the Belgian consumption still exceeds the British slightly, but in families with incomes of 30s. to 35s. the Belgian consumption is lower by 12 per cent., and in families with incomes between 35s. and 40s. a week the Belgian consumption is lower by nearly two pints, or 19 per cent. It is probable, though no data can be given, that the low consumption by the poorer British families is in part to be attributed to the use of condensed instead of fresh milk.

The amount of *cheese* eaten by the Belgian family is 20 to 30 per cent. less than the amount consumed by the corresponding family in the United Kingdom, but the consumption of *butter*, *butter substitutes*, *olive oil*, *lard*, *dripping*, &c., is from 18 to 25 per cent. greater in the foreign country.

One of the most remarkable features of the Belgian budget is the very large consumption of *potatoes*, ranging in round numbers from 29 lb. to 42 lb., against 14 lb. to 20 lb. in this country, and nearly double, or more than double, the British consumption in each income class: the excess is greatest in the case of the families with incomes between 35s. and 40s. a week, where it amounts to 138 per cent. The average consumption is greater than that given by the budgets obtained by the Board from towns in Ireland (Cd. 2337, 1904, p. 8), viz., 29·78 lb. The consumption of *vegetables other than potatoes* and of *fruit* in the two countries can only be estimated from the amounts expended on these items, as the units are too varied to admit of direct comparison. It will be seen that, as in the case of milk, the British expenditure rises more rapidly with the family income than does the Belgian; for families with incomes of less than 30s. a week the Belgian expenditure on vegetables and fruit is considerably in excess of the British, but for families with higher incomes the expenditures are the same. The *farinaceous foods* &c., and to these may be added in Belgium macaroni and similar pastes and potato meal (the small amount of buckwheat flour was included with wheaten flour). The expenditure on such items is a small one, and the Belgian expenditure is only 60 to 70 per cent. of the British.

Sugar is the only important item of food of which the consumption is very much less amongst the Belgian working classes than amongst the corresponding classes in this country; for the three comparative income classes the weekly consumption ranges from 1·17 lb. to 1·33 lb. as compared with 4·62 lb. to 5·21 lb. in the industrial towns of the United Kingdom. The low consumption is probably due in part to the higher predominant price, which is about 50 per cent. higher than in this country, i.e., 2½d. to 3½d. per lb. against 2d. per lb.

Coffee, with a large admixture of *chicory*, is the usual non-alcoholic drink of the Belgian working classes. The amount spent on these two items ranges from 10d. to 1s. 0½d. in the three income classes considered, and is 68 to 70 per cent. of the corresponding expenditure of the British family on tea, coffee and cocoa.

Alcoholic drinks have been excluded entirely from the comparisons and from the Tables, as the data afforded by the budgets are not sufficiently reliable.

Considered as a whole, the dietary of the Belgian working-class family would seem to compare very favourably with that of the British family *enjoying the same income*, especially when allowance is made for the smaller household. A smaller number of eggs, less cheese, a smaller quantity of the miscellaneous farinaceous foods, and much less sugar is consumed, and less is spent on coffee and chicory than is expended on tea by the British family. Against these deficiencies are to be set a much larger consumption of bread and flour, of potatoes, and of butter, oils and fats, and a slightly higher consumption of meat. It is important to remember, however, that this is, as stated, a comparison of families enjoying the same income. A comparison of the budgets for two working-class families each enjoying the average income characteristic of its own country would be much less favourable to Belgium owing to the low rates of wages ruling (*see below* p. xxxv).

Retail Prices.

As stated at the commencement of this General Report it was decided by the Board to renounce any attempt to obtain the prices usually paid by the working classes in Belgium in October, 1905, the period to which the data for the United Kingdom relate. Considerable difficulty had been experienced in obtaining such prices even in the case of France, and the obstacles to securing prices for a past epoch, and the doubts as to the reliability of such data as may be obtained, inevitably increase with the length of the interval that has elapsed. While the prices given as those predominantly paid by the working classes in Belgium refer accordingly to the period of the investigation in that country, viz., June, 1908, the prices for England and Wales relate to October, 1905, and it thus becomes necessary, for the purpose of comparing the two countries at the earlier date which has been used as the standard period in the previous Reports of this series, to form some estimate of the price changes that have taken place in Belgium during the intervening period. This has been done as far as possible by utilising the quarterly returns of the retail prices of a number of the principal articles of food in different towns, published by the Belgian Labour Department, and also, especially for some commodities not included in the official publication, data furnished to the Board by a large firm with branches in all the towns covered by this enquiry. These sources cannot be regarded as affording more than a very rough index to the course of prices usually paid by the working classes, but so far as they go, the principal changes indicated appear to be a rise of about 20 per cent. in the price of paraffin oil, a rise of 10 to 15 per cent. in the prices of bread, flour and pork, a rise of 4 to 6 per cent. in beef, bacon, cheese, and possibly sugar (as regards which the evidence is somewhat conflicting), a fall in coffee possibly as great as 20 per cent. (though here again the data are not very consistent), and a fall of about 25 per cent. in the price of potatoes. There was no material change in the price of butter. As regards milk and mutton, the latter, not a very important item, and coal, no evidence has been obtainable.

The following Table summarises the prices, at the dates of the respective investigations, of those commodities for which comparative prices can be given:—

Predominant Retail Prices in England and Wales and in Belgium.

Commodities.	Predominant Range of Retail Prices.		Ratio of Mean Predominant Price in Belgium (1908) to that in England and Wales (1905), taken as 100.
	England and Wales. (October, 1905.)	Belgium. (June, 1908.)	
Sugar per lb.	2d.	2½d. to 3½d.	150
Bacon "	7d. to 9d.	7d. " 8½d.	98
Cheese "	7d.	7½d. " 9½d.	121
Butter "	{ 1s. to 1s. 1d.* 1s. 2d.† }	1s. 0½d. " 1s. 1½d.	98
Potatoes per 7 lb.	2½d. to 3½d.	2½d. " 3d.	92
Flour, Wheaten "	8d. " 10d.	9½d. " 10d.	107
Bread, White per 4 lb.	4½d. " 5½d.	4½d. " 5½d.	95
Milk per qt.	3d. " 4d.	2½d.	64
Beef per lb.	{ 7½d. " 8½d.† 5d. " 6d.* }	6d. to 7d.	96
Mutton... .. "	{ 7½d. " 9d.† 4d. " 5d.* }	6½d. " 7½d.	110
Pork "	7½d. " 8½d.	7½d. " 9½d.	106
Coal per cwt.	9½d. " 1s.	1s. 0½d. " 1s. 2½d.	126
Paraffin Oil per gallon	7d. " 8d.	6½d. " 7½d.	95

* Colonial or "Foreign."

† Danish.

‡ British or Home-killed.

The predominant prices for England and Wales are taken from the Table on p. xxiii. of the Report on Cost of Living of the Working Classes in the United Kingdom. In the case of beef and mutton it has been thought sufficient, as in the comparison of English with French and with German prices, to take the mean of the predominant prices of "British or home-killed" and of "foreign or colonial" meat as typical of the prices paid by the British working classes; the actual proportion of foreign or colonial meat consumed by the working classes is not known, but it almost certainly exceeds 40 per cent. The price of "foreign or colonial" butter has been similarly combined with that of Danish. The Belgian prices are cited from the Table on p. xvii. above.

It will be seen that with few exceptions, notably sugar, cheese, milk and coal, the prices ruling in Belgium, in June, 1908, are on the whole very close to those ruling in England in October, 1905: excluding the four commodities named, the prices of all the remaining nine lie within a range of 10 per cent. on either side of the prices usually paid by the working classes of this country in 1905. Sugar is some 50 per cent. dearer in Belgium than in England, but milk is 36 per cent. cheaper, the price being only some 2½d. per quart, against the 3d. to 4d. common in this country. As regards the difference in cheese prices, it should be stated that the range of prices is very wide, and that there is a large consumption of local varieties, which are cheaper than Dutch cheese. If the prices had been collected in Belgium at the earlier date it is evident, from what has been said above, that the result would in the majority of cases have been rather more favourable to that country; the price of potatoes, which appear to have been much dearer in 1905 than in 1908 in Belgium, is, however, an important exception.

The figures suggest that the cost of maintaining a certain standard of living cannot be very different in the two countries, but in order to make a more definite comparison it is necessary to allow for the relative quantities of the various commodities consumed. In the Report on the United Kingdom, the standard of living taken was that of the average British working-class family, and the price levels in different towns were compared by the amount necessary to purchase the quantities of certain articles of food and of coal in the average weekly budget of such a family, as determined by an earlier investigation. The same principle was applied to the comparison of prices in France and Germany with those ruling in England, and may be used again in the present instance. We may ask, that is to say, if the average British working man, with an average family, went to live in Belgium, retaining as far as possible his accustomed mode of life, and purchasing the same weekly quantities of food and fuel, how much more or less would he have to pay? Or, to put the question in another way: if the prices of commodities in England, at October, 1905, had altered to the level of prices existing in Belgium at the same period, by how much would the ordinary expenditure of the average British working-class family on food and fuel have changed? As Belgian prices for 1905 are not available, the answer to the question must be obtained by utilising the prices for 1908, and applying any necessary correction for the changes that have taken place since the earlier year. The following comparative budgets show accordingly, for all commodities for which comparative prices can be given, the cost of the average British budget (1) at the predominant prices paid by the working classes in England and Wales in October, 1905; (2) at the predominant prices paid by the working classes in Belgium in June, 1908.

Cost of the Average British Working-man's Budget (excluding commodities for which comparative prices cannot be given) at the Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes of (1) England and Wales, and (2) Belgium.

Commodity.	Quantity in Average British Budget.	Predominant Prices in		Cost in Pence of Quantity in Column 2.	
		England and Wales. (October, 1905.)	Belgium. (June, 1908.)	England and Wales.	Belgium.
Sugar ...	5½ lb.	2d. per lb.	2½d. to 3½d. per lb.	10½	16
Bacon ...	1½ lb.	7d. to 9d. per lb.	7d. to 8½d. per lb.	12	11½
Cheese ...	¾ lb.	7d. per lb.	7½d. to 9½d. per lb.	5½	6½
Butter ...	2 lb.	1s. 1½d. per lb.*	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 1½d. per lb.	26½	26
Potatoes ...	17 lb.	2½d. to 3½d. per 7 lb.	2½d. to 3d. per 7 lb.	7½	6½
Flour, Wheaten ...	10 lb.	8d. to 10d. per 7 lb.	9½d. to 10d. per 7 lb.	12½	13½
Bread, White ...	22 lb.	4½d. to 5½d. per 4 lb.	4½d. to 5½d. per 4 lb.	27½	26½
Milk ...	5 qts.	3d. to 4d. per quart.	2½d. per quart.	17½	11½
Beef ...	4½ lb.	6½d. per lb.†	6d. to 7d. per lb.	30½	29½
Mutton ...	1½ lb.	6½d. per lb.†	6½d. to 7½d. per lb.	9½	10½
Pork ...	½ lb.	7½d. to 8½d. per lb.	7½d. to 9½d. per lb.	4	4½
Coal ...	2 cwt.	9½d. to 1s. per cwt.	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 2½d. per cwt.	21½	27
Total Cost of the above ...				185	189
Index Number (England and Wales, 1905, Belgium, 1908) ...				100	102
Index Number, excluding Coal (England and Wales, 1905, Belgium, 1908) ...				100	99

* Mean of Colonial or "Foreign" and Danish.

† Mean of British or Home-killed and of Foreign or Colonial.

It will be seen that under the prices ruling in the industrial towns of Belgium in June, 1908, the English workman with an average family, would have had to pay roughly 189d. for the same commodities that he had previously purchased for 185d., that is to say 2 per cent. more: he would have paid about 5½d. more for his sugar, and 5½d. more for his coal, but would have saved 6½d. on his milk. But the cost of the above list of commodities in Belgium was, so far as can be estimated by the Board from the available data (see above, p. xxxi), about 3 per cent. less in October, 1905, than in June, 1908. If, then, the Belgian data had been obtained in 1905, at the same time as the English prices, the ratio would have been approximately 100 to 99 instead of 100 to 102. That is to say, if the prices of commodities in England at October, 1905, had altered to the level of Belgian prices at the same period, the weekly expenditure of the average British working-class household on food and fuel would hardly have been sensibly affected but probably slightly decreased.

It must be remembered, however, that the above comparison only covers some 70 per cent. of the whole expenditure of the English workman on food and fuel. The principal commodities omitted are tea, for which no really comparable prices could be obtained in Belgium; eggs, which it has been thought better to exclude owing to the variety of qualities, especially in this country; vegetables, the retail prices of which are very difficult to compare, even in different districts of the same country, owing to the great range of qualities and the variety of units by which they are sold; currants, rice, and jam; fish, and the various tinned meats, tripe, liver, etc., which enter so largely into the British working-class dietary. But, so far as can be judged, it is thought that the prices of those commodities which are included in the list are fairly representative, and the ratio 99:100 will accordingly be taken as giving approximately the ratio of the cost of the average English workman's food and fuel at Belgian prices, compared with its cost at English prices, in October, 1905.

It should be borne in mind in any such comparison that the standpoints of the Englishman and of the Belgian are not identical. If the Belgian budget be taken as the basis of comparison, and if the question be asked by how much the weekly expenditure of the average Belgian working-class family would have been increased if the prices ruling in that country in 1905 had been altered to those ruling in England and Wales at the same period, the answer obtained will not be quite the same as that given by the above work. The following Table affords a comparison between the cost of the principal articles for which comparative prices are available in the Belgian working-class budget:—

Cost of the Average Belgian Working-man's Budget (excluding commodities for which comparative prices cannot be given) at the Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes of (1) England and Wales and (2) Belgium.

Commodity.	Quantity in Average Belgian Budget.	Predominant Prices in		Cost in Pence of Quantity in Column 2.	
		England and Wales. (October, 1905.)	Belgium. (June, 1908.)	England and Wales.	Belgium.
Sugar ...	1 lb.	2d. per lb.	2½d. to 3½d. per lb.	2	3
Bacon ...	¾ lb.	7d. to 9d. per lb.	7d. to 8½d. per lb.	6	6
Cheese ...	¾ lb.	7d. per lb.	7½d. to 9½d. per lb.	3½	4½
Butter ...	2½ lb.	1s. 1½d. per lb.*	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 1½d. per lb.	29½	29½
Potatoes ...	33 lb.	2½d. to 3½d. per 7 lb.	2½d. to 3d. per 7 lb.	14½	13
Flour, Wheaten ...	¾ lb.	8d. to 10d. per 7 lb.	9½d. to 10d. per 7 lb.	1	1
Bread, White ...	34½ lb.	4½d. to 5½d. per 4 lb.	4½d. to 5½d. per 4 lb.	43½	41
Milk ...	4 qts.	3d. to 4d. per quart.	2½d. per quart.	14	9
Beef ...	2½ lb.	6½d. per lb.†	6d. to 7d. per lb.	18½	17½
Mutton ...	½ lb.	6½d. per lb.†	6½d. to 7½d. per lb.	1½	1½
Pork ...	1 lb.	7½d. to 8½d. per lb.	7½d. to 9½d. per lb.	8	8½
Coal ...	1½ cwt.	9½d. to 1s. per cwt.	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 2½d. per cwt.	14½	18
Total Cost of the above ...				155½	152½
Index Number (England and Wales, 1905, Belgium, 1908) ...				100	98
Index Number, excluding Coal (England and Wales, 1905, Belgium, 1908) ...				100	95

* Mean of Colonial or "Foreign" and Danish.

† Mean of British or Home-killed and of Foreign or Colonial.

From this Table it will be seen that the total cost at the Belgian prices of 1908 is about 2 per cent. less than the cost at the English prices of 1905, instead of about 2 per cent. more, in part owing to the smaller consumption of sugar, flour and coal and in part to the larger consumption of bread and potatoes.

In 1905, the cost of the above articles in Belgium would also have been probably some 2 per cent. less than in 1908, and the ratio in the earlier year would accordingly have been approximately, England, 100; Belgium, 96—a slightly lower ratio than that obtained on the basis of the British family budget. As in the last case, the table covers only a limited number of the commodities in the Belgian workman's dietary, no comparative prices being available for coffee, vegetables, veal, horseflesh or *charcuterie*. If these articles could be included, it is quite possible that the ratio might be further lowered by one or two points. The Englishman, however, is more concerned with the possible change in cost of his accustomed food and fuel, if prices in England should have altered to the Belgian level, than with the change in cost to the Belgian in the converse case, and accordingly the ratio Belgium 99: England and Wales 100 is taken as representing, from the English point of view, the relative levels of cost of food and fuel in the two countries in October, 1905.

It may be of interest to add that this ratio is probably also not far from the truth for the later date at which the Belgian investigation was undertaken (June, 1908), as the rise in prices in this country, estimated for the most part from records of prices obtained by the Board from a number of provincial towns covered by the investigation in the United Kingdom, and for certain commodities from records of London prices, appears to have been much the same as in Belgium, though possibly slightly greater. The principal differences, as compared with 1905, were:—A great increase in the price of potatoes, amounting to 38 per cent. in the metropolis; a rise of about 10 per cent. in bread, flour and cheese; a rise of some 8 per cent. in meat (to which the rise in the price of foreign beef that culminated in May and June, 1908, principally contributed). Butter and sugar were both about 4·5 per cent. lower. Coal, judging from London retail prices, was also about 4 per cent. lower. Possibly, in June of last year, the ratio of prices in the two countries may have been nearer 98 to 100, rather than 99 to 100, but the data as to price changes are hardly adequate to fix the figure to a single unit in either case.

It is necessary to emphasise the fact that in this Report, as in the previous Reports of the same series, the average working-class budgets of the two countries, while sufficient for the purposes for which they have been used, do not form any satisfactory basis for the direct comparison of the prices usually paid by the working classes. They were collected at widely different periods, and while the Belgian budgets were drawn from the towns visited for the purpose of this Report, the British budgets, collected at an earlier date, did not cover so extensive a field as the subsequent enquiry into the condition of the working classes in industrial towns.

(iii.) WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

Wages.—The predominant weekly wages for the building, engineering and printing trades in Belgium in 1908 were given in the Table on p. xxi. above; corresponding data for England and Wales in 1905 will be found on p. xxxiii. of the Report on Cost of Living of the Working Classes in the United Kingdom. Enquiries were made of Belgian employers, at the time the schedules were filled in, as to the course of wages during the years 1905–1908, but the only change noted as the result of such enquiries was a slight decrease of wages in the coal mining industry, due to the industrial depression. No changes were reported in the three trades dealt with in this section, and the comparisons made may consequently be regarded as approximately true for the year 1905. In England and Wales on the other hand, while the rates of wages in the building trade have remained at the same level, the rates both in the engineering and printing trades have risen by about 2 per cent., and if both sets of data had been collected last year the result would have been slightly more favourable to this country.

Bringing together the data for the two countries we have the following comparisons:—

Predominant Weekly Wages in certain Occupations in England and Wales and in Belgium.

Occupation.	Predominant Range of Weekly Wages.		Ratio of Mean Predominant Wage in Belgium (1908) to Mean Predominant Wage in England and Wales (1905) taken as 100.
	England and Wales. (October, 1905).	Belgium. (June, 1908).	
<i>Building Trades* :—</i>			
Bricklayers	37s. 6d. to 40s. 6d.	} 20s. 9d. to 24s.	58
Masons	37s. 2d. „ 39s. 4d.		
Carpenters	36s. 2d. „ 39s. 4d.	20s. 2d. to 25s. 3d.	60
Joiners	36s. 2d. „ 39s. 4d.	20s. 5d. „ 23s. 5d.	58
Plumbers	35s. 4d. „ 39s. 9d.	20s. 2d. „ 23s. 5d.	58
Plasterers	36s. 6d. „ 41s. 8d.	20s. 7d. „ 24s. 6d.	58
Painters	31s. 6d. „ 37s. 6d.	18s. 9d. „ 21s. 7d.	58
Bricklayers' Labourers	24s. 4d. „ 27s. 0d.	} 15s. to 18s.	65
Masons' Labourers	23s. 6d. „ 26s. 6d.		
<i>Engineering Trades :—</i>			
Fitters	32s. to 36s.	19s. 9d. to 22s. 10d.	63
Turners	32s. „ 36s.	20s. 6d. „ 24s. 4d.	66
Smiths	32s. „ 36s.	20s. 1d. „ 24s. 6d.	66
Patternmakers	34s. „ 38s.	19s. 7d. to 24s.	61
Labourers	18s. „ 22s.	12s. 11d. to 16s. 3d.	73
<i>Printing Trades :—</i>			
Compositors	28s. to 33s.	19s. 1d. to 22s. 10d.	69
Arithmetic Means {	All above Occupations	...	63
	The Building Trades	...	59
	The Engineering Trades	...	66

* The wages stated for the building trades are for a full week in summer in both countries.

The wages given for the building trades are in both cases wages for a full working week in summer. In the case of the engineering trades, the English wages are the standard time-rates recognised by the unions concerned: the Belgian rates, on the other hand are based on returns of actual earnings in an ordinary week, for the most part on time rates, and the two are consequently not strictly comparable. The earnings of English workmen in the engineering trades in an ordinary week, even on time and not on piece rates, often exceed the "standard rates," though they sometimes fall below them, and on the whole the comparison is a little favourable to Belgium. The same difficulty occurs in the case of the compositors; English rates are standard rates, which are not infrequently exceeded, while the Belgian figures are usually based on actual earnings.

It will be seen that the wages of skilled men in the building trades in Belgium are only from 58 to 60 per cent. of the wages of the corresponding English artisans. For skilled men in the engineering trades the ratios lie between 61 and 66 per cent. Compositors' wages are about 69 per cent. of those ruling in this country. A glance at the Table shows how great is the difference for skilled men in these trades, the difference in ten out of eleven cases, taking the means of the above ranges, being from 11s. 7d. to 16s. 7d. a week. The smallest difference occurs in the case of the lowest paid class, i.e., the engineering labourers, who earn 12s. 11d. to 16s. 3d. a week in Belgium against 18s. to 22s. in this country, a ratio of 73 per cent. For the building trades as a whole the ratio is 59 per cent. and for the engineering trades 66 per cent.

If the arithmetic mean of the index numbers in the last column of the above table be taken as representing approximately the level of wages in Belgium as compared with England, we find that on the whole the wages of the Belgian artisan are, to those of the English artisan as 63 to 100. The comparison being based on a limited number of trades, there is room for some doubt as to how far the conditions subsisting in the trades chosen are representative of the conditions in Belgian and English industry generally. While it is not possible to make exact comparisons of wages in other trades, the detailed data given in the reports on the several towns tend emphatically to confirm the general impression that rates of wages are very low in Belgium, with but few exceptions. In

many cases the rates paid for skilled labour are hardly higher, indeed as will be seen from the above table are often lower, than those paid to unskilled or only slightly skilled labourers in this country.

Reference was made in the Report on Cost of Living in French Towns to one possible source of error in any comparison of the present kind, namely the differences that may arise in wage-rates owing to the fact that, while two occupations are nominally the same, the actual work is really different in the two countries. It is not believed that there are any differences in the organisation of the building and engineering trades which can cause any real doubt as to the above results. While there are certainly differences between the work usually assigned to the several classes of artisans in the two countries, such differences are for the most part small, and care has been exercised in the choice of occupations for inclusion in the comparative list. The consistency of the results for the several sections of the building and engineering trades respectively in itself affords evidence of the absence of any serious error arising from differences between nominally similar occupations.

Hours of Labour.—The usual hours of labour in the building, engineering, and printing trades in Belgium, in 1908, were stated in a table on p. xxii. above, and similar data for England and Wales in 1905 will be found on p. lvi. of the Report on Cost of Living in German Towns. The following table summarises the averages of predominant hours for these trades :—

Weekly Hours of Labour in certain Occupations in England and Wales and in Belgium.

Occupation.	Average Hours of Labour per week (excluding intervals) in summer.		Ratio of Average Hours of Labour in Belgium (1908) to those in England and Wales (1905), taken as 100.
	England and Wales. (1905.)	Belgium. (1908.)	
<i>Building Trades* :—</i>			
Bricklayers and Masons	52½	67½	129
Carpenters	53	67½	127
Joiners	53	67½	127
Plumbers	53½	67½	126
Plasterers	53	67½	127
Painters	53½	68½	128
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	52½	67½	129
<i>Engineering Trades :—</i>			
Fitters	53	60½	114
Turners	53	60½	114
Smiths	53	60½	114
Patternmakers	53	60½	114
Labourers	53	60½	114
<i>Printing Trades :—</i>			
Compositors	52½	59½	114
Arithmetic Means ... {			
	All above Occupations		121
	The Building Trades		128
	The Engineering Trades		114

* The hours of labour stated for the building trades are for a full week in summer, in both countries.

It will be seen that the average hours of labour of the Belgian artisan are from 14 to 29 per cent. in excess of the average hours of labour usual in this country amongst the corresponding classes of workpeople. In the building trades the average hours in Belgium are 67½ to 68½, the hours in different towns and with different firms ranging, for the most part, from 63 to 72 (*cf.* the Table on p. xxii.), while in England and Wales the usual average hours are 52½ to 53½. As regards the engineering trades, the usual hours in Belgium are distinctly shorter than for the building trades, but still considerably longer than is common in this country; the average is about 60½ in Belgium against 53 here. For compositors the ratio is similar, 59½ hours in Belgium against 52½ in England and Wales. Taking the average of the index numbers shown in the last column of the above Table, the hours of labour in Belgium may be said to exceed those usual in this country by about 21 per cent.

No evidence was found of any marked change in the hours of labour so far as regards these trades in Belgium during the years 1905 to 1908, and although in England and Wales the general tendency has been for hours to decrease, the average decrease is something under 1 per cent. The above results may accordingly be regarded as holding good very approximately both in 1905 and 1908.

Hourly Rates of Wages.—Weekly wages in Belgium, for the trades considered, standing to English weekly wages for the same trades approximately as 63 to 100, while hours of labour during the week are in the ratio of 121 to 100, the average hourly earnings of the Belgian artisan in the selected trades must be to those of the corresponding English workman, approximately, as 52 to 100. That is to say, for the building, engineering and printing trades in the towns visited, the average hourly earnings of the Belgian workmen are little more than half of those of the English workmen performing the same duties.

(iv.) SUMMARY OF COMPARISONS WITH RESPECT TO RENTS, PRICES, WAGES, AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

Summarising the statistical comparisons of the preceding sections, it has been found that as regards *rents* :—

Net rents of working-class dwellings in Belgium (not including payments on account of local taxation) are to gross rents of working-class dwellings in England (including all local taxation) as ... 61 to 100

Net rents of working-class dwellings in Belgium are to the net rents of working-class dwellings in England (excluding that portion of English rents which represents local taxation) as ... 74 to 100

As regards *prices* :—

The cost of the average British working man's weekly purchases of certain standard articles of food and fuel (for an average family) at the prices ruling in Belgium in October, 1905, was to the cost of the same articles at English prices at the same date, approximately as ... 99 to 100

The ratio found for rents in Belgium and England at the dates of the respective enquiries, as stated above (p. xxvii) may be taken with quite sufficient accuracy for an approximate comparison of the present kind as representing the ratio at October, 1905, and if the expenditure on rents be combined with that on food and fuel, we have, taking the expenditure on the latter items at four times the former as in the British comparisons :—

The expenditure of the average British working man (with an average family) on certain standard articles of food and fuel, and on rent, at the prices and rents ruling in Belgium in October, 1905, would be to his expenditure on the same items together with local taxation at the prices and rents ruling in England as ... 91 to 100

Or, excluding that portion of English rents which represents payments on account of local taxation, as ... 94 to 100

It appears, therefore, that an English workman living in Belgium and maintaining as far as possible his English mode of life, and his English dietary, would have found his expenditure on food, fuel, house-room and local taxation (remembering that in Belgium he would be almost exempt from such taxation) reduced by about 9 per cent., or excluding local taxation from both sides of the account, by about 6 per cent. At the same time, however, his earning capacity would be reduced in a much greater degree, for, as regards *wages and hours of labour* :—

The weekly money wages of the working classes in Belgian towns, in certain widely distributed trades selected for comparison, are to those of the same classes in England as ... 63 to 100

The average usual working hours per week of the working classes in Belgian towns, in the trades selected for comparison, are to those of the same classes in England as ... 121 to 100

Hence the hourly rates of money wages for the working classes in Belgian towns, in the trades selected for comparison, are to those of the same classes in English towns approximately as... 52 to 100

The basis of this estimate is limited by the fact that the wages and hours of labour which it is possible to compare are those of various sections of the building and engineering trades, and one section of the printing trade alone. As regards the cost of food and fuel in the two countries it must also be remembered that it is not possible to extend the comparison to all the items of the British budget, and that the comparison of prices is made from the standpoint of the *British* artisan's ordinary dietary and not from that of the Belgian dietary. It may be added that the estimates are not, and are not intended to be, estimates of the relative well being of the working classes in the two countries, but only of two important factors in such well being, namely the money earnings of labour during equal times in each country, and the costs in each of some standard quantities of food, fuel and house-room, the standard chosen being that of the British artisan.

The question may naturally be asked, how far the results arrived at will be true for the present or at least some more recent date. On this point only somewhat general indications can be given; the conclusions set out above are the result of special and prolonged enquiries, and any changes can only be measured with certainty when similar enquiries have again been made at a later date.

From the data obtained in the weekly budgets, it is estimated that the rise in *Rents* in Belgium, between October, 1905, and June, 1908, was something under 1 per cent. (*cf.* p. xxvii.). This is the only definite information as to *changes in rents* available. The movement of average rents over a large number of towns is, however, fairly slow (*cf.* Second Series of Memoranda, etc., Cd. 2,337, 1904, p. 34) and the general movements in both countries are no doubt similar, *i.e.*, in the direction of a rise. It is not probable, therefore, that the rent index numbers would have been greatly affected if all the data had been collected towards the end of 1908.

Retail Prices seem to have been, generally, rather higher in October, 1908, than in October, 1905. In England and Wales the difference is estimated at about 4 per cent. on the articles of the British working man's budget. In Belgium, as already stated, the rise is estimated at about 3 per cent. on the same articles, or 2 per cent. on the articles of the Belgian working man's budget. On the whole, the index numbers for October, 1905, were probably not very inaccurate in October, 1908.

Wages in the building, engineering and printing trades in England appear to have risen, on an average of these three trades, about 1 to 1½ per cent. between the autumn of 1905, and the autumn of 1908: there was no appreciable alteration during that period in wages in the building trades, but in the engineering and the printing trades wages rose by about 2 per cent. In Belgium no change was reported in any of the three trades.

Hours of Labour do not appear to have undergone any appreciable change in either country. Sporadic decreases are reported in England, but any change in the general average seems to be certainly under 1 per cent.

On the whole, therefore, it does not seem likely, so far as the somewhat inadequate data available enable any judgment to be formed, that the results of the present investigation would have been appreciably different, if all the data could have been brought down to the autumn of 1908.

TABLE A.

INDEX NUMBERS OF WAGES, RENTS AND PRICES.

(i.) TOWNS GROUPED GEOGRAPHICALLY.

Town.	Wages.					Rent.	Prices.	Rent and Prices combined.*
	Building.		Engineering.		Printing.			
	Skilled Men.	Unskilled Labourers.	Skilled Men.	Unskilled Labourers.	Compositors.			
Brussels	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Antwerp	92	96	96	93	78	99	95	96
Other Flemish Towns:								
Bruges... ..	72	67	81	78	76	59	89	84
Courtrai... ..	83	79	95	86	63	58	92	86
Ghent	87	91	84	90	76	63	94	89
Louvain	80	91	82	84	—	65	94	89
Malines	81	76	71	74	72	52	92	85
Tournai	76	76	86	91	74	74	99	95
Turnhout	79	79	84	85	64	44	92	84
Mean	80	80	83	81	71	59	93	87
Walloon Towns:								
Charleroi	94	94	94	101	86	74	97	93
La Louvière	95	100	111	109	85	75	96	93
Liège	84	84	99	105	91	88	96	95
Paturages	98	95	—	—	82	43	94	86
Seraing	81	91	98	106	—	59	96	90
Verviers	85	89	91	105	77	61	100	94
Mean	90	92	99	105	84	67	97	92

(ii.) TOWNS ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

Town.	Wages.					Rent.	Prices.	Rent and Prices combined.*
	Building.		Engineering.		Printing.			
	Skilled Men.	Unskilled Labourers.	Skilled Men.	Unskilled Labourers.	Compositors.			
Antwerp	92	96	96	93	78	99	95	96
Bruges	72	67	81	78	76	59	89	84
Brussels	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Charleroi	94	94	94	101	86	74	97	93
Courtrai... ..	83	79	95	86	63	58	92	86
Ghent	87	91	84	90	76	63	94	89
La Louvière	95	100	111	109	85	75	96	93
Liège	84	84	99	105	91	88	96	95
Louvain	80	91	82	84	—	65	94	89
Malines	81	76	71	74	72	52	92	85
Paturages	98	95	—	—	82	43	94	86
Seraing	81	91	98	106	—	59	96	90
Tournai	76	76	86	91	74	74	99	95
Turnhout	79	79	84	85	64	44	92	84
Verviers	85	89	91	105	77	61	100	94

* In the construction of this index number, prices have been given a weight of five and rents a weight of one.

TABLE B.

CONDENSED BUDGETS—BELGIUM.

Average Weekly Expenditure on and Quantity of Certain Articles of Food consumed by Workmen's Families, whose incomes fall within certain limits, in all Districts of Belgium, 1908-9.

Limits of Weekly Income.	Under 25s.	25s. and under 30s.	30s. and under 35s.	35s. and under 40s.	40s. and over.
Number of Returns ...	815	362	247	152	283
Average Weekly Family Income ...	s. d. 20 5½	s. d. 27 5½	s. d. 32 0½	s. d. 37 0½	s. d. 52 1½
Average Number of Children living at Home	2·26	2·52	2·96	3·27	3·94
EXPENDITURE.					
Bread ...	s. d. 2 9	s. d. 3 1½	s. d. 3 8½	s. d. 4 0½	s. d. 4 8½
Wheat and buckwheat flour ...	0 0½	0 1½	0 1½	0 1½	0 1½
Meat of all kinds (including poultry and rabbits).	3 0	4 2½	4 11	5 8	7 9½
Fish ...	0 4	0 4½	0 5	0 6½	0 7½
Eggs ...	0 4	0 7	0 7½	0 8½	1 3½
Fresh milk ...	0 7½	0 8½	0 9½	0 9	1 0
Cheese ...	0 2	0 3½	0 3½	0 4½	0 6½
Fats, oils and butter*	2 1½	2 9	3 2	3 6½	4 10½
Potatoes ...	0 11½	1 0½	1 1½	1 3½	1 5
Vegetables and fruit†	0 6½	0 9	0 10	0 11½	1 3
Farinaceous foods other than bread or flour.‡	0 2½	0 3½	0 3½	0 4	0 5½
Coffee and chicory ...	0 8½	0 10	0 11	1 0½	1 3½
Sugar ...	0 2½	0 3½	0 3½	0 4	0 5
Other items ...	0 3½	0 6½	0 7½	0 9	0 11½
Meals away from home ...	1 0½	1 6½	1 9½	2 2½	3 0½
Total expenditure on food ...	13 4½	17 5½	19 10½	22 8	29 8½
QUANTITIES.					
Bread and flour ... lb.	29·14	33·18	38·58	42·04	49·14
Meat of all kinds (including fish) ... "	6·00	7·84	9·16	10·37	13·80
Eggs ... No.	4·1	6·9	7·6	8·3	14·4
Fresh milk ... pints.	6·86	7·83	8·69	8·36	11·11
Cheese ... lb.	0·32	0·48	0·55	0·62	0·88
Fats, oils and butter* ... "	2·31	2·91	3·34	3·59	5·00
Potatoes ... "	29·42	30·93	34·14	37·75	42·36
Sugar ... "	0·85	1·17	1·18	1·33	1·68

* Butter, butter substitutes, lard, suet, dripping, olive oil and substitutes.
† Including dry peas and haricots.
‡ Macaroni, rice, barley, oatmeal and potato meal.

TABLE C.

CONDENSED BUDGETS—UNITED KINGDOM.

Average Weekly Expenditure on and Quantity of certain Articles of Food consumed by Workmen's Families, whose incomes fall within certain limits, in all Districts of the United Kingdom, 1904.

Limits of Weekly Income.	Under 25s.	25s. and under 30s.	30s. and under 35s.	35s. and under 40s.	40s. and over.
Number of Returns ...	261	289	416	382	596
Average Weekly Family Income ...	s. d. 21 4½	s. d. 26 11½	s. d. 31 11½	s. d. 36 6½	s. d. 52 0½
Average Number of Children living at Home	3·1	3·3	3·2	3·4	4·4
EXPENDITURE.					
Bread and flour ...	s. d. 3 0½	s. d. 3 3½	s. d. 3 3½	s. d. 3 4½	s. d. 4 3½
Meat (bought by weight)* ...	3 2½	4 1½	5 1½	5 5	7 2½
Other meat (including fish) ...	0 7½	0 8½	0 10	1 0	1 4
Eggs ...	0 5½	0 8½	0 11	1 0	1 4½
Fresh milk ...	0 8	0 11½	1 3½	1 4½	1 7½
Cheese ...	0 4½	0 5½	0 6	0 6	0 8
Animal fats† ...	1 8	2 1	2 4½	2 6½	3 8½
Potatoes ...	0 8½	0 9½	0 10½	0 10½	1 1½
Vegetables and fruits... ‡	0 4½	0 7	0 10	0 11½	1 3½
Farinaceous foods other than bread and flour.‡	0 4½	0 5	0 6	0 5½	0 7
Tea, coffee, cocoa, &c. ...	0 11½	1 2½	1 4½	1 5½	1 10½
Sugar ...	0 8	0 10	0 10½	0 11½	1 3
Other items§ ...	1 1	1 4½	1 7½	1 10½	2 6½
Meals away from home ...	0 1½	0 2½	0 4	0 6½	0 9
Total expenditure on food ...	14 4½	17 10½	20 9½	22 3½	29 8
QUANTITIES.					
Bread and flour ... lb.	28·44	29·97	29·44	29·99	37·76
Meat of all kinds (including an allowance for fish)... "	6·42	7·57	8·66	9·25	11·87
Eggs ... No.	6·2	8·7	11·3	12·0	16·3
Fresh milk ... pints	5·54	7·72	9·85	10·34	12·63
Cheese ... lb.	0·67	0·70	0·79	0·77	1·02
Animal fats† ... "	2·05	2·47	2·67	2·87	3·96
Potatoes ... "	14·05	15·84	16·11	15·87	19·93
Sugar ... "	3·87	4·62	4·79	5·21	6·70

* Including bacon.
† Rice, tapioca, oatmeal.
‡ Currants, raisins, jam, marmalade, treacle, syrup, pickles, condiments, and "other items."
† Butter, margarine, lard, suet, and dripping.

TOWN REPORTS.

BRUSSELS.

On the main line of the State Railway which crosses Belgium from east to west, Brussels stands about midway, being 76 miles east of Ostend and 88 miles west of the German frontier station of Herbesthal. Approaching the Belgian metropolis from Ostend, the railway passes through the important Flemish cities of Bruges, Ghent, and Alost, while the traveller towards Brussels from the German frontier passes in succession through Verviers, Liège, Tirlémont, and Louvain. In relation to the Dutch and French frontiers, on the north and south respectively, the Belgian capital is scarcely less centrally situated, but is slightly nearer to the former than to the latter. By a special service of fast trains established in August, 1908, the journey between Brussels and the great seaport of Antwerp, a distance of 27 miles, is now reduced to 36 minutes. Paris lies 194 miles to the south-west and the distance between the two capitals is covered by express trains in 4 hours. For travellers from Brussels southwards to the Belgian "black country," the railway facilities are, on the whole, less perfect, and are the subject of some complaint among business men who use them most.

To its position in the centre of the Belgian railway system, Brussels is largely indebted for its present great and growing prosperity. To this the highly developed system of Belgian canals has also contributed, for, ever since 1560, the city of Brussels has been connected with the river Rupel (a branch of the Scheldt) by a canal some 17 miles in length, known as the *Canal de Willebroeck*. Similar means of communication with the great coalfields of the South were supplied in 1830, by the opening of the Brussels-Charleroi canal, some 45 miles in length. Extensive works are now being carried out for improving navigation between Brussels and the North Sea. The scheme involves the conversion of the *Canal de Willebroeck* into a ship canal, and the construction of three new docks and an outer port in the northern suburbs of Brussels. The widening and deepening of the existing canal are already finished as far as Humbeek, about $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the city, and it is expected that a further 6 miles will be completed this year (1909). The newly converted part of the Willebroeck canal has a minimum width of 59 feet at the bottom, and of 131 feet at the surface. At the mooring places, a width of from 230 to 328 feet is provided. The largest of the new docks (already finished) is 984 yards long, 131 yards wide, and 21 feet deep, and affords just over a mile of quay accommodation. Of the two smaller docks (which are to accommodate barges) one is 765 yards long and 46 yards wide, while the other measures 656 yards by 38. The former is to connect the large dock (or *Bassin Maritime* as it is called), with the Charleroi Canal, in connection with which a number of small docks in the north-western corner of Brussels City have hitherto served for loading and unloading. The outer port will provide a mile and a quarter of quay frontage for large coasting vessels, within easy reach both of the northern suburban railway junction of Schaerbeek and of the great Brussels Goods Station (*Gare à Marchandises*), which occupies an area of nearly 75 acres in the north-west of the city, and has extensive warehousing accommodation. The funds for the execution of this great scheme of converting Brussels into a seaport are being provided by a society of which the shareholders are the Belgian Government, the Province of Brabant, and the various municipalities of Greater Brussels. In a sense the Belgian Capital may even now lay claim to the title of a seaport. Four steamers (of from 213 to 230 tons capacity) ply regularly every week between Brussels and London, and there are two other regular weekly services of steamers; one with Amsterdam and the other with Rotterdam. Foreign goods to the value of £1,674,177 came to Brussels by water in 1907, while goods to the value of £1,313,425 left Brussels for abroad on sea, river, and canal craft in the same year. In point of value, hides and skins for the Brussels boot and shoe and glove-making trades ranked first among the foreign goods brought by water in 1907 (£172,000); after these came coffee (£113,000); vegetable oils (£96,000); coal and coke (£85,000); beer (£82,000); vegetables, including 6,700 tons of potatoes (£44,000); barley, for the Brussels breweries (£43,000); stone, rough and prepared (£33,000); fish (£31,000), including some 2,500 tons of mussels, shrimps, etc., and some 1,200 tons of herrings; and wood, for the building and furniture

trades (£25,000). Among the goods shipped from the Brussels wharves for abroad in 1907, glass manufactures (chiefly prepared sheet glass for mirrors) rank first in point of value, with £313,000; next come sugar, raw and refined (£149,000), followed by stone, rough and prepared (£74,000), dyes and colours (£65,000), and stationery and paper goods (£18,000).

The total shipping of Brussels docks in 1907, in the home and foreign trades combined, amounted to 9,323 vessels of an aggregate of 1,404,000 tons* entered, and 8,704 vessels of an aggregate of 1,256,000 tons* cleared.

In speaking of Brussels it is necessary to distinguish between the city of that name and the group of nine communes of which that city is the centre, and with which it is officially associated, as forming what is known as the *Agglomération Bruxelloise*. It is necessary also to note that each of the nine communes of what, throughout the remainder of the present Report, will be termed "Greater Brussels," is an administrative unit, entirely independent of the others, and having its own Mayor, Aldermen, Town Councillors, and other machinery of civic government. Of these nine communes the City of Brussels, though not the largest in area, is by far the most important in point of resident population. This may be seen from the following statement showing the estimated population of each of the various communes of Greater Brussels†:—

Estimated Population of the Various Communes of Greater Brussels at the end of 1907.

Brussels City	198,449	Anderlecht	60,318
Schaerbeek	75,153	Saint-Josse-ten-Noode ...	33,329
Ixelles	73,064	Laeken	32,934
Molenbeek-Saint-Jean ...	67,094	Etterbeek	27,828
Saint-Gilles	61,748		

Total—Greater Brussels ... 629,917

Of a total area of 16,307 acres occupied by the nine communes the city of Brussels covers 2,490 acres, or a little more than one-seventh. Anderlecht is considerably larger, with an area of 4,392 acres, but of the remaining communes, the largest—Schaerbeek—with 2,344 acres, does not quite equal the City of Brussels in extent, while the smallest (Saint-Josse-ten-Noode) only occupies 280 acres.

As might be supposed, the population is increasing much more rapidly in the suburban communes than in Brussels proper, but it is noteworthy that, even in the already densely peopled area of the City, the number of inhabitants still continues to increase. The following table shows the rate of growth of the population in (a) Brussels City and (b) Greater Brussels since 1880:—

Year.	Brussels City.			Greater Brussels (including the City).		
	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	162,498	—	—	394,940	—	—
1890	176,138	13,640	8·4	465,517	70,577	17·9
1900	183,686	7,548	4·3	547,362	81,845	17·6
1907 (estimated) ...	198,449	14,763 (in 7 years).	8·0 (in 7 years).	629,917	82,555 (in 7 years).	15·1 (in 7 years).

Thus in Greater Brussels the population has grown from 394,940 in 1880 to 629,917 in 1907, an increase of 234,977, or 59 per cent., while in Brussels City during the same period the population has grown from 162,498 to 198,449, an increase of 35,951, or 22 per cent. Among the suburban communes the greatest proportional increases have taken place in Anderlecht and Etterbeek, the population of the former having grown from 22,812 to 60,318 (or 164 per cent.), and that of the latter from 11,753 to 27,828 (or 137 per cent.) in the period under review. Of these two communes Anderlecht contains a large working-class element in its population.

* The Belgian system of calculating the tonnage of vessels differs from that adopted elsewhere, and in order to render these figures comparable with those of non-Belgian ports, they should be reduced by from 15 to 20 per cent.

† It should be noted that the mode in which the populations are estimated in Belgian towns tends in general to give too high a figure. This fact also affects the birth-rates and death-rates, which are calculated per 1,000 of estimated population, and are, accordingly, somewhat too low.

A very large part of the increase in the population of Brussels during the last quarter of a century must have been caused by migration to the capital from the provinces, for the actual rate of growth has considerably exceeded the rate of natural increase of the population and the latter has been declining throughout the whole period, notwithstanding a steady and rapid decline in mortality due to the increased activity of the sanitary authorities, the improvement of the water supply, and the replacement of many congested courts and alleys by modern streets.

The following Table shows the birth-rate,* general death-rate,* and rate of infantile mortality in Greater Brussels in each of the five years, 1904–8:—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	19·8	14·5	138
1905	19·1	14·5	143
1906	18·5	14·6	156
1907	17·6	13·7	132
1908	16·9	14·7	159

It will be observed that, while the birth-rate has declined rapidly since 1904, the death-rate has remained approximately stationary. The average birth-rate for the quinquennial period 1904–8 is 18·4 per 1,000 of population, the average death-rate is 14·4 per 1,000 of population, and the average rate of infantile mortality 146 per 1,000 births. How Brussels City compares with the suburban communes in regard to its birth and mortality rates will be seen from the following Table:—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.		Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.		Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.	
	Brussels City.	Suburban Communes.	Brussels City.	Suburban Communes.	Brussels City.	Suburban Communes.
1904	19·9	19·7	15·6	14·0	137	138
1905	18·8	19·3	15·9	13·8	157	137
1906	18·3	18·6	15·6	14·2	160	154
1907	17·5	17·6	15·3	13·0	146	125
1908	16·4	17·1	15·7	14·3	174	152

In each of the years 1905–8, the birth-rate for the suburban communes slightly exceeded that for Brussels City, but in 1904 the reverse was the case. On the whole, the birth-rates for the City and the suburbs differ very little. In respect of its mortality, however, although this is low, the City contrasts unfavourably with its sister communes. There can be no doubt that this is mainly due to the fact (to be dealt with later) that a considerable working-class population is housed in the City under conditions which cannot fail to result in a higher rate of mortality. The excess of the City death-rate over the suburban death-rate, during the period under review, varied from 1·4 to 2·3 per 1,000 of population, the average rates being 15·6 for the City and 13·9 for the suburban communes. With regard to infantile mortality, the same contrast between the City and suburbs is observable, the average rates for the period being 155 per 1,000 births in the City and 141 in the suburban communes.

The conditions which are mainly responsible for the higher mortality of the City as compared with its sister communes are confined to the area occupied by Brussels in mediæval times. The limits of the original City are clearly defined by a girdle of wide, tree-planted boulevards coinciding with the line of ancient fortifications and forming a five-sided figure which suggests the outline of an heraldic shield with its point towards the south. All that is of historic and architectural interest in Brussels lies within this area, of which the greatest extent, from north-east to south-west, is about a mile and a half, and from east-south-east to west-north-west about a mile.

The once symmetrical outline of the City is now broken by three excrescences, representing successive extensions of its boundary. One of these, at the N.W. angle of the original shield-like figure, is in the nature of a wedge projecting about a mile into the northern suburb of Laeken, and comprises little more than the new docks, the great railway station for goods, and the Customs warehouses. The other two extensions,

* See note † on page 2.

one on the east and the other on the south-east, represent the fashionable residential suburbs of modern Brussels. That on the south-east consists of a mere strip of land starting from the outer boulevards in the Palace Quarter of Old Brussels, projecting in a south-easterly direction for about two miles, and ending in the Exhibition Grounds in the Bois de la Cambre—the most frequented of the Public Parks of Brussels. Along the middle of this strip (which divides the suburban commune of Ixelles into two unequal parts) extends the *Avenue Louise*, the longest and most fashionable of the many residential “Avenues” of modern Brussels. Somewhat to the North of this is the Eastern extension, by which the old boundary of the City is carried a mile further to the East, and which includes two of the four principal City parks, the *Parc du Cinquantenaire* and the *Parc Léopold*. Thus Brussels City has three suburbs of its own, which are distinct from the eight independent suburban communes with which it is officially associated under the name of Greater Brussels.

Old Brussels naturally divides itself into two parts very unequal in area, and very different in their history and characteristics. The western (and by far the greater) part is low-lying and traversed from south to north by the Senne, a small river which ultimately finds its way into the Scheldt. Considerations of public health have rendered it necessary to cover up this stream along the whole of its course through the City (about a mile), and it now flows beneath the one great modern thoroughfare which has been cut through Old Brussels, and which connects the railway station on the southern with that on the northern boundary of the City—i.e., the *Gare du Midi* with the *Gare du Nord*. For the first part of its course northward this thoroughfare is known as the *Boulevard du Hainaut*, then as the *Boulevard Anspach*, and finally as the *Boulevard du Nord*. Asphalted from end to end, it is traversed by a double line of electric tramways, and flanked by the principal commercial hotels and popular *cafés*. With the Stock Exchange as its most noteworthy architectural feature, it is at all times the most frequented thoroughfare of Brussels. The streets on either side of it are for the most part old, tortuous, narrow, and characteristically Flemish in appearance, and, being cobble-paved, are rendered very noisy by vehicular traffic. In the teeming population of these streets are comprised all classes of tradespeople, as well as a large working-class element, the former living over their own shops, while the latter are usually housed in small, cottage-like dwellings situated in the numerous courts and alleys.

The eastern portion of the City differs from that just described in being situated partly on rising ground and partly on the surface of a plateau overlooking the lower town. It contains the Royal Palace, the various Government offices, the Law Courts (the most prominent of the more modern architectural features of Brussels), the oldest of the City parks, and the more fashionable of the shopping streets, of which the *Rue Royale* is, perhaps, the most noteworthy. At the same time the worst of what may be called the slums of Brussels are to be found in this Upper Town, as, for example, in the district between the *Rue Haute* and the *Rue Blues*, a district which adjoins the Law Courts and is within a few minutes walk of the Royal Palace.

The few factories existing within the City area are to be found on its extreme western boundary, in the neighbourhood of the Charleroi Canal, the presence of which is also in great measure accountable for the fact that, of the suburban communes, those on the western side of the City, viz., Molenbeek-Saint-Jean and Anderlecht are the most industrial in character.

As compared with the City, the suburban communes are more modern in appearance. Their streets are wider, straighter, and more distinctly residential in character, and in the evenings, as well as on Sundays and holidays, they are deserted by their inhabitants for the livelier streets and boulevards of Brussels, which offer a much larger choice of *cafés*, *cabarets*, *estaminets*, music halls, theatres, dancing saloons, cinematograph shows, and other similar places, in which all classes of the population (and not least the working classes) appear to spend a great part of their leisure. There were in the City of Brussels alone, on March 1st, 1908, no less than 3,543 establishments licensed to sell intoxicating drinks for consumption on the premises. This represents a proportion of one such establishment to every 56 inhabitants. The proportion ten years ago was one to every 46 inhabitants.

The question of municipal action in regard to public services is greatly complicated by the fact that each of the communes of Greater Brussels is entirely independent of the others. Thus, while the water supply of Greater Brussels is municipal, its conditions of distribution vary from commune to commune. Originally the City supplied all the contiguous communes, but in consequence of complaints as to the insufficiency of

the supply, a number of communes in 1891 formed a company, for supplying the needs of their respective areas. This company, registered as a co-operative society, under the title of the “Intercommunal Water Company,” started with a capital of £24,200 in shares of £200, and its members were the communes of Schaerbeek, Saint-Gilles, Ixelles, Saint-Josse-ten-Noode, Auderghem, Koekelberg, Watermael-Boitsfort, and La Hulpe. The last-named commune withdrew in 1901, and the commune of Anderlecht was admitted on January 1st, 1905, and subscribed 23 shares. At that date the Company's share capital amounted to £28,800, of which the bulk was held by the four wealthier communes of Schaerbeek, Ixelles, Saint-Gilles, and Saint-Josse-ten-Noode, whose boundaries are co-terminous with those of the City itself. Three years after its formation, the Intercommunal Water Company obtained authority to take from the sources of the river Bocq, 7,700,000 gallons of water per day. In order to provide the capital for the extensive works which this necessitated, it borrowed a sum of £557,640 (repayable in 90 years) on the security of the credit of the four communes referred to, and obtained a grant of £40,000 from the Provincial Council of Brabant. Subsequently, when it became necessary further to improve the service, and authority had been obtained to draw 1,540,000 gallons per day from certain springs in the commune of Cruet, a further loan of £80,000 was obtained from the National Savings Bank, on the security of the same four communes. Bonds to the number of 4,301, of £20 each, were created, bearing interest at 3 per cent., and divided among the four chief founders in proportion to their population. At the present time seven of the communes of Greater Brussels (besides ten rural communes) obtain their water from the Intercommunal Company, which supplies either (1) in bulk to the communes, or (2) direct to the individual consumer.

The urban communes of Schaerbeek, Ixelles, Saint-Gilles, Saint-Josse-ten-Noode, Anderlecht, and Laeken are supplied in bulk, the conditions of delivery being, however, more favourable to the first four, owing to their having taken the leading part in the formation of the Company, and contracted for a period of 90 years to consume a minimum of 33 gallons per day per inhabitant, besides having covenanted not to procure water from any other undertaking. In consideration of these facts the Company supplies water in bulk to these communes (as also to Anderlecht, since January 1st, 1905) at 1½d. per 1,000 gallons. The northern suburban commune of Laeken is not a shareholder in the Company, and possesses a water supply of its own, but this being insufficient, it buys the excess from the Company at 4½d. per 1,000 gallons.

The work of laying mains, making connections, and fixing meters is undertaken by the Intercommunal Company for the communes of Schaerbeek, Saint-Gilles, and Saint-Josse-ten-Noode in consideration of an annual payment of one centime per cubic metre (rather less than ½d. per 1,000 gallons) of water consumed. For the sum of 3s. 2d. per annum per meter, the Company also undertakes to keep the meters in repair. (In Ixelles, the municipality itself has undertaken the service of distribution to the consumers.)

Where the Company supplies direct to the consumer, as is the case in most of the rural communes around Brussels it fixes the charge in agreement with the communes concerned; the prices are the same as those charged by the Brussels City Council, nor may they exceed the Brussels rates.

The municipality of Brussels supplies water to the City itself, to the two urban communes of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean and Etterbeek, and to the rural commune of Uccle. The scale of charges in operation since the beginning of 1905 in Brussels and the three communes referred to is as follows:—For domestic use the usual minimum annual payment is 17s. 7d. for 13,200 gallons. For every additional 22 gallons, 0.44d. is charged. Furthermore, 9s. 7d. per annum has to be paid for the upkeep of the meter. Special preferential rates are fixed for houses occupied by the working classes, or of which the assessed rental value does not exceed £6 per annum. In such cases only 4s. 10d. per annum is charged (instead of 17s. 7d.) for 13,200 gallons, and only 0.1d. (instead of 0.44d.) per additional 22 gallons. A workman occupying a house which he owns pays somewhat more, viz., 8s. per annum for 13,200 gallons, and 0.1d. per additional 22 gallons.

In the commune of Schaerbeek, 6s. 5d. per annum is charged for a supply of 17,600 gallons, and 0.2d. per additional 22 gallons. In addition, there is a tax of 1½ per cent. on the assessed rental value of the house to cover the cost of water for public service, sewer flushings, etc. For working-class houses, and for houses of an assessed rental value of less than £5 5s. 7d. per annum, the rate is 3s. 2d. per annum for 8,800 gallons, excess being charged at 0.1d. per 22 gallons.

Except in Brussels City and in the southern commune of Saint-Gilles the manufacture and supply of gas are in the hands of private enterprise throughout Greater Brussels. In Brussels City this service was municipalised in 1874, and the results of the undertaking have since become famous. The profits have been sufficient not only to repay the capital sunk, but to leave a large balance for the benefit of the city. Moreover, the scale of charges for consumers has become the standard for concessions granted by the sister communes. Since 1894 the scale has been as follows:—For lighting private dwellings, 2s. 11d. per 1,000 cubic feet; for heating the same, 2s. 3d. per 1,000 cubic feet. Under the “slot” system 3s. 2d. per 1,000 cubic feet is charged when the fittings for lighting and cooking are lent by the town. In Saint-Gilles, where the gas was municipalised in 1901, the price to consumers is now 2s. 11d. per 1,000 cubic feet.

As with gas, so with electricity, only Brussels City and Saint-Gilles have municipalised the supply. In the other communes, so far as electricity is in use, its supply is a matter of private enterprise.

The Brussels Tramway system, practically the whole of which has now been electrified, is worked by a Company (*Société des Tramways Bruxellois*), which is also the principal shareholder in a light railway undertaking (*Société des Chemins de Fer Economiques*), which supplements the tramway services. Under the terms of its concession the Company pays each year to the City of Brussels an amount equal to 10 per cent. of the sum which it has distributed as dividend on its different classes of shares in that year. Under this arrangement the city received £11,647 in 1906. The share of the Municipality in the receipts of all the other enterprises for passenger transport in the city (light railway, horse tramway, and omnibus) amounted in 1906 to £1,000 only, a fact which affords a measure of the relative importance of the electric tramway system. The conditions on which the Company holds its concession include provisions as to the wages and hours of labour of its men. Drivers and conductors must not be paid less than 3½d. per hour, nor may they work more than 10 hours a day as a rule. The rate for overtime must not be less than 4½d. an hour, and each employee must have one day's rest in seven. The Company must also insure its men against accidents, must affiliate them to the National Superannuation Fund (under State guarantee), and contribute to the payments necessary for this purpose. As a matter of fact, the Company pays higher wages than those imposed by the specification, and contributes liberally to the superannuation fund. Bonuses are also paid to the workmen in the Company's workshops. The Company is obliged to organise special services for workpeople at reduced fares at the hours of going to and returning from work. Generally the fare is one penny for any distance, and permits a change of tram.

Considerable sums are spent on technical education by the various communal administrations, assisted by subsidies from the State and the Province of Brabant. The budget of the City of Brussels alone provided for an expenditure of £12,978 in 1908 on two institutions which offer great facilities to people desirous of learning or perfecting their knowledge of certain trades. One of these institutions is the Royal Academy of Arts, where, every Sunday morning from 9 till 11, free lessons in drawing are given to workmen employed in the different branches of the building trades. The second institution is the Communal School of Industry (*Ecole Industrielle Communale*), where, from the 1st of October to the 1st of July instruction is given daily in a list of subjects including arithmetic, algebra, geometry, physics, chemistry, mechanics, electricity, drawing, surveying, book-keeping, industrial economy, and photography in its application to industry. The classes are held on Sundays as well as week days until the 1st of April, the hours for the Sunday classes being from 8 till 12 in the forenoon, and those for week days from 2 till 4 in the afternoon, and from 5 till 9.30 in the evening. The fees are very moderate. For the evening classes (150 lessons) a sum of 32s. is charged; for drawing as applied to machine construction the fee is 40s. for 250 lessons; a course of 40 lessons in architectural drawing is given for 9s. 7d. A fee of 4s., charged on admission to any class, is returned at the end of the term to pupils who have worked well. Grants of £6,138 were made to the Brussels Municipality by the State and the Provincial Council of Brabant in 1908 in aid of these two institutions. A school of cabinet making is maintained by the city at a gross yearly cost of about £1,300 or a net cost of £800, the sum of £500 being recovered in the form of pupils' fees, interest on legacies, and a grant from the Province. In addition to the sums mentioned some £3,500 per annum is paid by the City of Brussels to a large number of technical (and domestic) training institutions established by industrial and philanthropic associations.

Three of these, intended exclusively for girls, absorb more than half of this sum. Of the others, those for which the largest grants figure in the city budget for 1909 are schools for teaching a number of the crafts which are of special importance in Brussels, such as upholstery, jewellery and gold and silversmith's work, tailoring, bookbinding, printing and lithography, hairdressing, plumbing and gasfitting, &c. Most of these schools are also subsidised by the State, and the teaching is offered either gratis or at merely nominal fees.

In Brussels, as in most of the larger cities of Belgium, the problem of the unemployed has been claiming more and more of the attention of the local authorities in recent years, and is now being dealt with by a number of institutions with which those authorities are prominently identified, more especially free public labour registries and Municipal Funds for the encouragement of savings to meet unemployment. A free public labour registry exists in the City for the use of employers and workpeople in all the communes of Greater Brussels. It is supported by contributions from various sources, including the philanthropic society by which it was founded (in 1889), the municipalities of certain of the communes whose inhabitants make use of it, the Provincial Council of Brabant, and the State as represented by the Labour Department of the Ministry of Industry and Labour. Employers and workpeople are represented in equal numbers on the Board of Administration, of which the Mayor of Brussels City is *ex officio* chairman. Though not yet on a large scale, the operations of this Bureau are increasing yearly, and in the course of 1908 it dealt with 5,399 applications from employers, and 9,852 from workpeople, and provided 4,106 situations. The northern suburban commune of Schaerbeek, besides maintaining a labour registry of its own, pays a yearly subsidy in aid of the City of Brussels Registry.

Of Municipal Funds for the encouragement of savings to meet unemployment there are four in Greater Brussels: one for the City, a second for an association of ten suburban communes (called the Intercommunal Fund), a third for the commune of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, and a fourth for the commune of Ixelles. In comparison with the City and Intercommunal Funds, those of Ixelles and Molenbeek-Saint-Jean are unimportant. Matters are moving in the direction of an amalgamation of all the Funds, with the object of forming a single Fund for the whole of Greater Brussels, and on the 20th of January, 1909, the two principal Funds actually agreed to amalgamate. It is not anticipated that this fusion will entail any material change in the principles on which the Intercommunal Fund has so far been organised and administered. That Fund is composed of subventions voted annually by the several affiliated communes and administered by a Board consisting of delegates of the respective municipalities, representatives of organised employers and workpeople in equal numbers, and two persons specially conversant with social questions. The Fund is used to supplement either the allowances paid by Societies (in practice Trade Unions) to their unemployed members, or the savings made to meet unemployment by persons not belonging to any society. The sums granted to supplement unemployed benefit paid by societies to their members bear a definite proportion to such benefit, but must not exceed 100 per cent. of the same, nor 9½d. a day, nor may they be paid to any one person in respect of more than 60 days in a year.

These Funds are deserving of notice rather as examples of the application of what is still a comparatively new principle in dealing with the unemployed problem, than as schemes involving any considerable expenditure of public money. In the latter respect they are insignificant. The sum at the disposal of the Intercommunal Fund in 1907 (the latest year for which the figure is available) was £511, of which it spent only £371, including £304 for supplementing Trade-Union unemployed benefit, £2 to persons not belonging to any society, who withdrew from the Savings Bank money deposited there as provision against unemployment, and £65 for expenses of administration. The City of Brussels Fund spent £341 out of a total of £400 at its disposal in the same year; while the corresponding Funds of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean and Ixelles spent £150 and £35 respectively, the latter sum representing the whole, and the former all but £10, of the money voted for the year for that particular purpose.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

Official figures as to the number of workpeople employed in the various industries of Brussels at the present time, or even at a comparatively recent date, are entirely lacking, no census of occupations having taken place in Belgium since 1896, a period sufficiently

remote to allow of considerable changes in the relative importance of the different industries. An attempt has recently been made by the Secretary of the Federation of Brussels Trade Unions to calculate the number of workpeople employed in the different trades in and about Brussels at the end of 1907, with the object of showing what proportion in each trade were organised. The results of the 1896 Census were taken as a basis, and, so far as possible, allowance was made for growth of population as a cause of increase, and the introduction of machinery as a cause of decrease in the numbers employed in the different industries. The total number of workpeople in the *arrondissement* of Brussels (an area somewhat larger than that of the Brussels Agglomeration) was calculated to have been 136,424 at the end of 1907, 104,818 of these being males, and 31,606 females. These figures, however, are found to include clerks and shop assistants, so that, in relation to the other occupations, the group "commerce" appears unduly large as a source of employment for "workpeople" in the usual (more restricted) sense of the word. Subject to this reservation, and in the absence of official statistics, the following Table may be taken as showing, at any rate approximately, and according to the main groups of occupations in descending order of importance, the present distribution of the occupied working classes in the administrative area of which Brussels is the centre.

Group of Trades.	Number of Workpeople Employed.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.
Clothing (including hats, boots and shoes, and gloves)	9,525	18,881	28,406
Building	20,827	—	20,827
Commerce	17,000	3,000	20,000
Food, &c., preparation	10,186	1,277	11,463
Metal and Engineering	10,977	406	11,383
Woodworking and Furnishing	10,796	163	10,959
Textiles	2,808	4,075	6,883
Printing and Stationery	5,237	1,361	6,598
Transport	5,431	—	5,431
Chemical products (including gas, soap, and candles)	3,618	804	4,422
Other	8,413	1,639	10,052
Total	104,818	31,606	136,424

It will be seen that the clothing group is by far the most important, a fact which is scarcely surprising when it is remembered that Brussels ranks high among European cities as a centre of fashion and amusement. Within the clothing group, high-class tailoring for men and women occupies a prominent position. Hatmaking and glove-making are also of considerable importance, and like the boot and shoe industry afford employment to many workpeople, both in factories and at home. With regard to the boot and shoe industry, it may be noted that Brussels is one of the few towns in Belgium in which the substitution of machinery for hand labour has made much progress. In the southern suburbs are several large boot and shoe factories, fitted with the most up-to-date machinery, and manufacturing what are known as "American" boots. Glove-making affords comparatively little employment in factories, the bulk of the work (beyond that of sorting and examining the skins, and the shaping and punching of the gloves) being given out to homeworkers, mostly women. The greater part of the gloves made in Brussels are for women's wear, and the material used is genuine kid.

As regards employment of male labour, the three most important groups of occupations in Brussels are the building, metal and engineering, and the woodworking and furnishing groups. Of these, the building trades have probably shown the greatest expansion in recent years, owing partly to the activity of the various municipal corporations—more especially that of the City of Brussels—in clearing congested areas and laying down wide, modern streets, and partly to the development of the suburbs, in order to supply the increased demand for house room to accommodate a rapidly growing population. Most of the workpeople employed in the building trades in Brussels have their homes in the country, travelling to town every day from villages as distant as thirty miles or more. This is especially true of the masons, bricklayers, and outdoor labourers, of whom one of the largest colonies is to be found at the village of Waterloo, some 10 miles south of the City. A large contingent also comes from Louvain,

distant by rail 18 miles to the east, the difference in the rates of wages ruling in the metropolis being more than sufficient to compensate for the trouble and cost of the daily journey.

Among the metal and engineering trades, which employ some 11,000 workpeople, the most important branches are iron founding and bridge construction, machine making (including automobiles and locomobiles), steam heating apparatus, and steam fittings; also gold and silversmiths' work.

Furniture making ranks first and carriage building second among the woodworking trades, the former being in fact one of the most important industries in Brussels as regards the employment of male labour.

The printing and stationery trades are of considerable importance, and to a large extent carried on in the City of Brussels itself.

Among the food, &c., preparation trades, chocolate and sweetstuff manufacture, sugar refining, and brewing are the most prominent.

The textile trades are represented by a number of cotton and flax spinning and weaving establishments, with some lacemaking, dyeing and printing concerns; the works are, however, for the most part situated in the outlying parts of the *arrondissement*, and the greater part of the labour employed is that of women and girls who live in the surrounding villages.

The only other trades of which mention need be made are soap and candlemaking, in the manufacture of which some large factories are engaged in the western and southern suburbs.

Two labour groups which cannot properly be classed as trades, but which together represent a considerable body among the wage-earning population of Brussels, are the workpeople employed by the several Municipal Corporations of Greater Brussels and those employed by the Brussels Tramway Company. The former number nearly 4,000, and the latter some 3,000.

There are very few industries in Brussels in which workmen's organisations have developed sufficiently to exercise an appreciable influence on the conditions of labour. To some extent this is no doubt due to the nature and great variety of the local industries, which, as a rule, are split up among a considerable number of firms, each employing only a small number of hands. There is little doubt, however, that it is also largely due to the temperament of the Brussels workman who is, on the whole, easy-going and pleasure-loving, and whom it is easier to interest in politics and sport than in economic questions. It has been suggested, too, that the system of cheap workmen's tickets adopted by the Belgian State Railways, by inducing many workpeople who are employed in Brussels to live in the country, may to a certain extent have hindered the development of trade unions.

The total membership of the Brussels Trade Unions at the end of 1907 was just under 12,000, in 58 unions. The unions with the largest membership are those in the building trades (3,300 members for all branches), the printing trades (2,100 members), metalworking (1,800 members), the woodworking and furnishing trades (630 members), and the municipal workers (600 members). By far the best organised trade is that of the printers, which includes 48 per cent. of all the men in the trade, and is the only union in Brussels which has a general wages agreement with the employers. Among the building trades, the best organised branch is that of the bricklayers and masons, of whom 16 per cent. belong to the union. Of the metalworkers, 15.5 per cent. are organised, this being also the proportion organised among the municipal workers, of whom, as already stated, there are nearly 4,000 in Greater Brussels. The foregoing figures do not include the membership of the non-militant "Christian" (Roman Catholic) Unions, numbering about 2,700.

While wages agreements between organised employers and workpeople are almost unknown in Brussels, standard rates of wages have been fixed by most of the municipalities of Greater Brussels for the trades usually employed in the execution of municipal works, and in all specifications for public contracts a list of those rates is inserted as representing the minimum scale of remuneration (per day or per hour) which the contractor may pay to his men. An examination of the different minimum wage lists now enforced by the several communes of Greater Brussels shows material differences in the rates fixed by the different municipalities for one and the same trade. This may be seen from the following table in which rates per hour, or per day of 10 hours, as fixed in the original lists, have been converted into wages for a week of 60 hours.

Minimum Wages required to be paid to men employed on Municipal Contracts in Communes of Greater Brussels in 1908.*

Occupations.	Minimum Wages for a Week of Sixty Hours.*					
	Brussels City.	Anderlecht.	Etterbeek.	Ixelles.	Molenbeek-Saint-Jean.	Saint-Gilles.
Bricklayers and Masons ...	s. d. 19 2	s. d. 24 0	s. d. 23 0	s. d. 19 2	s. d. 21 7	s. d. 21 7
Stonemasons (Cutters) ...	24 0	24 0	24 0	24 0†	24 0	24 0†
Carpenters ...	21 7	24 0	24 0	21 7	24 0	24 0
Joiners ...	21 7	24 0	24 0	21 7	24 0	24 0
Plumbers ...	21 7	26 5	23 0	21 7	24 0	24 0
Plasterers ...	19 2	24 0	21 7	19 2	21 7	21 7
Painters ...	19 2	24 0	20 2	19 2	21 7	21 7
Slaters ...	19 2	24 0	21 7	19 2	21 7	21 7
Glaziers ...	21 7	24 0	19 2	21 7	21 7	21 7
Paperhangers and Upholsterers	21 7	21 7	23 0	19 2	21 7	21 7
Locksmiths and Fitters ...	21 7	21 7	24 0	21 7	21 7	21 7
Paviors ...	20 5	28 10	26 5	21 7	24 0	24 0
Paviors' Labourers ...	12 0	19 2	19 2	16 10	15 7	18 3
Carmen ...	16 10	21 7	19 2	16 10	19 2	19 2
Navvies ...	16 10	21 7	19 2	19 2	19 2	19 2

* In comparing the wages shown in this table with those stated in the general table given below the difference in hours of labour must be considered.

† Blue Stone.

‡ White Stone.

It is of importance to note in connection with these figures that, while contractors cannot pay less, they very frequently pay more than the minimum rate. It was explained to the writer in interviews with the principal firms of contractors in Brussels that they usually found it necessary to pay more in order to secure the very best labour and to ensure the completion of their contracts in good time.

Except as regards the printing trades, for which the minimum rates as determined by agreement are shown, the wages stated in the general table given below are based on the records of the pay sheets of the representative employers visited, and relate to the month of June, 1908.

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Building Trades:—		
Bricklayers and Masons ...	23s. 9d. to 27s. 7d.	66 to 69
Stonemasons (Cutters) ...	26s. 5d. „ 27s. 7d.	66 „ 69
Carpenters ...	25s. 4d. „ 28s. 8d.	66 „ 69
Joiners ...	23s. 9d. „ 29s.	66 „ 69
Plumbers ...	23s. 9d. „ 27s. 7d.	66 „ 69
Plasterers ...	23s. 9d. „ 27s. 7d.	66 „ 69
Painters ...	21s. 1d. „ 24s. 10d.	66 „ 69
Navvies ...	21s. 1d. „ 22s. 1d.	66 „ 69
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	18s. 6d. „ 19s. 4d.	66 „ 69
General Labourers ...	15s. 10d. „ 19s. 4d.	66 „ 69
Engineering Trades:—		
Fitters ...	20s. 4d. to 23s. 7d.	56 to 60
Turners ...	21s. 11d. „ 26s. 9d.	56 „ 60
Smiths ...	22s. 5d. „ 26s. 6d.	56 „ 60
Patternmakers ...	25s. 1d. „ 27s. 10d.	56 „ 60
Labourers ...	14s. 10d. „ 16s. 1d.	56 „ 60
Clothing Trades:—		
Tailoring—		
Tailors (Men's and Women's wear) ...	26s. 10d. to 33s. 7d.	60 to 66
„ (Working only in furs) ...	38s. 5d. „ 43s. 2d.	54 „ 60
Hatmaking—		
Hatters (Ladies' straw and felt hats) ...	31s. 2d. to 32s.	60

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Boot and Shoemaking:—		
Clickers ...	20s. to 22s.	54 to 60
Pressmen ...	17s. 7d. „ 20s. 1d.	54 „ 60
Lasters ...	19s. 3d. „ 21s. 7d.	54 „ 60
Machinists ...	20s. „ 24s.	54 „ 60
Printing Trades (minimum rates):—		
Hand Compositors (on books, &c.) ...	26s. 5d.	57
„ (newspapers) ...	26s. 5d.	48
Pressmen ...	26s. 5d.	57
Machinemen (single machine) ...	26s. 5d.	51
„ (double machine) ...	28s. 10d.	
„ (two single machines) ...	31s. 2d.	
Stationery Manufacture:—		
Rulers (by machine) ...	18s. 5d. to 28s. 10d.	56½ to 60
Paper and Envelope Cutters (by machine) ...	19s. 2d. to 24s.	56½ „ 60
Other Machinists (e.g., Envelope making, Goffering, &c.) ...	24s. to 28s. 10d.	56½ „ 60
Bookbinders ...	20s. „ 28s. 10d.	56½ „ 60
Labourers ...	14s. 5d. to 19s. 2d.	56½ „ 60
Woodworking Trades:—		
Furniture Making—		
Cabinet Makers ...	24s. to 32s.	56 to 63
Carvers ...	32s. to 42s. 10d.	56 „ 59½
Upholsterers ...	23s. 10d. to 26s. 6d.	56 „ 66½
French Polishers ...	21s. 5d. „ 25s. 2d.	59½ „ 63
Chair Makers ...	20s. 2d. „ 24s. 8d.	56
Labourers ...	16s. to 22s. 8d.	56 to 63
Carriage Building (including Motor-car Bodies)—		
Upholsterers ...	22s. to 29s. 3d.	61 to 63
Wheelwrights ...	22s. 5d.	56
Smiths ...	24s. 5d. to 28s.	56 to 63
Painters ...	22s. to 27s. 2d.	61 „ 63
Labourers ...	14s. 5d. to 16s.	56 „ 63
Food, Drink, &c., Trades:—		
Sugar Refining, Syrup Manufacture—		
Boilers ...	24s.	66
Centrifugal Men ...	16s. 11d.	66
Labourers ...	14s. 5d. to 16s. 10d.	55 to 67½
Chocolate and Sweetstuff Manufacture—		
Chocolate Makers ...	24s. to 28s. 10d.	63
Sweet Makers ...	24s.	63
Candied Fruit Makers ...	19s. 2d.	63
Honey-cake Makers ...	38s. 5d.	63
Finishers and Decorators ...	33s. 7d.	63
Packers ...	19s. 2d.	63
Bread Baking—		
In Machine Bakeries—		
Bakers ...	21s. 11d. to 25s. 11d.	60 to 69
Bread Deliverers ...	26s. 5d. to 28s.	60 „ 69
In Small Bakeries—		
Journeyman Bakers ...	19s. 2d.	Irregular.
Bread Deliverers ...	21s. 7d.	„
Brewing—		
Brewers ...	19s. 2d. to 21s. 8d.	60 to 63
Coopers ...	22s. 8d. „ 25s. 2d.	60 „ 63
Cellarmen ...	15s. 1d. „ 20s. 2d.	60 „ 63
Beer Deliverers and Draymen	17s. 6d. „ 23s. 1d.	60 „ 63
Enginemmen and Stokers ...	21s. 2d. „ 23s. 5d.	60 „ 63
Soapmaking:—		
Mixers ...	19s. 2d.	57 to 60
Soapmakers ...	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	57 „ 60
Packers ...	16s. to 17s. 9d.	57 „ 60
Candlemaking:—		
Men employed at Saponifying, Acidifying, and Distilling Processes.	18s. 6d. to 24s.	63 to 66
Pressers ...	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	63 „ 66
Labourers ...	14s. 5d. to 16s. 10d.	63 „ 66

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Tramway Service:—		
Drivers and Conductors	23s. 3d.	51
Electricians, &c.	23s. 1d.	60
Workmen on lines (skilled)	23s. 1d.	48 to 60
Men in workshops (")	18s. 6d.	60
Labourers	16s. 10d.	60
Municipal Service (Brussels City):—		
Road maintenance—		
Road-sweepers	16s. to 18s. 5d.	60
Carmen	16s. 10d. to 20s.	60
Gas Works—		
Gas Stokers	26s.	—
Yard Labourers	18s. 2d. to 21s.	60 to 65
Waterworks—		
Enginemen	27s. 8d. to 28s. 10d.	72
Stokers	23s.	72
Navvies and Labourers	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	60

From the above Table it is seen that the usual hours of labour per week generally lie between 54 and 63. Compositors on newspaper work, however, only work 48 hours a week, and printing machinemen, and drivers and conductors in the tramway service only 51 hours. On the other hand, from 66 to 69 hours usually constitute a full week's work in the building trades, while long hours are also worked in sugar refineries, candle factories, and in most bakeries. In most of the Brussels trades Monday is a short day, work beginning about an hour later than on other days, and usually ending at about four in the afternoon. The usual intervals of rest in factories and workshops are a quarter of an hour for breakfast (at eight or half-past eight in the morning), an hour for dinner (from twelve till one), and a quarter of an hour in the afternoon for coffee (generally at four o'clock). On Monday the mid-day interval is sometimes dispensed with. A noteworthy feature of Brussels working-class life is the frequency of holidays. These include New Year's Day, Easter Monday, Independence Day, Ascension Day, Whit Monday, the Monday and Tuesday of the week in which the local yearly fair, or *Kermesse*, is held, the feast of the Assumption, All Saints' Day, and Christmas Day. The afternoon of Shrove Tuesday is one of universal merrymaking.

As a method of industrial remuneration the time-wage has a far greater vogue than the piece-wage system. The latter is, however, not uncommon in the larger metal-working, engineering, and boot and shoemaking establishments. A system observed in some of the largest of the engineering establishments consists in reckoning a given quantity of work as representing so many hours of labour, and paying a bonus of half an hour's wages on every hour saved on that time.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

Before discussing the existing conditions of working-class housing in Brussels, some general remarks on Belgian legislation for the improvement of such housing seem appropriate. The first important enactment dealing with this subject in Belgium was the Law of 9th August, 1889, laying down the principles by which the action of the State and other public authorities in this matter has since been governed. Article 1 of that Law provides that there shall be established in every *arrondissement** one or more official bodies designated *Comités de Patronage* (which, for present purposes, may be rendered "Housing Committees") whose duty it is

"(a) to facilitate the construction and renting of healthy working-class dwellings, and the sale of such dwellings to workpeople either for ready money or for payments distributed over a series of years;

"(b) to study all that pertains to the healthiness of dwellings occupied by the labouring classes, and of localities in which such dwellings are more particularly situated;

"(c) to encourage the development of savings and insurance schemes, as also of credit institutions, friendly and superannuation societies."

* The *arrondissement*, as an administrative unit, is greater than the Commune, but less than the Province.

A Housing Committee must consist of not less than five, and not more than 18 members, of whom a majority are appointed by the Provincial Government, and the rest by the Central Government. Grants of public money may be made to the Committees to cover their working expenses, and they may accept gifts and legacies for the furtherance of certain of their objects. They are required to inform the Authorities—whether Local, Provincial or State—of the measures which they deem to be opportune for furthering the objects of the Law in their respective areas, and to report annually on their work to the Ministry of Industry and Labour. Passages in their reports pointing out defective conditions in particular communes are referred by the Government to those communes, which, however, are free to take action in the matter, or not, as they think fit.

Next in importance among the provisions of the Law of 1889 is that whereby the National Savings and Superannuation Fund is authorised to invest a part of its resources in loans required for the construction or purchase of working-class dwellings. Persons wishing to avail themselves of this provision can only do so through the agency of a recognised society established for the purposes contemplated by the Law, nor is any loan granted to such a society except on the recommendation of the Housing Committee of the place in which that society has its headquarters. Further details as to the powers and duties of the Housing Committees, and the facilities provided by the Law of 1889, and its amending Acts, for improving the housing of the working classes, may be gathered from the text of the Laws, of which a translation is given in the Appendix to the present volume (p. 197).

During the ten years immediately following the enactment of the Law of 1889 the various Housing Committees formed in accordance with that law in the Brussels Urban District (there are now five such Committees in Greater Brussels) made it their first business to inquire into the condition of working-class housing in their respective areas, and such statistical information on this subject as exists for the whole area of Greater Brussels is in the nature of a compilation of the results of these investigations, covering an aggregate of 48,690 working-class dwellings. These results were brought together for the first time in a report laid before the Seventh International Congress on Working-Class Housing held at Liège in the autumn of 1905, by M. Hector Denis, Chairman of one of the most active of the aforesaid Housing Committees, and are generally accepted as representing approximately the conditions prevailing at the present time.

The figures show that more than one-third (34 per cent.) of all working-class dwellings in Greater Brussels consist of a single room, that 45·4 per cent. consist of two rooms, and only 20·6 per cent. of three or more rooms.

The relative prevalence of working-class dwellings of one, two, and three or more rooms respectively in eight of the nine communes of Greater Brussels will be seen from the following Table:—

Commune.]	Proportion of all Working-class Dwellings which consist of—		
	A single room.	Two rooms.	Three or more rooms.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Brussels City	48·5	41·5	10·0
Saint-Gilles	34·6	47·0	18·4
Molenbeek-Saint-Jean	33·0	46·0	21·0
Saint-Josse-ten-Noode	28·0	28·0	44·0
Ixelles	24·8	50·6	24·6
Schaerbeek	23·0	54·0	23·0
Etterbeek	20·7	40·6	38·7
Anderlecht	20·0	35·0	45·0
Greater Brussels as a whole	34·0	45·4	20·6

It would seem, therefore, that Brussels City has the highest proportion of single-roomed dwellings (48·5 per cent.) and the lowest proportion of dwellings of three or more rooms for the working classes. The Commune of St. Gilles, which is co-terminous with the City on the south, comes next with 34·6 per cent. of single-roomed dwellings, and 18·4 per cent. of dwellings of three or more rooms. The Commune of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, on the north-west, which ranks third in point of frequency of single-roomed dwellings, is of a pronounced industrial character, and has a very large working-class population. Both Saint-Josse-ten-Noode and Ixelles, on the contrary, are inhabited mainly by a well-to-do,

and, in parts, fashionable population. Schaerbeek is mainly lower middle-class, with a considerable element of the working classes; in Anderlecht, the working classes are estimated to represent about one-third of the total population, while of Etterbeek, it is not possible to say that any particular class predominates in a marked manner.

Since 1903 the Housing Committee for the City of Brussels has been engaged in a second and more detailed and systematic investigation of all the working-class houses within its own area. For this purpose the Committee has divided the City into eight sections, unequal in extent but approximately equal in point of numerical strength of working-class population. The results of this investigation have so far been published for two of the eight districts only. These areas are, however, fair samples of the City generally, so that the details which follow may be regarded as representative of working-class housing conditions in the centre of Greater Brussels; that is to say in the space comprised within the great outer boulevards which mark the line of the old fortifications.

Of the two districts for which the results of this recent investigation have been published, one is situated at the extreme southern angle of old Brussels—the point of the shield, as it were—and is bounded on one side by the Rue Haute, probably the best-known (not to say most notorious) working-class street in Brussels. The other district is at the opposite or northern end of the City, its northern limit coinciding with that part of the northern line of boulevards which takes its name from the *Jardin Botanique*. This area extends south almost as far as the Town Hall and the Exchange, and has for its eastern boundary the Rue Royale, a street corresponding in its general character and importance to Oxford Street in London. The two areas comprise together 3,255 houses, inhabited by 27,334 persons. The houses occupied exclusively by people of the working class number 680, and shelter 1,503 families, consisting of 6,511 persons. Thus 21 per cent. of the houses and 24 per cent. of the population are working-class. Of the 680 houses under consideration, 300, or 45 per cent., are occupied by a single family each; 166 by two families, 90 by three, 45 by four, 22 by five, 13 by six, 9 by seven, 6 by eight, 4 by nine, 1 by ten, 2 by eleven, 2 by twelve, 1 by thirteen, and 1 by seventeen families. With regard to 18 houses, no information on this point was obtainable. It will be seen that, as a rule, a house is occupied by either one or two families, and not more, this being the case with 466, or 69 per cent., of the houses investigated. It would be a mistake to infer from this that, as a rule, the families are suitably housed as regards space. The contrary is, indeed, the case, for the majority of the houses are very small, and scarcely afford adequate accommodation for one family. It was found that there were altogether 2,417 rooms in the 680 houses investigated, the average per house being, therefore, between three and four rooms—probably three if one were to leave out of consideration the larger tenement houses, some of which, as was shown above, sheltered from a dozen to 17 families. As a matter of fact, 832, or 55 per cent., of the 1,503 families considered had only one room each; 495, or 33 per cent., had two rooms; 126, or 8 per cent., three rooms; 42 had four rooms, 2 had five rooms, 5 had six rooms, and 1 had nine rooms. The great majority, therefore (88 per cent.), of all the families lived either in a single room or in two rooms, and more frequently in the former than in the latter. The great majority of the rooms are necessarily occupied both day and night, for, of the 2,417 rooms considered, 2,001 were used for sleeping in. Of these 226 had only one occupant at night, 643 had two, 394 had three, 290 had four, 209 had five, 125 had six, 68 had seven, 31 had eight, 12 had nine, and 3 had ten occupants each at night. Of 300 houses occupied by one family only, practically all were situated in blind alleys (*impasses*), courts, and lanes. One hundred and fifty-eight of the houses were in alleys and lanes not exceeding 9 feet 9 inches in width. Of the 680 houses, 46 had no room above the ground floor, 423 had a single story, 157 had two, and 44 three stories above the ground floor, the remaining 10 being situated over shops and stores. Houses with one story above the ground floor, therefore, represent the predominant type. In 238 of the houses with upper stories, the highest room was a garret with sloping ceiling, and in all but 10 cases this garret was occupied. The rooms are, as a rule, deficient in height. In ground-floor rooms the usual distance from floor to ceiling was from 8 feet 3 inches to 11 feet 6 inches; in first-floor rooms, from 8 feet 3 inches to 9 feet 9 inches; in second-floor rooms, from 7 feet 6 inches to 9 feet 9 inches, and in third-floor rooms and garrets, from 6 feet 6 inches to 9 feet.

The most usual area of the rooms was from 160 to 215 square feet. Thus, the average working-class room, assuming it to be square, would measure from 12½ to 14½ feet each side.

With regard to closet accommodation, it was found that the 680 houses had between them a total of 378 such conveniences, or, say, one for every 17 inhabitants on an average. As a rule, the closets are in the courts or alleys outside the houses. Cases were found where one closet had to serve for 72 people.

The waste water and slops of houses facing a street are usually drained direct into the main sewer, but for houses situated in alleys and courts a common means of disposal of domestic slops is to pour them into the channel which runs down the middle of the alley or court, whence they are carried into a gulley communicating with the sewer. Water for domestic use has nearly always to be fetched from outside the house, and this is invariably the case in the alleys and courts. As a rule it is obtained from the municipal water mains, but very frequently from old wells, of which there are 182 in the areas investigated. It is not unusual for houseowners who are required by the Authorities to connect their property with the municipal water main to restrict the consumption to the utmost by making the supply accessible only for certain short periods in the morning and afternoon, and only at a single tap or standpipe fixed at the entrance of the alley or house. Those needing water at other times (even for drinking purposes) have to use the pumps which communicate with the old wells referred to, and of which one is to be seen in every court or alley.

Washing and drying of linen is done in the courts or alleys, or in the back yard (where such exists) in the summer, and in the kitchen (generally the only living room) in the winter.

The following paragraphs are descriptive of conditions in five typical *impasses* in Brussels City visited in the course of the present enquiry:—

(a) *Impasse des Chansons*.—This is one of the many blind alleys entered from the Rue Haute. It contains eight cottage-like houses, of two rooms each, the lower room entered direct from the alley, and connected with an upper room by means of a steep ladder-like stairway. Ten families, consisting of 58 persons, occupy the eight houses and have the use of two closets situated in the alley and in front of the houses. The rent charged is 3s. 2d. per week; no extra charge is made for water, which has to be fetched from a stand-pipe fixed at one end of the alley. Domestic washing was drying on lines hung across the alley.

(b) *Impasse du Camélia*.—An alley containing 31 small houses, of two rooms each, similar to those described above, and sheltering a population of 103 persons. Most of the houses were occupied by one family, and were let at a rent of 4s. 7d. a week. The rooms were fairly large—18 feet by 16½, and measuring 10½ feet from floor to ceiling, on the ground floor. Such a room when sublet fetched 2s. 11d. a week. Water was obtained from a pump communicating with an ancient well. The general appearance of the alley was clean and cheerful, the housefronts being whitewashed, and light and air being freely admitted, owing to the absence of high buildings from the immediate neighbourhood. The closet arrangements, however, were very defective; thus a single convenience had to serve for the occupants of a row of 13 houses.

(c) *Impasse de Varsonie*.—This alley, entered from the Rue Haute, is some 200 feet long and only 5 feet wide, and was inhabited by 20 families, consisting of 97 persons. The houses were similar to those in the alleys just described, and, except in two cases, each was occupied by a single family. While all the houses were uniform in outward appearance, some had larger rooms than others. Thus, in one of the houses containing two families, the lower room might be described as spacious, for it measured 22 feet by 16, and had a height of 10 feet from floor to ceiling, but it was occupied by a family of 7 persons, who paid 2s. 5d. a week for it, a rent for which they could have had the whole of one of the smaller-roomed houses in the same alley. For the larger-roomed houses, the rent was 3s. 7d. a week. Two closets served for the use of 20 families.

(d) *Impasse Liserons*.—A combination of blind alley and court, the former being the approach to the latter from the main street; it was inhabited by 97 families, consisting of 445 persons. In the alley were 16 four-roomed houses, occupied by 32 families, one living in the two lower, and one in the two upper rooms of each house. The lower back room in each case was windowless, and measured 8 feet by 15; the front rooms were about 10 feet square, and the ceilings were low—about 8 feet from the floor. The rents were 2s. 10d. a week for the two ground-floor rooms, and 2s. 5d. for those above. Two closets in the alley served for the use of the 32 families, who fetched water from a stand-pipe communicating with the municipal water main. In the court, to which the alley gave access, were two four-storied tenement houses, with a total of 56 rooms, each serving as the dwelling of a family. The rents of these rooms ranged

from 1s. a week for a garret to 3s. 2d. on the first floor. Six closets were provided (in the court) for the 56 families. At the date of visit, domestic linen was being washed in the court, and was suspended from wood and wire frames projecting from most of the windows.

(e) In the *Impasse des Escargots*, in the same neighbourhood, some 90 families, numbering about 450 persons, were living in conditions similar to those just described. Thirty of the families were housed in a single room each, at a rent of 2s. 2d. a week. None of the houses, however, contained more than four rooms, or more than one story. The closet accommodation was, as usual, defective, there being one closet only for every 10 families, on the average.

Among the suburban communes one of the most industrial is that of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, on the west of Brussels City. Here three main types of working-class dwellings are distinguishable. The first is represented by the tenement of one or two rooms situated in a block of back houses of the kind so common in German cities, and only differing from the German pattern in being less lofty and barrack-like. The second type is a two-roomed cottage situated, not in an alley or narrow lane (as is most usual in Brussels City), but in a more or less roomy court, where it is usually faced or flanked by other similar houses. Both of these types occur most frequently in the older parts of the commune, that is to say in those parts which lie nearest to the City of Brussels boundary. The third, and the least general of the three types, is a two-floor cottage with three or four rooms, usually forming one of a row of similar houses built in more or less open but dreary surroundings in the outer parts of the commune, which are still in course of development.

A few descriptive remarks based on notes taken in the course of visiting the various types of dwelling will help to give a clearer idea of working-class housing conditions in this industrial suburb. For back-house tenement dwellings, it will be sufficient to select one of a number of blocks of such buildings which are to be found in the *Rue du Billiard*. The block in question consists of three double-fronted, three-floor houses situated in a rectangular court approached from the above-named street through a covered passage between two shops. The court is of sufficient depth (about 40 feet) to ensure free access of light and air between the backs of the street houses and the façade of the tenement block in the rear. Each house in the block has 12 rooms, forming six tenements, viz., one tenement (a front room and a back room) on either side of the central stairway on each floor. None of the rooms are windowless, but those on the top floor are garrets with sloping roofs. The rent for two such rooms is 1s. 10d. a week, as compared with 2s. 5d. on the first and ground floors. The water supply is obtained from a stand-pipe and a pump, both in the court; the former communicating with the municipal main, and the latter with a well. For municipal water each tenant pays 2d. a month in addition to his rent. Three closets, also in the court, serve for the use of the 18 families. In the same neighbourhood are a number of courts, among which one will serve to illustrate the second of the aforesaid three types of dwelling. The court is entered through a covered passage as above. Two of its sides are formed by five small whitewashed houses of two rooms each (one above and one below). The third side is formed by a brick wall, against which are built three closets for the use, not only of the occupiers of the five small houses, but also for that of the tenants of the upper stories of the house the back windows of which look into the court. Communicating with these upper stories is an exterior stairway. The two-roomed cottages are let at 1s. 10d. to 2s. 3d. a week, and the occupiers who sublet a room charge 11d. a week for it. The rooms measure 17 feet by 14, and are 8½ feet high on the ground floor. One stand-pipe, connected with the municipal main, supplies water to the whole court; for this each tenant pays 2d. a month in addition to his rent.

Among dwellings of the third type visited on the outskirts of this commune, i.e., cottages built in long rows in more or less open surroundings, those with four rooms (two below and two above) seemed to be the most numerous. One row contained 30 such houses, each of which let at 3s. 2d. a week. In another row of 32 similar houses the rent was 2s. 11d. a week, but 7s. 2d. a year extra was charged for water procurable from stand-pipes, of which there was one for every eight houses. Other tenants of houses of this class paid 3s. 6d. a week (no extra charge for water). As a rule, these houses are drained into cesspools, of which there is one to every two houses, and the emptying of which, twice a year, is an extra charge on the tenant. Closets are provided at the rate of one to every four houses, and stand on unfenced ground at the back of the row.

Of the suburban communes having a pronounced industrial character only Anderlecht remains to be mentioned. This is the largest, though not the most populous, of the communes comprised in what is known as the Brussels Agglomeration, and only a small portion of its total area is urban, viz., that part which lies nearest to the boundary of Brussels City. A considerable part of the working-class population live in the remoter semi-rural parts of the commune in separate houses similar to those on the outskirts of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean. The majority, however, live nearer the city, and are for the most part housed either in tenement blocks (many of which are of the back-house description referred to above), or in two-roomed cottages situated in courts or alleys. When a tenement dwelling is rented, the number of rooms seldom exceeds two. Here, as in the other Brussels communes, the tenants of working-class dwellings suffer from the usual inconveniences of having the water supply and the closets outside, and of being inadequately furnished with the latter.

For the purposes of the present enquiry information was collected in the latter part of 1908 and the beginning of 1909 as to the rents paid for working-class dwellings in typical working-class streets in the City of Brussels and certain suburban communes in which the working classes are more or less strongly represented, viz., Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, Anderlecht, and Schaerbeek. From the Table on page 13, it is seen that, of all working-class dwellings in Greater Brussels, 34 per cent. consisted of a single room and 45·4 per cent. of two rooms. Having regard, therefore, to the relative unimportance of dwellings of three or more rooms as types of working-class housing in Greater Brussels, it seems permissible to omit such dwellings from the subjoined summary Table:—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings in Greater Brussels.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.					Predominant Weekly Rents.
One room	...	...	...	...	1s. 7d. to 2s. 5d.
Two rooms	...	...	...	...	2s. 5d. „ 3s. 8d.

It should be observed that rents of working-class dwellings are most usually quoted (and paid) by the month. While the foregoing rents undoubtedly include a certain element of taxes (State and Provincial, as well as local) it is not possible to form an estimate, however rough, of the proportion in which that element is present in their composition. There are several taxes which bear directly or indirectly on housing in Belgium. Thus all land is subject to a tax (*Impôt Foncier*), which is levied on the rental value, not only of the soil itself, but also of any houses built upon it, and represents 11·29 per cent. of such twofold rental value (*revenu cadastral*).

Another tax which enters as an element, at any rate, into the rents of certain working-class dwellings in Brussels is the *Contribution personnelle et mobilière*—a fourfold tax, payable (with certain exceptions to be mentioned presently) by every householder, and intended to bear a certain proportion to his income as indicated by—

- the rental value of his dwelling;
- the number of doors and windows in the dwelling;
- the value of his furniture; and
- the number of servants and carriage horses which he keeps (if any).

For purposes of this tax, a householder is held to mean any person who owns or rents a whole house, or any person who rents part of a house in which his landlord does not himself reside. Thus, a person who rents part of a house from a landlord who lives in the same house is not liable to the tax. Nevertheless, he pays it indirectly, for in such cases the landlord is empowered by a special clause in the law to recoup himself from the tenant, and he does so by adding something to the rent.

The Belgian Law on Workmen's Dwellings of 9th August, 1889, as amended by the law of 18th July, 1893, exempts from the payment of the foregoing taxes (a), (b) and (c), "all workpeople, or persons formerly coming within that definition but now incapable of work, who, not being owners of houses or land other than that which they inhabit and cultivate respectively, occupy, either as owner or as tenant of a non-resident

"landlord," a dwelling of an assessed rental value not exceeding a specified yearly sum, which varies according to the population of the town between the limits of £2 17s. 7d. in communes with less than 3,000 inhabitants and £6 16s. 10d. in communes with 100,000 inhabitants and upwards. The proportion which the assessed rental value bears to the actual rent varies from town to town. In Brussels it is about one-half of the actual rent. In the capital, therefore, all working-class householders paying a rent of not more than £13 13s. per annum, or 5s. 3d. a week, are exempt from the tax in question; and from the above summary table of predominant rents it may be inferred that this is the case with all working-class householders in Brussels. It is, nevertheless, true that for some portion of working-class householders in Brussels, *i.e.*, for those who rent part of a house in which the landlord himself also resides, the rents paid include a certain element of the *Contribution Personnelle*.

Municipal opinion on methods of solving the housing problem in Brussels and its suburban communes is, on the whole, opposed to schemes which would place the municipality in the position of receiver of rents from working-class families. The only exception to this rule is furnished by the commune of Saint-Gilles, which has already erected four large tenement houses, and is erecting a number of others. Elsewhere municipal effort to relieve the great scarcity of suitable working-class dwellings has been confined to the investment of municipal funds in societies formed for that purpose under the Law of 1889. The municipal authorities of Greater Brussels which have adopted the policy are those of the city itself, Schaerbeek, Saint-Josse-ten-Noode, Anderlecht, and Molenbeek-Saint-Jean. As a rule, the initiative for the formation of the society has come from the municipality itself, which, together with the Public Poor-Relief Institutions (the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* and the *Administration des Hospices*), has provided the greater part of the share capital. The following are the best-known societies of this kind existing in Greater Brussels:—

(1) *Société Anonyme des Habitations Ouvrières de Bruxelles*. This society was founded in the year 1900 with a capital of £52,800, in 13,200 shares of £4. Of these the City of Brussels subscribed 3,000 and the *Administration des Hospices* 4,000. Among the other shareholders are a number of the principal Brussels banks. Practically all the 57 houses built by the society up to the present are solely for letting, and are constructed to accommodate two or more families each. Eleven are of the large tenement-house type, with flats for eight families each. Two houses contain four flats each, 33 contain three flats apiece, four are for occupation by two families only, and seven are for occupation by either one family or two. (These seven houses are the only ones built for the purpose of being purchased by the occupiers on the instalment system.) In the tenement houses the minimum accommodation consists of three rooms, for which the rents range from 3s. 11d. to 4s. 7d. a week, the rents diminishing with the height from the ground. Dwellings consisting of five rooms and a cellar cost from 3s. 4d. to 7s., and dwellings of four rooms from 3s. 2d. to 5s. 11d. a week, the upper floors being, as usual, cheaper than the lower.

(2) *Le Foyer Schaerbeekois*.—This society was established in 1898, its objects being "the construction, purchase, sale, and letting of houses intended for occupation by the working classes, and all operations incidental to those objects." Of a capital of £10,000 (in 1,000 £10 shares), the Municipality of Schaerbeek subscribed £8,000, the *Administration des Hospices* of that commune £1,000, and the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* £800. The remaining £200 was subscribed by four private individuals, the sole purpose of whose admission was to bring the membership up to seven, the minimum allowed by the Law for the formation of a joint-stock society. This society builds two classes of houses: (1) double or two-family houses, the ownership of which may be acquired by a workman on the instalment system in 20 or 25 years, with or without life insurance; (2) tenement houses of three or four stories for letting to workpeople with large families and small means. In this society a workman desirous of acquiring the ownership of a two-family house is not required to pay the usual initial deposit of one-tenth of the purchase-money; he may let half of the house, but must not charge more than 2s. 11d. a week. Most of the houses hitherto built by the society are of this type, and cost £240 to £280, including the site. In spite of the easy conditions on which a workman may purchase, very few have so far attempted to do so, and these are usually subordinate officials of the State Railway or Customs Departments, or the *élite* of the industrial working classes, such as printers, earning from 4s. 6d. to 5s. a day. In the society's tenement houses all the dwellings consist of three rooms (two bedrooms and a kitchen), with scullery, cellar, and water-closet. The demand for these tenements is always in excess of the supply. In order to be in a position to let the

dwellings cheaply, the society has fitted up the ground floors of these houses as shops, which let at high rents. The rents charged for the accommodation described above range from 2s. 7d. to 4s. 7d. a week, according to the part of the building in which the tenement is situated. In the society's three-story houses in the Rue d'Artevelde such a tenement is let for 3s. 4d. a week on the first, 2s. 11d. on the second, and 2s. 7d. on the third floor. In the four-story houses in the Rue l'Olivier, the rents of the front tenements range from 3s. 6d. to 4s. 7d., and those of the back tenements from 3s. 2d. to 4s. 5d.

(3) The *Société Anonyme des Habitations Ouvrières de Molenbeek-Saint-Jean*.—This Society was founded in 1899 on the initiative of the Municipality of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean. The share capital was fixed at £10,200, in 1,020 shares of £10. Eight hundred shares were subscribed by the Municipality, together with the *Administration des Hospices* and the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* and the remainder by four private individuals. This society has so far built 50 houses, intended only to be rented, and not purchased, by their occupiers. The houses are built in blocks or rows. Each consists of five rooms, *viz.*, two on the ground floor, two on the first floor, and a habitable garret. In addition there are a scullery (with sink), a loft (for lumber or for drying clothes), a closet, and, as a rule, a small garden. The rents range from 5s. 6d. to 6s. 3d. a week.

(4) The *Société Anonyme: le Foyer Anderlechtois* was established in 1907 with a share capital of £10,000, of which the Municipality of Anderlecht subscribed £8,000, the local *Administration des Hospices* £100, the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* £84, the remainder being found by the usual four private individuals required to complete the minimum statutory membership. The society has built 14 five-roomed houses, with scullery, closet, cellar, larder, and small garden. The rents charged are 3s. 6d. to 4s. 1d. per week.

All these societies have obtained large sums on loan, at a low rate of interest, from the National Savings Bank, which, under the Housing of the Working Classes Law of 1889, is authorised to invest a part (not exceeding 7½ per cent.) of its funds in loans for promoting the construction or purchase of working-class dwellings. It has already been mentioned that such loans are granted only to societies (not to individuals) on the recommendation of the official Housing Committees (*Comités de Patronage des Habitations Ouvrières*) established under the Law. Among the conditions subject to which a loan is granted, it is required that the borrowing society shall not pay more than a certain percentage (in no case more than 4 per cent.) as dividend on its paid-up share capital, and any profits earned in excess of such percentage must be placed to a Reserve Fund.

Apart from the Workmen's Dwellings Societies in which the Municipalities and Poor Relief Administrations are the principal shareholders, there are in each commune of Greater Brussels a number of other societies, formed for the purpose of benefiting by the provisions of the Law of 1889. In order to illustrate the working of these societies, it will not be out of place to give some particulars with regard to one of the best known amongst them—the *Société Anonyme des Habitations Ouvrières d'Etterbeek*, which exists for the purpose of facilitating the purchase or construction of houses of a value not exceeding £260. For this purpose the society grants loans on mortgage up to nine-tenths of the value of the property to be acquired by the borrower. It neither builds, buys, nor sells houses itself, but to those desirous of doing so, it gives expert advice as to the value of the site or house which they have in view, and as to its suitability in point of health. It also guides them in the choice of plans. The borrower selects his own plot and his own architect and builder, but the plans must be approved by the society, and the builder must submit to the conditions prescribed by standard specifications prepared by the society.

The grant of loans by the society is subject to the following conditions:—

- (a) No payment must be made to the builder without the consent of the society, whose architect must certify that the work has been properly executed.
- (b) The house must be insured against fire.
- (c) During the continuance of his contract with the society, the borrower must not carry on the sale of drink in the house, nor may he sublet it without the consent of the society.
- (d) The borrower must take out a life insurance policy with the National Savings Bank, so that in the event of his death before discharging his liability to the society in full, the latter may suffer no loss.
- (e) The loan is repaid in monthly instalments, which include interest at 4 per cent. per annum and premium on life (but not on fire) insurance.

The amount of the monthly instalment per £40 borrowed is as shown below :—

Age of Borrower.	Monthly instalment required for the Repayment of a Loan of £40 in			
	10 years.	15 years.	20 years.	25 years.
21 years	8s. 10d.	6s. 7d.	5s. 6d.	4s. 11d.
25 "	8s. 10d.	6s. 7d.	5s. 7d.	4s. 11d.
30 "	8s. 10d.	6s. 8d.	5s. 7d.	5s.
35 "	8s. 11d.	6s. 9d.	5s. 8d.	5s. 1d.
40 "	9s.	6s. 10d.	5s. 10d.	5s. 3d.
45 "	9s. 1d.	6s. 11d.	6s.	—
50 "	9s. 3d.	7s. 2d.	—	—
55 "	9s. 6d.	—	—	—

Thus, a man of 30 years of age desirous of acquiring a house which could be built or bought for £260 would first of all have to find one-tenth of this sum himself, i.e., £26. He would then, through the agency of the Society, be enabled to acquire the ownership of the house by paying 36·6 francs (29s. 3d.) per month for 25 years. Should he die before completing his payments, his debt to the Society would be cleared by his insurance policy, and the house would become the property of his heirs. If the borrower should fail to keep up his payments to the Society, the contract would be cancelled, the house sold, and any balance remaining after the Society had recovered what was due from the borrower, would be paid over to the latter.

Experience has shown that most workpeople find it difficult to save the amount needed in order to pay the initial deposit of one-tenth of the purchase-money, and this has led to the formation of societies for advancing the requisite sum. An association styled "*La Première Pierre du Foyer*" is a typical example. It has a capital of £200, in 25 £8 shares, of which the Etterbeek Society itself holds 15 shares, the remaining 10 being held by private persons interested in promoting the objects of the Society.

RETAIL PRICES.

In virtue of its position in the centre of the highly developed system of Belgian railways and canals, Brussels enjoys exceptional facilities for obtaining a constant and plentiful supply of food and other household provisions. The greater part of the trade in these commodities is still in the hands of the shopkeeping class, who do business on a modest scale. In recent years, however, the small shopkeeper has had to face increasing competition from three directions. The "family" grocer has now for his most serious competitor a certain well-known Brussels firm, which owns over 600 grocery shops in Belgium, including 83 in the capital. This firm caters largely for the working classes, and the prices which it quotes are as a rule appreciably lower than those quoted by other businesses, for what purport to be identical articles. A scarcely less serious competitor of the family grocer in the working-class quarters of Brussels is the Social Democratic Co-operative Society, which has its headquarters at the *Maison du Peuple*, and owns 25 branch grocery and bread stores in different parts of the Metropolis and its suburbs. The class of small tradesman whose business has been most seriously affected by this Society, however, is that of the baker, whose existence has of late years been rendered still more precarious by the competition of a number of large machine bakery undertakings, which may be said to dispute the supremacy of the Social Democratic Society as purveyor of bread to the working classes. Some particulars with regard to this Society will perhaps not be out of place here. Founded in 1881, when the trade unions of Brussels had fallen into a state of decay, the Society's chief aim was to revive the organisation of the working classes by means of co-operation. The first co-operative baking oven was started in September, 1882, when the Society had 80 members and a capital of £24. During the first week it baked 552

loaves, and, on the security of the Co-operative Society of Ghent, obtained 50 sacks of flour on credit. At that time it employed two workmen (at 2s. 11d. per day), and owned one draught dog and barrow for delivering bread. In 1885 it numbered 700 members, worked three ovens, and owned three bread-delivery barrows. Since then the history of the Society has been one of uninterrupted prosperity. It now owns two of the best-equipped machine bakeries in Brussels (acquired at the cost of £20,000), where it employs 105 bakers and 80 bread deliverers, and produces 220,000 loaves per week. The price charged by the Society (in June, 1908) for the loaf of wheaten bread (weighing a kilogramme, or 2·2 lb.) is 30 centimes, of which 3 centimes are returned as bonus on purchases. The price actually paid, therefore, is 27 centimes per kilogramme loaf, which corresponds to a price of 4½d. per 4 lb. Members who wish to have their bread delivered at their houses usually buy a certain number of bread tokens at one of the Society's stores for 30 centimes each, and one of these is given to the bread carrier for each loaf so delivered. In the period 1883-1907 the aggregate bread sales of the Society amounted to £1,400,000, and of a net profit of £200,000 realised in that period the sum of £136,000 was returned to members in respect of their purchases of bread. The Society has gradually extended its operations to other commodities, more especially groceries, coal, drapery, hosiery, and ready-made clothes. A bonus of 6 per cent. is distributed on purchases of groceries, of which the annual sales amount to some £32,000. The sales of the drapery, hosiery, and clothing branch amounted to £18,000 in 1906, on which a net profit of £1,420 was made. The yearly coal sales average £20,000, and yield a net profit of some £1,300. In addition to its 25 branch establishments for the sale of groceries, &c., its coal sheds, and its two great bakeries, the Society has four shops for the sale of fresh meat. It has secured for its headquarters a large building in the *rue Joseph Stevens*, which adjoins the typical working-class quarter of the *rue Haute*, to which reference has already been made. This building (known as the *Maison du Peuple*) is, at the same time, the headquarters of the Brussels Social Democratic Trade Unions, who have their offices and assembly rooms there, as well as a *café* capable of accommodating 800 persons, which is filled nightly with working men and their families.

While it is evident that a considerable section of the working-class population of Brussels obtain their household supplies from the Co-operative Society, the price quoted by that Society for a given commodity at a given date cannot safely be accepted as the price paid for it at that date by the majority of working-class buyers in Brussels. Many people who have a wide experience of the habits of the Brussels working classes maintain that most of them live "from hand to mouth," and obtain their supplies from petty shopkeepers in their immediate neighbourhood, to whom they are constantly in debt. It would, in fact, be difficult to account in any other way for the great number of small "general" shops which seem to thrive in any working-class quarter in spite of the presence in the same quarter of a branch store of the Co-operative Society, or one of the shops of the "multiple" firm. The prices paid by the workman's wife at the small shop where she has an account are invariably higher than those for which she could obtain the same article elsewhere for ready cash. In many cases she has to accept short weight and short measure, more especially in the matter of bread and coal. Many of these shops attract cash customers by displaying what appear from their size to be kilogramme loaves, ticketed at prices considerably below that at which a kilogramme of bread can be bought. Thus at the time of the writer's visit, when the full-weight kilogramme loaf of the large machine bakeries was being sold at 27 to 28 centimes, the "hucksters" in a certain working-class neighbourhood were exhibiting what appeared to be kilogramme loaves at prices ranging from 20 to 25 centimes. Twelve such loaves, bought at as many different shops, on being weighed were found to be in every case short of their reputed weight, the average amount of the shortage being 166 grammes, i.e., 16·6 per cent.

Many workmen's wives in Brussels buy their coal by the pail, reputed to contain 10 kilogrammes (22 lb.) This is especially the case with those whose dwelling consists of a single room (a large class, as has been seen). A pail of the most inferior unscreened coal—a mixture of small lumps and dust, labelled *Tout-venant*—costs from 30 to 35 centimes, or at the rate of 1s. 2½d. to 1s. 5d. per hundredweight; while a sack of good screened coal (*Charbon gras*), entirely free from dust, can be bought for 1·75 francs, which corresponds to a price of 1s. 5d. per hundredweight.

The subjoined Table summarises the data obtained from shopkeepers, large and small, in different parts of Greater Brussels, from the Working-class Co-operative Society, and from stall-holders at the City municipal markets as to the predominant retail prices of certain articles of grocery, dairy produce, potatoes, bread, flour, coal, and paraffin oil in June, 1908.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6½d. to 7d.
Sugar, Loaf "	2½d. " 3½d.
Bacon, Salted "	7d.
Eggs per 1s.	12, 13
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	7½d. to 10½d.
Butter "	1s. 1d. to 1s. 2d.
Margarine "	7d. " 8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	3d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	4½d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal per cwt.	1s. 5d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	6½d. to 7d.

Of the above articles, the most important in the dietary of the Brussels working classes are bread, potatoes, cheese, margarine and coffee. The cheapness of *coffee* is noteworthy. In this connection it may be observed that unroasted beans are admitted free of customs duty, while a duty of 4s. 0½d. per cwt. only is charged on roasted coffee. *Sugar* is used very sparingly in the household, but very largely in the form of sweetmeats and confectionery. *Margarine* (manufactured in Brussels) is used more frequently than butter among the working classes. To what has already been said with regard to bread it may be added that the household loaf is made entirely from foreign wheat (La Plata, Austrian, and Russian), on which no import duty is charged.

Meat.

The great bulk of the meat consumed in Brussels is Belgian produce, and passes through one or other of the three slaughterhouses of Greater Brussels—that of the City, that of Anderlecht, or that of Schaerbeek. The Brussels and Schaerbeek slaughterhouses are municipal, while that of Anderlecht—the largest of the three—is a private enterprise. Of a total of 23,746 head of cattle (oxen, bulls and cows) slaughtered at the City Abattoir in 1908, only 3,191 were foreign, including 3,114 from Holland and 77 from France; while of a total of 32,227 calves slaughtered at the same abattoir, only 24 were foreign (from Holland). These figures may be regarded as representing approximately the proportions in which native and foreign produce respectively enter into the aggregate meat consumption of Greater Brussels. Some notion of the relative importance of the different kinds of meat consumed may be gathered from the following table, showing the dead weight of meat obtained from the slaughterings at the three abattoirs in 1907.

Dead Weight of Meat obtained from the combined slaughterings at the three Abattoirs of Greater Brussels in 1907.

	Brussels Abattoir.	Anderlecht Abattoir.	Schaerbeek Abattoir.	Total
Beef	Cwt. 150,668	Cwt. 155,450	Cwt. 24,204	Cwt. 330,322
Veal	48,074	49,800	5,839	98,713
Mutton	17,470	31,491	158	49,119
Pork	82,068	135,550	8,658	226,276
Horseflesh	5,305	13,769	408	19,482
Goatflesh	50	—	—	50
Total	298,635	386,060	39,267	723,962

Thus, beef represents about 45 per cent., and pork about 31 per cent. of all meat slaughtered in Brussels; veal ranks next in importance with 14 per cent. Mutton, which represents 7 per cent. of the total, is but little eaten, nor can horseflesh, which represents 3 per cent. of all meat slaughtered in Greater Brussels, be said to constitute an important element in the meat dietary of the population in general.

While the foregoing figures are useful as a rough index of the relative importance of the various kinds of meat consumed in and about Brussels, they cannot safely be regarded as representing the quantities actually consumed. No record is kept of the meat

slaughtered in the abattoirs of Brussels for consumption in outlying towns of the provinces, nor is there any record of imports into Brussels of meat slaughtered at provincial abattoirs, so long as it is duly stamped as having passed the provincial meat inspector. The imports of uncertified slaughtered meat into Brussels in 1908 amounted to some 17,000 cwt., besides which about 9,600 cwt. of prepared meats (sausages, bacon, &c.) were examined at the customs warehouse in Brussels. A considerable quantity of the bacon so examined is salted "American Fat Back," for which, it would appear, there is much demand, but rather among the class of clerks, shop assistants, and subordinate officials than among the working classes.

Returns furnished for the purpose of the present enquiry by 318 typical working-class families (numbering 1,372 persons) in Greater Brussels, with various grades of income, show an average *per capita* consumption of meat of all kinds amounting to 27 oz. per week, which is at the rate of 88 lb. per year. Of the total meat consumption of these families, 37 per cent. consisted of beef, 12 per cent. of pork and the same percentage of bacon, 9 per cent. of *charcuterie*, 8 per cent. each of mutton and horseflesh, 6½ per cent. of veal, 5 per cent. of rabbits, and 2½ per cent. of poultry.

The predominant retail prices of various cuts of butcher's meat in Greater Brussels in June, 1908, are shown in the subjoined table, based upon data furnished by retail butchers in different parts of the agglomeration, including the keepers of stalls in the municipal market, and the meat selling establishments of the Workmen's Co-operative Society.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef:—	
Ribs	8½d.
Brisket	4½d. to 6d.
Silverside	11d.
Shin (with bone)	4½d.
Beef Steak	10½d. to 11d.
Rump Steak	1s. 0½d.
Thick Flank	11d.
Thin Flank	7d.
Mutton:—	
Leg	8½d.
Shoulder	6d.
Breast	4½d. to 6d.
Neck { Best End	8½d.
Scrag End	5½d.
Chops	9½d. to 10½d.
Veal:—	
Hindquarter	9½d. to 11½d.
Shoulder { with bone	7½d. " 9½d.
without bone	10½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Ribs	9½d. to 10½d.
Chops	9½d. " 11½d.
Leg	9½d. " 10½d.
Pork:—	
Leg	8½d. to 9½d.
Foreloin	8½d. " 9½d.
Belly	6d. " 8½d.
Chops	9½d. " 10½d.

It may be well to observe that for the average working man's wife in Brussels, the above classification of cuts has little or no meaning. When she buys meat she does so without reference to, or knowledge of, the part of the carcass from which it is cut. In the case of beef (which is seldom bought more than once a week), the most usual purchase consists of some pieces of lean meat for making the popular Flemish stew known as *carbonnade flamande*. Neither butchers nor their working-class customers agree in their statements as to the part of the carcass from which *carbonnade* is cut, and, judging by what is exhibited under that name in the shops, it seems probable that the term may be applied to any odd pieces of lean beef which, in any other form but that of a stew, would be tough and tasteless. The prices generally paid for horseflesh by the working classes in June, 1908, were 7d. per lb. for fillet, 6d. for *faux filet*, 5½d. to 6d. for steak, and 3½d. per lb. for inferior cuts.

In the working-class quarters of Brussels, the butcher's most formidable competitors are the *Charcutier* and the *Tripier*. The latter is, in fact, the purveyor of meat for the poorest of the population. His stock-in-trade consists of the hearts of bullocks and sheep, the lungs of sheep, cooked feet of sheep, calves, and cows, cows' teats, giblets of poultry, and bones for making soup. Bullock's heart is sold at $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb., an entire sheep's heart and lungs for $3d.$, a boiled sheep's foot for $\frac{1}{2}d.$, a boiled calf's foot for $2d.$, a plate of bones for $2\frac{1}{2}d.$, and a "handful" (*poignée*) of giblets—sufficient, it is stated, to make soup for four or five persons—for $3\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $4\frac{3}{4}d.$ Many who are interested in the welfare of the working classes in Brussels would banish the *charcutier* from working-class streets, as offering a temptation to the housewives to avoid the trouble of preparing proper meals for their families. Even in the poorest quarters the shop window of the *charcutier* is made conspicuous by its attractive array of cooked delicacies, chiefly made from pork. In such shops little is bought by weight, the customer usually asking for 10, 15 or 20 centimes' worth of the particular article required. The savouries most in demand are *boudin blanc*, *boudin noir*, *pâté de foie* and *Kip-Kap*. The first two are a black and a grey sausage respectively, of which pig's blood and fat are the chief ingredients; *pâté de foie*, as its name implies, is in the nature of a paste, made chiefly from liver, and is sold in slices; *Kip-Kap* is simply the Flemish equivalent for *viande hachée*, or minced meat. The dearest of these articles (*pâté de foie*) is sold at a price corresponding to $4d.$ per lb., and the cheapest (*Kip-Kap*) at $2\frac{1}{4}d.$ per lb., while a pound of the black or grey sausage can be had for $3\frac{1}{4}d.$ To obtain these prices, 10 centimes' worth of each article was bought at each of nine different shops, and the purchases were then weighed, in order to ascertain the average quantity supplied for 10 centimes ($1d.$).

ANTWERP.

Antwerp, one of the greatest ports and commercial centres of the world, is situated on the right bank of the Scheldt, at a distance of 55 miles from the sea. It is connected with the industrial and commercial centres of Belgium, Holland, Germany and France by the Belgian railway and canal systems, and is the most convenient maritime outlet for Westphalia and South Germany. Railway communication with Brussels, which lies 27 miles to the south, has been greatly improved since August, 1908, by a frequent service of fast trains, which perform the journey in 36 minutes.

The most important port in Northern Europe in 1568, having succeeded to the larger part of the trade of Bruges, and greatly benefited by the changes consequent upon the discovery of America and of the Cape route to the East, Antwerp suffered heavily in the long wars of the second half of the sixteenth century, so that the population, which was estimated at 125,000 in 1568, had sunk in 1589 to less than half that figure. After the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the Dutch, having erected forts at the mouth of the Scheldt, prohibited the passage of sea-going vessels to and from the port, and Antwerp continued in an almost stagnant condition for the succeeding one hundred and fifty years. At the time of the French Revolution, when the French destroyed the Dutch forts and re-opened navigation on the Scheldt, its prosperity began to revive, and the first Napoleon caused large sums to be spent on the improvement of the harbour and docks. After Belgium had become an independent kingdom in 1830, however, the trade of Antwerp was again seriously hampered by the levy of tolls upon its shipping by the Dutch, who only finally, in 1863, yielded this right in consideration of a large money payment. The growth of the city in wealth and population may be said to date from this period, and was due to the remarkable development not only of Belgian industry, but also of that of Westphalia and South Germany. The population grew in the ten years between the censuses of 1866 and 1876 by 28 per cent., and has continued to increase at a very rapid rate. The following table shows the population of the City of Antwerp at the three censuses of 1880, 1890, and 1900, and the estimated population on 31st December, 1907 :—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	169,112	—	—
1890	224,012	54,900	32.5
1900	272,831	48,819	21.8
1907 (estimated)	310,903	38,072 (in seven years).	14.0 (in seven years).

The immigration into Antwerp from other districts is considerable. In 1866 the native-born population formed 67.2 per cent. of the total, while at the censuses of 1880, 1890 and 1900 the respective percentages were 63.1, 63.1, and 56.7. The foreign element is notably large, 40,858 foreigners of all nationalities, or 13.4 per cent. of the total population, being inscribed as residents on December 31, 1906. Of these 16,433 were born in Holland, 10,441 in Germany, 2,885 in Russia, 2,822 in Austria-Hungary, 2,740 in France, and 1,825 in the United Kingdom. The Germans are mainly engaged in foreign trade, and form the wealthiest foreign colony in Antwerp.

The effective population of Antwerp is, however, considerably higher than would appear from the above table. Within the fortifications which surround Antwerp lie the two independent communes of Borgerhout and Berchem (with populations of 46,441 and 29,447 respectively at the end of 1907), which are in no way, save administratively, separate from the city proper, and the real population, therefore, amounted at the end of 1907 to 386,791. Including these communes the growth of Antwerp since 1880 is shown by the following table :—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	198,764	—	—
1890	268,397	69,633	35.0
1900	330,486	62,089	23.1
1907 (estimated)	386,791	56,305 (in seven years).	17.0 (in seven years).

In addition, the two communes of Merxem (population at the end of 1907, 16,259) and Deurne (population at the end of 1907, 11,386) situated just beyond the fortifications, on the north and north-east boundaries of the city, are inhabited by a large number of workmen who are employed in Antwerp, while Hoboken (population at the end of 1907, 15,111) is two miles from the southern boundary walls. This commune, the seat of the shipbuilding industry, has nearly quadrupled its population since 1880. There are also other populous communes close to Antwerp, and it has been proposed to create a greater Antwerp by the incorporation of fourteen of them. It seems probable that Borgerhout, Berchem, Merxem, Deurne, and Hoboken, to which the street tramways run, will be incorporated with the main city at some near date.

The following table shows the birth and death rates per 1,000 of population, and the infantile mortality rates per 1,000 births for the City of Antwerp for five years :—

Year	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	25·4	14·9	169
1905	24·1	14·0	165
1906	22·9	14·0	179
1907	23·2	13·5	156
1908	22·1	13·1	165

It will be observed that both the birth-rate and the death-rate show a marked decline during the period.

Industry is secondary to commerce at Antwerp, and in the latter direction the expansion of the city has been strikingly rapid in recent years. The following statement shows the value of the import and export trade of Antwerp, the number of passengers arriving at and departing from the port, and the movement of foreign-going shipping at the port, in 1907, as compared with the previous year and with ten years earlier :—

	1907.	1906.	1897.
Value of Total Imports (General Trade) ...	£ 111,615,754	£ 100,427,002	£ 62,252,240
Value of Total Exports (General Trade) ...	91,635,102	92,170,456	46,330,720
Total Value of Foreign Trade ...	203,250,856	192,597,458	108,582,960
Total Number of Passengers and { Arriving Emigrants. { Departing*	75,642 169,910	66,579 160,768	41,584 48,138
Total Tonnage of Vessels Entered and Cleared in the Foreign Trade, with Cargoes and in Ballast. }	22,452,882†	21,676,118†	12,314,351†

* Including indirect Emigration.

† The Belgian system of calculating the tonnage of vessels differs from that adopted elsewhere, and, in order to render these figures comparable with those of non-Belgian ports, they should be reduced by from 15 to 20 per cent.

From this Table it is seen that the growth of the foreign trade of the port during the last ten years has been remarkable. During the decade 1897-1907 the value of all imports increased by 79 per cent., and that of exports by 98 per cent., the value of the foreign trade as a whole increasing by 87 per cent. During the same period the tonnage of foreign-going shipping has increased by 82 per cent., while the total number of passengers arriving at and departing from the port in 1907 was 2½ times as great as in 1897.

British and German shipping represent more than three-quarters of the total tonnage, the tonnage entered in 1907 under the British flag being 5,653,239 tons (50 per cent. of the total), and under the German flag 2,895,043 tons (26 per cent. of the total). The import trade is mainly in coffee, rubber, cotton, wool, tobacco, timber, coal, ores and crude metals, crude chemicals, cocoa, cereals, hides and skins, resins and bitumen, dyestuffs and oleaginous seeds, while the exports include all kinds of manufactured articles from the chief industrial centres of Belgium and Germany. The transport trades are the most important in a vast port like Antwerp as regards the numbers occupied. On its industrial side, diamond cutting, its distinctive industry, is stated to employ some 4,500 men, and among other

industries of the city and district may be mentioned the food trades (biscuit and chocolate making, sugar refining, rice shelling, margarine manufacture, brewing, and distilling), the manufacture of chemicals and the making of telephone apparatus, motor cars and cycles. Ship repairing affords much employment in the port, while ship-building is carried on at Hoboken.

The Scheldt opposite the city varies in breadth from 350 to 600 yards, and its depth at low tide is over 26 feet. The right bank only is utilised for shipping, and the port is composed of two distinct sections; the quays along the river-side, and the inner port formed of a series of docks. The quays have a length of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and are flanked by a broad embankment covered with sheds and warehouses. They are reserved mainly for steamers trading regularly with the port. There are eight inner docks, with a water surface of about 185 acres, in addition to the two intercalary docks opened in 1907, which have a surface of 69 acres and about 173 acres of wharfage. The port of Antwerp is managed by the municipality.

Mediæval Antwerp is completely overshadowed by the remarkable modern out-growth dating for the most part from the middle of the nineteenth century. The old town, of which the Cathedral and the town hall square formed the core, is still largely composed of narrow winding streets of tall houses, for the most part with inner courts. Although the city is devoid of regular plan, broad straight streets mark the modern parts which form more than two-thirds of Antwerp; and, owing to the predominance of stuccoed houses and light-coloured frontages, its general aspect is bright. The streets, however, are badly paved in many parts of the town, but, like the houses, they are maintained in a remarkable state of cleanliness. Antwerp affords many evidences of great wealth. The broad boulevards, which have taken the place of former fortifications and are nearly two miles in length, are lined by fine houses; and in many other avenues and boulevards in the neighbourhood of the Park and the Pepinière, where the wealthier sections of the population mostly live, such houses are very general. There is an absence of public recreation grounds. The city is, in fact, cramped for space to accommodate its rapidly rising population. For military reasons the building of dwellings within a certain surrounding zone has not been permitted, but it is anticipated that the present ring of fortifications, with its massive gates at intervals, and surrounded by a deep moat along the entire length, will be demolished. There is a noticeable movement of the working population to the outer parts of the town, and to communes outside the *enceinte*; and this movement, although checked by the impossibility of erecting houses at convenient points near the city walls, has been aided by the excellent system of tramways. The tramway company encourages the working classes to live away from the centre by the issue of cheap tickets available before eight in the morning and between five and eight in the evening, when, for 1*d.*, workmen are enabled to travel distances for which other travellers pay 1½*d.*, 2*d.*, or 2½*d.*

The gasworks, waterworks, electric power and light works, and the tramway system are owned and managed by companies which pay for their concessions. The care of the streets, the maintenance of abattoirs and cemeteries and a variety of other duties are undertaken by the municipality, which owns two museums, public libraries, two theatres, and maintains various technical schools in addition to the ordinary communal schools.

The language of the mass of the people at Antwerp is Flemish, while the commercial and educated classes mainly speak French.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

In the course of the thirteen years that have elapsed since the industrial census for the whole of Belgium was carried out (1896), the population of Antwerp and the district grouped with it for the purpose of that census has increased to such an extent that the industrial classification then made can no longer be accepted as even approximately correct. It showed, however, that at that date the industrial population in Antwerp and district (i.e., including Borgerhout, Berchem, Deurne, and Merxem) was inferior to that in Ghent and Liège, each of which represented groups of communes with about one half of the total population of the Antwerp group.

The working men are organised in three main groups, the Liberal, Catholic, and Socialist. The diamond workers are the most strongly organised group in Antwerp ;

and these, with the workers in the tobacco, printing, and building trades, and the dock labourers, have been able to obtain wages agreements. The greater number of trades in the city, however, employ chiefly unskilled labour, and are difficult to organise.

The normal working day in Antwerp is from 10 to 10½ hours. Work begins in summer at 6.30, and ends at 6.30 or 7 in the evening. The dinner interval is usually from twelve to half-past one. In addition to four great Church festivals, industrial establishments are generally closed on New Year's Day, Easter Monday, Whit Monday, the 21st July (National Fête), and two days each at Carnival and in August, but in some cases only half-days are granted on each of these occasions. Saturday is a full day in most trades.

Building Trades.—Wages agreements came into force for a number of occupations in January, 1908, as the result of a strike which had taken place some months previously. Minimum rates of 4½d. per hour for skilled and 3½d. for unskilled men were agreed upon, and the normal day was fixed at 11 hours in summer, between six in the morning and seven in the evening, save on Saturday, when it was to be one hour less. Rates higher by 25 per cent. are payable for overtime, but if work is done between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m., or on Sundays or holidays, an increase of 50 per cent. is stipulated. These conditions are identical with those which have been imposed upon all public contractors at Antwerp since December, 1903.

Shipbuilding and Engineering Trades.—In the city proper, ship repairing takes precedence of shipbuilding as a source of employment. The latter industry is concentrated at Hoboken, where vessels of up to 6,000 tons have been built. No trade union rates are recognised in these trades, and both time and piece work are in vogue, the former, however, being the rule in all the repairing yards.

There exist some special trades in Antwerp, such as motor car building and the manufacture of telephone apparatus. The latter industry employed a large body of men some years ago; in 1908 the motor car builders were working short time with reduced staffs.

Diamond Cutting.—Some 4,500 men are estimated to be employed in this industry, which is peculiar to Antwerp and Amsterdam, although in recent years there has been a tendency for the industry to spread in Belgium, and factories are found in Boom, Termonde, Turnhout, Lierre, Louvain, &c., to the number of about forty. Scales of payment for the various kinds of work are recognized. The workers fall into two main classes: those who handle the brilliants, and those who handle the inferior class of goods called roses; and capable workmen in the former class earn far more than those in the latter. The workers in brilliants are, however, absolutely predominant, forming, according to the figures furnished by one trade organisation, over 92 per cent. of the total. The splitters, of whom there are some sixty in the entire Antwerp industry, earn the highest wages. Their task is to divide the stone conformably with its crystalline structure, an operation requiring great skill and delicacy, and one on which depends the perfection of the future finished stones. They are paid by the piece, and the average capable splitter earns from £6 to £8 per week. The stones pass from the splitter to the cutter, who rubs diamonds one against the other to obtain the desired form. The cutters of brilliants earn about 60s. per week. The third, and most numerous class of all, are the polishers, who form over 50 per cent. of the total number of workers. Their earnings vary from 40s. to 60s. according to their capacity. The *sertisseurs* or setters earn from 24s. to 40s. per week. The weekly hours of labour in this industry are 52: nine hours each day except Saturday, when work ceases at three, without any midday break. The select class of splitters, however, only work about 42 hours. Employers have not generally their own factory, but hire polishing apparatus (*moulins*) in a large building where several manufacturers carry on their work. The owners of these factory buildings are frequently not in the diamond trade. It was stated that in one single building of this kind 650 *moulins* were let out on hire. From 15 to 20 employers possess their own private and separate installations, and are established on a large scale; the remainder are small employers of labour, working as just noted, in hired premises, for the sake of cheaper motive power. As regards race, the Antwerp masters include a large Jewish element of Dutch, Austrian, German, Polish and Russian extraction, the bulk of whom, however, are Belgian subjects.

The workmen have formed a strong union, which had in 1908 nearly 3,000 members, and is locally characterised as being socialistic, in contradistinction to the "Neutral" guild founded in 1907, which numbers about 700 men. The former union possesses large offices and staff. The employers are also organised, and maintain a permanent office.

Printing Trades.—The majority of the employers and men concluded an agreement in December, 1907, by which on and after January 1, 1908, the compositors, lithographers, and bookbinders were to receive at the age of 24 or after ten years' work at their trade 4½d. per hour, the rate of wages for those of less than ten years standing varying with the length of experience. The numbers occupied in these trades are estimated at about 1,700, and in addition to the important daily newspapers published in the city a variety of commercial printing is done.

Brewing.—Over 600 men are employed in the numerous breweries which exist in Antwerp. The majority are established upon a small scale, but there are three which employ at least 80 men each. Most of the beer brewed is of high fermentation, but the taste for light beer has greatly developed. This beer is made by the larger breweries, which employ a number of German brewers for the purpose.

Tobacco Industry.—Piece-work rates are fixed by agreement for the manufacture of cigars and cigarillos in Antwerp, which (with St. Nicolas, Grammont, and Ghent) is a leading centre for this industry in Belgium. A number of firms, however, which count as Antwerp manufacturers, make their wares elsewhere, or possess merely small establishments in the city and manufacture more largely in other places, for example at St. Nicolas. In general, it is stated, the highest class of cigars are made here, not in the country centres. About half of those employed are women. There are a large number of small manufacturers, employing two or three hands, and often themselves engaged as retailers.

Dock Labour.—The wages of harbour and dock labourers are regulated by agreements, but owing to the casual nature of the employment and the constant change of employer it is obviously difficult to ascertain the normal weekly earnings in these occupations. The time wages for the various classes of work range from 3s. 7d. to 6s. 5d. per day of nine hours, but the majority of labourers earn from 4s. to 4s. 10d. per day. According to agreements adopted by the various committees appointed for the purpose after the great strike of dock labourers in August and September of 1907, it was settled that men were to be paid for the time occupied in fetching their tools from the storehouses and in taking them back when the work was finished; that the men were to be paid when, after engagement, they were unable to work through delay in the arrival of the ship or for any other valid cause; and that men detained till nine o'clock in the morning without being able to commence work were to receive for such time of waiting the sum of 1s., and when detained beyond that hour 2s., for the time lost, while in the afternoon the same sums were to be paid under similar conditions—1s. up to four o'clock and 2s. after four o'clock.

The men employed in the stevedoring department of an important dock company in Antwerp in the years 1905 and 1906 were divided into three classes: (A) those engaged in stowing the cargo in the ship's hold, at wages of 4s. 10d. per day; (B) those assisting the stevedores in the hold, at wages of 4s. 5d. per day; (C) those on shore bringing the cargo alongside the ship, at wages of 4s. per day. The working hours were: Summer (counted as from February 16 to October 31), 7 a.m. to 12 noon, with a pause from 9 to 9.30, and from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., with a pause of half-an-hour at four o'clock; winter hours, 7.30 a.m. to 9 a.m., 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon, and 1.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. The system of working was with day and night gangs. The men employed during the day were allowed to work only three hours' overtime, and the night gangs came on at 10 in summer and 9 in winter months. Overtime and Sunday work were paid 50 per cent. extra in each case. The following table shows the average weekly earnings, for the whole of the years 1905 and 1906, of certain men working under these conditions. The figures given relate only to men who were on the books of the company during the whole of the year, whether 1905 or 1906, and may be taken as representing the average earnings of steady dock labourers per week (allowing for short time and overtime) in Antwerp. It might seem somewhat remarkable that the average earnings of the labourers of Class B were lower than those of Class C in 1905; the explanation, however, is that the time worked during the year by men in the former class was, on the average, considerably less than that worked by those in the latter.

	1905.		1906.	
	Number of men to whom the figures relate.	Average earnings per week.	Number of men to whom the figures relate.	Average earnings per week.
Labourers of Class A.	18	27s. 11d.	14	25s.
" " B.	22	20s. 10d.	19	23s. 4d.
" " C.	41	21s. 3d.	35	18s. 6d.

Public Services.—The tramway company is perhaps the largest single private employer of labour in Antwerp, having (October, 1908) about 1,600 men, of whom half were drivers and conductors. The remainder were engaged in the maintenance of the permanent way, or in the repairs or other work in connection with rolling stock. The drivers and conductors work 11 hours per day, and have a day off (unpaid) after every seven days' work. The majority of the drivers are paid from 3s. 10d. to 4s. per day worked, while conductors are paid from 3s. 8d. to 3s. 10d. per day. An annual allowance of 16s. is made for clothing. On the lines in the better quarters conductors frequently receive a halfpenny or penny from regular travellers when the fare is paid. The gas company employs some 1,200 men in winter, and about one-third less in summer. It maintains a special sick fund for its men, and grants pensions to those who after 25 years' service with the company have reached the age of fifty-five.

The following Table shows the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of men employed in certain principal occupations at Antwerp in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Building Trades :—</i>		
Bricklayers and Masons, Stonemasons (Cutters), Carpenters, Joiners, Plumbers, Plasterers and Painters	23s. 5d.	65
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers, and General Labourers	18s. 2d.	65
<i>Ship Repairing :—</i>		
Fitters	26s. 5d.	60
Turners	28s. 10d.	60
Smiths	31s. 2d.	60
Boilersmiths	28s. 10d.	60
Rivetters	24s.	60
Carpenters	28s. 10d.	60
Riggers	26s. 5d.	60
Labourers	19s. 2d.	60
<i>Engineering Trades* :—</i>		
Fitters	21s. 7d.	60
Turners	24s.	60
Smiths	21s. 7d.	60
Patternmakers	24s.	60
Labourers	14s. 5d.	60
<i>Boilermaking and Shipbuilding Trades* :—</i>		
Angle-iron Smiths	26s. 5d.	60
Other Smiths	21s. 7d.	60
Platers	24s.	60
Rivetters	20s. 2d.	60
Caulkers	19s. 2d.	60
Holders-up	15s. 4d.	60
Platers' Helpers	14s. 5d.	60
Labourers	13s. 5d. to 14s. 5d.	60
<i>Diamond Cutting (Brilliantes) :—</i>		
Splitters	£6 to £8	42
Cutters (in the rough)	£3	52
Polishers	£2 to £3	52
Setters	24s. to 40s.	52
<i>Printing and Allied Trades :—</i>		
Compositors (Hand)	20s. 6d.	57
Compositors (Machine)	28s. 10d.	54
Lithographers	20s. 6d.	57
Bookbinders	20s. 6d.	57
<i>Sugar Refinery Labourers</i>	16s. 10d.	60
<i>Chocolate Makers</i>	14s. 5d. to 16s. 10d.	60 to 63
<i>Biscuit Bakers</i>	14s. 5d. to 19s. 2d.	60 „ 63
<i>Bakeries :—</i>		
Bakers, first men	27s. 7d. to 29s. 3d.	60 „ 63
„ second men	21s. 7d. to 24s.	60 „ 63
Bread Deliverers	20s. 10d. „ 24s.	60 (but irregular)

* The wages shown for the engineering, boilermaking and shipbuilding trades are time-rates; smiths, platers and their helpers, rivetters and holders-up often perform piecework, in which case their earnings are about 10 per cent. higher than stated here.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Breweries :—</i>		
Brewers	16s. to 20s.	63
Maltsters	16s. „ 20s.	63
Coopers	20s. 10d. „ 22s. 5d.	63
Draymen	17s. 7d. to 20s.	63
Labourers	14s. 5d. to 17s. 7d.	63
<i>Cigar Making :—</i>		
Cigar Makers (best cigars)	24s. to 32s.	60
„ (medium quality)	16s. „ 24s.	60
„ (ordinary cigars)	14s. 5d. to 16s.	60
Labourers	14s. 5d.	60
<i>Dock Labourers : (see text).</i>		
<i>Public Services :—</i>		
Road Department (Municipal)—		
Paviors	18s. 3d. to 22s. 1d.	60
Paviors' Labourers	15s. 4d. „ 17s. 9d.	60
Navvies	16s. 4d. „ 17s. 9d.	60
Labourers	16s. 10d. „ 19s. 2d.	60
<i>Gas Works (Company)—</i>		
Gas Stokers	28s. 10d.	—
Yard Labourers	16s. 10d.	60
<i>Waterworks (Company)—</i>		
Labourers	16s. 10d.	60
<i>Tramways : (see text).</i>		

Representing the level of predominant wages at Brussels by 100, the index numbers for Antwerp are—for the building trades, 92 for skilled men and 96 for labourers, for the engineering trades, 96 for skilled men and 93 for labourers, and for compositors 78.

The municipality, with grants of £60 from the State and £12 from the province, maintains a labour exchange, which is carried on with marked success. The diamond workers, cigar workers, and dock labourers do not, however, come to the exchange, as, in the case of the diamond industry and the dock labourers to an especial degree, other well-organised agencies safeguard their interests in this respect. The following Table shows the average hourly wages at which men were engaged through the agency of this labour exchange, in 1907, for certain representative trades :—

Average Hourly Wages at which Workmen were engaged in 1907.

	Average Hourly Wages.
<i>Building Trades :</i>	
Bricklayers and Masons	4d.
Carpenters and Joiners	4d.
Plumbers	3½d.
Plasterers	4½d.
Painters	4d.
<i>Engineering, etc., Trades :—</i>	
Fitters	4d.
Turners	4½d.
Erectors	3½d.
Smiths	3½d.
Rivetters	4½d.
<i>Woodworking and Furnishing Trades :—</i>	
Woodcarvers	4½d.
Cabinet Makers	3½d.
Upholsterers	3½d.
<i>Printing and Bookbinding Trades :—</i>	
Compositors	3½d.
Pressmen	3½d.
Bookbinders	3½d.
Root and Shoe Makers	3d.
Tailors	3½d.
Bakers	4½d.
Chocolate Makers	3½d.
Carmen	3½d.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

The wealthy commercial and middle classes in Antwerp inhabit separate, self-contained houses, but clerks and working men live to a great extent in houses divided into two or more tenements. Houses inhabited by more than one household show a distinct tendency to increase, more particularly in the city proper; in 1900 the census figures returned the number of houses destined for habitation at 32,129, and the number of households at 68,006, or an average of 2.12 per house, as compared with an average of 1.63 per house in 1890. Houses occupied by several working-class families are found in great numbers in the First and Fourth Wards, which touch the quay-side; outside these wards, while the majority of houses contain two families, a notable number of single-family cottages exist, especially in the Fifth and Ninth Wards.

The working-class quarters are fairly widely distributed over the area within the *enceinte*. Owing to the excellent tramway system and the low fares charged at certain periods of the day, working men are enabled to live at a certain distance from their work. The two main classes into which the industrial population falls, those engaged in the shipping and transport trades, and those engaged in other trades, live, broadly speaking, in clearly marked districts. The former are grouped around the river and in the neighbourhood of the docks, while the latter live away from the central parts in the Fifth, Eighth, Ninth (the Ninth being outside the city walls) and Tenth Wards, and in the suburbs of Borgerhout and Merxem, the last-named being also outside the *enceinte*.

The predominant types of working-class dwellings consist of two, three, and four rooms; and of these the three-roomed dwelling is the most frequent. In the First and Fourth Wards dwellings of one and two rooms predominate, and a large number of tenements are found in the majority of houses in these quarters. The large houses in these wards require no special description, being ordinary tenement houses divided into dwellings of one or two rooms. In some cases these houses are very large, and one house visited, which had one entrance in the Place St. André, was stated to be occupied by forty households, the majority renting only one room. A feature of this quarter is the large number of back dwellings and closes or courts. The back houses, as a rule, leave much to be desired. A long, narrow passage is usually found at one side of the front house, leading to one, two, or three back houses, and the light and air are severely restricted. The courts are either open or are entered from beneath a front house. The cottages within them, numbering from four to fifteen or more, usually contain one room downstairs and a *mansarde* or attic above, but sometimes there is only one room downstairs and a loft above. The Fifth Ward also contains a number of courts, but here they are more open (although some are extremely unsatisfactory), and the houses are larger, possessing always two, often three, and in some cases more rooms.

The most typical houses occupied by working men consist of three floors with six rooms; and they are occupied by two families. The street door gives access to a vestibule or passage, in which the stairs are placed, and the passage goes through to a small yard which contains a pump and a closet for the joint use of the two families. It is usual for each of the two families to have one of the *mansardes* or attics, where the children sleep. The other type of three-roomed dwellings has two rooms on the ground floor and one room above, with an unenclosed space on the first floor serving as a lumber room. Dwellings of four rooms have simply two rooms on the ground floor and two on the first, while the two-roomed dwelling is generally a cottage with two rooms downstairs and a lumber room above, or two rooms taken in a house occupied by one or more families.

The majority of houses have a yard (usually small), but gardens are rare. The closet is placed in the yard, and is drained into a cesspool. Water-taps in the houses are exceptional, less than one-third of the dwellings being equipped in this way. The amount paid for a private supply, with no restriction as to the quantity used for domestic purposes, is 6 per cent. of the assessable rental value of the tenement. The usual source of supply is a pump in the yard, or a street standpipe. Cellars are found only in the more modern dwellings.

Among a large number of tenements of various kinds visited in the course of this enquiry the following may be taken as representative examples:—

Rue des Poires.—Twelve houses of two stories containing four rooms, and each let to two households. The front lower room measured 13 feet by 11 feet 3 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, and the back 10 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, while the upper rooms

measured respectively 17 feet by 11 feet 3 inches by 8 feet 6 inches, and 10 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 9 inches by 8 feet 6 inches. There was a passage, a cellar, and a closet (in the yard), and a small garden. The rent of the house was 5s. 6d. per week, and the occupants of the first floor paid 2s. 10d. per week.

Rue Luxembourg.—Twenty-four recently erected houses, all exactly alike, built in red brick, having four rooms and an attic; let at from 4s. 3d. to 4s. 7d. per week. The passage had a width of 2 feet 9 inches; the dimensions of the front room were 12 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 3 inches by 11 feet 3 inches; of the kitchen 9 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 3 inches; of the front room on the first floor, 12 feet by 14 feet by 9 feet 3 inches; and of the attic room 9 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 3 inches. At the back were small yards and gardens, the pump and closet being in the former, and there were two cellars. Several of the houses were occupied by two households. The occupants were bakers, Customs officers, gas workers, diamond workers, printers, etc.

Rue de l'Abbaye.—Twenty two-storied houses of four rooms, occupied by two households, the whole houses being let at 4s. 3d. per week. The front room of the downstairs measured 16 feet by 11 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 9 inches, and the tenement measured 16 feet by 11 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 9 inches; in the upper tenement the front room was 14 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, and the back room 11 feet 9 inches by 9 feet by 9 feet 6 inches. The pump and closet were in the yard.

Chaussée St. Bernard.—Eight new working-class houses in a court, having two rooms downstairs and two attics above. The front room downstairs measured 13 feet 3 inches by 13 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 3 inches, and the back room 10 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, the front attic 11 feet 9 inches by 13 feet 6 inches by 7 feet 3 inches, and the back attic 9 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 9 inches by 7 feet 3 inches. The street door opened into the front room, while the staircase was in a passage running from the back door of this room to the yard. There was a cellar, a small yard, and three pumps for the use of all the households.

Place Lozanne.—In this square, off the *rue Lozanne*, there were 36 houses, of which 34 were exactly alike, having one room downstairs and two upstairs. The staircase was in the lower room, which measured 17 feet by 14 feet 6 inches by 10 feet 9 inches, while the upper rooms were 8 feet 3 inches by 14 feet 3 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, and 8 feet 3 inches by 11 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 6 inches. Each house had a small vestibule and a small garden in which the closet was placed, water being obtained from a pump in the middle of the open space round which the houses were grouped. The rent of these houses was 4s. per week.

Rue Schalkens.—A house in a court, containing three rooms, one above the other: measurement 16 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 9 inches by 8 feet 3 inches. Rent 4s. per week.

Rue du Couvent.—A back house, entered by a long passage leading into two small courts; it contained two rooms with an attic, and was occupied by cigar workers. There were five persons in the household, of whom the father, one son, and one daughter were wage-earners. The rooms were large, measuring 21 feet by 15 feet; the height of the downstairs room was 13 feet, and of that on the first floor 8 feet 3 inches; while the attic was 15 feet square and 6 feet 6 inches in height. There was no fireplace, but the usual long-piped stove; the interior was very well kept, with good furniture and many little ornaments. Closet and pump for the use of five households. Rent, 4s. 6d. per week.

Place St. André.—In one building, stated to contain 40 tenements, one tenement of one room measuring 15 feet by 13 feet by 9 feet 6 inches, cost 2s. 6d.; a second, one room measuring 13 feet by 12 feet by 10 feet 9 inches; and the two rooms of at 2s. 5d., measured 13 feet by 12 feet by 10 feet 9 inches, had dimensions of 12 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 6 inches and 9 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 6 inches.

Rue St. Jean.—In a court off this street a tenement of two rooms and *mansarde*, let at 4s. 5d. per week, was occupied by a family of eleven. The two rooms measured 12 feet 6 inches by 14 feet, with a height of 10 feet 9 inches, but the attic room was lower. There were two closets for ten households.

Rue Demi-Lune.—Houses of four rooms and two attics each, occupied by two families. The dimensions were: lower front room, 15 feet by 8 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 9 inches; upper front room, 8 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 9 inches; lower back room, 12 feet by 6 feet by 10 feet 9 inches; upper back room, 12 feet by 5 feet by 10 feet 9 inches; by 19 feet by 10 feet 9 inches; upper back room, 12 feet by 5 feet by 10 feet 9 inches;

and attic, 8 feet 6 inches by 17 feet by 6 feet 6 inches. These houses cost 6s. per week, but two rooms on the first floor, with one attic, were sub-let for 3s. There was one closet, a cellar, and a small yard, and a water tap was provided. These houses had only one entrance.

Burgerswelzyn.—A broad court containing 28 houses, each containing four rooms and two attics, and occupied by two households. The houses were rented at 6s. 6d. per week, and sub-let. The court opened on the street, and had a general breadth of about 65 feet. Each house had a small yard, a closet, cellar, and well, and a passage leading into the yard. The ground-floor rooms measured respectively 10 feet 3 inches by 12 feet by 10 feet 3 inches, and 11 feet 6 inches by 8 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 3 inches; the attics measured 13 feet by 11 feet 6 inches by 6 feet 6 inches and 9 feet 3 inches by 11 feet 6 inches by 6 feet 6 inches. Each household had an attic.

The following table shows the predominant weekly rents for working-class dwellings consisting of two, three and four rooms at Antwerp (including the suburbs) in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Two rooms	...	...	...	2s. 7d. to 3s. 10d.
Three rooms	...	...	...	3s. 2d. „ 4s. 5d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	3s. 8d. „ 4s. 10d.

The general level of rents at Antwerp is approximately the same as at Brussels. Taking rent at Brussels as 100, the index number for rent at Antwerp is 99, which is much higher than that for any other of the provincial towns investigated for the purposes of the present enquiry.

The above rents include the use of water. As regards taxes, few workmen who are tenants pay either local or State taxes.

The *Bureau de Bienfaisance* owns a number of workmen's dwellings in two wards. In 1908 there were 430 houses let to 700 households, at rents rather below the prevailing rents for similar accommodation in the same neighbourhood, the rents having been established some years ago when the Antwerp working men did not find it so difficult to obtain lodging.

A number of workmen have availed themselves of the law of 1889, and have borrowed money from registered Loan Societies for the erection of their own houses. A deposit of 10 per cent. of the total cost is exacted, and under the newer regulations an assurance upon the life of the future proprietor must be effected. The type of house most usually built by these workmen consists of two rooms (with perhaps a small back kitchen) on the ground floor, two rooms on the first floor, and above an attic and a lumber room. Several of these houses were visited in the course of this enquiry. The first house visited had been built by a printer, and contained the above number of rooms. The monthly sum due, including interest on mortgage and assurance premium, amounted to 26s., the house having cost £240, of which £200 had been advanced by the Loan Society. The front room on the first floor measured 15 feet 6 inches by 14 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 3 inches, and the back room 13 feet by 10 feet 6 inches by 10 feet 3 inches. There was no tap in the house, water being obtained from a pump, but there was a small coal-cellar and a small yard. Another house, built by a cabinetmaker, cost £192, of which £180 had been borrowed. It contained two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs and a lumber room. The dimensions were as follows: Front room downstairs, 13 feet by 10 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 3 inches; back room 13 feet by 7 feet 6 inches by 10 feet 3 inches; upstairs front room 13 feet by 13 feet by 10 feet 3 inches; back room 13 feet by 10 feet 9 inches by 13 feet. The monthly payments were 20s. 10d. for a period of 25 years.

The furniture of typical working-class houses in Antwerp is unusually abundant, and there is a general ambition to possess solid and carved furniture. The front room on the ground-floor is generally a bedroom, containing a good wardrobe and chairs, and various little ornaments. The scrupulous neatness and cleanliness of the houses is remarkable. This does not apply generally to the shipping quarters, but even there under very depressing conditions one may often remark the same striving towards cleanliness.

RETAIL PRICES.

Save for the sale of vegetables, potatoes, and fruit, markets are of little account in the retail trade at Antwerp. Of the two co-operative societies founded by Liberal and Socialist organisations respectively, the former sells only bread, coffee, medicine, and coal, but the Socialist co-operative society deals not only in these commodities but also in general groceries, haberdashery, drapery, various dry goods, boots and medicines. The Liberal society in 1907 supplied bread to 13,500 households. Its members, *i.e.*, those who buy its bread, have a right to free medical attendance during illness and medicine at half-price for themselves and families; to 2·2 lb. of bread per day free up to a period not exceeding six months during illness or incapacity for work, and to free dental attendance. The Catholic workmen have no co-operative society, but a company established in 1901 receives their support. At the close of 1908, 10,130 regular customers were enrolled in the books of this company, which only makes and sells bread. Customers pay one franc (9½d.) to be enrolled and have certain advantages such as free medical advice and medicine, and free allowance of bread in case of illness or unemployment of the bread winner; and, after five years of membership and at the age of sixty, they are entitled to a pension, based on the quantity of bread which they have purchased. In October, 1908, there were 125 pensioners of the company; in 1907 the highest pension amounted to £2 18s. 5d.

In addition to these organisations, which appeal for support more or less directly to the political convictions of purchasers, other co-operative organisations exist, one of which, namely, the Co-operative Society of State Employees, is the strongest of its kind in Belgium. In 1907 it had a membership of 4,500, and a turnover of £52,000. In this case also bread forms the staple of the business, but coal, boots, general groceries, hardware, *charcuterie* (sausages, &c.), haberdashery and other dry goods are also sold.

“Multiple” shops are not numerous when the size of Antwerp is taken into account; there are three grocery firms (two of these have shops throughout the Kingdom) with a total of 22 branches in the city proper and eight in the suburbs. These firms also deal in many kinds of cotton, linen and woollen goods, and general haberdashery, hardware and various kinds of domestic utensils.

Neither the co-operative societies nor the “multiple” firms deal in meat. This is sold by auction in two small covered markets, but these markets are too small to exercise an appreciable effect upon the general trade conditions in respect to this commodity. No frozen beef is stocked by the butchers in Antwerp. An attempt to introduce the sale of frozen mutton in recent years was made by a large company with six shops, but meeting with no success, the shops were closed after less than a year's trading.

The fare of the Antwerp workman does not vary greatly from day to day. In the early morning at half-past five or six o'clock a light breakfast of coffee (with a large percentage of chicory) and bread and butter or margarine is taken before going to work. Some slices of bread brought from home are eaten at about eight o'clock. At midday the chief meal of the day consists of soup, a little meat and potatoes. Soup is invariably taken and is made of onions, potato-meal, carrots, &c., with a little bacon fat or butter. In the evening between seven and eight o'clock coffee with bread and butter or bread and cheese with beer are generally taken. A large number of men working in the harbour district take their midday meal in eating houses, at many of which soup, a plate of meat and potatoes, with bread and a glass of beer, are obtainable for 4½d. or 5½d.

Groceries and other Commodities.

In Antwerp as elsewhere in Belgium it is customary among all classes to mix chicory in large proportions with their *coffee*. *Margarine* is consumed to a large extent by the working people and several margarine factories are established in Antwerp. Smoked *bacon* is comparatively little eaten, salted bacon being most in demand. The *bread* eaten is almost exclusively white bread. A mixed bread, five-sixths consisting of the same flour as the pure white bread and the remaining sixth of equal parts of the finest wheat and barley flour or of barley flour alone, is also baked, but it is eaten much as people in England eat brown bread, for the sake of change. At one bakery, which had a normal monthly output

of 1,100,000 lb. it was stated that only one-tenth of the bread made was of this kind. The loaf in common demand weighs 2·2 lb., and in June, 1908, was sold at $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ by the large co-operative or company bakeries which dominate this trade. The smaller bakers are only resorted to when credit is necessary; the quality of the bread sold, and the inducements offered by the great bakeries, which do not give credit, attract the stabler elements in the working class, and of course, when cash is not paid, a higher price is charged. When bought in quantities of 50 kilogrammes (110 lb.) *coal* cost from $1s. 1\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $1s. 3\frac{3}{4}d.$ per cwt. in June, 1908; coal is, however, generally bought by working-class households in quantities which are not weighed but are usually reckoned to weigh 22 lb., and which cost from $3d.$ to $3\frac{1}{2}d.$

The following Table shows the prices of certain principal commodities at Antwerp in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	$7\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $8\frac{3}{4}d.$
Sugar, Loaf "	$3d., 3\frac{1}{4}d.$
Bacon, Salted "	$7\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $8\frac{3}{4}d.$
Eggs per 1s.	12, 13
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	$7d.$ to $9\frac{1}{4}d.$
Butter "	$1s. 1d.$ " $1s. 2d.$
Margarine "	$7\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $8\frac{3}{4}d.$
Potatoes per 7 lb.	$2\frac{1}{2}d.$ " $3d.$
Flour, Wheaten "	$9\frac{1}{4}d.$ " $1s. 0\frac{1}{4}d.$
Bread, White per 4 lb.	$4\frac{1}{4}d.$
Milk per quart	$2\frac{1}{4}d.$
Coal per cwt.	$1s. 1\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $1s. 3\frac{3}{4}d.$
Paraffin Oil per gallon	$6\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $7d.$

Meat.

Antwerp obtains its supplies of beef from its own province, and from the provinces of East Flanders, Brabant, and Hainault. A certain quantity also comes from Holland, but it is veal particularly which comes to the city from that country. The United States also exports to Antwerp about one hundred head of live cattle per fortnight. Mutton comes mainly from the Campine, where the soil is very suitable for sheep rearing. The mutton which arrives from the Argentine—in 1906, 49,619 sheep, in 1907, 57,023 sheep—is for the most part despatched to Brussels. Pork is plentiful in the neighbourhood. Probably no port in the world receives such a large number of horses for food purposes as Antwerp; in 1906 and in 1907, 15,702 and 14,901 respectively were imported. A large proportion of this meat is destined for various other centres, and much of it goes regularly into country districts; yet horseflesh is very popular among the Antwerp working classes, especially in the suburb of Borgerhout.

All animals must be slaughtered at the municipal abattoir, and all dead meat introduced into the city must be examined before it is exposed for sale. The bulk of the meat consumed is killed in the abattoir, except in the case of pork, of which quite four-fifths is regularly slaughtered before despatch to Antwerp.

Beef, pork, and horseflesh are the most popular with the working classes. Returns of weekly expenditure obtained for this enquiry from 367 families, comprising 1,751 persons, showed an average weekly consumption of meat amounting to 25·7 oz. per head, which is at the rate of 84 lb. per year. Of this amount 35 per cent. was beef, 19 per cent. horseflesh, and 15 per cent. pork. *Charcuterie* accounted for 10 per cent., bacon for 13 per cent., veal for $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., mutton and rabbits for 2 per cent. each, and poultry for $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Fresh pork, therefore, with bacon and *charcuterie*, amounted to 38 per cent. The workpeople buy chiefly the brisket, shin, and thin flank of beef, and these parts, stewed with potatoes, constitute what is known as *carbonnade flamande*. All parts of pork are bought, but especially the belly and leg. In regard to horseflesh the steak, which costs from $5\frac{1}{4}d.$ to $6d.$ per lb., is the most popular, the inferior parts, costing only from $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $3d.$ per lb., being generally used for making a stew with potatoes and onions.

The following Table shows the prices of the various cuts of beef, mutton, veal, and pork in Antwerp in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	$7d.$
Brisket	$5\frac{1}{4}d.$
Silverside	$8\frac{3}{4}d.$
Shin { with bone	$2\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $3\frac{1}{2}d.$
{ without bone	$4\frac{1}{4}d.$ " $5\frac{1}{4}d.$
Beef Steak	$11d.$
Thick Flank	$11d.$
Thin Flank	$6d.$
Mutton :—	
Leg	$9\frac{1}{2}d.$
Shoulder	$6d.$ to $7d.$
Breast	$4\frac{1}{4}d.$ " $5\frac{1}{4}d.$
Neck { Best End	$8\frac{3}{4}d.$
{ Scrag End	$5\frac{1}{4}d.$ to $7d.$
Chops	$8\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $11d.$
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	$7\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $9\frac{1}{4}d.$
Shoulder { with bone	$7\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $8\frac{3}{4}d.$
{ without bone	$8\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $11d.$
Ribs	$8\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $11d.$
Chops	$11d.$
Leg	$9\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $11d.$
Pork :—	
Leg	$8\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $10\frac{1}{2}d.$
Foreloin	$8\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $10\frac{1}{2}d.$
Belly	$7\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $8\frac{3}{4}d.$
Chops	$8\frac{3}{4}d.$ " $10\frac{1}{2}d.$

Taking Brussels as base (= 100), the following are the prices index numbers for Antwerp :—food other than meat 98, meat 90, all food 96, coal 87, and food and coal 95. The index number for rent and prices combined is 96.



BRUGES.

Bruges, the capital of the province of West Flanders, lies 62 miles west-north-west of Brussels on the main line from the capital to Ostend. The latter town is 14 miles to the west of Bruges, Ghent is 26 miles to the east, while the sea lies eight miles to the north-west. The town enjoys good railway communication with other Belgian towns and the north of France; steam trainways run from Bruges to different local centres, and a ship canal $6\frac{1}{4}$ miles long, 230 feet broad, and 26 feet deep, connects it with the recently-constructed harbour of Zeebrugge. The Ghent-Ostend Canal also passes the town, and a third canal connects Bruges with L'Ecluse, $14\frac{1}{4}$ miles distant, which is, however, in Dutch territory.

In the middle ages Bruges, with a population which is estimated to have been about 200,000, was the chief commercial centre of northern Europe, and was regarded as the wealthiest city outside Italy. Its port was Damme, now a village, some three miles to north-east of the town. As the market for the busy Flemish centres of manufacture of broadcloth, laces, linens, and tapestries, Bruges possessed a large export trade, and in turn almost monopolised the importation of English wools and Russian furs, besides dealing largely in other articles. Its trade with Germany was very important, as it occupied the position of an *entrepôt* for the cities of the German Hanseatic League. Its prosperity declined in the fifteenth century owing to the rise of Antwerp and of the English ports, and the beginning of the English cloth industry, but chiefly because the Zwyn, or arm of the sea which went to Damme, ceased to be navigable for large vessels. At the present time Bruges is a town of but slight activity, being a considerable centre neither of commerce nor of industry. Although the creation of a harbour at Zeebrugge where the largest vessels may ride at anchor, and the building of the ship canal already mentioned, gave rise to many hopes, yet prospects of a considerable revival in the immediate future are held to be doubtful.

Lacemaking by hand forms the largest single source of employment, over 3,000 women being engaged in this trade, but few of the other industries attain great importance. The population includes a large element of persons of independent fortune, many old civic families having been settled here for generations. The town is an ecclesiastical centre, being the seat of a bishop, whilst a seminary for the priesthood and over twenty convents, either of contemplative or teaching orders, are established in the town. As a legal, administrative, military, artistic, and foreign residential centre (residents of English nationality being numerous) it is also important.

Bruges is a flat town situated slightly above the sea level in the low Flanders plain. The ramparts, which once encircled the town and had a length of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, have been razed, only four of the old town gates being left standing; and on their site boulevards have been laid out, with here and there gardens and fields. The boulevards are bordered by canals, so that the town is almost entirely surrounded by water; it is, moreover, intersected by numerous branches of canals, by such sheets of water as the Minnewater, and by the Docks. Bruges owed its name, in fact, to the multitude of its bridges (Brugge, its Flemish form, signifies "bridges"). Externally it appears an essentially mediæval town, all the principal public buildings being remarkable for their Gothic or Early Renaissance styles, while the old Flemish domestic architecture, with its pointed gables descending stepwise at both sides, is a conspicuous feature. The streets are narrow and picturesque, with low houses roofed with red tiles, and the unfrequented canals are often lined with shady promenades or by the backs of houses, small and great. In this connection it may be mentioned that the municipality, in its desire to preserve to the town its mediæval aspect, allows grants amounting to about one-third of the cost of the frontage of the house, provided that the plans chosen conform to certain styles, and receive the approval of the town architect. Other characteristic features are the various signs which recur on the façades: the Bear of Bruges or the Lion of Flanders, for instance, is often sculptured in the stonework, religious statues are placed in niches in the walls, while here and there—especially at street corners—are small shrines.

BRUGES.

The population of Bruges as returned by the censuses of 1880, 1890, and 1900, and as estimated for 31st December, 1907, is shown in the following table:—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	44,501	—	—
1890	47,497	2,996	6·7
1900	51,657	1,160	8·8
1907 (estimated)	53,781	2,124	4·1
		(in seven years).	(in seven years).

The population is not largely recruited from without. At the census of 1900 it was found that 68·9 per cent. of the inhabitants had been born in the town.

The following Table shows the birth-rates, death-rates and infantile mortality rates for each of the five years 1904–8:—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	29·0	21·6	160
1905	28·6	22·4	153
1906	26·7	23·7	174
1907	27·9	21·2	138
1908	26·8	21·1	134

Bruges is a Flemish-speaking town, and for some years the municipal reports have been printed in Flemish alone.

Neither waterworks, electric power and light works, nor street tramways exist in the town. The gas works are owned by a company, which pays nothing for the concession. The maintenance of the streets is done by contract. The municipality owns a public library (grant in 1906, £296), theatre (grant in 1906, £608), museums, cemeteries, market hall and slaughter-house, and subsidises, in conjunction with the State and the province, schools of music and drawing, and technical schools.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

The most important source of employment in Bruges itself is lace-making, which is carried on by between three and four thousand women, mainly working at home. The clothing trades are also important, but the only other industries of any note are building, printing, and papermaking. Outside the town the metalworking, engineering, and woodworking trades are carried on, chiefly by one large firm.

The wages paid at Bruges are low, and the hours are long. Besides the midday interval of from one hour to one hour and a half, morning and afternoon breaks of fifteen, twenty, or thirty minutes each are universally accorded by employers. On Saturdays a full day is worked in all the establishments, but on Mondays it is customary to cease work at four or five in the afternoon. The general holidays are: New Year's Day, Easter Monday, Whit Monday, the first Monday after May 3 for the Procession of the Holy Blood (a *fête* peculiar to Bruges), Ascension Thursday, Assumption Day (August 15), All Saints' Day (November 1), and Christmas Day. Work is also suspended in the afternoon of Shrove Tuesday.

Working-class organisation is feeble at Bruges. The bulk of the wage-earners hold aloof from the trade union movement, which can be said to exist only among the Socialist section of their class. The following notes relate to the conditions of particular industries:—

Building Trades.—No standard rates of wages prevail in any of the branches of the building trades. The predominant range of wages for skilled men generally is from 16s. 5d. to 19s. 11d. for a week of from $68\frac{1}{4}$ to $71\frac{1}{4}$ hours, while the wages of labourers range from 10s. 11d. to 14s. 3d. In public contracts it is usual to stipulate for fixed minimum wages for the various classes of workmen, and it is of interest to note that for a considerable contract given by the municipality in July, 1908, bricklayers and masons, carpenters and joiners, roofers, glaziers, plumbers, fitters and locksmiths, plasterers, painters, and navvies, were to be paid a minimum hourly wage of $3\frac{1}{4}$ d.; stonemasons (cutters) were to receive $3\frac{3}{4}$ d., and labourers $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour. The maximum day at these rates was fixed at 10 hours, overtime to be paid one-third more. Another public

contract (in August, 1908) fixed the minimum rate of wages at 3*d.* per hour for roofers, glaziers, plumbers, fitters and locksmiths, plasterers, and painters, at 3½*d.* for carpenters and joiners, and at 2*d.* for labourers.

Metal and Engineering Trades.—Except one firm, which employs in all branches of the metal and woodworking trades some 1,200 persons, the establishments in this industry at Bruges are small. The firm alluded to is engaged in the building of railway rolling stock (including tenders, but not locomotives), tramcars, bridges, &c. The great majority of the men are paid on a combined system of time and piece rates. A number of the more skilled men have been recruited from the Walloon country, as well as from Malines, where they have served their apprenticeship in the State railway works. In the smaller establishments time rates are universal.

Printing Trades.—Apart from the printing of newspapers, of which three are published daily and two thrice weekly, Bruges is a not inconsiderable printing centre. Some thirty printing works exist in the town, and the most important firm, with 250 employees, prints a large quantity of prize, religious, and scientific books, almanacks, commercial advertisement bills, &c., and executes extensively lithographic work of a religious character.

Lace Industry.—Lacemaking is confined to women, who manufacture in their homes bone or pillow lace, and work mainly for the Brussels market. Over 3,000 women are occupied in this industry, but their earnings are small. Capable workers may earn 7*s.* or 8*s.* in a week of at least 60 hours, but 4*s.* 10*d.* to 6*s.* 5*d.* is reckoned a normal good wage for those who follow this occupation as a trade. Lacemaking is taught in several schools, notably in one or two convents at the east end of the town.

Horticulture.—The climate being especially suitable for the cultivation of ornamental plants such as palms, bay trees, &c., the nursery industry is extremely important on the outskirts of Bruges and in the neighbouring communes, where over 70 firms are occupied in the trade. (In the trade directory 152 names are classed as "horticulturists, gardeners, and flower dealers.") Three firms of Bruges are established upon a large scale, and of these one possesses more than 300 hothouses, and another 212, many of a very large size. The specialties are bay trees, palms, azaleas, and orchids, but many other plants are grown. The products find markets in France, Germany, Austria, and Russia, and also in England and the United States. Long hours and low wages are the rule in this industry. The skilled gardeners work about 12 hours each day for a weekly wage of from 14*s.* 5*d.* to 16*s.* 10*d.*, and the unskilled men receive from 12*s.* to 13*s.* 2*d.* a week. A considerable proportion of the men are also obliged to work several hours on Sundays.

Brewing.—More than 30 breweries are established at Bruges and in its immediate neighbourhood, but practically all of them are small concerns, employing only a few men. Beer of high fermentation is generally brewed. The wages are uniform in the various breweries, and range from 12*s.* to 14*s.* 5*d.* per week of from 66 to 70 hours. The maltsters work on Sundays for three hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon.

Baking.—The majority of the bakeries in Bruges are small, and the master baker himself works, sometimes with the aid of a journeyman, who either lives in the house and receives a monthly wage of from 20*s.* to 32*s.*, or lives out and is paid a weekly wage of from 14*s.* 5*d.* to 16*s.* 10*d.*

The following Table shows the predominant weekly wages earned by men employed in certain of the principal occupations at Bruges in June, 1908, with the number of hours most usually worked:—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Building Trades:—		
Bricklayers and Masons, Carpenters, Joiners, and Painters.	16 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> to 19 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	68½ to 71½
Labourers	10 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i> to 14 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i>	68½ to 71½
Engineering Trades:—		
Moulders	23 <i>s.</i>	64
Fitters	17 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	64
Turners, Smiths, and Patternmakers	20 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	64
Labourers	12 <i>s.</i>	61

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Printing and Allied Trades:—		
Compositors	18 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i> to 21 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>	58½ to 60
Machine Compositors	24 <i>s.</i> to 28 <i>s.</i>	58½
Lithographers	18 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i> to 21 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>	58½ to 60
Bookbinders	18 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i> „ 21 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>	58½ „ 60
Woodworking Trades:—		
Sawyers	16 <i>s.</i> to 18 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i>	66½
Woodmoulding Machinists	18 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i> to 23 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	66½
Joiners	21 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i> „ 23 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	66½
Polishers and Painters	18 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i> to 21 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i>	66½
Labourers	12 <i>s.</i>	66½
Horticulture:—		
Skilled Gardeners	14 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> to 16 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	72
Others	12 <i>s.</i> to 13 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>	72
Brewing:—		
Brewers	12 <i>s.</i> to 14 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	66 to 69
Maltsters	12 <i>s.</i> „ 14 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	69 „ 70
Bakers (living out)	14 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> to 16 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	54 „ 60
Gasworks (Company):—		
Gas Stokers	18 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	—
Yard Labourers	15 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	69

In comparison with other towns in Belgium, wages at Bruges are very low. Taking wages at Brussels as 100, the index numbers for the wages of skilled men and unskilled labourers in the building trades at Bruges are 72 and 67 respectively; wages in the engineering trades are represented by 81 for skilled men, and 78 for labourers, while the index number for wages of compositors is 76.

When dealing with the economic situation of the working classes in Bruges, it is essential to make reference to the extensive and manifold sources of public and private charity. Public charity is exercised by the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* and by the *Administration des Hospices*. The latter possess an annual income of some £24,000, which is devoted to the care of the sick and the assistance of the aged, while the *Bureau de Bienfaisance*, although far less wealthy, still possesses a large revenue, derived from the property which it has inherited and from its annual municipal grant. In 1901 and in 1906 respectively 2,552 and 1,685 families were assisted by this Outdoor Relief Society, and in the financial year 1906–1907 £4,501 was expended on relief, exclusive of establishment charges. In addition to these bodies many of the twenty odd convents and monasteries give daily doles of food, while other sources of help are the charitable societies attached to the various parishes, which distribute food, coal, and clothes to poor families. The facility of obtaining relief is, in fact, so great that it may well be questioned whether it has not a demoralising effect upon the working-class population, and whether its operation does not tend to the depression of wages in Bruges.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

The housing conditions of the working classes in Bruges cannot be held to compare favourably with those of the same classes in other towns of a like size in modern Belgium. Being a town of great age, and having experienced in the nineteenth century a period of relative commercial and industrial stagnation, Bruges has had no incentive to renovate the old houses, and the bulk of its wage-earning classes are housed to-day in dwellings which date back several generations. The low earnings of the workers preclude the payment of high rents, so that property owners are not induced to incur expenditure upon the erection of new dwellings. Like the majority of old towns, Bruges possesses many streets, and even some groups of streets, of quite a slum character, and here the large body of unskilled workers for the most part live. Several of these streets are very narrow, and contain houses hardly fit for human habitation, but the town authorities hesitate to deal with them in a summary fashion owing to the fact that the occupants, if driven away, would perhaps be unable to find accommodation elsewhere. There has been a considerable clearance of congested and unhealthy dwellings, but the slowness with which improved working-class dwellings are added is evidenced by the fact that, according to a return

furnished by the municipality, out of a total of 1,028 new buildings erected in Bruges from the beginning of 1900 to November 24, 1908, only 182, or 17·5 per cent., were of this class.

Although individual streets where the working-class element predominates are found in every quarter of the town, two distinctive districts are essentially of this character. The eastern portion of Bruges (separated from the rest of the town by the canal from the Porte de Damme to the Porte de la Grille de Fer) is mainly working-class in character, as is also the neighbourhood of the railway station, in particular upon its northern side. Everywhere the single-family house prevails; at the censuses of 1890 and 1900 the number of households per house destined for habitation was respectively 1·03 and 1·12. As no official investigation has recently been made into the housing conditions, it is not possible to state the percentage of tenements containing one, two, three, four or more rooms with the proportion of inhabitants in each group. Enquiry for the purposes of this report showed that the majority of the wage-earning families lived in houses containing two, three, or four habitable rooms. Houses possessing only one habitable room were found to be frequent in the courts as well as in some of the older parts of the town.

The two-roomed cottage usually possesses one room downstairs with an attic room above, or two rooms downstairs with a loft above, or again two rooms one above the other. The house has almost invariably a vestibule or lobby entrance, and a scullery projects into the yard behind. Cottages of three rooms have generally two rooms downstairs and an attic on the first floor, with a loft at the rear of the attic. Four-roomed houses are of two main kinds; most frequently there is a small room in front and a large room at the back, and two rooms with loft above, or if the entrance is in the middle of the house, there is a room at either side and two on the first floor. Among the houses built in Bruges in the last half-century the former type predominates for workmen's dwellings. All classes of dwellings possess, for the most part, a scullery and a loft. Yards are general but they are often very small, while gardens are rather the exception. Cellars are unusual, and even in the newer houses there are receptacles under the staircase instead of cellars. The conveniences are placed in the yard. Water is obtained from wells sunk in the yard or from the public pumps, and to a large extent reliance is placed upon rain-water, which is collected in cisterns. The stairs are situated in the lobby or vestibule in the majority of cases, but in the newly built houses they are nearly always placed between the front and back rooms. These stairs are very steep, and might often be described as ladders. The lobby varies in dimensions, but its size is often excessive in proportion to the available space, especially in the cottages of three and four rooms.

The building material used at Bruges is for the most part brick, and only in the newly built houses is the frontage left unpainted; the others are painted white or pale yellow. The windows of the ground floor frequently possess outer shutters, the most favourite colour for which is green. The kitchen floors are usually tiled, and the walls white-washed; in the older houses the beams of the ceilings are visible. Even in the poorest dwellings the fire places are discarded, long-piped stoves being in general use. Gas lighting is the exception, lamps being the rule.

There are no water mains at Bruges, and the needs of the town in this respect are supplied by well water, canal water, or rain water—the latter collected in cisterns. Over 150 public pumps, and some public wells, are established in the streets. A large proportion of these pumps are supplied from the interior canals, the water of which is exposed to pollution by the sewage and slops from the houses which line them, and has also been contaminated higher up by the waste from the factories of Ghent, or of Bruges itself. No systematic sanitary inspection is carried out, although a public health department established in the town hall examines all complaints.

The following notes upon individual tenements visited for the purposes of this enquiry will afford an idea of the accommodation possessed by working-class households in Bruges.

Rue du Persil.—This street, at the north-eastern extremity of Bruges, is occupied exclusively by working-class families. The houses contain four rooms as a rule, and are let at rents which range from 2s. 5d. to 3s. 2d. per week. A row of 13 houses of identical construction were let at 2s. 5d.; each house possessed one small room and vestibule in the front on the ground floor, and a good kitchen behind with a scullery, while there were two rooms and a loft above. The stairs were placed in the vestibule, which measured 7 feet 6 inches by 5 feet by 9 feet 3 inches. The front room had an area of 7 feet 6 inches by 8 feet 3 inches, and the kitchen measured 10 feet 9 inches by 13 feet by 9 feet 3 inches. No gardens were attached to the houses, and the yards were used in common by two or more households.

Three other houses in this street were each found to contain four rooms, with corridor, good scullery, and loft, and were let at 3s. 2d. per week. The corridor (breadth 3 feet) ended at the kitchen, which measured 13 feet by 13 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, and the staircase was situated between it and the front room (9 feet 9 inches by 10 feet by 9 feet 9 inches). The scullery, having an area of 10 feet 3 inches by 6 feet 6 inches, projected into the yard, and the convenience and a coal shed were placed at the end of the yard. This type of house is very common among the new workmen's dwellings in Bruges, and especially in the communes which immediately adjoin.

Rue Verte.—Ten houses, with two rooms downstairs and an attic upstairs, were let at 2s. 3d. per week. The vestibule, which held the stairs, measured 7 feet 9 inches by 5 feet 3 inches by 9 feet; the front room 7 feet 9 inches by 7 feet 6 inches by 9 feet; the kitchen about 13 feet square and 9 feet in height. The houses were old. There were no cellars, the coal being stored under cover in a small yard, and no garden.

Thirteen houses with four rooms each in the same street were let at 2s. 9d. per week. The vestibule measured 7 feet 6 inches by 6 feet by 9 feet 3 inches, the front room 7 feet 6 inches by 7 feet 3 inches by 9 feet 3 inches, the kitchen 14 feet by 13 feet by 9 feet 9 inches. The upper rooms were lower, but the front room was broader than the front room on the ground floor. The staircase was in the vestibule.

Rue du Mortier.—A house containing two rooms on the ground floor surmounted by a loft, was let at 2s. per week. The front room had an area of 8 feet 3 inches by 9 feet, and the back room measured 17 feet 6 inches by 13 feet. The yard was 9 feet 3 inches long, and part of it was occupied by a scullery 6 feet square.

Petite rue des Tonneliers.—Five houses with one room downstairs and one room upstairs were let at 2s. per week. The vestibule, so general in Bruges in the older houses, held the staircase, and the living-room measured 20 feet by 10 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 3 inches less the space occupied by the vestibule, which protruded into the room and measured 4 feet 3 inches by 5 feet.

Rue de l'Incendie.—Some twenty houses, containing one room with loft, which were let usually at 1s. 1d. or 1s. 4d. per week. They were very old houses, with no windows looking on to the street, and in many cases the loft was used as a sleeping-room. In one house the loft contained three beds, and nine children besides the father and mother lived in the dwelling. In most of these houses the room downstairs measured 13 feet by 11 feet 9 inches by 8 feet 3 inches, but smaller dimensions were also found.

The following Table shows the predominant weekly rents of dwellings of two, three, and four rooms respectively in Bruges:—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Two rooms	...	...	...	1s. 8d. to 2s.
Three rooms	...	...	...	1s. 11d. to 2s. 7d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	2s. 3d. to 3s. 2d.

Rents at Bruges are represented by the index number 59, rents at Brussels being the standard, = 100.

Rents are paid monthly by working-class tenants in Bruges, and a large number of the owners of working-class property have combined for the purpose of rent collection.

The working people are exempt from taxes in respect of their houses, for at Bruges no house of which the assessed rental value is below £5 15s. 2d. is rated. This figure represents an actual rent of from 3s. 10d. to 4s. 7d. per week.

No industrial firms have built workmen's dwellings in Bruges, nor has the municipality undertaken any similar schemes. The charity organisations, such as the *Hospices* and the *Bureau de Bienfaisance*, own a large number of small houses, containing one or two rooms, which they let free of rent to elderly persons, whether married or single; but families whose heads are still in the vigour of life hardly come within their charity in this respect. The law of 1889 has not been utilised to a large extent in Bruges, where only 58 loans have been made since the two existing loan societies were established. A group of 14 houses built by this means were visited. They had cost rather more than

£120 each, and contained two rooms with a good scullery on the ground floor, and two rooms upstairs. The corridor, ending at the kitchen door, was 3 feet 6 inches broad, the front room was 10 feet 3 inches square, the back room 13 feet square, and the scullery measured 9 feet 9 inches by 6 feet 6 inches. The stairs lay between the front and back rooms. A yard and a garden were attached. The rent paid for these dwellings, including purchase-money and insurance, spread over 25 years, amounted to 16s. per month. But although few workmen have entered into negotiations with the Housing Committee with a view to the construction of a house—the chief impediment being the difficulty of finding the initial deposit of one-tenth of the cost of a projected building—several cases were observed where the tenants were buying the houses which they occupied on the instalment system, by paying to the house-owner each month a sum over and above their rent.

RETAIL PRICES.

Bruges is well supplied with markets for the sale of many commodities which form important items in the budgets of working-class families. Potatoes and vegetables are sold at three daily markets, and eggs and butter at a large market held every Saturday, whilst a considerable fish market takes place every Wednesday and Saturday, minor markets in this commodity being held every day. Meat is sold in two public squares on Wednesdays and Saturdays, as well as daily by some 30 stall-holders in the covered market beneath the great Belfry. Various kinds of dry goods, both personal clothing and household articles, boots, earthenware and other utensils are also sold in the public markets, but general groceries are not sold in the markets. The co-operative movement is not strong in Bruges, as far as the working classes are concerned. Of the two co-operative societies the more important is the Union, which confines its membership to public service employees, with the result that its working-class element is composed almost entirely of railway and postal servants, with a few others from less important branches of public administration. In 1907 its membership amounted to 1,321. Bread, general groceries, dry goods and boots form the bulk of its trade; and the percentage return made to purchasers is paid in kind, and not in money. The co-operative society organised by the Socialist party counts about 600 members, and carries on an important bakery business, the value of the bread sold in 1907 being nearly £3,000; general groceries, dry goods and coal are also sold by this society. Both societies maintain meeting halls for their members, with *cafés* and billiard rooms. One "multiple" grocery and hardware firm has four branches in Bruges.

Groceries and other Commodities.

The working people in Bruges depend for their sustenance mainly upon bread, potatoes, and in a minor degree fish, while their drink is coffee mixed with chicory. Soup is largely consumed, and is made of potato meal, onions, haricots and other vegetables, with an addition perhaps of bacon fat. Meat is not much eaten, for although its price is not relatively high, the wages paid to workmen do not often permit the expenditure which its purchase would entail. The bread eaten is nearly always white bread: at the Socialist co-operative bakery more than 85 per cent. of the bread baked is white. The loaf weighs 2·2 lb., and in June, 1908, the co-operative societies sold white bread to their members at the price of 4½d. per 4 lb., non-members paying 4½d. The ordinary coffee sold is of Brazilian origin, arriving by way of Antwerp, and the working classes pay from 6½d. to 7½d. per lb. It is usual in Belgium to mix chicory with coffee, and often more chicory than coffee is present in the beverage as drunk by the poorer classes. In many of the budgets obtained for this enquiry in Bruges it was found that over 70 per cent. of the "coffee" was composed of chicory, and an independent dealer stated that the poorer people often drank pure chicory. Eggs are sold by the 13 in the market, a practice which many shops follow. Dutch cheese costs from 7½d. to 8½d. per lb., and is in common demand, while margarine is sold very generally at 8½d. per lb. Pure butter is not usually eaten by working people. Smoked bacon is not unknown, but the salted variety is the most popular form of this meat. Coal is sold by the Socialist Co-operative Society as well as by other coal "clubs." The members of the latter pay from 2½d. to 9½d. or more each week during the summer months; and one of these clubs with 78 members received in 1907 the sum of £130. The coal is purchased in July and August, the period of the year when the price of coal is lowest. A large proportion of working-class households, however, buy their coal from the street hawkers.

The following Table shows the prices paid for certain principal commodities by the working classes at Bruges in June, 1908:—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6½d. to 7½d.
Sugar, Loaf "	2½d. ,, 3d.
Bacon, Salted "	8½d.
Eggs per 1s.	16
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	7½d. to 8½d.
Butter "	11½d. to 1s. 1d.
Margarine "	8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	2½d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	4½d., 4½d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal per cwt.	1s. 0½d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	7d. to 7½d.

Meat.

The beef supplies of Bruges are obtained in summer from its own province (West Flanders), but in the winter it is usually necessary to supplement local supplies by purchases from the province of East Flanders. Sheep are little reared in the neighbourhood of Bruges, the Brussels market being the main source of supply. The working classes do not eat mutton to any considerable extent. Pigs are plentiful, and sometimes the surplus pork is exported from the district to England. Frozen or chilled meat is not sold in Bruges; an attempt was made to introduce this trade into the town three or four years ago, but without success. There are no dealers in horseflesh in Bruges.

Returns of weekly expenditure upon food, obtained for the purposes of this enquiry from 79 representative working-class families (comprising 434 persons) in Bruges, showed an average weekly consumption of meat per head of 13·3 oz., which is at the rate of 43 lb. per year. Of this total 57 per cent. was beef, 19 per cent. was pork, 6 per cent. mutton, and 2 per cent. veal, while *charcuterie*, bacon and rabbits accounted respectively for 5, 3 and 8 per cent. The consumption of horseflesh was practically, and of poultry absolutely, nil.

The bulk of the meat consumed in the town is killed at the municipal abattoir at which butchers are obliged to kill their animals, although certain quantities of pork are regularly imported from the neighbouring communes. The insignificant amount of horseflesh consumed is noticeable; Bruges stands almost alone among the larger towns in Belgium in having no horse-butcher's shop.

The subjoined Table shows the prices of the various cuts of the chief kinds of meat in June, 1908. Although quotations are given for the principal cuts, it must be remarked that many of these are rarely bought by working-class households, while mutton, and more particularly veal, are not often found on working-class tables. Brisket, thin flank and the lower ribs are the parts of beef generally bought by working people, while the sides and legs of pork are also popular. They buy occasionally the breast and the scrag end of the neck of mutton. Most of their purchases are made on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the public squares; here much of the meat exposed for sale is of an inferior kind, the better meat being sold in the shops or in the stalls of the Central Market.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	7d. to 7½d.
Brisket	5½d. „ 6d.
Silverside	7½d. „ 8½d.
Shin, with bone	4½d. „ 5½d.
Beef Steak	9½d.
Rump Steak	9½d.
Thin Flank	5½d. to 6d.
Mutton :—	
Leg	8½d.
Shoulder	6½d. to 8½d.
Breast	5½d. „ 6½d.
Neck { Best End	7½d. „ 9½d.
{ Scrag End	5½d. „ 7d.
Chops	8½d. „ 9½d.
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	8½d. „ 10½d.
Shoulder { with bone	7½d. „ 9½d.
{ without bone	8½d. „ 10½d.
Ribs	9½d.
Chops	10½d.
Leg	10½d. to 11d.
Pork :—	
Leg	7½d.
Foreloin	7d. to 8½d.
Belly	6d. „ 7d.
Chops	8½d.

Considered as a whole, prices at Bruges are lower than at any other of the towns investigated. Representing the level at Brussels by 100, the corresponding figures for prices of food other than meat, for meat, and for food as a whole are 93, 89 and 92 respectively; for coal the index number is 71, and for food and coal taken together 89. The index number for rent and prices combined is 84, the lowest figure obtained as a result of the present enquiry.

CHARLEROI.

Charleroi lies on the left bank of the Sambre, a tributary of the Meuse, about 35 miles by rail to the south of Brussels. It is the centre of the important coal and iron district which bears its name, but the town itself is of only very limited industrial importance, being little more than the best known of a group of communes, the population of which is almost entirely occupied in coal mining, iron working, engineering, or the manufacture of sheet glass. Of this group of communes Charleroi is the most populous, having 27,687 inhabitants at the end of 1907. The population of Jumet at that date was 26,545, and that of Gilly 24,383. Montignies-sur-Sambre and Marchienne-au-Pont included 21,323 and 20,959 persons respectively, while Courcelles, Marcinelle, Châtelaineau, Châtelet, Dampremy, and Couillet all numbered more than 10,000 inhabitants.

Railway communication, not only with all parts of Belgium, but with France and Germany, is good, as the main line of the Belgian Northern Railway, linking the French and German systems, runs through Charleroi. The journey from Charleroi to Brussels (35 miles) is accomplished by fast trains on the Belgian State Railway in 63 minutes. The river Sambre also carries a considerable quantity of heavy goods and has been partially canalised in order to facilitate the traffic.

The commune of Charleroi is itself composed of two parts which are entirely different in character. To the south, in the valley and on the slopes rising up to the plateau beyond, is the town proper, up to thirty years ago surrounded by fortifications, which have since been razed and to some extent replaced by broad boulevards. The larger part of the commune, lying to the north, beyond the old fortifications, is generally known as the Suburb (*le Faubourg*) and in character is little more than a village, composed of working-class houses and resembling closely the adjacent communes mentioned above. Like them, it is industrial in character, whilst the town, properly speaking, is purely a commercial centre with a very large number of shops and cafés.

The population of Charleroi grew very steadily during the second half of the nineteenth century. Whereas in 1846 it was only 7,490, at the end of 1900 it was 24,460, and at the end of 1907 it was estimated as 27,687.

The following table shows the population of Charleroi as enumerated at the censuses of 1880, 1890 and 1900, and also the estimated population at the end of 1907 :—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	16,372	—	—
1890	20,668	4,296	26·2
1900	24,460	3,792	18·3
1907 (estimated)	27,687	3,227 (in seven years).	13·2 (in seven years).

The birth-rate and mortality rates of Charleroi fluctuated considerably during the five years 1904–8. The average number of births per 1,000 of population was 18·7, the rate having varied from 20·0 in 1904 to 17·8 in 1908, while the average number of deaths was 15·3 per 1,000 of population, the deathrate ranging from 14·1 in 1906 to 17·5 in 1908. The infantile mortality rates during the five years under review averaged 138 for 1,000 births, and ranged from 123 in 1905 and 1906 to 160 in 1908.

The following table gives the vital statistics for each year of the period :—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	20·0	16·0	136
1905	17·9	14·8	123
1906	18·6	14·1	123
1907	19·3	14·3	148
1908	17·8	17·5	160

The water supply, the markets and the abattoir are the only public services in municipal hands. The gasworks and the tramways proper, as distinct from the lines of the national light railway system (*chemins de fer vicinaux*), are managed by private companies which contribute from their profits to the town funds (*see below*).

Water is supplied either by meter, or at a fixed price from the public taps. In Charleroi itself the charge by meter is 11*d.* per 1,000 gallons, when the quantity consumed in six months does not exceed 22,000 gallons. In the neighbouring communes there is an extra charge of 2½*d.* per 1,000 gallons with a minimum of 14*s.* 5*d.* per annum, the minimum in the town being 12*s.* If the user does not provide his own meter he is charged a minimum annual meter rent of 6*s.* 5*d.* Those who obtain their supply from the public taps have to be provided with a key, which may be hired from the authorities on depositing the sum of 2*s.* and paying a monthly rent of 9½*d.* in advance. The deposit is refunded when the key is returned. It is strictly forbidden to lend the key, to sell or give away the water, or to use it for watering gardens or for any other than domestic purposes. The public taps are open for use from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. from April 1st to October 31st, and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the remainder of the year. On June 30th, 1907, there were 1,804 households drawing their water from the public mains and 1,126 holders of keys to the public taps; very few, however, of the latter belonged to the working classes.

Public markets are held daily in one or more of the principal squares of the town for the sale of vegetables and dairy produce, poultry, drapery and haberdashery. The amount collected in tolls from stallholders in 1906 was £5,564, while from the proprietors of merry-go-rounds, shows, etc., at the annual fair, £927 was collected. During the same year *café* keepers contributed £202 to the municipal funds for the right to place their chairs and tables on the pavement, and shopkeepers for a similar right to display their goods outside their shops £179, a total of £6,872 for the use of the public streets, as against £3,905 derived from the supply of water.

The charge for gas is 3*s.* 4½*d.* per 1,000 cubic feet, and the contribution of the company to the town funds in the year 1908 was £4,200. The electricity supply company contributed nothing to the municipal exchequer in 1906, but in 1907 and 1908 its payments were reckoned at £720 and £1,120 respectively.

The local tramway company pays annually to the town a sum varying from £640 to £800, while the town's contribution to the capital outlay on the system of district light railways was £25,400, refunded by annuities amounting to £884; of this sum £123 was, in 1907, derived from profits on working.

The municipal abattoir yielded £1,261 in the year 1906-7.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

From the industrial standpoint, Charleroi must be regarded, not as an isolated unit, but rather as the centre of the group of communes already mentioned, most of which surpass it in production.

The basis of the prosperity of the district is the rich coal field upon which it is situated and which furnishes the fuel required for the local industries—iron and steel production, engineering work and the manufacture of sheet glass, for which the Charleroi district is one of the most important centres in the world. Within the relatively small area of the town itself (904 acres), there are only one glass works and two coal mines.

Coal Mining.—In 1907 there were 37 coal mines at work in the Charleroi basin, giving employment to 7,818 hewers and 24,815 other workers underground, and 13,976 at the surface, or 46,609 in all. The total quantity of coal extracted was 8,334,000 tons. The amount paid in wages was £2,936,000, and other expenses amounted to £2,016,000, a total of £4,952,000 as against £5,736,000, which represented the value of the coal raised. Of the 37 mines 33 made a profit on the year's working, amounting to £843,000, whilst four incurred losses amounting to £59,000. The average selling price per ton of coal was 13*s.* 9*d.* Of this 7*s.* 1*d.* or 51 per cent. represented wages, 4*s.* 10*d.* or 35 per cent. working expenses and 1*s.* 10*d.* or 14 per cent. profit.

In 1907 the hewers of the Charleroi basin worked 2,309,170 days and their average gross daily earnings were 5*s.* 8*d.* Taking all underground workers into account the total number of days worked was 9,655,770 and the average daily earnings were 4*s.* 11*d.* At the surface 4,138,620 days were worked and the average daily earnings were 2*s.* 9*d.* Altogether, underground and at the surface 13,794,390 days were worked and the

average daily earnings were 4*s.* 3*d.* The following table shows for the six years, 1902-7, the average daily earnings of workpeople employed in or about mines in the Charleroi basin :—

Year.	Hewers only.	All underground workers.	All surface workers.	All persons employed.
1902	4 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	2 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>
1903	4 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	2 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>
1904	3 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i>	2 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>
1905	4 <i>s.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i>	2 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i>
1906	5 <i>s.</i> 1 <i>d.</i>	4 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	2 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i>	3 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>
1907	5 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i>	4 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	2 <i>s.</i> 9 <i>d.</i>	4 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i>

From these figures it will be seen that miners' wages in 1907 were higher than in any of the five previous years. In 1908, however, wages showed a decline, so that those given in the table at the end of this section do not represent the high water mark.

The following table shows the ages and sex of 46,609 persons employed in the coal mining industry of the Charleroi basin in 1907 :—

Underground.		Above ground.	
Men above 16 years	30,835	Men above 16 years	9,281
Boys 14-16 years	1,253	Boys 14-16 years	609
" 12-14 "	531	" 12-14 "	675
Women above 21 years	14	Women above 21 years	429
		Girls 16-21 years	1,573
		" under 16 years	1,409
Total	32,633	Total	13,976

One other point which may be noted is the production of coal in proportion to the number of persons employed. In 1907 the average production of coal per hewer was 1,066 tons, per worker employed underground 256 tons, and per worker in general 179 tons.

A certain quantity of the coal produced in the Charleroi basin is converted into coke, there being eight works with 475 coke ovens in the district in 1907. In that year 500,000 tons of coal were used to produce 367,000 tons of coke (73 per cent.), the average value of which was 22*s.* 6*d.* per ton.

The production of briquettes is considerably more important than that of coke in the Charleroi basin. In 1907 there were 26 works engaged in this industry, containing 55 presses, and giving employment to 1,184 workpeople. The amount of coal used was 1,319,000 tons, from which 1,455,000 tons of briquettes were produced, the average value being 17*s.* 3*d.* per ton.

Blast furnaces and Iron and Steel Works.—In 1907 there were seven works in the Charleroi basin, with 15 furnaces in blast, giving employment to 1,630 workers. To feed these 15 furnaces, 4,000 tons of coal, 681,000 tons of coke, 18,000 tons of Belgian and 1,589,000 tons of foreign ores, and 140,000 tons of other materials were required. The total production of pig-iron was 580,000 tons, of which 452,000 tons were destined for the production of Thomas steel.

The number of works engaged in the production of steel in the Charleroi basin during the year 1907 was 12. The quantity of crude steel produced was 661,000 tons, of half-finished steel 372,000 tons, and of finished steel 322,000 tons. The number of workpeople employed in these works was 6,429.

In 1907 there were 18 establishments in the Charleroi basin engaged in puddling and rolling iron, and giving employment to 4,970 workpeople.

Almost all labour in connection with the blast furnaces and the iron and steel works is paid by means of a fixed daily wage, supplemented by a bonus or premium, which varies with the production above an established minimum, and is sometimes so arranged that it increases more than proportionately as the output increases.

The intervals for meals vary, depending largely upon the position of the work at the moment, so that it can only be stated, as in the table which follows, that the nominal hours of work are 72 per week.

Engineering Trades.—There are in the basin of Charleroi altogether some 220 establishments producing iron or ironwork in one form or another, and of these over 150 are situated in the communes named as immediately adjacent to the town. Twenty-six of

these are engineering shops pure and simple, whilst many of the 71 steel works, rolling mills and boilermaking shops have general engineering works attached. In 10 establishments the chief work is the production of rivets, bolts and nuts, &c., while 11 others are occupied in copper and brass founding, and the manufacture of steam fittings. Several important works turn out locomotives and tenders, mining plant, &c., and material of various kinds to meet the requirements of the industries of the district. The largest electrical engineering works in Belgium are situated within the boundary of Charleroi proper.

Sheet-glass Industry.—This industry ranks with coal mining and iron and steel as one of the most important of the Charleroi basin. It is dependent to a very large extent upon the export trade, the United Kingdom and the Far East probably being the best markets. Of late, business has been far from good, and out of 43 furnaces in the 27 glass works in the district, only 17, belonging to 13 works, were in operation in September, 1908. In September, 1907, 19 furnaces were at work.

To meet this crisis, the workmen, who are organised in a very strong trade union, have adopted the policy of working half shifts in many cases, so that the wages and hours indicated in the table at the end of this section are often double those prevalent at the date of this enquiry (September, 1908), and as, owing to the shift system, the hours worked in one week differ from those worked in the next, the figures given show the average rather than the actual earnings. Wages are not paid weekly, but twice a month. The actual organisation of the work is somewhat as follows:—

A furnace of normal size provides accommodation for about 10 blowers at one time, and with each blower there work a first and a second gatherer. The blowers and gatherers work in three shifts of nine hours each, with short intervals for food and rest. When the first shift has finished there is an hour's interval before the second shift begins. Between the second and third shifts there is another interval of an hour, and again between the third and first shift. In this way a shift has 21 hours' rest between two periods of nine hours' work, and completes 24 of these periods during 50 days. The blowers and gatherers are paid piece rates, and their earnings vary considerably, depending greatly on the capacity of the blower. A very good blower may earn as much as £10 a week, in which case the first and second gatherers would earn some 70s. and 30s. respectively. The normal weekly earnings for men in full work may be given as 64s. 7d. to 73s. 10d. for blowers, 36s. 11d. to 46s. 2d. for first gatherers, and 18s. 6d. to 24s. for second gatherers.

It is not possible to give an estimate of the normal net earnings of a slitter. There is only one for each glassworks, and his earnings depend entirely upon the output of the blowers. Further, he has to provide the diamonds required for his work, so that his expenses are considerable.

The flatteners, like the blowers and gatherers, work in three shifts, only they are of longer duration, viz., 11½ hours work (subject to irregular interruptions for food and rest) and 24½ hours off duty. In this way, each flattener works 20 shifts in 30 days. This class of workers is paid piece wages, whilst the furnacemen (*gaziers*) who work three shifts of the same duration as those worked by the flatteners, are paid time rates.

The cutters, with a fixed minimum of sheets to cut, are paid piece rates. They work 10 hours a day for six days in the week, and do no night work. Some of the cutting is done in the glass works itself, but much is put out to be done in shops, which make cutting a special business. Packers are paid by the piece, so much per 1,000 square feet packed, while the verifiers (*repasseurs*), and also the case-makers, are paid by time.

The following Table shows the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of men employed in the principal occupations in the neighbourhood of Charleroi, in June, 1908:—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Building Trades:—</i>		
Bricklayers and Masons	21s. 3d. to 23s. 7d.	59
Stonemasons (Cutters)	25s. 2d. „ 30s. 3d.	63
Carpenters	27s. 9d. „ 30s. 3d.	63
Joiners	22s. 8d. „ 25s. 2d.	63
Plumbers	25s. 2d. „ 30s. 3d.	63
Plasterers	21s. 3d. „ 23s. 7d.	59
Painters	17s. 8d. „ 20s. 2d.	63
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	16s. 6d. „ 18s. 11d.	59

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Coal Mining:—</i>		
Underground—		
Hewers	28s. 8d. to 33s. 5d.	60*
Putters and Trammers	22s. 1d. „ 26s. 5d.	60 to 66*
Road Cutters	27s. 4d. „ 30s. 9d.	60*
Driftmen	33s. to 34s. 10d.	48*
Surface—		
Enginemen	25s. 7d. to 29s. 6d.	72†
Labourers	16s. 4d. to 18s.	60 to 63
<i>Blast Furnaces:—</i>		
First Hands	21s. 11d. to 22s. 8d.	72†
Second Hands	18s. to 20s. 2d.	72†
Chargers and Wheelers	18s. „ 19s. 2d.	72†
Labourers	16s. 10d.	72†
<i>Steelworks:—</i>		
1st Converter Men	28s. 10d. to 32s. 3d.	72†
2nd Converter Men	24s. to 28s. 10d.	72†
Labourers	16s. 10d. to 18s.	72†
<i>Rolling Mills:—</i>		
1st Rollermen	43s. 9d. to 55s.	72†
2nd Rollermen	31s. 10d. to 37s. 11d.	72†
Catchers	27s. 4d. „ 30s. 5d.	72†
1st Heaters	45s. 7d. „ 50s. 6d.	72†
2nd Heaters	26s. 5d. „ 32s. 5d.	72†
Labourers	16s. 10d. „ 20s. 10d.	72†
<i>Engineering Trades:—</i>		
Moulders	19s. 2d. to 25s. 6d.	58 to 63
Fitters	20s. 1d. „ 23s. 2d.	58 „ 63
Turners	20s. 1d. „ 23s. 2d.	58 „ 63
Smiths	20s. 11d. „ 23s. 3d.	58 „ 63
Labourers	13s. 11d. „ 17s. 3d.	58 „ 63
<i>Sheet and Window Glass:—</i>		
Blowers	64s. 7d. to 73s. 10d.	50††
1st Gatherers	36s. 11d. to 46s. 2d.	50††
2nd Gatherers	18s. 6d. to 24s.	50††
Flatteners	46s. 2d. to 55s. 5d.	53††
Cutters	26s. 9d. „ 32s. 4d.	60
Verifiers	28s. 7d. „ 32s. 4d.	60
Furnacemen	24s. 11d. „ 26s. 9d.	53††
Packers	18s. 6d. „ 23s. 1d.	60
Case makers	21s. 3d. „ 25s. 10d.	60
<i>Printing Trades:—</i>		
Compositors	21s. 7d. to 24s.	60
<i>Public Services:—</i>		
Roads Department (Municipal)—		
Road Sweepers	15s. 7d.	—
Carmen	20s. 9d.	—
Paviors	25s. 2d. to 30s. 3d.	63
Paviors' Labourers	17s. 8d. „ 20s. 2d.	63
Waterworks (Municipal)—		
Turncocks	16s. 7d. „ 22s. 2d.	—
Tramways (Company)—		
Drivers	20s. 1d. „ 25s. 1d.	66 to 74½
Conductors	20s. 1d. „ 22s. 9d.	66 „ 74½
Electricity Works (Company)—		
Stokers	22s. 2d. „ 23s. 1d.	84
Enginemen	27s. 8d.	84

* Bank-to-bank times.

† Including intervals.

Wages at Charleroi are seen to be comparatively high. The wages of skilled men in the building and in the engineering trades, and of unskilled labourers in the building trades at Charleroi are 94 per cent. of those at Brussels, while for unskilled labourers in the engineering trades the corresponding figure is 101. For compositors it is 86.

The Charleroi Labour Exchange is supported entirely by grants from the province of Hainault, the town of Charleroi and neighbouring communes.

During the year ended September 30th, 1907, there were 2,382 applications for work, and 3,661 situations offered by employers. There is no statistical information showing the number of situations actually filled through the agency of the Labour Exchange.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

In considering working-class house accommodation at Charleroi, it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the town proper, which is principally middle-class, but where, nevertheless, a fair number of workers occupy tenements in houses of two or more stories, and the northern parts of the town, known as Broucheterre and the Suburb, outside the lines of the former fortifications, where the vast majority of working-class families live, each occupying a small house to itself. These northern quarters partake more of the nature of big villages than of parts of a town, each having its own square or market-place, though apart from this the streets are not laid out on a definite plan. The great majority of the buildings contain two stories, and have small yards or gardens behind.

For the purpose of this report it will be necessary to deal with these two parts of the town separately, and the more important, that is the Suburb and the Broucheterre, will be considered first.

All working-class houses, whether old or of comparatively recent construction, can generally speaking be placed in one of two classes, provided that the modern houses built under the auspices of building societies organised according to the law of August 9, 1889, or under similar conditions, be treated apart, as will be done below. The one is the well-known system of back-to-back houses, which prevails in so many Yorkshire towns. These tenements generally contain one room above and one below, together with a cellar and a lumber-room, but sometimes there are two bedrooms upstairs. The other type contains the usual two rooms above and two below, without any passage or vestibule. There are no statistics relating to housing conditions in Charleroi, but it is probable that two-roomed tenements, mostly of the back-to-back type, predominate, and that after these the four-roomed tenements are the commonest. Three-roomed tenements are not very usual, and where found are generally of the back-to-back type with one good sized room downstairs and two small ones above.

With regard to two-roomed back-to-back tenements, these have sometimes been created by the division of former through four-roomed houses, but more generally blocks of two-roomed back-to-back tenements have been specially erected. According to the size of the blocks, they are pierced by one or more narrow passages to give access to the tenements which look out on the back. The additional space thereby gained on the first floor is sometimes utilised to form part of a second bedroom, the remaining space being taken from the other room, situated over the kitchen. In this way a three-roomed tenement is formed. Where the block is built on sloping ground, there is frequently one more story at the back than at the front, or *vice versa*, in which case there are two-roomed tenements on one side and three-roomed tenements on the other.

In the back-to-back tenements the staircase is practically never screened off in any way, but rises directly out of the kitchen, and the same is to a large extent true of the through four-roomed houses.

The back-to-back house is not the oldest kind of house in these parts of Charleroi. Hardly any of the blocks of these tenements appear to have been built before the second half of the nineteenth century, and many of them are of comparatively, or even quite, recent origin.

The oldest type of house is that containing two rooms downstairs and two upstairs, but in these early buildings the upstairs bedrooms are little more than attics, and the ceilings, even of the downstairs rooms, are low. On the other hand, they have considerably more frontage than the four-roomed houses of modern construction. The latter have frequently been erected in terraces, each house with a frontage of 11 feet 6 inches to 13 feet, and a depth of about 33 feet. Inside there are two narrow rooms downstairs, each 10 feet 9 inches to 12 feet 3 inches wide by 15 feet to 16 feet 6 inches long. The stairs are situated in the back room, generally parallel with the street, along the wall dividing the two rooms. There is no passage of any kind, and it is necessary to pass through the front room in order to reach the kitchen at the back. The ground-floor rooms are tiled, as is usual in practically all working-class dwellings. Almost all houses at Charleroi are built of brick, a certain number of them being faced with plaster.

In the town of Charleroi proper, which consists of the centre and southern quarters, conditions are entirely different. In the first place the middle-class element predominates, and the number of small working-class houses is very limited. The working classes who live in this part of the town generally occupy one or two rooms in a large house, for the buildings here have almost all three and four stories, with two or three rooms on each floor. The narrow streets and high buildings are accounted for by the fact that this area was originally fortified. The workpeople inhabiting the town proper are largely strangers. The number of French is very considerable, a fact which is easily explained by the proximity of the frontier. There is also a large Flemish element, attracted to Charleroi by the work in the coal mines. These immigrants principally occupy furnished rooms in houses which are let off entirely in this way, the chief tenant very frequently keeping a *café* on the ground floor.

Another type of accommodation largely patronised by foreign workers is the lodging-house. The proprietor generally keeps a *café* at the same time, and this easily leads to abuse. An arrangement by no means uncommon is for the foreigner to deposit his pay-book with the proprietor as security for the payment of his board and lodging. When the pay is due at the end of the fortnight, the proprietor or proprietress of the lodging-house goes to the works to receive it, and deducts all sums due for board and lodging, drinks, &c., supplied, before handing the balance to the lodger. In this way the lodger is not infrequently exploited, being more or less tied to the house by the fact of his leaving his pay-book with the proprietor as security for his board and lodging during the ensuing fortnight. 9s. 3d. a week is a common sum paid by workmen in Charleroi and neighbourhood for board and lodging.

In the town proper there are a few narrow alleys or *impasses* containing small houses, and there are others outside the lines of the old fortifications, but they are unimportant when compared with the numerous courts in such towns as Seraing and Liège.

It is exceptional to find water laid on to working-class houses. By far the commonest arrangement is a cistern in the cellar or under the yard, in which the water from the roof is collected, to be pumped up into the kitchen as required. When it is remembered that Charleroi is situated in a coal and iron district, where dirt and dust are plentiful, and also that the keeping of pigeons, which perch on the roofs, is a common practice, it will be readily understood that this cistern water is by no means good for drinking, and the municipal authorities forbid its use for this purpose. They also have power to close wells which they may consider unsatisfactory, thus practically enforcing the use of drinking water from the street taps in the case of houses not connected with the municipal water supply.

The sewage disposal system of Charleroi is mixed. Parts of the town are sewered, but the cesspool system largely prevails, and this is especially the case in the working-class quarters.

The following notes concerning certain typical houses visited for the purpose of this Report will further illustrate the housing accommodation.

An old four-roomed house, containing two rooms above and two below, lumber room and cellar. Front room 11 feet 6 inches square, back room, with stairs at side, 11 feet 6 inches by 16 feet 6 inches. Two rooms upstairs of similar dimensions. Rent 3s. 11d. a week.

A row of six modern houses, all alike. A front room downstairs 11 feet 6 inches by 13 feet and a kitchen behind 11 feet 6 inches by 15 feet. Stairs in the kitchen against the wall dividing the two rooms. Two bedrooms and a lumber room upstairs, and a cellar. Town water supply laid on. Weekly rent 4s. 7d., not including the water.

Small house in a court. A kitchen 15 feet by 12 with a small scullery behind, some 5 feet by 8 lighted from the kitchen. Upstairs an attic bedroom. Rent 2s. 3d. a week.

A block of back-to-back houses, each consisting of two rooms, lumber room and cellar. Dimensions 16 feet 6 inches by 18 feet, with stairs in corner. Height of kitchen 9 feet. Weekly rent 2s. 7d.

An old house, containing four rooms, but no lumber room or cellar. A front room 13 feet by 15 feet and a back room 15 feet by 9 feet 9 inches. Stairs in corner of back room. The bedrooms above little better than attics. Weekly rent 2s. 11d.

Two-roomed back-to-back tenements; dimensions 13 feet by 15, with stairs in the corner, cellar and lumber room. Front house 2s. 9d. a week, back house 2s. 7d. a week. Two-roomed back-to-back tenements with cellar and lumber room; dimensions, 11 feet 6 inches frontage and 15 feet depth. Staircase at the back of the room. Rent 2s. 5d. a week.

Three two-roomed houses, each with an upper and a lower room with a back door opening into a small yard. Lumber room and cellar. Dimensions of rooms 11 feet 6 inches by 13 feet. Rent 2s. 7d. a week.

A row of ten modern houses, with two rooms upstairs and two rooms downstairs, cellar and lumber room. The front rooms were 9 feet 9 inches wide and 13 feet deep and the kitchen 9 feet 9 inches wide and 15 feet deep. The staircase was in the kitchen against the wall between the front and back rooms. Height of the downstairs rooms 9 feet 9 inches. Weekly rent 3s. 11d.

Three-roomed back-to-back tenements, downstairs a large kitchen 20 feet square, upstairs two rooms 8 feet 3 inches by 20 feet and 11 feet 6 inches by 20 feet respectively. The front houses were let for 3s. 2d. a week, and the back houses for 2s. 7d. a week.

Five new houses with two rooms and a scullery downstairs and two bedrooms above; cellars and lumber rooms. The front room 11 feet 6 inches wide and 14 feet deep, the kitchen 11 feet 6 inches by 13 feet, and the scullery 6 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 9 inches. Upstairs rooms same size as front room and kitchen. Rent 4s. 7d. a week.

A new block of back-to-back houses. Downstairs a kitchen 16 feet 6 inches square, upstairs two bedrooms, one partly over the passage giving access to the back tenements. Dimensions of bedrooms 12 feet by 16 feet 6 inches and 7 feet 6 inches by 16 feet 6 inches respectively. Stairs at side of kitchen. The front tenement let at 2s. 11d. and the back one at 2s. 7d. a week.

A three-roomed house in a court towards the centre of the town. Downstairs a front room 10 feet 9 inches by 13 feet and a back room 10 feet 9 inches square. Upstairs an attic bedroom at the front and a lumber room at the back. Rent 2s. 11d. a week.

The municipal building regulations provide, among other things, that the height of buildings shall bear a certain relation to the width of the streets in which they are situated. Thus the buildings must not exceed 26 feet 3 inches in height where the street is less than 13 feet wide, 36 feet in streets from 13 feet to 19 feet 9 inches, 49 feet 3 inches in streets 29 feet 6 inches to 32 feet 9 inches wide, and 62 feet 3 inches on public squares, boulevards, &c., more than 52 feet 6 inches wide.

Another regulation requires that every house shall be provided with a back yard equal to not less than one-fifth of the area covered by the house, and never less than 6 feet 6 inches square.

Since 1905 certain special regulations as to working-class dwellings and lodging houses have come into force. It is laid down, *inter alia*, that the minimum height of rooms on the ground floor shall be 9 feet 9 inches, and on the upper floors 8 feet 6 inches, that no one shall sleep in the basement, that all rooms on the ground floor intended for human habitation shall contain 880 cubic feet of space for each occupant and shall be lighted and ventilated directly from the outside; no person may occupy a room upstairs of less than 640 cubic feet capacity, and a room inhabited by two or more persons must have a proportionate amount of space.

In working-class lodging houses the number of occupants is to be proportional to the volume of air in the room, and this is never to be less than 640 cubic feet per person. Where the rooms are occupied both day and night, the volume of air must be at least at the rate of 880 cubic feet per person. There must also be at least one closet for every eight persons or fraction thereof.

In the table given below the predominant weekly rents for two-roomed, three-roomed and four-roomed tenements are indicated. The figures relate entirely to self-contained houses found chiefly outside the lines of the old fortifications. As has already been mentioned, in the town proper there are a considerable number of larger houses, in which rooms can be rented singly or in pairs, though generally furnished. The usual rents for such tenements as these are 1s. 6d. to 2s. 3d. per week for one room and 2s. 3d. to 3s. 8d. per week for two rooms.

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Two rooms	...	...	...	1s. 10d. to 2s. 7d.
Three rooms	...	...	...	2s. 5d. to 3s. 2d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	2s. 11d. to 4s. 1d.

Rent at Brussels being taken as base, = 100, the rent index number for Charleroi is 74.

In Charleroi and district there are seven building societies organised in accordance with the Law of August 9, 1889. Of these seven societies two are at Gilly, two at Jumet, two at Marcinelle and one at Charleroi. This last is called *Tertou s'Maison* ("To each his own House") and was founded in 1897 with a capital of £6,000, of which only £600 is paid up. At the end of 1907 it had lent £64,320 to 481 borrowers; whilst 331 loans representing £36,461 were outstanding. On December 31, 1907, the society owed £36,336 in respect of capital and £1,022 in respect of interest to the National Savings Bank, whilst it also owed £2,141 to third parties. A rule of the society provides that not more than £200 shall ever be lent in respect of any one house, and further that the borrower must provide in money or in land not less than one quarter of the sum necessary for the construction or purchase of the house and land. The rate of interest charged upon loans made by the Society is 4 per cent. The type of house constructed by persons borrowing money from the building societies generally has a frontage of from 16 feet 6 inches to 20 feet, which is considerably above the average of the ordinary house of the kind built under other conditions. The interior accommodation of these comparatively wide-fronted houses is not always the same. Some have a passage right through from front to back, but perhaps the commonest arrangement is a vestibule leading from the front door to the kitchen at the back, which occupies the whole width of the house. In this case the staircase is in the kitchen and not in the passage. In some of the building society houses at Charleroi there is no passage, but merely two rooms downstairs, each the full width of the house.

RETAIL PRICES.

The conditions of retail trade at Charleroi differ from those prevailing in some other Belgian towns, in that the markets play a very important part there. There are two co-operative societies, the one a branch of a Socialist organisation at Roux and the other a Catholic society; both concerns depend almost entirely on their bread business, though the Catholic society also makes a specialty of beer. Several "multiple" firms have branches in the town, and there is no lack of private traders.

Groceries and other Commodities.

The bread trade of Charleroi and district is largely in the hands of three concerns. The one is the Socialist Co-operative Society, *La Concorde*, of Roux and Charleroi, which distributes every week-day some 11,000 two-kilogramme (4·4 lb.) loaves among its 15,000 members. A second large baking establishment is the Catholic Co-operative Society, *Les Ouvriers Réunis*, which bakes every week-day some 8,000 loaves of the same weight for the 11,000 families which belong to it. The third concern is a private company, organised on about the same scale as the co-operative societies. All three charge a uniform price.

In the centre of the town and even in the northern parts, coal is frequently sold by the bucket, a charge of 3d. or 3½d. being made for a very modest sized bucket of coal. The female members of the miners' households are allowed to pick coal from the waste heaps of the mines during certain hours of the day. In this way they are often able to get all they require for home use free of charge.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.				Predominant Price.
Coffee	...	...	per lb.	6½d. to 8½d.
Sugar, Loaf	...	...	"	3d.
Bacon, Salted	...	...	"	7d. to 8½d.
Eggs	...	...	per 1s.	12, 13
Cheese, Dutch	...	...	per lb.	8½d.
Butter	...	...	"	1s. 1d. to 1s. 2d.
Margarine	...	...	"	8½d., 8¾d.
Potatoes	...	...	per 7 lb.	3d.
Flour, Wheaten	...	...	per 4 lb.	9½d.
Bread	...	...	per 4 lb.	1½d.
Milk	...	...	per quart	2½d.
Coal	...	...	per cwt.	9½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Paraffin Oil	...	...	per gallon	7d.

Meat.

The abattoir, as already stated, is a municipal institution. In addition to the meat leaving the abattoir a considerable quantity is imported, of which only that not bearing the stamp of origin is inspected. Horse meat is on sale at five butchers' shops, in which no other kind of meat is allowed to be sold. The current prices at the date of the enquiry were 6d. to 7d. per lb. for fillet, according to quality; 5½d. per lb. for steak, and 2½d. to 3½d. per lb. for inferior cuts. Returns of working-class expenditure on meat obtained for the purposes of this enquiry from 50 families, representing 244 persons, showed a weekly *per capita* consumption of 27·1 oz., or at the rate of 88 lb. per annum, of which beef formed 46 per cent., bacon 14 per cent., pork 12 per cent., *charcuterie* 10 per cent., veal 6 per cent., horse-flesh 5 per cent., mutton 3½ per cent., rabbits 2 per cent., and poultry 1½ per cent.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Out.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	8½d.
Brisket	5½d. to 6d.
Silverside	9½d. to 11½d.
Shin, with bone	5½d.
Beef Steak	10½d. to 11½d.
Rump Steak	11½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Thick Flank	10½d.
Thin Flank	5½d. to 7d.
Mutton :—	
Leg	9½d. to 10½d.
Shoulder	7d. „ 7½d.
Breast	5½d. „ 6d.
Neck { Best End	8½d. „ 10½d.
{ Scrag End	5½d. „ 7½d.
Chops	9½d. „ 10½d.
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	11½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Shoulder, with bone	10½d.
Ribs	10½d.
Chops	11½d.
Leg	9½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Pork :—	
Leg	8½d. to 9½d.
Foreloin	8½d. „ 10½d.
Belly	7½d. „ 8½d.
Chops	10½d.

Taken as a whole, prices at Charleroi are high. Meat is higher in price than at any other of the towns investigated, but, on the other hand, coal is cheap, as would be expected, having regard to the fact that Charleroi is a great coal-mining centre. Representing prices at Brussels by 100, the index number for food, other than meat, at Charleroi is 101, for meat it is 103, and for food as a whole, 102; for coal the index number is 63, and this low figure reduces the index number for prices as a whole to 97. The index number for rent and prices combined is 93.

COURTRAI.

Courtrai is one of the oldest as well as one of the most important seats of the Belgian linen industry. Following Bruges and Ostend, it is the third town of the province of West Flanders in point of population. It is situated on both banks of the river Lys or Leye, 55 miles west of Brussels by rail, is only a few miles distant from the French frontier, and is in excellent railway communication with North France and with the populous towns of Belgium. Flemish is the language of the people. The last census showed that about two-thirds of the population of the arrondissement of Courtrai spoke only Flemish, one in eight spoke only French, and one in five spoke both languages.

Courtrai was of old a strongly fortified town, but the fortifications were demolished many years ago, facilitating expansion in different directions and relieving the congestion which had arisen within the ancient enclosure. The area of the commune is 5,224 acres; there has been no increase during modern times. The surrounding country is fertile and highly cultivated, producing amongst other crops flax of a fine quality.

The industrial importance of Courtrai depends almost entirely upon its trade in flax and its linen manufactures, and these in turn have their origin in the peculiar qualities which make the river Lys incomparably adapted for the steeping or "retting" of the flax plant. This reputation has been enjoyed by the Lys for ages, and no analysis yet made has satisfactorily explained why the water of the "Golden River," as it is called, should give to the flax the special quality and colour which manufacturers value. Not only is the greater part of the flax produced in Flanders steeped in the Lys, but large quantities from France and Holland are also treated here. For some twenty-four miles the Lys is used by the occupiers of both banks for the "retting" of flax during the summer months, and it is estimated that 10,000 tons of this Lys-steeped flax go to Ireland alone, while large quantities also go to England and Scotland. Much of this flax comes back to Belgium in the form of yarn. It may be noted that the raw flax imported into Belgium in 1906 was in amount 144,000 tons, with a value of £6,042,000, the imports of linen yarn (including hemp and jute) were 10,000 tons, with a value of £1,512,000, and the imports of linen tissues (including hemp and jute), 600 tons, with a value of £74,000. The exports of raw flax in that year were 56,000 tons, with a value of £4,073,000, of linen yarn (including hemp and jute), 27,000 tons, with a value of £3,275,000, and of linen tissues (including hemp and jute), 7,000 tons, with a value of £689,000.

Courtrai itself serves as a mart for the raw flax steeped in the neighbourhood, and has in addition a large and flourishing weaving industry, with various dependent trades, like bleaching, finishing, and dyeing. Comparatively little spinning is done here, and the scutching is done in the villages around. A few years ago cotton weaving was introduced and most firms engaged in the linen trade produce unions.

Most of the linen weaving firms manufacture the coarser classes of goods, such as ticking and material for window blinds, both plain and striped, and one firm weaves sail-cloth. Fabrics for furniture and brocades are also manufactured. The finer goods produced include table linen, handkerchiefs, &c., but the best linen is still woven on hand looms in the adjacent villages. Most of the power looms are of English make. A minor trade which has flax for its raw material is the manufacture of linseed oil cake; little of the seed is of local origin, however, for the supplies are insufficient, and moreover the seed obtained from Argentina and elsewhere is richer in oil. Most of the linen factories are in the town.

The large extent of the flax industry has brought employment and wealth to the entire district. Courtrai is surrounded by a number of prosperous little communes all of which are more or less engaged in the same industry. Twenty or thirty years ago these villages still depended in the main on rural employments; now all the scutching of the flax is done there, and the old peasant cottages have given place to rows of brick-built houses, warehouses for the flax, and scutching mills, which are worked by steam or electric power.

The other local industrial establishments include manufactures of white lead, several small engineering works, which do not, however, manufacture machinery for the staple

industry, a State locomotive repairs workshop, corn mills, two important manufactories of artistic furniture, beer breweries, three large roofing tile works, and a manufactory of Flemish pottery, and there is a considerable clothing trade, employing some hundreds of women and girls, who to a large extent work at home. There are several small newspapers, but the general printing trade is not important. Lace-making used to be an extensive industry here, but it has almost disappeared, and the manufactures of paper, leather, sugar, and soap have also decayed.

During the past half century the population of Courtrai has steadily increased, yet there has been no period of unusual advance. While the population of the whole country increased by 38·6 per cent. between December, 1856, and December, 1900, that of Courtrai increased by 44·4 per cent., or 5·8 per cent. more. The following Table shows the population at the last three censuses and the estimated population at the end of 1907 :—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	26,943	—	—
1890	30,383	3,440	12·8
1900	33,143	2,760	9·1
1907 (estimated)	34,829	1,686 (in seven years).	5·1 (in seven years).

The increase during the years 1901 to 1907 has been entirely due to excess of births over deaths, for it is estimated that while 12,194 persons have come to the town 12,866 or 672 more have left it. Throughout the past thirty years there has been a gradual decline in both the birth-rate and the death-rate. For the period 1904-8, the average birth-rate was 27·5 per 1,000 of population, and the average death-rate 20·8 per 1,000 of population, the birth-rate having varied from 26·1 in 1907 to 29·6 in 1905, and the death-rate from 18·5 in 1905 to 23·4 in 1908. The infantile mortality is comparatively high, and has undergone no permanent reduction during recent years.

The following Table gives the birth and death rates per 1,000 of the population and the infantile mortality per 1,000 births for the years 1904 to 1908 :—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	28·6	23·2	207
1905	29·6	18·5	162
1906	26·2	19·7	182
1907	26·1	19·0	142
1908	27·1	23·4	203

There has been much building and rebuilding in Courtrai during recent years, and the town has been much modernised, with equal advantage to appearance, public convenience, and health. The dominating feature of the town is the spacious *Grand' Place*, surrounded by many handsome buildings, including the Town Hall and the new Post Office, while in the centre rises the ancient Belfry. In the old part of the town several hundreds of insanitary dwellings have been demolished during the past thirty years, giving place to commodious streets and open spaces. Boulevards have been planned in several directions, small parks and gardens laid out, and statues and monuments erected. At the present time a large people's park is being constructed on the outskirts of the town. While, however, much has been done to improve the sanitation of the town, many improvements are still contemplated, and the rate of progress is only retarded by considerations of cost. There is as yet no public service of water, the supply being obtained from pumps, and the cesspool system of drainage is used.

The town carries on no direct trading enterprise, with the exception of a pawn shop, the abattoirs, and the regulation of the markets and fairs, which are held in the streets and yield a revenue (1908) of £1,146. The gasworks belong to a company, which charges private consumers 3s. 5d. per 1,000 cubic feet, and industrial consumers 2s. 9d. per 1,000 cubic feet up to 176,500 cubic feet, and 2s. 3d. beyond that amount.

The tramways belong to the *Société nationale des chemins de fer vicinaux* and are worked by a company the shares in which are chiefly held by the communes interested.

Among municipal institutions of interest are a well-stocked library, museums of fine art and antiquities, and technical schools, with departments for designing, architecture and surveying, painting and practical sculpture (wood, marble, and stone), workshops for weavers and apprentices, and special classes for engine-drivers and stokers. Over 400 students, representing some 30 occupations, attended the schools during the winter term, 1908-1909. There is also a municipal laboratory for agricultural and industrial chemistry.

Hospitals and infirmaries exist for the care of the sick, aged, and afflicted poor, while the service of outdoor relief is discharged by the *Bureau de Bienfaisance*, to which the town in 1907 made a grant-in-aid of £3,725, the revenue from endowments and other sources being £4,321, while the total expenditure was £8,356. The Municipal Council elects five members of the committee of management. Relief generally takes the form of money, but grants of bread, coal, bedding, and clothing are also made. The following Table summarises the recipients of relief during the past six years :—

—	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Families permanently relieved ...	740	721	721	631	649	637
Families temporarily relieved ...	96	135	130	99	91	98
Totals	836	856	851	730	740	735
Individuals permanently relieved ...	3,767	3,605	3,736	3,255	3,905	4,072
Individuals temporarily relieved ...	495	555	681	531	516	541
Totals	4,262	4,160	4,417	3,786	4,421	4,613

The mean number of individuals relieved annually during this period has been equal to 124 per 1,000 of the population.

In order to encourage thrift the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* opens bank accounts for children at birth, and pays 2s. 5d. as a first deposit.

The budget of the town for 1908 showed a total revenue of £48,117, of which £35,239 was ordinary and £12,878 extraordinary revenue, the former including £9,840 derived from the local supplements (*centimes additionnels*) to the State property, personal, and trading taxes, £13,320 from the fund by which the communes are reimbursed for the loss of the old *octroi* duties, £2,355 from the State and Province in support of education, and smaller sums from the markets, fairs and stands on the quays, town properties, the tramways, the abattoirs, cemetery dues, the Gas Company, taxes on dogs, balls and *cafés-chantants*, new *cabarets*, &c. The total expenditure was £44,143, of which £33,259 was ordinary and £10,884 extraordinary. The interest on the town's debt was £6,025.

The tax on the opening of new *cabarets* is £12. In 1908 there were in Courtrai 1,052 *cabarets* (or *estaminets*), *cafés*, and hotels, equal to one for every seven houses and every 30 of the population.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

No recent enumeration of the entire industrial population of Courtrai exists, and the only figures available disregard the home workers, who are still numerous in the textile and clothing industries. The area allotted to the District Factory Inspector comprises four *arrondissements*, the principal towns in which, next to Courtrai, are Roulers (estimated population in December, 1907, 25,236), Mouscron (21,694), Menin (19,681), and Iseghem (14,130). The factory workers in the textile industries of this district were estimated in 1908 at 19,608, of whom 10,867 were employed in spinning and weaving mills, both linen and cotton, 6,853 being males and 2,309 females of 16 years and upwards, 541 males and 573 females from 14 to 16 years, and 328 males and

263 females under 14 years ; 8,324 persons were employed in 320 flax scutching mills, all being males, and only 836 being under 16 years ; 242 persons (11 under 16 years) were employed in 13 bleaching and finishing works ; and 175 persons (five under 16 years) in 11 dyeing works.

The spinning mills of Courtrai alone employed 392 persons, the weaving mills 1,574, the bleaching and finishing works 150, and the dyeing works 95. The scutching mills are in the surrounding villages. It is estimated that the scutching of purely Courtrai flax employs at least 225 power mills, with nearly 6,000 handles, representing over 6,000 workers, in addition to a large number of treadle and hand mills, the operators of which are not included in returns of the factory population.

The other Courtrai trades employing the largest groups of workpeople are the metal and furniture trades, the manufacture of roofing tiles, corn-milling, brewing, the manufacture of pottery and white lead, and the building trades. The home industries include the clothing trade, a certain amount of lace making, and the manufacture of clay pipes.

The prosperity of Courtrai has for centuries been dependent upon the flax trade, and the manufacture of linen. The soil of Flanders, which is sandy with a mixture of clay, and the general conditions of climate from early times marked out this part of Belgium as specially suited to the cultivation of flax. The flax plant thrives best in a cool soil and a moderate temperature, with humid atmosphere and cloudy skies, and these conditions exist in an exceptional degree in the territories intersected by the rivers Scheldt, Lys, Mandel, and Dendre.

The linen industry of Courtrai dates from a remote period, but it appears to have reached its highest reputation in the eighteenth century, when the fine linen produced here enjoyed great favour throughout Europe: the town had also become an important national market, both for raw flax and linen fabrics.

Hitherto the cultivation of flax had to a large extent been combined in the same hands with its manufacture into fabrics. The growing of the crop, the extraction of the fibre, the spinning of the yarn, the weaving of linen stuffs, and the final bleaching were all done in a small way by members of the same family, or by households working in conjunction, the agricultural and preparatory processes occupying spring and summer, and the mechanical operations being reserved for the winter months. Little of this combination of agriculture with industry continues in the present day except to the extent that the flax grower sometimes carries the preparation of the fibre as far as the process of stripping.

At the present time, hand spinning has virtually disappeared, and hand-loom weaving is confined to certain classes of fine linen, the looms being kept going by nominal manufacturers of the town, who supply the raw material.

The various operations connected with the production of flax absorb so much labour in the Courtrai district that a brief description of the work necessary before the flax reaches the spinner's hands will not be out of place. The seed is sown from the beginning of March to early in April. The best quality comes from Russia, and this is the kind usually cultivated both in Belgium and the North of France. In a good season the plants are ready for pulling towards the end of June. It is usual to pull the flax (the roots adhering) before the seed capsules are quite ripe. The crop is dried in small sheaves, after the manner of corn, but covered with straw as a protection against rain. It would be possible to steep the flax at once, but at sacrifice of quality, and in practice almost the whole of the crop is housed nearly a year before it is submitted to this process. Before the work of steeping begins the seed is *Rippled* or *Shelled*, either by being beaten by mallets on the barn floor or combed by treadle machines. The flax is then sorted according to length, colour, strength, &c. The seed is used for sowing or for the manufacture of oil.

Some of the cultivators of flax themselves carry further the preparation of the fibre, but as a rule the crop is sold to master "steepers" ("retters") or master "strippers" ("scutchers"), either growing or according to certified weight. Should the crop be bought standing the buyer may have to harvest it himself; in the alternative case the farmer does the harvesting.

The next operation is the *Steeping* or *Retting* (*rouissage*) of the flax, which takes place in the summer months. The object of steeping is to separate the fibre from the glutinous matter which adheres to it, and to facilitate its detachment from the stalk. Fermentation sets in owing to immersion, the chemical change being the conversion of the pectose in the cells into pectin and soluble pectic acid; the latter passes into the water, while the former, not being soluble, still adheres to the flax fibre and is only detached by the later bleaching.

In addition to dew-retting, which consists of retting in the open fields, there are two other methods of steeping the flax, viz., steeping in ponds, wells, tanks, or other stagnant water, and steeping in running water. Flax which undergoes the first method, as practised at Bruges, Lokeren, and in the Waes district, takes a bluish hue and is known by the trade name of "Flanders flax." One advantage of this method of steeping is that it can be applied to newly-harvested flax. The flax steeped in the river Lys takes a yellowish shade, and is known as "Courtrai flax." The steeping begins about the middle of April, and lasts until October, and during that period the Lys is closed to steam navigation. It is complained that the value of Lys steeping has been diminished of late years owing to the contamination of the water. Nevertheless, no other water which has yet been tried has yielded the same results; it has proved possible to obtain elsewhere an equal colour, but not the condition, suppleness, and resistibility which belong to Courtrai flax. Both banks of the Lys are used for this purpose for the entire length from the French frontier at Pont-Rouge to the neighbourhood of Deynze, a distance of about twenty-four miles, giving a steeping surface of twice that extent. The best flax grown in East and West Flanders and the other provinces of Belgium is steeped in the Lys, and large quantities also come for this purpose from the North of France (the Pas-de-Calais, Normandy, and the Lille district), and from Holland. The yellow flax of Courtrai is always worth from two to four times as much as the blue flax produced by steeping in stagnant water.

The method of steeping is as follows. The flax is tied into beets (*bottes*) or trusses, and these are placed vertically, roots downward, into large wooden crates, known as *ballons*, which are sunk in the water by means of heavy stones and moored to the bank by ropes or chains. This operation lasts from six to twenty days, according to the temperature of the water. The steeping is done twice, the second immersion usually following at an interval of a week, after the flax has dried on the field, though the beets may be allowed to lie for two months with a view to improving their quality. Great care has to be taken that the process of fermentation is not carried too far; the flax is ready when the fibre easily leaves the core. The steepers need also to be on the look-out for freshets, which would soil the water and damage the flax. When these occur the crates are drawn to land, and they are only replaced when the water is normally clear. The steeping done, the flax is dried in the open, in readiness for stripping or scutching.

The work of steeping occupies a very large number of labourers during the whole of summer; an estimate made a few years ago by an investigator of the Belgian Ministry of Industry and Labour placed the number of persons thus employed on the Lys at nearly 12,000, while the amount of flax treated was estimated at 108,000 tons.

The men who steep the flax in summer *Strip* or *Scutch* it in winter. The purpose of this operation is to detach the flax fibre from the stalk, so as to prepare it for the spinning mill, and it is preceded by what is called the *Breaking* (*broyage*) of the stalks by pushing them between rollers. The scutching (*teillage*) is done in a number of villages near Courtrai. Both breaking and scutching by hand are still practised here and there by home workers, but machinery is now almost universal. The scutching mills are sometimes little more than sheds, and the mechanical appliances are of the simplest, though thanks to good ventilation there is, as a rule, a noticeable absence of dust.

The flax, duly made into bales, now passes into the dealer's hands, for, while many scutchers sell direct to the spinners, the middleman has during late years become increasingly prominent, and most of the trade is now done through him. The flax is bought according to sample shown at the warehouses in Courtrai or the surrounding villages, and deliveries are usually made on Monday and Friday of each week, payment being due the same day in the case of Monday deliveries, or the following Monday in the case of Friday deliveries. It is noteworthy that neither invoices nor receipts are rendered, yet disputes are said to be of rare occurrence. The flax is sold in bales of 227 lb. net, and in normal seasons the price varies from about £20 per bale for the best qualities, and £10 for medium qualities, and £5 5s. for inferior fibres.

Little *Spinning* is done at Courtrai—there are only two spinning firms, for East Flanders, and particularly Ghent, is the important seat of this industry in Belgium. The numbers spun are from 20's to 50's English, the Belgian linen industry having adopted the English system of numbers. A large amount of the Lys-steeped flax goes to Great Britain and Ireland, and this applies especially to the better qualities, which are used for finer numbers than the Belgian spinners are able to produce. France comes second as a buyer, and smaller quantities of flax are sent to Russia, Bohemia, &c. Belgian spinners mostly use Russian flax and the "blue" Flanders quality.

The *Weaving industry* of the town, on the other hand, is very important, comprising 48 establishments, large and small. Of these 13 are machine weaving mills, while 35 firms are engaged in the hand weaving trade. Belgian yarn is used for the coarser numbers and Irish and English for the finer. The special products of the district are union cloths, tickings, furniture stuffs, window curtains, but also finer fabrics like cambrics, damasks, lawn, &c.

Much of the finest linen is still woven by hand-loom weavers, working at home in the villages of Ledeghem, Moorseele, Gullegheem, Lendelede, Meulebeke, Iseghem, Pitthem, Dadizeele, &c. The industrial census of 1896 showed that there were 4,500 home weavers in the arrondissement of Courtrai and 8,531 in the entire province of West Flanders. The number of these weavers is constantly decreasing, but it still seems probable that hand-loom weaving will long survive as an art industry. The great majority of the weavers are men, though narrow looms, for the production of handkerchiefs and the like, are often worked by girls. The preparatory work is done by women, girls, and boys.

Coming to the general conditions of labour in Courtrai, the hours worked vary considerably in different industries, the range being from 57 to 72 hours. The working day, as a rule, commences at 5.30, 6.0, or 6.30 a.m., and ends from 12 to 14 hours later, the intervals occupying 2 hours. Monday is almost invariably a short day, work ceasing at 4 o'clock or 4.30. There are three intervals, 15 or 30 minutes each for breakfast and tea, and an hour or an hour and a half for dinner. In some mills work begins an hour earlier in summer than in winter.

The majority of the industrial undertakings of Courtrai are comparatively small, and in the largest of them, the textile mills, one or two hundred employees are seldom exceeded. Most of the undertakings are in private hands, and not infrequently the employer is the active manager of his works.

It will be seen from the table given below that the general level of wages is not high, a great part of the work done in the textile and allied trades being unskilled. A large number of workpeople resident in the town and district cross the French frontier, and obtain at Tourcoing, Roubaix, Lille, and elsewhere higher wages than can be earned at home.

There is little effectual organisation amongst the working classes. Nominally, the *Syndicats* or Trade Unions of the three types, Christian (Roman Catholic), Socialist, and Neutral, have an aggregate membership of about 1,200. The weavers are best organised, yet the members of their three unions do not exceed 600. The Christian societies have their headquarters at the Workers' Club (*Maison des ouvriers*), an institution provided by a benevolent society, and offering various social attractions, including meeting rooms and a gymnasium. The Socialist trade unionists meet in the *Volksrecht* Co-operative Society's building. A short time ago a co-operative tailoring establishment was begun, and it is making good progress, relying almost exclusively upon the working classes for its trade. Eight journeymen tailors are united, and they work on premises which combine workrooms and a shop. The hours of work are 51 weekly, and the tailors receive wages of 21s. 7d. weekly, with a share in the profits, though a part of these is devoted to strike funds. The trade is confined to men's clothing.

There is no public Labour Bureau. Wages disputes between employers and workpeople are settled by the *Conseil de Prud'hommes*. There are no collective wages agreements in existence.

Notes are added regarding the special labour conditions prevailing in the more important groups of industries:—

Textile Industries.—The great majority of the workers in the spinning mills are females, who do most of the preparatory work, as well as the spinning, while the hacklers and dryers (the flax being spun wet) are men. Comparatively few married women are employed. The usual hours are 66 per week.

In the weaving mills hours range from 63 to 66. Both spinners and weavers are paid by piece. In one mill the weavers are required to earn certain minimum weekly rates. A week's notice on both sides is usual, though in some works no notice is given. Wages are paid weekly, on Saturdays in most cases. Carpet weaving and the weaving of jute sacking and other goods are carried on at Ingelmunster and elsewhere in the neighbourhood, the hours being longer and the wages lower than in the town. Bleachers work from 63 to 72 hours, and dyers from 63 to 70, according as they are employed in the mills or in separate establishments. As has been explained already, the stripping or "scutching" of the flax is done in the villages by men who during the summer months

steep the flax in the Lys. While engaged in the latter work their hours are irregular, for they must always be within call, but in the scutching mills 11½ hours daily are worked, without any curtailment on Monday.

Building Trades.—The hours worked in these trades in summer are uniformly 72 weekly. A large number of the bricklayers and masons come from the neighbouring village of Harlebeke. The usual weekly wages fall within the range of from 20s. 2d. to 23s., except for stonecutters, who earn from 23s. to 25s. 11d., and labourers, who earn from 14s. 5d. to 15s. 7d. The municipal authority fixes minimum rates of wages and maximum hours for men employed by contractors on public works; the hours are in all cases those usual in the several trades, but the rates of wages fixed are below the customary rates except in the case of bricklayers and masons. It is stated, however, that in practice contractors are compelled to exceed the minimum rates if they would secure good workmen.

Engineering Trades.—These trades are of little importance at Courtrai. There is only one firm which actually manufactures machinery (its specialty being engines for gas and petroleum), and the other workshops are mostly engaged on mill fitting work and repairs. Wages rates are fixed by the hour, and there is no piece work. The hours worked in summer are 62½ and 63 weekly, though one firm works 12 hours a day in winter. No notice is necessary for the termination of service. A considerable number of men are employed at the State Railway Workshop just outside the town, and alterations are pending which will further increase the importance of this enterprise. All classes of men are paid rates of wages which increase according to years of service, but the predominant rates are in general below those paid in private undertakings, though the hours worked are fewer.

Art Furniture Trade.—A large amount of artistic furniture is made at Courtrai, most of the trade being in the hands of two firms, whose workpeople work 62 and 68 hours a week respectively. There is little difference in the rates of wages paid, those of cabinet makers, upholsterers and polishers falling within the range 19s. to 21s. 9d.

Printing Trades.—There are in the town 15 printers, not one of whom employs more than 20 men. Several small daily newspapers are published, but they are produced by hand, the type-setting machine not having been introduced as yet. The hours worked by hand, the type-setting machine not having been introduced as yet. The hours worked range from 57 to 60 weekly. Payment is by the hour, and the predominant wages of both compositors and pressmen are from 16s. to 17s. 3d. weekly; 4d. per hour is the maximum paid, except in special cases.

Food and Drink Trades.—In addition to a large number of private bakeries, in which the *patron* generally works with his men, there are two co-operative bakeries of considerable importance, carried on in the special interest of the working classes. In the private bakeries the hours are longer and the wages in general lower than in these co-operative undertakings. Two local peculiarities help to explain the longer hours usual in private bakeries. One is the custom of living with the master, and the other is the fact that the journeyman baker is expected to deliver the bread to customers when he has finished his work in the oven room. A working day of at least 12 hours is the consequence, though there is no recognised number of hours. The value of board and lodging was variously estimated by master bakers consulted at from 8s. 5d. to 14s. weekly, and probably the mean of these sums amply represents the money worth of this payment in kind. In addition first bakers receive in money from 5s. 6d. to 7s. 5d. weekly, second bakers from 3s. 8d. to 5s. 6d., and third bakers, who are generally young learners, from 2s. 9d. to 3s. 8d. The hours worked in the two co-operative bakeries are 57 and 66 weekly respectively, and the wages range from 16s. 10d. to 20s., though one society pays its men the uniform wage of 18s. 5d. There are about 16 breweries in the town, most of them small, and doing only a local trade. The hours worked are from 60 to 66 weekly, and the wages paid to brewers are from 14s. 5d. to 16s., with free beer at discretion, to be consumed on the premises.

Miscellaneous Trades.—There are in the neighbourhood three large manufactories of roofing tiles, for which the fine clay available can be used with great success. The hours worked are 69 weekly, and the wages earned by the majority of the men range from 14s. 5d. to 21s. 7d. Flemish pottery of a special kind is made at Courtrai, and relatively high wages are earned by potters, painters, and decorators. There are two manufactories of white lead, but the number of men employed is small. In one a 10 hour and in the other a 12 hour day is worked. Other local industries are corn-milling and the manufacture of cattle cake from linseed and rapeseed; in both 12 hours daily are worked.

The Public Services.—The town employs few workpeople beyond those engaged on the roads and at the Abattoir, for the gasworks and the tramways are in the hands of companies, and there is no public water supply. The staff of the road department work 72 hours weekly in summer and 60 in winter, and unskilled labourers earn 14s. 5d., which is the maximum rate of wages for unskilled labour in most local industries.

It may be added that in connection with some factories and other works sick funds exist to which the employers contribute, but in general little in the nature of voluntary benevolence is done for the working classes, except by means of the friendly societies (*sociétés de secours mutuels*), most of which have lists of honorary members. There are seven of these societies, with 2,790 active and 360 honorary members. In addition there are some thirty saving and old age pension societies.

The following Table summarises the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of men employed in all the important trades and industries of the town in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Building Trades :—		
Bricklayers and Masons	20s. 2d.	72
Stonemasons (Cutters)	23s. to 25s. 11d.	72
Carpenters	20s. 2d.	72
Joiners	20s. 9d. to 23s.	72
Plumbers	20s. 2d. „ 23s.	72
Plasterers	20s. 2d. „ 23s.	72
Painters	20s. 2d. „ 23s.	72
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	14s. 5d. to 15s. 7d.	72
Engineering Trades :—		
Fitters	22s. 6d. to 27s. 9d.	62½ and 63
Turners	20s. to 27s. 9d.	62½ „ 63
Smiths	17s. 8d. to 22s. 6d.	62½ „ 63
Patternmakers	17s. 6d. „ 20s. 2d.	62½ „ 63
Labourers	12s. 7d. to 14s.	62½ „ 63
State Railway Workshops :—		
Fitters	16s. 4d. to 17s. 3d.*	60
Smiths	18s. 3d. „ 20s. 8d.*	60
Boilersmiths and Coppersmiths	21s. 1d.*	60
Labourers	14s. 7d.*	65
Linen Industry :—		
Scutching—		
Scutchers	12s. 10d. to 14s. 5d.	69
Breakers	16s.	69
Spinning—		
Hacklers	14s. 5d. to 17s. 7d.	66
Drying-loft Men	20s.	66
Weaving—		
Weavers, Linen	14s. 5d. to 16s. 10d.	63 to 66
Weavers of Furniture Stuffs	21s. 7d. to 22s. 5d.	63 „ 66
Turners (Tacklers, Tenters)	20s. 10d. to 28s.	63 „ 66
Warpers	13s. 7d. „ 16s.	63 „ 66
Beamers	14s. 5d. to 20s.	63 „ 66
Sizers	14s. 5d.	63 „ 66
Labourers	13s. 2d. to 14s. 5d.	63 „ 66
Carpet Weaving :—		
Weavers	14s. 5d. to 16s.	69
Dyers and Labourers	13s. 2d. to 14s. 5d.	69
Jute Sack Weaving :—		
Weavers	10s. 5d.	69
Bleaching, Dyeing, and Finishing Works :—		
Bleachers	14s. 5d.	63 to 72
Dyers	12s. to 14s. 5d.	63 „ 70
Finishers	12s. 10d. to 14s. 5d.	62 „ 65

* Rates paid to the majority of employees. See text.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Art Furniture Manufacture :—		
Carpenters and Joiners	16s. 10d. to 17s. 5d.	62 and 68
Cabinet Makers and Polishers	19s. to 20s.	62 „ 68
Upholsterers	20s. to 21s. 9d.	62 „ 68
Labourers	14s. 5d. to 17s. 5d.	62 „ 68
Pottery Manufacture :—		
Potters	24s.	68
Ovenmen	20s. 2d.	68
Painters and Decorators	24s. to 28s. 10d.	68
Labourers	14s. 5d.	68
Roofing Tile Works :—		
Clay getters	14s. 5d. to 16s. 10d.	69
Moulders	14s. 5d. to 20s.	69
Kilnmen	20s. to 21s. 7d.	69
Sorters	14s. 5d. to 20s.	69
Labourers	12s. to 14s. 5d.	69
Whitelead Manufacture :—		
White Lead Makers	17s. 7d. to 21s. 7d.	60 and 72
Lead Melters	21s. 7d. to 24s.	60 „ 72
Labourers	12s. to 14s. 5d.	60 „ 72
Linseed Oilcake Manufacture :—		
Millers	16s. 10d.	72
Pressmen	22s. 5d.	72
Labourers	12s.	72
Printing Trades :—		
Compositors and Pressmen	16s. to 17s. 3d.	57 to 60
Lithographers	18s. 3d. to 19s. 2d.	57 „ 60
Bookbinders	16s. to 16s. 10d.	57 „ 60
Food and Drink Trades :—		
Corn Milling—		
Millers	22s. 5d.	72
Labourers	13s. 2d. to 14s. 5d.	72
Baking—		
Private Bakeries :—		
1st Bakers	5s. 6d. to 7s. 5d.*	72
2nd Bakers	3s. 8d. „ 5s. 6d.*	72
3rd Bakers	2s. 9d. „ 3s. 8d.*	72
Co-operative Bakeries :—		
Bakers	16s. 10d. to 20s.	57 and 66
Beer Brewing—		
Brewers	14s. 5d. to 16s.	60 to 66
Coopers	16s.	60 „ 66
Draymen	14s. 5d. to 16s.	60 „ 66
Labourers	12s. to 14s. 5d.	60 „ 66
Public Services :—		
Road Department (Municipal)—		
Paviors	22s. 5d.	72†
Paviors' Labourers	14s. 5d.	72†
Road Makers and Road Sweepers	14s. 5d.	72†
Carmen	12s.	72†
Gas Works (Company)—		
Gas Stokers	16s. 10d.	—
Yard Labourers	13s. 2d. to 15s. 7d.	63
Tramways (Company)—		
Engine Drivers	17s. 6d. to 20s. 5d.	300 hours per month
Conductors	19s. 5d.	60

* These are the money wages only : employees in private bakeries also receive board and lodging, valued variously at from 8s. 5d. to 14s. weekly.

† The winter hours are 60 weekly.

Representing the level of predominant wages in Brussels by 100, the index numbers for Courtrai are—for the building trades, 83 for skilled men and 79 for unskilled labourers, for the engineering trades, 95 for skilled men and 86 for unskilled labourers, and 63 for compositors.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

Relatively to the extent of the municipal area, Courtrai would not be regarded from the lenient standard applied to old towns in Belgium as densely populated. The number of inhabitants per acre of total surface at the census of 1900 was 6.5, comparing with 5.7 in 1890, 5.3 in 1880, and 4.5 in 1866. Taking only the area built upon, the population was in 1900, 95.5 per acre, comparing with 93.1 in 1890, 96.8 in 1880, and 100.4 in 1866. The diminished density shown by the latter figures is the result of two factors—primarily the demolition of the fortifications and the growth of the old town outward, and in a secondary degree, the considerable number of clearances which have been made during the past three decades in congested and insanitary districts, leading to the erection of houses in more open situations. At the census of 1900, the number of houses per acre of municipal area was only 1.37.

The number of households per house destined for habitation was returned as 0.98 at the census of 1900, and as 0.94 at the previous census of 1890. These figures illustrate a feature of the housing arrangements of Courtrai which is apparent at every turn, viz., the predominance of the one-family house. In the newer streets, particularly in the business centres, houses of three stories are common, though not the rule, but in the town generally the middle-class house consists of two stories, and the working-man's house of one story, in addition to the ground floor in every case.

The working classes are found in most parts of the town, except the newly-built quarters in the centre of the town converging on the *Grand' Place*, but they almost entirely monopolise the old districts and those adjoining and across the river. Most of the streets are fairly broad, though there are notable exceptions, and all are paved from house to house with setts, or are roughly cobbled, flagged pathways being unknown. The houses are brick-built, often with painted fronts, the lower portions of which are kept clean by constant scrubbing.

The usual accommodation of working-class households is four rooms—a sitting room and a kitchen downstairs and two bedrooms above, with, in most cases, a loft which can only be used for storage purposes, and a cellar; some of the newer houses have a pantry, and small yards are almost universal, except in the courts and *cités*.

There is little difference in plan between one four-roomed dwelling and another, except that a small proportion have passages, with a width of 3½ or 4 feet. In the absence of a passage, a small vestibule about two feet deep is sometimes built in wood before the door. The front room is invariably the sitting-room, and rarely has more than one window; behind is the kitchen, with a door to the yard; while the staircase leading to the bedroom may be approached from either room, or, where there is a passage, may lie between the two. The rooms are generally of fair size, and of moderate height. The kitchen and the passage, where this exists, are always substantially tiled, and often the entire ground floor is so floored. The rooms of the better class of houses are papered, and the windows on the street have wooden shutters. Both sitting-rooms and kitchens have fireplaces, but these have been built up or otherwise closed, for stoves are universally used on account of their economy and superior heating properties. Sometimes the stove is a bulky structure, standing out four or five feet from the wall, but small iron stoves, placed close to the flue, are also popular. Water is obtained from pumps, and the conveniences are found in the backyards.

The following notes relate to typical dwellings visited:—

Rue Schinckel.—Two rooms downstairs (sitting-room in front and kitchen behind) with passage, pantry, and yard; two bedrooms and loft above; also cellar. Size of sitting-room, 12 feet long by 10 feet wide, and 10 feet high; kitchen, 10 by 6 by 10 feet; passage, 3½ feet wide; passage, kitchen and pantry tiled. Thirty houses of this type rented at from 3s. to 3s. 4d. weekly.

Rue Decollets.—Two rooms downstairs and two bedrooms. Sitting-room, 9 by 8 by 10 feet; kitchen, 12 by 10 by 10 feet; passage, 3½ feet wide. All the ground floor tiled. Rents of twenty houses of this kind, 3s. 2d. and 3s. 4d. weekly.

Rue D'Heule.—Two rooms downstairs, two bedrooms, loft, and cellar, with yard. Sitting-room 12 by 10 by 10 feet; kitchen 10 feet square. Downstairs rooms tiled and papered; pump in kitchen, closet in yard. Rent, 2s. 3d. weekly.

Rue Berger.—Two rooms downstairs and two bedrooms, and loft above; also a passage and a cellar. Downstairs rooms, 10 feet square. Rent, 2s. 7d. weekly.

It is characteristic of working-class houses in by-streets that in a considerable proportion of them the front downstairs room is used for business purposes, either as an *estaminet*, or as a small shop for the sale of fish, vegetables, groceries, sweets, or fuel. Sometimes almost every house is put to this subsidiary use, and it is almost invariably the wife who attends to the bar or counter, while her husband works in the factory or elsewhere. It does not appear that the practice has any perceptible influence upon rents.

While, on account of age and neglect, much of the working-class property in the older parts of the town is of a very inferior kind, the worst houses must be sought in the courts, alleys, and blocks of back buildings comprised in the terms *impasses*, *passages*, *ruelles*, *cours*, *enclos*, *cités*, *bataillons carrés*, &c. The whole of these may be grouped together as representing the cheapest accommodation which households of straitened means can afford and the extreme limit of the sanitary authority's toleration. Already a large amount of dilapidated property of this kind has been demolished—as a rule without compensation to the owners—and more houses are constantly being condemned and closed either permanently or until the required improvements have been carried out, but there are still many slum areas, small in extent yet evil in character, which readily find tenants.

Nearly all these courts and *cité* dwellings are inhabited by single families, and they are for the most part smaller, and proportionately cheaper, than the houses in the open streets. The great majority of such dwellings consist of either two or three rooms. There are comparatively few dwellings of four rooms, and one-roomed tenements hardly exist. The four-roomed dwellings consist of the usual sitting-room and kitchen downstairs, and two bedrooms upstairs; the three-roomed dwellings are without the second bedroom, or they have one large room below and two bedrooms. Occasionally houses of this size have a loft, but rarely a passage or a cellar.

The rooms in the court and *cité* houses do not greatly differ in size from those elsewhere, though very small and low rooms were noted in some of the dwellings visited. Here, too, the tiled floor is common, but there is a noticeable absence of comfort, and in some two-roomed cottages in a court off the Rue de Menin, the upstairs bedroom was reached by an open ladder. In the street just named there is a group of dwellings, of a type found in other parts of the town, consisting of a low ground floor and a loft in the high-pitched roof; the rooms are very small and the entire accommodation primitive, though the rents were only 1s. 3d. weekly.

The water supply is obtained from pumps, which are sometimes placed outside for collective use; the outside w.c.'s also often serve for several households, occasionally for as many as ten or a dozen, though this is an abuse which the Sanitary Committee is strenuously endeavouring to abate. Since 1901 a bye-law has been in operation requiring each house to have a separate w.c. and cesspool.

The following are the predominant rents for the typical four-roomed dwelling and the dwellings of two and three rooms found in courts and *cités*:—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Type of Dwelling.	Predominant Weekly Rents.
Four rooms—ordinary houses ...	2s. 1d. to 3s. 4d.
Three rooms—Courts and <i>Cités</i> ...	1s. 7d. to 2s.
Two rooms— " " ...	1s. 4d. to 1s. 7d.

Taking the level of rents at Brussels as 100, the rent index-number for Courtrai is 58.

No direct local taxes are paid by the working classes, since the tenants of all dwelling-houses assessed at less than £4 16s. per annum, equal to an actual rent of £12, or 4s. 7d. weekly, are exempted from the "personal" contribution (*contribution personnelle*), in the fixing of which rent is a factor. There is no separate charge for water, owing to its being obtained from pumps. Rents are, as a rule, paid either weekly or monthly.

Little has been done by employers of labour to provide dwellings for their work-people, though several own small groups of houses which are reserved for foremen and others whose duties require them to live near their work, and for which nominal rents are charged. Since 1892 a public utility Building Society, bearing the name *Le Foyer (Rond den Heerd)*, has existed for the purpose of lending money on mortgage to working men desirous of living in their own houses. It works with a capital

of £4,850 (in £20 shares), of which the Municipality subscribed £4,000, and citizens of the town most of the remainder, and with advances obtained from the State Savings Bank at 2½ and 3 per cent. interest, the balance of these advances outstanding at the end of 1907 being £15,498. Money is lent for the erection, purchase, or reconstruction of houses, but it is a condition that the borrower must live in his house, unless compelled to leave the neighbourhood, and must undertake not to use the house as a *cabaret*. The maximum loan granted is £200, and the borrower must pay down at least one-tenth of the total cost, though as a rule he pays more. The payment is spread over 10, 15, 20, or 25 years, and the rate of interest charged is 3½ per cent. if the loan is contracted in conjunction with a life insurance policy, and 4 per cent. without that additional security. The shareholders only receive 3 per cent. interest. Up to the end of 1907 231 houses had been built and 40 bought by the Society's help, and the loans on 74 had been entirely paid off. Of these houses 54 were built in Courtrai and most of the remaining 217 in neighbouring villages. In the aggregate £28,736, or £106 per house, had been advanced, and on December 31st, 1907, £17,410 was owing by borrowers. As a rule, the small houses built in the country consist of four rooms, contained on the ground floor and a story above, and cost about £140, of which £28 is for the site and £112 for the building.

Another Building Society similarly constituted, though wider in area, is the "Society for the purchase, construction, sale, and letting of working-class houses at Courtrai." It has been in existence since 1897, and works with a subscribed capital of £2,080 and loans. Up to the present it has erected over a hundred houses, consisting for the most part of four rooms, with cellars and gardens in many cases. The houses are of brick, and of simple construction, and the usual cost is from £100 upwards. Where let the rents charged are from 8s. to 10s. 5d. monthly. The Society pays 3 per cent. to its shareholders and charges 5 and 5½ per cent. on advances.

There is also a Building Society in the neighbouring commune of Iseghem.

RETAIL PRICES.

There are no covered markets at Courtrai, but open markets for farm produce and vegetables are held every Monday on the *Grand' Place* and other convenient places, and a large proportion of the butter, eggs, and cheese consumed is in this way purchased direct from the country dealers. These commodities are, however, sold by most grocers, as well as in special shops. Milk is usually retailed from house to house in carts drawn by dogs. There are few provision stores of exceptional size, but a "multiple" firm, known all over Belgium, has a branch here. There are two co-operative societies, the *Volksrecht* society, which carries on a bakery and a restaurant, in addition to a considerable general provision business, and the *Ons Huis* society, which carries on a bakery and a restaurant. The *Volksrecht* society has 950 family members, and sells some 25,000 lb. of bread weekly, while the other society, which is of recent origin, sells a little more than half this amount.

Groceries and other Commodities.

Coffee is invariably bought in the bean, and is often roasted at home; the qualities are many, from 5d. per lb. upward, but the price usually paid by working people is from 6d. to 7d. It is used with a strong addition of still cheaper chicory. The cheese mostly eaten is Dutch, costing 8½d. per lb. There is a large consumption of *margarine*, which costs 8½d., against 1s. 0½d. to 1s. 1d. paid for fresh butter, which comes from the neighbourhood. There is a very large consumption of potatoes, and all working-class households who can afford it buy their winter's supply in bulk, but bought in small quantities old potatoes cost 3d. per 7 lb.

The bakers have an association for the defence of trade interests, but only a small proportion of the 100 private firms belong to it. The bread eaten is almost exclusively wheat, and it is baked in round and long loaves of 1·1, 2·2, and 4·4 lb. The loaves mostly sold are of 2·2 and 4·4 lb., and the shop prices in June, 1908, were from 4½d. to 5d. for 4 lb. The co-operative societies and many of the private bakers, however, give a half-yearly discount (called *ristourne*) of ½d. on 4 lb., and when allowance for this is made, the net price in June, 1908, is found to have been 4d. to 4½d. per 4 lb. A brown bread (*pain gris*), made of wheat flour and bran, and costing about 4d. for 4 lb., is eaten to a small extent. Salted bacon is eaten far more than smoked, the price being from 6½d. to 7d. per lb. Coal is usually bought by the hundredweight, or by two cwts.

The following were the predominant prices paid by the working classes for various commodities in June, 1908:—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6d. to 7d.
Sugar, Loaf "	3d.
Bacon, Salted "	6½d. to 7d.
Eggs per 1s.	13 to 16
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	8½d.
Butter "	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 1d.
Margarine "	8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	3d.
Flour, Wheaten "	8½d. to 9½d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	4d. to 4½d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal per cwt.	1s. 1½d. to 1s. 2½d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	6½d. to 7d.

Meat.

There is a public Abattoir at Courtrai, and municipal regulations require that no animals intended for sale as human food shall be slaughtered elsewhere within the commune. The Mayor and Sheriffs may, however, authorise butchers resident in the surrounding villages to slaughter in certified places, but meat coming from other communes, or from abroad, must be examined and stamped at the Abattoir. Private individuals may kill pigs for home consumption on their own premises, and the same privilege may be exercised in regard to other animals by permission of the local authorities. No record is kept of the weight of meat which passes into the market from the Abattoir.

Nearly the whole of the beef sold at Courtrai comes from the provinces of Flanders, and the same holds good of the mutton and veal. The sheep grown for the butcher are crossed with an English breed, and are said to yield very good mutton. The pigs come from various parts of Flanders, and have likewise an English strain. The horses used for food come from England, and to a less extent from France and Flanders. There has been no importation of cattle or sheep from Holland or France for several years, but several butchers have of late done a small trade in frozen meat from Argentina, the yearly importation being between 150 and 200 carcasses of cattle and 80 sheep.

There are in the town 104 butchers, and with the exception of the horseflesh butchers the majority of them sell all kinds of meat; 98 sell beef, 95 pork, 75 mutton, one mutton only, and one pork only. There are four horseflesh butchers, whose trade is restricted to this kind of meat, and who are required to advertise their establishments conspicuously as "*Boucheries chevalines*."

The working classes principally eat beef and pork, with horseflesh; their consumption of mutton is small. The cheaper cuts of beef are bought, the price paid ranging in June, 1908, from 5½d. to 7½d. per lb., while from 7d. to 8½d. was paid for pork.

The consumption of horseflesh has greatly increased during the past few years. In 1895 the animals slaughtered for food numbered only 170; in the four succeeding years the numbers were 240, 213, 239, and 203. In 1900 there was an increase to 404, and the average of the past three years shows a further increase of 50 per cent. upon that figure, an increase due to the fact that the area of supply has widened. The annual consumption of horseflesh may now be estimated at little less than 10 lb. per head of the population. The usual price of horseflesh is from 5½d. to 5¾d. per lb. for the dearest cuts from the fillet, to 3½d. to 4½d. for steak, but inferior parts can be had for as little as 2½d. per lb.; it is stated, however, that these parts are largely used in making "cervelas" sausage. There is a considerable consumption of sausage, which is popular owing to the fact that it needs no cooking and can be bought in small quantities as required. Good sausage of beef and pork can be obtained for 9d. per lb., but inferior kinds are sold as low as 4d. Poor families eat as a sandwich a *pâté* of liver, of all kinds, which is usually bought by the pennyworth, and a minced preparation, made from the intestines and offal, known as *Kip-kap*, of which a pound can be obtained for twopence. There is not a large consumption of fresh fish, but salted herrings and dried fish are common articles of food.

The following Table shows the predominant prices of various cuts of fresh meat paid by working-class buyers in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.					Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—					
Ribs	...	...	...	...	7½d.
Brisket	...	...	...	...	5½d.
Silverside	...	...	...	...	7½d.
Shin, with bone	...	...	...	...	5½d. to 6d.
Beef Steak	...	...	...	...	10½d. to 11½d.
Rump Steak	...	...	...	...	11½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Thin Flank	...	...	...	...	5½d. to 7d.
Mutton :—					
Leg	...	...	...	...	10d.
Shoulder	...	...	...	...	7½d.
Breast	...	...	...	...	6d.
Neck	{ Best End	...	...	...	8½d. to 11d.
	{ Scrag End	...	...	...	5½d. „ 6d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Veal :—					
Hindquarter	...	...	...	...	9½d.
Shoulder	{ with bone	...	...	...	8½d. to 10½d.
	{ without bone	...	...	...	10½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Ribs	...	...	...	...	10½d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	10½d. to 11½d.
Leg	...	...	...	...	10½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Pork :—					
Leg	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Foreloin	...	...	...	...	7½d.
Belly	...	...	...	...	7d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	8½d.

For some time the Director of the public Abattoir has recorded the average prices charged by the retail dealers of Courtrai for various kinds of meat. The following Table shows the course of these prices during the past 12 years ; it will be seen that, subject to insignificant fluctuations, there has been a slight upward tendency, the most noticeable increase being in the case of veal and pork.

Average Retail Prices per lb. of Meat Sold by Courtrai Butchers.

Year.	Ox Beef.	Cow Beef.	Veal.	Mutton.	Pork.
1896	8½d.	7½d.	8½d.	9½d.	7d.
1897	8½d.	7½d.	8½d.	9½d.	7d.
1898	8½d.	7½d.	8½d.	9½d.	7d.
1899	8½d.	7½d.	9½d.	9½d.	7½d.
1900	8½d.	7½d.	8½d.	9½d.	7½d.
1901	8d.	7½d.	8½d.	9½d.	7½d.
1902	8d.	7½d.	8½d.	9½d.	7½d.
1903	9½d.	8½d.	9½d.	9½d.	7½d.
1904	9½d.	8½d.	9½d.	9½d.	8d.
1905	9½d.	8½d.	9½d.	9½d.	7½d.
1906	9d.	8d.	9½d.	9½d.	8½d.
1907	9½d.	8½d.	10½d.	9½d.	7½d.
1908	8½d.	8d.	10½d.	9½d.	8½d.

As indicated by index numbers, prices at Courtrai are low. Representing prices at Brussels by 100, the index number for the price of food other than meat at Courtrai is 94, for meat it is 91, and for food as a whole 93. For coal, the prices index number is 84 and for food and coal together it is 92. The index number for rent and prices combined is 86.

GHENT.

Ghent, the capital of East Flanders, and the most important centre of the Belgian textile industry, is situated at the junction of the rivers Scheldt and Lys, which here break into several arms, and divide the city into thirteen islands connected by sixty-five bridges. It is on the main line between Brussels (36 miles) and Ostend (40 miles), and also possesses direct railway communication with Antwerp (31 miles) and Lille (48 miles), while several steam tramways run to the smaller centres of the district. There are two important canals : one from Ghent to Ostend by way of Bruges, and the second from Ghent to Terneuzen, which is in Dutch territory. The latter canal has been recently widened and deepened, and having a breadth of 318 feet and a depth of over 26 feet up to the city, it allows the passage of merchant vessels of a considerable size and thus procures for the city the advantages of a sea-port. In this respect it is of great and growing importance. In 1907 the value of the total imports in the general trade was £10,472,000, while the value of the exports was £6,819,000. The total tonnage of vessels entered and cleared in the foreign trade, with cargoes and in ballast, at Ghent in 1907 was 1,682,664, according to the Belgian system of calculating tonnage.* The river and canal traffic returns for the same year showed that 15,690 vessels arrived by these inland waterways.

Ghent is also the chief Belgian centre for horticulture. But although in the main an industrial and commercial town, it possesses other interests, and occupies a special position as the recognised capital of Flemish Belgium, corresponding with Liège in the Walloon division of the kingdom. Besides the Flemish Academy, one of the two State universities (with 1,054 students in 1908) is established here, and there are schools of industry, of horticulture, of brewing, of the fine arts (860 students) and of music, a training school for teachers, and a theological school. The town is also the seat of a bishopric, and has important law courts.

In proportion to its population Ghent covers an extensive area (6,650 acres). It is pre-eminently a city of waterways, in which traffic is impeded at many points by the opening of swing bridges at all hours to allow the passage of boats. The surface of the city being for the most part quite flat, and long lines of quays, between whose banks flow sluggish waters often noisome through industrial and other effluents, being numerous, Ghent produces upon the visitor a somewhat gloomy impression. This impression is increased by the numerous large factories and by the dull aspect of the majority of the buildings, the houses, save in the central parts, being constructed in sombre-coloured or painted brick, or in brick faced with plaster. The large industrial population, in particular, lives in monotonous rows of mean streets, whose houses line the cobbled footways. During the last thirty years the city has been largely transformed, great clearances having been effected in the older parts by the demolition of many narrow and congested streets, lanes, and alleys. There are several open spaces, but only one park, which is some distance from the centre. Good communication between the various parts of the city and suburbs is provided by electric tramways.

Ghent experienced a continuous growth in population in the nineteenth century. In 1815 the number of its inhabitants was returned at 62,226, a figure which had increased to 108,925 in the succeeding forty-one years. The following Table shows the population of Ghent as returned at the censuses of 1880, 1890, and 1900, and as estimated at the end of 1907 :—

Year	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	131,431	—	—
1890	148,729	17,298	13·2
1900	160,133	11,404	7·7
1907 (estimated)	164,117	3,984 (in seven years).	2·5 (in seven years).

It is noteworthy that two-thirds of the population were born within the town ; in 1890 and in 1900 66·8 per cent. and 65·1 per cent. respectively were found to be

* The Belgian system of calculating the tonnage of vessels differs from that adopted elsewhere, and in order to render these figures comparable with those of non-Belgian ports, they should be reduced by from 15 to 20 per cent.

indigenous. Although a busy industrial centre, Ghent exercises no strong attraction upon the neighbouring districts. Liège, Antwerp, and especially Brussels among the great towns recruit their population far more largely from without.

Ghent has three important suburbs—viz. Gentbrugge, Ledeborg, and Mont-St.-Amand, which form independent communes, but are in no way topographically separate from the city.

Adding the population of these three suburbs to that of Ghent itself, the following figures are obtained :—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	153,282	—	—
1890	180,189	26,907	17·6
1900	198,446	18,257	10·1
1907 (estimated)	206,470	8,024 (in seven years).	4·0 (in seven years).

The population of *Gentbrugge* was only 4,298 in 1880, but it had nearly doubled by 1890, the number of inhabitants at that date being 8,262. In 1900 the population was 10,857, and at the end of 1907 it was estimated at 13,191. *Ledeborg* has not shown so great a development during the period under review, although its population is still slightly larger than that of *Gentbrugge*. The number of its inhabitants was 10,124 in 1880 and 13,878 at the end of 1907. *Mont-St.-Amand* has increased in population more rapidly than *Ledeborg*, but not so quickly as *Gentbrugge*. It is at present the most populous of the suburbs, having 15,284 inhabitants at the end of 1907, as compared with 13,226 at the Census of 1900. The population of *Mont-St.-Amand* at the two previous censuses of 1890 and 1880 was returned as 10,836 and 7,429 respectively. The area within the communal boundary of *Ledeborg* is almost entirely built upon, and it is, therefore, not probable that there will be any appreciable increase in the population of this suburb in future years. The other suburbs, having much building land still available, are, however, likely to show a continued increase in population.

The birth-rate, death-rate, and rate of infantile mortality of Ghent in each of the years 1904–1908 is shown in the following Table, the most noteworthy features of which are the great decline in the birth-rate during the period and the very high infantile mortality :—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	24·2	20·1	273
1905	23·1	18·2	221
1906	22·3	18·6	246
1907	21·6	17·6	209
1908	21·5	19·2	258

The average birth-rate, death-rate, and rate of infantile mortality during the above period for Ghent itself and for the three suburban communes of *Gentbrugge*, *Ledeborg*, and *Mont-St.-Amand* is as follows :—

—	Average Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population, 1904–8.	Average Death-rate per 1,000 of Population, 1904–8.	Average Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births, 1904–8.
Ghent	22·5	18·7	241
Gentbrugge	22·6	16·1	151
Ledeborg	21·8	15·2	185
Mont-St.-Amand	25·1	17·7	255

It will be observed that the average birth-rate for *Mont-St.-Amand* is considerably higher than the average birth-rate for the other three communes, which are about equal. The death-rates and rates of infantile mortality for the four communes differ greatly.

The activities of the municipality embrace the usual public services, including the supply of water, gas, and electric light and power. The tramway system, however, which has a length of 16½ miles, is in the hands of a company which pays the annual sum of £3,600 to the city in return for the concession. Grants for indoor and outdoor relief, for night refuges, *crèches*, and other charitable objects are made by the municipality, which also owns a library, two theatres (one for performances in French and the other for those in Flemish, both being leased and subsidised), an abattoir, labour exchange, public baths and cemeteries.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

The textile trades occupy a pre-eminent position among the industries of Ghent, flax-spinning, cotton-spinning and the weaving of flax, jute and cotton being the principal branches of these trades. The engineering trades also give employment to large numbers of workpeople, but, compared with the textile trades, their importance is quite secondary.

Ghent is regarded as the headquarters of the Belgian trade union movement, and the strongest working-class organisations are identified with Socialism, the Liberal and Catholic trade unionists being inferior in number and influence.

The normal working day begins at about six a.m., and ends between seven and eight o'clock in the evening. Intervals of fifteen minutes at about eight a.m. and four p.m. are taken in most industrial establishments, and the midday interval for dinner varies from one hour and a half to one hour and three quarters. In the textile factories work stops at five o'clock on Mondays, without the usual break at four. In the engineering shops the hours of labour are shorter than in other trades, and some firms start half-an-hour later and finish half-an-hour earlier on Mondays, closing at five on Saturdays, while others merely stop at four on Mondays without any other difference. There are eleven days in the year when work in Ghent is at a standstill: the first of January, the Monday and Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday, Easter Monday, Ascension Thursday, Whit Monday, two days for the communal *fêtes*, August 15, November 1, and Christmas. Some trades have in addition their special *fête* day. Work in the principal trades at Ghent is fairly regular, their products being such as to be not much affected by seasonal demands.

In connection with certain trades for which wages are quoted below the following notes may be of interest.

Building Trades.—No standard rates of wages are in force for private undertakings. The municipality, however, has established a scale of minimum hourly rates to be paid to men employed on municipal contracts. According to this scale, paviors must receive not less than 4½d. per hour, plasterers, carpenters and joiners 4½d., stonemasons 4d. (“blue” stone), and 4½d. (“white” stone), bricklayers and plumbers 3½d., painters, paviors’ labourers, and navvies 3½d., plasterers’ labourers and bricklayers’ labourers 3½d. The normal day must not exceed ten hours, between 6 a.m. and 7.30 p.m., and overtime is to be reckoned as time and a half.

Metal and Engineering Trades.—The construction of large steam engines, locomotives and boilers forms the bulk of the work done in the Ghent workshops. The State railway works employ nearly 900 hands in their locomotive and wagon repair yards in the suburb of *Gentbrugge*, where an important firm also employs 650 hands in wire-drawing and nailmaking. The latter occupations afford good wages at piece rates, but in the engineering trades both time and piece rates are paid, although time rates are more general. The wages quoted for the railway works are lower than those earned in the private workshops, but the men have many compensating advantages such as pensions and help in sickness, in addition to shorter weekly hours of labour.

Textile Trades.—Ghent is the chief cotton centre in Belgium. Of 61 cotton weaving mills no fewer than 57 are established in East Flanders, and over 40 of these are situated in Ghent and its suburbs. The counts spun are low, the bulk of the output being composed of counts ranging from 5 to 8, while only a few mills go beyond 40. A large variety of tissues are woven in the Ghent sheds, but plain goods, fustian, flannelettes and velveteens are produced in great quantities. With regard to the flax industry 17 spinning mills, including the three largest establishments in Belgium, are at Ghent, but flax weaving is of minor importance. As in the case of cotton-spinning the lower counts are mainly manufactured. Women are far more numerous than men in the flax trade, which

The single-family house predominates in Ghent, as in most other towns in Belgium. The census of 1900 returned the number of houses destined for habitation at 34,201 and the number of households at 42,141, or an average of 1.23 households per house, while at the previous census in 1890 the average was 1.15. The dwellings occupied by working-class families are usually composed of three, four and five rooms, the groups with three and five rooms being both considerably more numerous than those with four. Two-roomed cottages are mainly old property, met with in out-of-the-way streets and in the courts (*see below*), and are destined to disappear through the operation of the municipal bye-laws which enact that every dwelling-house must have a minimum of three habitable rooms, each with an area of at least 150 square feet. The newer workmen's dwellings include a certain proportion of six-roomed houses, but for such dwellings rents somewhat beyond the reach of the ordinary workers' incomes are charged, and many of these houses are divided into two tenements.

The predominant type of three-roomed dwelling is a three-story house with the rooms placed one above the other. The uppermost room is less lofty than the two lower ones, but in other respects the rooms are similar. The street door leads directly into the living room, and the stairs, for the most part closely resembling a sort of ladder, are generally placed against the opposite wall. These houses have a small yard behind, except in the courts (where they are extremely numerous) and where an open space often serves for the whole block. The four-roomed houses have two rooms downstairs, and two rooms upstairs with a loft, and are found both with and without corridors, (extending to the door of the back room) although all houses of recent erection possess them. In the five and six-roomed dwellings the additional rooms are built above the first floor. The new houses of four, five and six rooms have generally a back kitchen or scullery, but the space for this addition is almost invariably obtained at the expense of the yard area. The yards indeed throughout the working-class quarters are very small, and workmen's dwellings with forecourts or little back gardens are quite rare. Water is usually obtained either from pumps within the houses or in the streets, but town water is also provided in a certain proportion of the dwellings of four, five and six rooms. The closets are in the yards, and the majority of the dwellings of all kinds in the working-class streets have lofts and cellars.

An important feature of Ghent housing conditions is the existence in every ward of a great number of courts usually situated behind houses that front a street, or blind alleys. At the end of 1907, 523 courts containing 6,938 houses and 6,985 households with 25,242 inhabitants (which is 15.8 per cent. of the town population) existed in the municipal area. An enquiry was made by the Housing Committee in 1904 and their report showed the population of the courts to be mainly composed either of young or of old households; fifty per cent. of the houses contained two rooms, one above the other, 19 per cent. were of three rooms one above the other, and 16 per cent. had one room downstairs and two upstairs. Some of the courts are quite large; in one visited in the course of the enquiry there were 62 houses (all with two rooms) and in another 67 houses. The general conditions of these courts are not on the whole bad, although those which lie behind houses fronting a street are sometimes unsatisfactory. Their most objectionable features are their promiscuity and want of privacy. Water has to be fetched from outside the houses, and there are no separate yards or conveniences. Great improvements have, however, been made in recent years, and some of the most unhealthy and unsatisfactory courts have been demolished. Despite the general increase in population the number of persons inhabiting courts has decreased from 29,181 and 29,149 respectively in 1880 and 1890 to 25,242 in 1907 or from 22.2 and 19.6 per cent. of the total population to 15.8 per cent. in 1907.

The following Table shows the predominant weekly rents for dwellings of three, four, and five rooms in Ghent in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Three rooms	...	...	...	2s. 2d. to 2s. 7d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	2s. 10d. to 3s.
Five rooms	...	...	...	3s. to 3s. 7d.

Rents at Ghent are represented by the index number 63, rents at Brussels being the standard, = 100.

The above rents cover the supply of water. The working people do not pay any taxes as tenants of their dwellings. It is usual to pay rents weekly.

The municipality has initiated no schemes for the better housing of the working classes, but, in conjunction with the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* (Outdoor Relief Committee) and the *Hospices*, it has provided four-fifths of the capital of a registered building society which is established in Ghent in accordance with the law of 1889. There are also two societies which lend money under the provisions of the same law, and down to December 31st, 1906, they had effected 563 loans, amounting to nearly £67,260, for the construction of workmen's dwellings. Some of the textile firms have also built workmen's houses. In one case 66 houses have been built in the centre of the town; they contain four rooms with an attic and loft; fifty-eight of them are let at rents of 2s. 10d. per week, and the remaining eight at 3s. 2d. They have 13 feet of frontage, possess corridors, cellars and pumps, but the town water is outside, and the yards are very small. A second firm has built some dozen houses, possessing four rooms and two attics, which are let at varying rents, the normal figure being 4s. per week.

Of the three suburbs of Ghent, *Ledeberg*, although not the largest in point of population, is the oldest. An enquiry was made into the housing conditions of the working classes in this commune in October, 1908, by the Housing Committee, when visits were made to 1,749 working-class houses or 53 per cent. of the total existing at the census of 1900. The single-family house has an absolute predominance, 1,798 households having been found to inhabit 1,749 houses, and dwellings of four and five rooms represented respectively 54.3 and 22.6 per cent. of the total investigated, those of two rooms amounted to 14.3 per cent., and those of three rooms to only 8.3 per cent. The majority of the dwellings have their own conveniences in the small back yards, but there are very few gardens. Water is obtained from pumps, the town water not being generally laid on. Rents are slightly lower than in Ghent; the predominant range of rents paid for four-roomed dwellings in *Ledeberg* is from 2s. 4d. to 2s. 7d., as compared with from 2s. 10d. to 3s. for the same class of dwelling in the town.

Gentbrugge has developed with remarkable rapidity during the last thirty years. In 1876 there were only 820 houses, ten years later there were 1,451, and at the last census in 1900 the number was returned at 2,346. No fewer than 612 new houses were built in the six years 1901-1906. The population, which, as already shown, has grown from 4,298 in 1880 to 12,759 in 1906, contains a large proportion of the employees of the State railway works, of wire-drawers and nailmakers, papermakers, and horticultural labourers—there are 64 nurseries in the commune—besides over 500 textile operatives. An investigation into housing conditions in *Gentbrugge*, inhabited by 7,782 persons. Housing Committee, covered 1,855 working-class dwellings, inhabited by 7,782 persons. Only three courts, with 74 houses all of the same kind (having one room downstairs and one upstairs) were found in the commune and these houses sheltered 257 inhabitants. Over 46 per cent. of the dwellings visited—863 out of 1,855 houses—contained four rooms, two on the ground and two on the first floor; 11 of these were empty, 22 were tenanted by two households each, and one had three. Five-roomed cottages accounted for 36 per cent., and here again only the small number of 42 houses held more than one family. It is seen, therefore, that five-sixths of the dwellings counted as five-roomed tenements the back kitchen attached to a considerable number of the more recently built houses has been regarded as a living-room. On this account the four-roomed house may be taken as the predominant type of working-class tenement in *Gentbrugge*. The range of rents for such houses was from 2s. 5d. to 2s. 10d. in June, 1908.

Mont-St.-Amand differs from the two other suburbs in that it contains a notable number of courts. An enquiry made in 1906 showed that at that date 20 courts, with a population of 1,036, existed in the commune, and the bulk of the houses in them contained one room downstairs and one above. Elsewhere dwellings of four and five rooms proved the most numerous, the former predominating. The usual rents for four-roomed dwellings ranged from 2s. 5d. to 3s. 2d. per week. All the houses, except those in the courts, have pumps, conveniences, and yards. Indeed the houses in the various suburbs which possess four or more rooms resemble closely in all respects the houses with a like number of rooms in Ghent itself.

A large number of working-class dwellings in the various quarters of Ghent and in its suburbs were visited for the purpose of this enquiry, and the examples given below

will afford concrete illustrations of the accommodation contained in representative dwellings of this class.

Rue du Marron.—Twenty-two houses, 11 on each side of a court, containing three rooms one above the other, and let at 1s. 11d. per week. There was a small yard and a small cellar; water was obtained from a pump. The staircase was in the kitchen, which measured 16 feet 6 inches by 13 feet by 9 feet 9 inches. The houses were built in red brick, and the ground floor was paved with square tiles. A small out-building (2 feet 9 inches by 3 feet) extended into the yard, where the closet was placed.

Rue de Saule.—Twenty-two houses built in recent years by the building society in which the municipality, the *Hospices*, and the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* possess four-fifths of the share capital. They contain two rooms on the ground floor, two rooms on the first floor, with an attic and loft on the second floor. A passage leads from the street door to the kitchen door. They are fitted with stoves and gasmeters, and in addition to a pump are provided with town's water. A small yard lies at the back. The windows on the first and second floors project slightly into the street. The rent of these houses was 3s. 5d. per week. Their frontage measured 13 feet.

Rue de la Corneille.—Some ten houses of four rooms and a loft let at 3s. 2d. per week. A passage led back to the kitchen, where the stairs were placed; the front room measured 10 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, and the kitchen 13 feet by 13 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 9 inches. A court containing eight houses with four rooms and loft ran off this street. The rooms were larger than in the houses in the *Rue de la Corneille*, but in other respects the houses were similar and fetched the same rent.

Rue Snellaert.—Some 30 houses recently built by one of the largest textile companies in this and adjoining streets, and containing two rooms on the ground and first floors and two rooms on the second floor. A passage leads only to the kitchen, where the staircase is situated, but the staircase on the first floor is not within a room. A lean-to behind the kitchen curtails the size of the yard, rendering it in some cases extremely small. The frontage of the houses measured 18 feet, the front room 9 feet 9 inches by 14 feet by 10 feet 9 inches, the kitchen about 12 feet 6 inches square, and 10 feet 9 inches in height. On the first floor the front room measured 9 feet 9 inches by 17 feet by 10 feet 9 inches, and the back room 12 feet square, and 10 feet 3 inches in height, while the rooms on the second floor were only 8 feet 3 inches high. The rents paid varied, but 4s. per week was the normal charge to ordinary workmen with no claims on account of long service.

Rue Van Dyk.—Some 30 houses let at 3s. per week and containing two rooms below and two above. As is usual in Ghent, the passage extended to the kitchen door, and had a breadth of 4 feet. The front room measured 10 feet 6 inches by 13 feet by 11 feet 9 inches, and the kitchen 10 feet 6 inches by 17 feet by 11 feet 9 inches.

Rue du Bassin (in Gentbrugge). Nine houses containing four rooms with garden and small yard, let at 2s. 2d. per week. The front room, which measured 11 feet 9 inches by 11 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, was entered directly from the street, while a passage ran out into the yard behind. The back room was 10 feet 6 inches by 7 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 9 inches.

Rue Lachaert (in Ledeberg). Thirteen houses with four rooms, two upstairs and two downstairs, let at rents of 2s. 7d. per week. The lower rooms measured 10 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 6 inches.

RETAIL PRICES.

Co-operative societies and "multiple" shops exercise an important influence upon the retail trade in many of the principal commodities of daily use. The working men of this city have been pioneers of the co-operative movement in Flanders, and their organisations, as developed in several directions, have formed a model for similar societies throughout the Kingdom. The Socialists were the first to found a co-operative distributive society, entering later into the sphere of production; and the proceeds of their enterprise enabled them to establish and maintain not only a considerable political propaganda, but also schemes for old age pensions, insurance against accidents, sickness, and unemployment, in addition to musical, dramatic, and gymnastic clubs, meeting halls, library, etc. Their society, the *Vooruit*, which was formed under its present constitution some

thirty years ago, is the principal co-operative society in Ghent; and in 1907 it possessed a membership of 7,500, and showed a turnover of £140,000. In the city and its three suburbs it owns 16 groceries, 7 pharmacies, and eight other establishments (bakeries, printing works, weaving sheds, etc.). On becoming a member, the nominal registration fee of 2½d. is payable, and 9½d. is retained at the first division of profits. All members of 20 years' standing who have purchased annually groceries and drapery and haberdashery to the value of at least £6 per annum are entitled, on reaching 60 years of age, to a pension of £4 16s., while higher annual purchases may bring the pension up to £12. In 1908 215 pensioners were receiving the aggregate amount of £973 per annum. The members also enjoy other advantages. At childbirth supplies of bread and groceries, based upon the purchases previously made, are given free of charge for a week, and at death the sum of 8s. is allowed to the nearest relative. For an additional payment of ½d. per week the member has the right in case of sickness to 2½ lb. of bread per day for the maximum period of a year, with medical attendance and medicine. The members have free use of the library and of the meeting rooms. The dividend returnable upon the purchase of the various articles is paid in kind, and not in money, purchasers being credited with the amount due in the books of the society. The Roman Catholic trades unions also maintain a co-operative society, the membership of which in 1907–1908 exceeded 2,300. Its turnover in the same financial year was £26,164, and in addition to paying a dividend in money of 6 per cent. upon purchases, it maintained a pension and life insurance fund. As in most Belgian towns, those employed in the State and municipal services in Ghent possess a co-operative society which in 1907 counted some 1,500 members and had total sales of £10,400.

The strongest "multiple" firm in Ghent is native to the city, having been established in 1887 as a joint-stock company. At the present time it possesses a regular *clientèle* of 12,500 families, and carries on 14 branches in the city and suburbs. Its sales in 1907 were £192,000. In several features its business resembles that of the co-operative societies. All workmen who have taken during a year at least seven loaves per week are entitled to five loaves per week for ten weeks if they are unable to work. There are also life assurances for purchasers of bread, groceries, etc. A second "multiple" firm, which has branches throughout Belgium, possesses 14 shops in the city and suburbs, and allows bonuses in kind on many articles; while another firm has five establishments.

The multiple shops and co-operative societies deal not only in groceries, but also in haberdashery, drapery, and general dry goods, in ironmongery, brushes, etc. All the co-operative societies and the chief "multiple" firms carry on an extensive bakery trade, but in no case is fresh meat sold. It may be observed in passing that grocers' shops in Belgium approximate far more nearly to those in England with respect to the wares in which they deal than do those in France. Bacon and ham, for instance, are sold by the grocers as a rule in Belgium. In France the *charcutier* alone generally keeps these commodities in stock.

Markets are very largely resorted to for the purchase of potatoes, vegetables, and fruit, which are sold daily in one or more public places. The chief market day is Friday, when, in various streets and public squares close to the Town Hall and the *Château des Comtes*, butter, eggs, margarine, poultry, and fish markets are held. Ironmongery, tin goods, hosiery, haberdashery and drapery, clothing, and a variety of other commodities are also sold in public markets twice weekly.

Groceries and other Commodities.

Coffee is usually bought at from 7½d. to 9½d. per lb. by working-class families, who drink it with a large admixture of chicory (1½d. to 1¾d. per lb.). White refined sugar in lumps or granulated is sold at from 2½d. to 3d. Butter and margarine may not be sold by the same dealer; the former, on account of its price, is not largely bought by working-people. A considerable proportion of the potato supply of Ghent arrives by barge from Holland. Workmen who have cellars often buy potatoes in large quantities, especially in the early winter season, at prices ranging from 2s. 10d. to 3s. 8d. per cwt. At nearly all seasons potatoes are bought at the markets in quantities of two or four quarters; the price stated in the Table, however, relates to purchases of smaller quantities. White bread almost exclusively is eaten in Ghent, and is sold in loaves weighing 2½ lb. English, Belgian, and German coal is sold in the city, the Belgian coal being slightly dearer than the foreign, which is therefore in more extensive demand among the working classes.

The following Table shows the predominant prices paid in June, 1908, for certain principal commodities of working-class consumption, based upon returns of prices charged by the leading co-operative societies and multiple firms, as well as by private traders in various quarters of the city and suburbs :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.				Predominant Price.
Coffee	...	...	per lb.	7½d. to 9½d.
Sugar, Loaf	...	...	"	2½d. " 3d.
Bacon, Salted	...	...	"	7d. " 8½d.
Eggs	...	...	per 1s.	14
Cheese, Dutch	...	...	per lb.	8½d. to 9½d.
Butter	...	...	"	1s. 0½d. " 1s. 1d.
Margarine	...	...	"	6½d. " 8½d.
Potatoes	...	...	per 7 lb.	3d.
Wheaten Flour	...	...	"	9½d. to 11d.
Bread	...	...	per 4 lb.	4d. " 4½d.
Milk	...	...	per quart	2½d.
Coal	...	...	per cwt.	1s. 1½d.
Paraffin Oil	...	...	per gallon	6d. to 7d.

Meat.

Flanders possesses a considerable cattle and pig-rearing industry, and the city is thus enabled to obtain the bulk of its beef and pork supplies within easy distance. Holland, and to a less degree France, export meat to Ghent to a limited extent ; in 1907, out of a total of 74,438 animals killed at the municipal abattoir, 839 head of cattle were of French origin, while 5,330 head of cattle and 1,682 sheep came from Holland. Mutton is, relatively, little eaten, and a considerable part of the supply is obtained in the Brussels markets, sheep rearing in the provinces of East and West Flanders being of little account. Frozen or chilled meat is not stocked by Ghent butchers. Horses are imported in large numbers ; of 11,693 horses and 51 asses imported in 1907 9,998 were embarked at London, 867 at Hull, and 826 at Goole, while the remaining 53 were embarked at ports on the Baltic. A part of this importation is directed to other places, a certain proportion is sold by the 21 Ghent retailers of horseflesh as fresh meat, but the larger proportion is converted into sausages at one of the eight local sausage factories. The suburb Mont-St.-Amand is a chief centre of this industry, 3,538 horses having been slaughtered in 1907 in this commune for that purpose.

All animals for human consumption, except poultry, game and rabbits, must be slaughtered in the city abattoir ; and it is forbidden by a municipal byelaw to sell any kind of meat, whether fresh, salted, smoked, preserved or otherwise prepared, without previous submission for examination by the town authorities. Fresh foreign meat may be introduced into the town only as whole carcasses, sides, or fore-quarters with the lungs adherent, except in the case of mutton.

The meat trade is in the hands of a large number of dealers. In 1907 433 dealers in fresh butchers' meat, 114 in fresh meat and *charcuterie*, 109 dealers in *charcuterie* alone, 707 dealers in commodities, the basis of which was meat, and 21 dealers in horseflesh were registered in Ghent. The list shows the importance of the trade in prepared meats and *charcuterie*. Meat is retailed in a covered market by some half-dozen stall-holders only.

The meat consumption of the working classes in Ghent does not appear to be large. The consumption per head shown by the budgets collected for the purpose of the present enquiry from 241 families, comprising 1,171 persons, was 21·6 oz. per week, which is at the rate of 70 lb. per annum. The proportions of the chief kinds of meat eaten to the total were : beef 57 per cent., pork 25 per cent., *charcuterie* 6 per cent., bacon 4 and horseflesh 5 per cent., while mutton, veal and rabbits each constituted only about 1 per cent. of the total. There was no consumption of poultry indicated in the returns.

The following Table gives the prices of the chief cuts of the various kinds of meat at Ghent in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.					Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—					
Ribs	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Brisket	...	...	...	...	5½d. to 6d.
Silverside	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Shin	{	with bone	...	...	4½d. to 5½d.
	{	without bone	...	...	5½d. " 6½d.
Beef Steak	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Rump Steak	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Thick Flank	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Thin Flank	...	...	...	...	5½d. to 6½d.
Mutton :—					
Leg	...	...	...	...	8½d. to 9½d.
Shoulder	...	...	...	...	7d. to 7½d.
Breast	...	...	...	...	5½d. to 6d.
Neck	{	Best End	...	...	8½d.
	{	Scrag End	...	...	6d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	8½d. to 9½d.
Veal :—					
Hindquarter	...	...	...	...	8½d. to 9½d.
Shoulder with bone	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Ribs	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	8½d.
Leg	...	...	...	...	8½d. to 9½d.
Pork :—					
Leg	...	...	...	...	7½d. to 8½d.
Foreloin	...	...	...	...	7½d.
Belly	...	...	...	...	6d. to 7½d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	7½d. to 8½d.

The prices quoted are for home-fed, not chilled or frozen, meat, which as has been already noted, is not sold in the city, and the level of prices is low. Veal, which is sold at the uniform price of 8½d. per lb., is little bought by the working people, who also show small liking for mutton. The inferior cuts, and odds and ends of this meat are, however, not infrequently purchased for making a stew with potatoes and vegetables. Most butchers, with a working-class *clientèle*, also sell large quantities of minced meat ; this is composed most usually of beef and lard or fat, but frequently more than one kind of meat is included. Horseflesh has not a considerable vogue at Ghent, but is cheaper than other kinds of meat, the price of fillet ranging from 4½d. to 5½d. per lb., that of *faux filet* and steak being 4½d. per lb., and that of inferior cuts from 2½d. to 3½d. per lb.

Taking prices at Brussels as base (=100), the following are the prices index numbers for Ghent :—food, other than meat 97, meat 92, all food 96, coal 80, and food and coal 94. The index number for rent and prices combined is 89.

LA LOUVIERE.

Few of the towns which belong to the industrial Centre of Belgium have grown so rapidly during recent years as La Louvière, in the province of Hainault, a principal seat of the coal, iron and steel industries, lying south of Brussels, and about 12 miles from Mons.

Three-quarters of a century ago La Louvière consisted of two farms and a small wayside inn, and the entire surrounding district was cultivated field and woodland. It was only in 1869 that a commune of La Louvière, with an area of 2,134 acres, was created out of a cluster of villages and hamlets which had in the meantime been called into existence, or had emerged from obscurity, owing to the development of coal mining. At that time the population was about 7,000. During the following 30 years it grew to 17,570, an increase of 151 per cent., and it is estimated that between 1900 and 1907 there was a further increase of 3,438, or 19·6 per cent.

The population at the last three decennial censuses and the estimated population at the end of 1907 are shown in the following Table :—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	11,859	—	—
1890	14,257	2,398	20·2
1900	17,570	3,313	23·2
1907 (estimated)	21,008	3,438	19·6
		(in seven years).	(in seven years).

It is commonly said that the population of La Louvière has been recruited from all parts of Belgium, and it is certainly true that the growth of the town has been due in the past, and is due to-day, far more to immigration than to excess of births over deaths. This immigration was naturally greatest during the early years of the town's development, yet during the seven years 1901-7, in spite of fluctuations, following the course of trade, a net addition of 2,175 inhabitants took place owing to this cause.

The following Table shows the birth and death rates per 1,000 inhabitants and the infantile death rate per 1,000 births for the years 1904 to 1908 :—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	24·3	12·5	119
1905	21·4	14·2	120
1906	24·8	13·2	115
1907	23·1	15·8	148
1908	24·8	14·9	136

It will be observed that during these years there has not been the heavy fall in the birth-rate which has occurred in many Belgian towns. The average birth-rate for the period under review is 23·7 per 1,000 of population, while the average death-rate is as low as 14·1. The average rate of infantile mortality was 128 per 1,000 births.

La Louvière is surrounded by a large number of small industrial communes, most of which have grown considerably, though not with equal rapidity, during the past 30 years. The nearest and more important of these towns are Houdeng-Goegnies, Haine St. Paul, Haine St. Pierre, Morlanwelz, Bois d'Haine, Manage, and La Hestre; the first three in particular, though not all in the same arrondissement, are so closely connected with La Louvière that they might well form one commune. The following table shows the extent to which the population of these neighbouring towns has increased since 1880:—

Commune.	Population on 31st December.				Increase in 27 years.	Per- centage Increase in 27 years.
	1880.	1890.	1900.	1907 (Estimated).		
Houdeng-Goegnies	5,274	6,033	7,574	8,305	3,031	57·5
Haine St. Paul	4,253	4,865	6,228	7,202	2,949	69·3
Haine St. Pierre	3,386	4,186	5,243	6,705	3,319	98·0
Bois d'Haine	1,749	2,631	3,510	—	1,761*	100·7*
Morlanwelz	6,500	7,307	7,809	8,526	2,026	31·2
Manage	2,770	3,193	3,812	—	1,042*	37·6*
La Hestre	3,423	3,535	4,081	—	658*	19·2*

* In 20 years.

The importance of La Louvière and all these adjoining towns depends for the most part on the collieries and the great iron and steel industries which have been established in this busy part of the district known as the Centre. Coal was extracted in the neighbourhood as early as the fourteenth century, but it was only in the first half of last century that coal mining reached large commercial proportions. There are four colliery companies in the immediate neighbourhood, viz., those of La Louvière and Sars-Longchamps, with a concession of 2,747 acres and seven pits; Mariemont with a concession of 4,110 acres and five pits; Bascoup, with a concession of 5,585 acres and five pits; and Haine St. Pierre, Houssu, and La Hestre, with a concession of 2,529 acres and seven pits. There are seven other companies in the Centre basin.

The iron and steel industries are of more recent origin. They include a blast furnace, several rolling mills in which plates, rails, and profile iron generally are produced; foundries, one of which specialises in pipes for drainage and water works, while others cast wheels, axle boxes, and miscellaneous railway material; steel works; large locomotive, boiler, machine, and carriage and wagon works; several works which manufacture structural iron for bridges, roofs, &c.; and bolt, nut and rivet manufactories—one an English establishment. The manufacture of rolling stock and other material for the railways and tramways is the most important branch of the metallurgical industry of the district, several establishments employing in their various departments more than 1,000 workpeople each.

Large contracts for locomotives, tenders, carriages and wagons are executed from time to time for the State railways, but the principal works chiefly depend upon foreign orders.

The only other important manufactories are those of pottery (La Louvière), window glass (Huine St. Pierre), and glasses and goblets (Familleureux and Manage). These industries likewise export the greater part of their output, the United Kingdom being one of the principal buyers.

The trade of La Louvière is greatly assisted by the branch of the canal which passes the town on the way from Charleroi to Brussels. At two points where a considerable difference in levels has to be overcome, powerful lifts, which raise the boats in troughs, supersede the old method of locks. The canal brings to the town large quantities of agricultural produce and raw materials for industry and serves for the shipment of coal and heavy goods.

Essentially a town of recent growth, La Louvière can hardly be said as yet to have taken form; it is rather a town in outline, for the builders have chiefly followed the lines of the roads leading to adjacent communes and opened out streets at right angles to these, and except in the centre and in the older districts there are few finished areas of large extent. The town has ample space for development, however, and the administrative authorities have taken care to lay down in advance the broad features of its future plan. No one can doubt that an important future awaits La Louvière, and in spite of its present somewhat raw aspect there are signs of a disposition to build for appearance as well as utility. As yet, however, there are no noteworthy public buildings.

The aspect of the houses of the working classes indicates a tolerable standard of well-being, but the dress and bearing of the male portion of the workers do not suggest that great regard is paid to outward appearances. Here as elsewhere in Belgium wooden clogs are common amongst both sexes. Wages are relatively high in the staple industries, and there is said to be considerable thrift.

It may be noted, in illustration of social habits, that there are 750 *estaminets* and other places at which alcoholic beverages are sold for consumption on the premises, a ratio of one licensed house to every 29 inhabitants. The great majority of these *estaminets* are workmen's dwellings, the sale of liquor being carried on in the front room, the sole furniture of which consists of a simple bar, a small table, and several chairs or benches. In some streets 50 per cent. of the dwellings serve this purpose, and at times one may come across an unbroken succession of eight or ten *estaminets*. A tax of 4s., 8s. or 12s. per annum is levied upon the tenants by the municipality, independently of the State tax.

The town's trading enterprise is confined to the abattoir and the management of the open markets, which are held twice a week in one of the public squares. There is no public water supply, though it has been decided to provide one, the existing system of house pumps having been condemned as insanitary. The gas works are in the hands of a company, which charges 3s. 2d. per 1,000 cubic feet to domestic consumers, and 2s. 3½d. to industrial consumers; and there is no electric light. The electric tramways are owned by the *Société nationale des chemins de fer vicinaux* and are worked by an association of the communes affected. The tramways are essentially inter-communal, yet owing to the formation of the town they serve the local needs of La Louvière equally well. The association of communes leases the rolling stock as well as the lines. Its working capital is small and the profits are relatively large. La Louvière derived from this source in 1906 £504 and in 1907 £1,032. Low fares are offered to workmen, who can travel six miles to and fro six times a week for 1s. 4½d., eight miles for 1s. 8½d., 12 miles for 1s. 11d., and longer distances at diminishing cost.

Considerable attention is paid to technical instruction in various forms. There is a large municipal Industrial School with a wide curriculum and special departments for mechanics and stokers, metal workers, electrical workers, the building trades, etc.; and there are two housekeeping schools (one municipal and the other ecclesiastical), in which factory girls and others receive practical training in domestic duties. The commune of Morlanwelz has also a successful Industrial School, attended by about a thousand scholars from the district, with special classes for joiners, fitters, turners, and drillers.

The municipal budget for 1907 provided for an ordinary expenditure of £20,904. The principal sources of the ordinary revenue were the local percentages levied upon the State property, personal, and trading taxes, yielding £7,280, the town's share of the fund assigned in substitution of *octroi* duties by the Law of July 18, 1860, yielding £4,621; the town's share in the "special fund" created in 1899 for distribution among the communes, yielding £786; and State and provincial subsidies towards the cost of education, in amount £2,635. The purely local taxes on industrial, financial, commercial and agricultural establishments, on façades of buildings, footways, bars and tobacco shops, *cafés* using musical instruments, carriages, horses, and dogs yielded £2,498.

The work of outdoor poor relief is discharged by the *Bureau de Bienfaisance*, which is conducted by a committee of ten persons, nominated by the Town Council. Its funds are derived from endowments to the amount of £4,668, yielding interest of £140, one-fourth of the cemetery fees, miscellaneous gifts and *fêtes*, and a municipal grant to make up each year's deficiency. In 1908 the total revenue was £1,324, of which the town contributed £726 or more than one-half. The number of families temporarily relieved was 180 and that of families permanently relieved 320.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

La Louvière has few industries, but those industries are large and, owing to their character and the exceptional amount of capital which they need, they comprise a comparatively small number of establishments. The same thing holds good of the smaller towns which are within the industrial district of La Louvière. The coal, iron, and steel trades predominate, and enterprise on a large scale is the rule. Small independent *entrepreneurs*, employing a few men and perhaps working with them, do not form part of the industrial organisation which has been developed so successfully in this district during the past generation. Of the four companies which work collieries in the immediate neighbourhood, one employed 3,681 workers at a recent date, another employed 3,106, another 2,586, and the fourth 2,423. Several of the large engineering works regularly employ more than 1,000 workpeople, and this number is exceeded by the old-established pottery manufactory.

The following enumeration of the industrial population has been supplied by the Factory Inspectors charged with the supervision of the district to which La Louvière

belongs, and which contains in addition the adjacent towns of Haine St. Pierre, Haine St. Paul, Bois d'Haine, Morlanwelz, Familleureux, Le Roeulx, and Manage.

The total number of workers employed by the four colliery companies, according to the return furnished, was 11,796, of whom 8,186 were employed underground and 3,610 at the surface, 560 of the latter being females. The following Table classifies the colliery workers in detail:—

Age of Workers.	Workers (under-ground).		Workers (above-ground).	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
12 to 14 years	161	—	85	240
14 to 16 "	291	—	102	
16 to 21 "	7,734	—	2,863	258
Above 21 years				62
Totals	8,186	—	3,050	560

The following Table classifies the workpeople in other trades, those employed in establishments in La Louvière being first given separately:—

Groups of Trades.	Total Number of Workpeople Employed.	Number of Workpeople whose Sex and Age are available.	Number of Workpeople Classified by Sex and Age.				
			Males.		Females.		
			Under 16 years.	16 years and over.	Under 16 years.	16 years and under 21 years.	21 years and over.
<i>La Louvière :</i>							
Metal and Engineering ...	5,633	3,563	476	2,951	38	69	29
Pottery	1,883	1,883	138	1,189	319	200	37
Woodworking	494	494	11	483	—	—	—
Quarrying and Stonemasonry	231	231	20	143	22	38	8
All Other Trades . . .	290	290	16	269	2	1	2
Total	8,531	6,461	661	5,035	381	308	76
<i>La Louvière and District :</i>							
Metal and Engineering ...	13,002	9,802	1,121	8,469	75	101	36
Glass	3,011	3,011	372	2,080	232	203	124
Pottery	1,943	1,943	141	1,246	319	200	37
Woodworking	947	947	19	928	—	—	—
Food	456	456	—	452	—	4	—
Cement	308	308	35	217	27	26	3
Quarrying and Stonemasonry	239	239	20	151	22	38	8
Building	222	222	4	218	—	—	—
All Other Trades	409	409	28	337	17	10	17
Total	20,537	17,337	1,740	14,098	692	582	225

The distribution of the principal industries (coal mining excluded) in the various communes included in the La Louvière district is shown by the following Table:—

Commune.	Total Number of Workpeople Employed.			
	Metal and Engineering.	Glass.	All Other Trades.	Total.
La Louvière	5,633	—	2,898*	8,531
Bois d'Haine	708	—	128	836
Familleureux	284	749	36	1,069
Haine St. Paul	3	—	230	233
Haine St. Pierre	3,873	690	286	4,849
Le Roeulx	372	—	24	396
Manage	319	1,572	171	2,062
Morlanwelz	1,810	—	751†	2,561

* See Table above.

† Including 308 in Cement and 213 in Woodworking.

The usual hours of labour are from 59 or 60 to 66 per week, though in some industries hours both below and above this range are worked. Work begins, as a rule, at six o'clock, and there are intervals of a quarter of an hour at eight o'clock for breakfast, an hour at noon, and a quarter of an hour at four o'clock for tea (*goûter*). It is the practice of many firms, and amongst them some of the largest, to begin work an hour later on Monday, and one firm, employing 1,300 workpeople, ceases work on Saturday at four o'clock. There are many holidays, and employers only count on a maximum of 300 working days in the year. In addition to the Church festivals there are several days' holiday in carnival week, and not only each local commune but in some cases different hamlets in a commune have their special *kermesses* or feasts, all of which are regarded as a pretext for ceasing work. Notice of longer or shorter duration is invariably necessary to the termination of an engagement.

The labour organisations are few in number and weak in influence. The only unions that count are those of the miners, metal-workers, and building trades attached to the Socialist party, yet their combined membership does not exceed a few hundreds. The glass workers of the Familleureux and Manage districts, on the other hand, are well organised. The Roman Catholic ("Christian") labour movement is of recent origin, and it would appear that conditions at La Louvière are not specially favourable to its growth; at present only one trade union of this type exists, consisting of some 60 metal-workers. There is an independent union of printers. No formal collective wages agreements have been concluded, though list or minimum rates are observed in several trades. Piece rates are paid in all the important industries except to unskilled labourers. There is no public Labour Registry in the town.

In general the industries of La Louvière are not those in which much female labour is employed; the only exceptions are the pottery industry, in which not only many young women but many children of both sexes are engaged; the bolt and nut manufactories, in which girls do the tapping; and certain operations at the pit-mouth, such as releasing the lorries from the cages, discharging and replacing them. Few married women are employed away from home, and even home work for wages would appear to be uncommon.

Notes are added regarding special conditions of employment in various trades and industries:—

Building Trades.—No uniform hours are worked, but the working day is seldom less than 10 or more than 11 hours in length. In general organised workers decline to work more than 10 hours daily. The Municipal Council, in its contracts with contractors, stipulates a maximum of 72 hours weekly for bricklayers and masons, plasterers and labourers; 66 for stone-cutters, carpenters and plumbers; from 60 to 66 for painters, and 60 for joiners.

Sometimes work begins later on Monday, but there is no trade custom to that effect. The usual wages of bricklayers and masons, stonecutters, carpenters, plumbers and plasterers all range from 24s. to 26s. 5d., and labourers receive from 16s. 10d. to 21s. 1d.

Coal Mining.—The coal pits in this portion of the Centre basin fall within a depth of from 700 to 800 metres, or 383 to 437 fathoms, but some are much under this depth. The coal seams are weak, often little over a foot thick, and dip at a very acute angle, causing exploitation to be difficult and profits low, though coal of a good quality is obtained. The pits are worked in two shifts, the coal being hewn by night and got out by day. The length of the shift is 9 or 10 hours, including descent and ascent, which, as a rule, occupy about an hour; deducting this time, and half an hour for meals, which are taken at such times as may be convenient, the majority of those employed underground actually work 7½ or 8½ hours daily. Putters and trammers, however, work somewhat longer, while, on the other hand, driftmen only work 8 hours a day. Surface men work 10 hours daily. The hewers, gallymen and driftmen are all paid by piece, the road men by piece or time, and the rest of the men below ground, as well as the surface-men, receive time wages, though in one colliery the putters and trammers receive in addition a bonus proportionate to the number of lorries loaded, and the cagers and drivers receive a bonus proportionate to the total tonnage of coal extracted. Hewers earned in June, 1908, from 25s. 9d. to 30s. 9d. per week, putters and trammers from 17s. 3d. to 24s., and surface men from 14s. 5d. to 15s. 10d. Wages are paid fortnightly, five days' wages being retained as security. A fortnight's notice is usual before a man can be discharged or can leave employment. A large number of the colliers are housed in small cottages belonging

to the companies, for which they pay low rents, ranging as a rule from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 3d. per week for four rooms. They are also supplied with coal for home use at a reduced rate.

Iron, Steel, and Engineering Trades.—The hours worked by blastfurnacemen are 63 weekly, and those in rolling mills range from 60 to 66. Payment is by piece, with a bonus additional in some cases. First rollers in plate rolling mills earn as much as 67s. 2d. per week and in rail rolling mills from 36s. to 48s., while second rollers earn 48s. and 28s. 10d. to 33s. 7d. respectively. The wages of heaters are about the same. Wages are paid fortnightly. The usual term of notice is a fortnight, but at one establishment it is only a day. In these works, as in the heavy metal trades generally, a large part of the unskilled labour is done by Flemings. Coming from agricultural pursuits Flemish labourers are not suited to skilled work, but they are invaluable in occupations which call for physical strength and endurance. In the locomotive, boiler, carriage and wagon works the hours worked range from 59 to 63. Piece work, combined with a system of bonuses, is here universal except as regards patternmakers and labourers. Wages are paid fortnightly and the term of notice varies from 20 hours to a week. The wages earned show a considerable range; those given in the following table are the predominant rates, ascertained by a comparison of returns supplied by all the principal works, but it should be added that the rates given by one important firm were abnormally high and as a consequence have not been quoted. Piece work is general in the bolt and nut works, of which there are six or eight, several of them carried on in conjunction with iron foundries. The hours worked are from 59 to 62 weekly. From two days to a week's notice is usual.

Glass and Earthenware Industries.—La Louvière is not, strictly speaking, one of the centres of the Belgian glass industry, which attains its largest proportions in the Charleroi district, yet there are at Familleureux and Manage several manufactories of crystal glass, goblets, and table glasses, and sheet glass is made at Haine St. Pierre. The hours worked by blowers and gatherers are 52½ in the window-glass works and 60 in the goblet and glass works. The men work in shifts and payment is all by piece. The glass workers are thoroughly organised, and though no formal wages agreement exists there are fixed rates common to and observed by all the goblet and glass works. Some 1,300 workers, to a large extent young women and boys and girls, are employed in the pottery and tile works of Boch Frères, a firm whose boast it is that during the 65 years of its existence no strike has ever occurred amongst its workpeople. The hours of work are 58½ weekly, and workpeople are engaged subject to a week's notice. Unskilled labourers in this trade, who in 1880 earned 13s. 2d. per week for 66 hours' work, now earn 18s. for nearly 8 hours less, and furnacemen who were then paid 14s. 5d. now receive 21s. 7d.

Printing Trades.—The printing establishments are small, and the aggregate number of employees does not exceed 50. There are two daily newspapers, but they are unpretentious and being produced leisurely by day they do not require composing machines. The printers are organised, and a minimum rate of 4½d. is observed, subject to the employer's right to require a minimum capacity, as proved by a test, but in practice this rate is often exceeded.

Food and Drink Trades.—These trades include two large corn mills, one owned by the *Bon Grain* Co-operative Society at Morlanwelz, several co-operative bakeries, in addition to the private bakeries, and about ten breweries, of which three are co-operative, one belonging to the *Bon Grain* society, one to the *Au Progrès* society, and the other to the *Union des Ouvriers* (Workers' Union) society at Houdeng-Goegnies. Bakers are paid net wages; there is no living-in and no allowance of bread. In the breweries free beer is customary.

Public Services.—The only workpeople employed by the town are those engaged in the repairing and cleaning of the streets; the house scavengers, the abattoir staff, and miscellaneous labourers engaged in connection with the markets. Their usual hours are 60 weekly. Ordinary works of street construction are done by contract. The gas works of the *Société anonyme d'éclairage du Centre*, which supplies the town, employ 80 workmen as stokers and yard labourers. The drivers and conductors of the electric tramways, worked by the *Société Intercommunale des Tramways*, are paid the same wages, which fall between minimum and maximum rates of £4 12s. and £6 per month, or 21s. 3d. and 27s. 8d. weekly, most of the men earning from 23s. 1d. to 24s. a week.

The following were the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of adult males in the principal trades and industries in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Building Trades :—		
Bricklayers and Masons	24s. to 26s. 5d.	60 to 66
Stonemasons (Cutters)	24s. „ 26s. 5d.	60 „ 66
Carpenters	24s. „ 26s. 5d.	60 „ 66
Joiners	21s. 7d. to 26s. 5d.	60 „ 66
Plumbers	24s. to 26s. 5d.	60 „ 66
Plasterers	24s. „ 26s. 5d.	60 „ 66
Painters	19s. 2d. to 23s. 9d.	60 „ 66
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	16s. 10d. „ 21s. 1d.	60 „ 66
Coal Mining :—		
Hewers...	25s. 9d. to 30s. 9d.	54 „ 60*
Gallerymen, Drift-men	26s. 8d. „ 31s. 2d.	48*
Putiers and Trammers	17s. 3d. to 24s.	54 to 66*
Surface Labourers	14s. 5d. to 15s. 10d.	60
Blast Furnaces :—		
First Keepers	24s.	63
Second Keepers	21s. 7d.	63
Pig Carriers	24s.	63
Lower Feeders	18s. 3d.	63
Upper „	19s. 2d.	63
Labourers	18s.	63
Rolling Mills :—		
1st Rollers { Plates	67s. 2d.	60
{ Rails, &c.	36s. to 48s.	60 to 66
2nd Rollers { Plates	48s.	60
{ Rails, &c.	28s. 10d. to 33s. 7d.	60 to 66
3rd Rollers { Plates	38s. 5d.	60
{ Rails, &c.	24s. to 33s. 7d.	60 to 66
1st Heaters { Plates	67s. 2d.	60
{ Rails, &c.	35s. to 50s. 5d.	60 to 66
2nd Heaters { Plates	43s. 2d.	60
{ Rails, &c.	26s. 5d. to 33s. 7d.	60 to 66
3rd Heaters { Plates	24s.	60
{ Rails, &c.	23s. to 24s.	60 to 66
Hookers-on	21s. 7d.	60 „ 66
Labourers	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	60 „ 66
Steel Works :—		
1st Converters	31s. 2d.	59 „ 66
2nd „	24s.	59 „ 66
1st Melters	33s. 7d.	59 „ 66
2nd „	27s. 7d.	59 „ 66
Moulders	38s. 5d.	59 „ 66
Furnacemen	21s. 7d.	59 „ 66
Labourers	16s. 10d. to 21s. 7d.	59 „ 66
Machine, Locomotive, Boiler, Carriage and Wagon Works :—		
Moulders	26s. 5d. to 31s. 2d.	59 „ 63
Fitters	23s. 8d. „ 28s. 10d.	59 „ 63
Turners	23s. 5d. „ 31s. 2d.	59 „ 63
Smiths	26s. 5d. „ 31s. 2d.	59 „ 63
Smiths in Boilerworks	28s. 10d.	59 „ 63
Patternmakers	24s. to 28s. 10d.	59 „ 63
Platers	30s. to 36s.	59 „ 63
Riveters	20s. 5d. to 26s. 5d.	59 „ 63
Holders-up	16s. 10d. to 19s. 9d.	59 „ 63
Platers' Helpers	16s. 10d. to 18s.	59 „ 63
Joiners	26s. 5d. to 33s. 7d.	59 „ 62
Painters	19s. 2d. to 23s.	59 „ 62
Labourers	16s. 10d.	59 „ 63

* Bank-to-bank times.

	Weekly Wages. Predominant	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Bolt and Nut Works :—		
Nut Makers	26s. to 28s. 10d.	59 to 62
Bolt „	26s. „ 28s. 10d.	59 „ 62
Fitters and Turners (dies)	24s. „ 26s. 11d.	59 „ 62
Labourers	16s. 10d.	59 „ 62
Glass Manufacture :—		
Window Glass—		
1st Gatherers	43s. 2d. to 50s. 5d.	52½
2nd „	28s. 10d. to 36s.	52½
1st Blowers	52s. 10d. „ 62s. 5d.	52½
Flatteners	36s. 11d.	63
Cutters	27s. 8d.	63
Labourers	19s. 2d.	64½
Glasses and Goblets—		
Blowers { Glasses	33s. 7d. to 46s. 2d.	60
{ Goblets	27s. 8d. to 34s. 7d.	60
Cutters	33s. 7d. to 36s. 11d.	60
Engravers	32s. 4d. „ 33s. 7d.	60
Labourers	16s. 10d. „ 19s. 2d.	60
Pottery and Tile Manufacture :—		
Grinders and Millers	18s.	58½
Pressers	22s. 10d.	58½
Moulders	31s. 2d.	58½
Furnacemen	21s. 7d.	60
Painters and Decorators	28s. 10d.	58½
Printers	22s. 10d.	58½
Labourers	18s.	58½
Printing Trades :—		
Compositors (hand)	21s. 7d. to 23s. 7d.	59 to 60
Pressmen	22s. 10d. to 26s.	59 „ 60
Food and Drink Trades :		
Corn Milling—		
Millers	22s. 2d. to 24s.	60 to 72
Labourers	18s. 6d. to 19s. 2d.	60
Bakeries—		
1st Bakers { Private Bakeries	24s.	60 to 66
{ Co-operative Bakeries	25s. 7d. to 28s. 10d.	48
2nd „ { Private Bakeries	19s. 2d.	60 to 66
{ Co-operative Bakeries	24s. to 28s. 10d.	48
Beer Brewing—		
Brewers { Private	19s. 2d. to 20s.	62 to 66
{ Co-operative	29s. 6d. „ 32s.	60
Draymen { Private	27s. 8d.	—
{ Co-operative	29s. 6d. to 32s.	—
Public Services :—		
Road Department (Municipal)—		
Paviors	24s.	60
Paviors' Labourers	18s.	60
Roadmen	16s. 10d.	60
Road Sweepers	16s. 10d.	60
Carmen	20s. 8d.	60
Gas Works (Company)—		
Gas Stokers	21s. 7d.	—
Yard Labourers	19s. 2d.	60
Tramways (Company)—		
Drivers and Conductors	23s. 1d. to 24s.	65

Wages at La Louvière are comparatively high. The level of wages in Brussels being taken as 100, the index numbers for La Louvière are—for skilled men, 95 in the building trades and 111 in the engineering trades ; for unskilled labourers, 100 in the building trades and 109 in the engineering trades ; for compositors the corresponding figure is 85.

Several employers, in addition to the colliery companies, provide dwellings for a portion of their workpeople at low rents. The Boch Pottery Company also provides a casino and recreation hall, and attached to its works are a savings bank, a housekeeping school, a vocal union, an orchestra, etc. Sick funds are carried on in connection with

many works; the workpeople usually contribute 1 or 2 per cent. of their wages, and in some cases the employers contribute. Some of these funds give medical assistance when needed to all the members of the workman's family. There are also several pension funds, similarly supported, and affiliated to the State Pension Bank. The coalmining industry has a fund of its own, extending to the entire basin of the Centre. One firm near La Louvière lends money to workpeople desirous of building their own houses. Small cottages containing two rooms downstairs and two upstairs, with or without a loft, and with a garden, cost from £150 upwards.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

La Louvière is so modern that the architecture of its streets presents no characteristics of special interest. Buildings of three stories (including the ground floor) are the rule in the principal streets, but working-class houses seldom exceed two stories, *i.e.*, the ground floor and the first story, with in many cases a loft under the tiles. The usual building material is brick, plain or plastered, with a lower course of granite, obtained from the neighbouring quarries of Soignies and Ecaussines. In the better houses the framework of the windows is also stone.

The single-family house is general amongst all classes; according to the census of 1900, the average number of households per house destined for habitation was 1.11. In a town whose interests are so exclusively industrial, a town still in the earliest stages of development, any widespread segregation of classes would hardly be expected; the population is, in fact, very diffused, and except in the main streets, which are occupied by business premises, with dwellings above, and in several quite new streets of a superior type, the working classes live in all parts of the town.

The cottage tradition of La Louvière and the general use of brick tend to produce great uniformity in architecture, and many of the streets are hardly to be distinguished, in severity and monotony of style, from the working-class quarters of English manufacturing towns. The best of the dwellings are to be found near the centre; on the outskirts there are streets of old and inferior property.

Even inside the dwellings there is little variety. Either they have passages or have not, and are with or without pantries, in addition to the kitchens, but when these differences have been noted the originality of the builder has been exhausted.

Practically there is but one type of working-class dwelling, whether in private or colliery ownership, *viz.*, the through cottage consisting of the ground floor and first story, with a loft and often a cellar. There are two rooms downstairs, a sitting-room in front, approached either direct from the street or through a passage, 4 feet wide, and the kitchen behind, with a door into a small backyard or *cour*. The front room is generally of ample proportions, but the kitchen also is invariably a very serviceable apartment. The kitchen is always tiled, and often the entire ground floor, from front door to back, is so treated, an arrangement which housewives prefer. The stairs usually rise from a corner of the kitchen and give access to two rooms of equal dimensions with those below. The sitting-room, passage, and kitchen are often papered. The water-closet is always outside. The water supply is obtained from a pump inside the house or from one outside serving for a number of households.

The following are the measurements of rooms in typical houses visited:—

Rue de la Fraternité.—House of 4 rooms with pantry. Front room and kitchen both 11 feet by 10 feet by 10 feet; pantry 10 feet by 6 feet by 10 feet. Both rooms tiled and papered. A small garden behind. Rent of this and many similar houses about 3s. 10d. weekly.

Rue Arthur Warocqué.—House of 4 rooms, with passage, loft, cellar, and garden. Front room 18 feet by 18 feet by 10 feet; kitchen 10 feet square; passage 4 feet wide, all tiled. Rent 3s. 8d. weekly.

Rue Arthur Warocqué.—House of 4 rooms, papered. Front room 11 feet by 11 feet by 10 feet; kitchen 10 feet by 9 feet by 10 feet. Rent 3s. 4d. weekly.

Rue des Moulins.—House of 4 rooms, with garden. Front room 15 feet by 15 feet by 10 feet; kitchen 10 feet by 15 feet by 10 feet. Staircase cut off kitchen. Rent 4s.

The worst houses are those found in the alleys and courts (*impasses*), which are, however, few, and are for the most part inhabited by the poorer Flemish and other families. These houses consist of two, three, or four rooms, and are let at low rents.

In the outlying small towns, like Haine St. Pierre, Haine St. Paul, Houdeng, &c., the housing conditions are far less favourable than in La Louvière, and there is much dilapidated and squalid property, though no overcrowding.

The tenement house is a negligible quantity, and there seems no likelihood of the development of this type of dwelling. A small number of groups of *quartiers*, as tenement dwellings are called—consisting as a rule of one room, though occasionally of two—do, indeed, exist, but the buildings in which they are found comprise only the customary ground floor and one or two stories. Some of these tenements are in reality *chambres garnies*, the owners letting rooms meagrely furnished to single persons or married couples at a monthly rent of 10s. or 12s. With these insignificant exceptions one-roomed dwellings do not exist.

Owing to the large number of unmarried workmen who come to the town from all parts of the country, many families let one or more rooms to lodgers. The usual charge for board and the use of a room is 10s. per week.

In determining the predominant rents paid by working-class families in La Louvière, it was found necessary to confine attention to the four-roomed cottage, since this is the typical dwelling. The usual range of rents for this accommodation is from 3s. 4d. to 3s. 8d. per week. Nearly two-thirds of all the dwellings of this size the rents of which were ascertained by direct enquiry fell within this range. This rent is not increased by any direct payment of rates, since the working classes, as a rule, live in dwellings the rents of which exempt them from local taxation, nor yet by any charge for water, since, in the absence of a public supply, this is derived from pumps placed in the houses or the adjoining yards. Houses are as a rule taken, and rents are paid, by the month.

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.			Predominant Weekly Rents.
Four rooms	...	...	3s. 4d. to 3s. 8d.

Rent at Brussels being taken as 100, the rent index number for La Louvière is 75.

There are some 750 employers' dwellings in the neighbourhood of the collieries and several of the larger industrial works, but they do not as a rule represent a high standard of housing accommodation. The La Louvière Colliery Company owns 220 houses, built many years ago in four blocks, each enclosing a large square, which is divided into garden plots and chicken runs. The houses contain four small rooms, with a pantry extra in some cases; the bedrooms are very low. The closets and the pumps are outside. The monthly rents range from 6s. 5d. to 8s. The Haine St. Pierre and Houssu Colliery Company owns 100 dwellings at the former place and 146 at the latter. The accommodation is as above, and the rents are 8s. and 9s. 7d. monthly. The Mariemont Colliery Company owns 200 dwellings, which are let at from 4s. 9d. to 9s. 7d. monthly. Cottages containing four rooms, and costing 2s. 4d. weekly, are provided for over 40 families by the Mariemont Glassworks Company, and the firms of G. Boël (steel works) and Boch Frères (pottery manufactory) own a number of houses.

Comparatively few working men own their own houses, although where land can be had cheaply a commodious dwelling of four rooms with loft, simply built of brick, can be had from £150 upwards. Two building societies—one carried on under "Liberal" and the other under Roman Catholic auspices—have been formed for the purpose of encouraging house ownership, but they only lend money to intending builders and do not build. Both societies have been established under the Housing Law of 1889, and enjoy the privileges and immunities which that law confers in respect of taxation, &c. The larger (Liberal) society, *La Prévoyance*, has existed for 16 years, and has now 84 members. The subscribed capital is £4,904, of which only £500 has been paid up, most of the needed funds being obtained from the State Savings Bank on mortgage or other guarantee. The society borrows from this source at 2½ and 3 per cent. and lends at 4 per cent. A workman desirous of building a house is required to deposit one-fifth of the total estimated cost and the balance is advanced to him under a contract, of which a life insurance policy generally forms part, providing for repayment during a specified number of years, which may be 10, 15, 20, or 25, as desired. Up to the year 1906 the society had been instrumental in building 498 houses in the arrondissement, 163 of these being in La Louvière; 129 houses had been cleared of debt, so that they were the unconditional property of their builders, and in the great majority of cases the loans had been contracted in conjunction with life insurance policies, the duration of which is concurrent with the period fixed for the repayment of the advances. In 1908 loans were still outstanding to the amount of £38,800, while the value of the property affected was £67,650. Houses

for single families are invariably built, the usual accommodation being two rooms below and two above, with loft and garden, and sometimes with pantry. As a rule it costs from £200 to £220 to build a good house of this size in the town, but small houses can be built in the villages for £150.

The other society, *La Maison Ouvrière*, works on the same lines, except that it makes loans on houses which are intended to serve as *estaminets*, which the *Prévoyance* society declines to do. Up to the present it has advanced money to 427 intending builders. There is a similar society at Houdeng-Goegnies, which since 1903 has enabled 56 members to acquire houses, and there are societies in the neighbouring communes of Morlanwelz, La Hestre, and Roeulx.

RETAIL PRICES.

Groceries and other Commodities.

There is no covered market at La Louvière, but markets are held in the streets twice a week, on Monday and Thursday, for the sale of farm produce, vegetables, fruit, etc. There is a very large number of grocers' shops, but in many the stocks appear to be small, and it is obvious that their turnover is insignificant. There are two large co-operative societies, neither located in the town, though their sales there are very extensive, and there is an important "multiple" firm with shops in all parts of the district. Most grocers deal in butter, cheese, and eggs, but there are also special shops for the sale of these articles.

The co-operative societies claim so large a share in the trade of the town and district, and are in themselves so interesting, that they are deserving of special remark. The principal society bears the name *Le Bon Grain*; it dates from 1891 and is directed from the little town of Morlanwelz. In legal constitution it is in reality a joint stock company (*société anonyme*), but this form was given to it owing to the fact that it owes its origin to the action of a band of public-spirited citizens—large employers of labour and others—who, while desirous of placing within the reach of the working classes cheap provisions of the best quality, were prepared to take upon themselves whatever risk might be involved. The operations of the company are indistinguishable from those of an ordinary co-operative society; the rights of the shareholders are so limited by the articles of association as to secure to customers all the advantages of systematic co-operation, and the surplus profits are divided half-yearly in bonuses in the usual way, while working-men co-operate on the board of management. Membership of the company, giving a right to participate in all the privileges offered, is obtainable for an entrance fee of 1s. 8d., without a purchase of shares. The society deals mainly in bread, pastry, flour, beer, and vinegar, in each of which articles it has a very extensive sale. At Morlanwelz it owns a large block of buildings comprising a flour mill, capable of producing 2,400 sacks of flour weekly, a bread bakery with 16 ovens, now producing 28,000 4·4 lb. loaves every day, a pastry and biscuit bakery, a brewery with an output of over 450,000 gallons of beer annually, and a vinegar distillery. The beer is sold at 4½d. per gallon, but 10 per cent. of the price is returned at the end of the year. The society has also established branch bakeries in three other towns. The members of *Le Bon Grain* exceeded 33,000 in 1908. In addition to money bonuses, the society grants free loaves to customers who are out of work owing to sickness or accident, and 76,000 loaves were given in this way in 1908, while buyers who have traded with the society for five years have a right to pensions at the age of 60 years, 85 per cent. of the profits, after the payment of bonuses, being assigned to a fund for this purpose. The amount of the pension depends upon the quantity of flour, bread, and beer purchased by the beneficiary; it may range from £4 per annum to four times that sum. Widows of pensioners continue to draw pensions if of the qualifying age. At the present time about 2,000 persons are in receipt of these pensions, which represent deferred bonuses. In the event of a member's death the sum of £1 is paid towards funeral expenses.

The other co-operative society is a Socialist organisation, bearing the name *Au Progrès*, and its headquarters are at Jolimont, near La Louvière. It has a membership of 28,000, representing 19,000 families. In addition to a large bakery, which produced during the year 1907-8 five and a half million loaves of 4·4 lb., to a value of £108,340, and yielded a profit of £10,270, it has at La Louvière and three of the neighbouring towns four shops for the sale of groceries and drugs, and eight for the sale of clothing or shoes; also a butcher's shop, and a brewery with a production of 1,250,000 gallons, yielding a profit of £5,640, and five people's restaurants. The society's beer is sold to members at a uniform price of 4½d. per gallon, subject to a bonus of 10 per cent. at the end of the half year, and the bonus on bread is 3 centimes (¾d.) per 4·4 lb. loaf,

equal to about 6 per cent. of the retail price. The present trade in bread is about 20,000 loaves daily. The aggregate turnover in 1907-8 was £168,276, and the aggregate profits were £16,726. This society likewise gives to members, in addition to bonuses on the bread, beer, and other articles purchased, a 4·4 lb. loaf daily in times of sickness or incapacity, to a maximum of three months at one time, and pensions at the age of 60 years, subject to active membership for ten years. During the financial year 1907-8 the society distributed to needy members 125,837 loaves with a value of £2,550, and 900 pensioners were on the books, the amount of their pensions ranging from a minimum of £3 4s. to £16 per annum.

Neither of these societies allows credit.

There is a third co-operative society at Houdeng-Goegnies, *L'Union des Ouvriers* (Workmen's Union), which restricts itself to brewing.

It may be noted that the competition of the co-operative societies has compelled many private dealers to follow their example in the return of bonuses or discount, generally called *ristournes*.

Food articles of a good quality are generally consumed by the working classes. *Coffee* is always bought in the bean, sometimes unroasted, and is most frequently used with a large admixture of chicory. Dutch *cheese* is commonly stocked, but Belgian kinds are also eaten. There is a considerable consumption of *margarine*, though many grocers do not sell it.

The bread eaten is exclusively wheaten. It is sold in round and long loaves, though usually the former, weighing 4·4 lb., and the price in June, 1908, was from 3½d. to 4½d. per 4·4 lb. The competition of the two co-operative bakeries keeps down the price of bread. Both still sold bread at 4d. for 4 lb. in the summer of 1908, but this price was subject to a half-yearly bonus, which reduced the net price to about 3½d. In March, 1909, their shop price was 5d. per 4 lb. Prior to 1908 the price had stood at 4d. for about 10 years. *Bacon* is bought both salted and smoked, and more at the *charcutier's* than the grocer's.

The following were the prices usually paid by the working classes for various articles of common consumption in June, 1908:—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	7½d. to 8½d.
Sugar, Loaf "	3d.
Bacon, Salted "	7½d.
Eggs per 1s.	10
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	7½d. to 8½d.
Butter "	1s. 2d.
Margarine "	8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	3d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d. to 10½d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	3½d. " 4½d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal per cwt.	11½d. to 1s. 1½d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	7d.

Meat.

All but a comparatively small quantity of the fresh meat consumed at La Louvière passes through the public abattoir. The imported meat comes from several neighbouring towns, and it is estimated that local butchers send to these towns about as much as they sell in La Louvière. No account is kept of the weight of meat which passes into the market from the abattoir, and the only data on the point are the returns of animals slaughtered. The beef comes from the Brussels markets and from the surrounding district; the mutton is for the most part of local origin; the pigs come from the Brussels and Ghent markets; and the majority of the horses are said still to come from England by way of Antwerp.

The working classes chiefly eat beef, pork, and horse-flesh; their consumption of mutton is small, and it is confined to the colder months of the year. Returns of the weekly expenditure on food obtained for the purpose of this investigation from

53 working-class families belonging to La Louvière and neighbourhood, and containing 287 persons in the aggregate, showed a meat consumption per head of 25·7 oz. weekly, at the rate of 84 lb. per annum. Of the consumption shown by these returns, 36 per cent. consisted of beef, 16 per cent. of horse-flesh, 14 per cent. of pork, and 13 per cent. of bacon; 9 per cent. consisted of rabbits, 5 per cent. of veal, 4 per cent. of *charcuterie*, 2 per cent. of mutton, and 1 per cent. of poultry. The only available estimate of the general town consumption is one published by the municipal authority in 1902, which gave as an approximate figure 50 kilog. or 110 lb. per head.

The consumption of horseflesh is a marked feature of the working-class dietary in this town. There are more than a dozen horse butchers in La Louvière and the immediate neighbourhood, and they have a ready sale for all the meat they offer. The comparatively high standard of life which the workers in the coal and iron trades are able to maintain suggests that the large consumption of this meat is a matter of taste and not of poverty. The price of the principal cuts is 6*d.* per lb., which is above the price of the cheapest cuts of beef and mutton; inferior cuts cost 3*d.* per lb.

The following table shows the prices usually paid by the working classes in June, 1908, for various kinds of fresh meat other than horseflesh :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	7½ <i>d.</i>
Brisket	5½ <i>d.</i>
Silverside	8½ <i>d.</i> to 11½ <i>d.</i>
Shin { with bone	4½ <i>d.</i>
without bone	5½ <i>d.</i> to 6 <i>d.</i>
Beef Steak	9½ <i>d.</i> to 11½ <i>d.</i>
Rump Steak	11½ <i>d.</i> to 1s. 0½ <i>d.</i>
Thick Flank	10½ <i>d.</i>
Thin Flank	7 <i>d.</i>
Mutton :—	
Leg	9½ <i>d.</i> to 10½ <i>d.</i>
Shoulder	7½ <i>d.</i>
Breast	5½ <i>d.</i> to 6 <i>d.</i>
Neck { Best End	9½ <i>d.</i>
Scrag End	6 <i>d.</i>
Chops	10½ <i>d.</i>
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	10½ <i>d.</i> to 11½ <i>d.</i>
Shoulder { with bone	8½ <i>d.</i> „ 10½ <i>d.</i>
without bone	11½ <i>d.</i>
Ribs	8½ <i>d.</i> to 10½ <i>d.</i>
Chops	10½ <i>d.</i>
Leg	10½ <i>d.</i>
Pork :—	
Leg	8½ <i>d.</i>
Foreloin	8½ <i>d.</i>
Belly	7½ <i>d.</i>
Chops	9½ <i>d.</i> to 10½ <i>d.</i>

Taking prices at Brussels as the base, = 100, the prices index numbers for La Louvière are : 100 for food other than meat, 96 for meat, and 99 for food as a whole; for coal the index number is 74, and for food and coal together it is 96. The index number for rent and prices combined is 93.

LIÈGE.

The town of Liège is the capital of the province of the same name, and is the seat of a university, of a bishopric and of a court of appeal. It is situated on the river Meuse, at a point where that river is joined by the Ourthe. At this part of its course the Meuse flows in two channels, one of which is artificial, and between them lies an island some two miles long and half-a-mile wide at its broadest point, almost all of which is now built upon. Some of the town lies beyond this island on the right bank of the river, but the largest part is situated on the left bank, where buildings not only cover the low ground of the valley but extend up the steep hill slopes on to the plateau above. Whilst the altitude of the centre of the town is some 230 feet, the citadel, which lies on the edge of the plateau overlooking the town, is 520 feet above sea level.

With regard to transport facilities the town is in a favourable position, as it lies 62 miles east of Brussels on the main line from that town to Cologne. The Paris-Cologne expresses also pass through Liège. The town is further connected with a large number of less important lines, belonging either to the State or the Nord-Belge Company. In addition there is a certain amount of goods and passenger traffic on the Meuse.

The town of Liège contains many narrow streets and on the whole is very irregular in plan. On the other hand there are certain fine boulevards and squares; parts of the quays are also well laid out, though a good deal might yet be done in the way of utilising the fine river frontage. Of late years the municipal authorities have spent considerable sums of money on improving the town, and they are at present engaged on an important scheme which will involve the demolition of much poor property near the river front. In the centre of the town and along the main thoroughfares houses of three, four, and five stories predominate, whilst in the outer parts of the town houses of more than two stories and an attic are uncommon.

The following Table shows the population of Liège in certain census years, and the estimated population at the end of 1907. It will be seen that during the decade 1890–1900 the growth of the town was comparatively slow, but since 1900 it would appear to have again become more rapid.

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	123,131	—	—
1890	147,660	24,529	19·9
1900	157,760	10,100	6·8
1907 (estimated)	173,939	16,179 (in seven years).	10·3 (in seven years).

With regard to vital statistics, there has been a tendency of recent years for the birth-rate to diminish. In 1904, the birth-rate was 19·0 per 1,000 of the population, and in 1908, 16·4, whilst the average for the five years 1904–1908 was 17·9. During the same years, the death-rate has varied between 13·9 and 15·2 per 1,000 of population, the average death-rate for the five years being 14·5. The infant mortality per 1,000 births has fluctuated between 119 (in 1907) and 146 (in 1906), the average for the period under review being 132.

A Table with details of the vital statistics for the years 1904–8 follows :—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904... ..	19·0	14·4	122
1905... ..	18·6	15·2	139
1906... ..	18·2	14·3	146
1907... ..	17·5	13·9	119
1908... ..	16·4	14·5	136

The only important trading enterprise in the hands of the municipality is the water supply. The undertaking was commenced in 1862 and water was first supplied in 1869.

At the end of 1906, 17,680 houses had a supply of town water, and the number of subscribers was 15,561. In the case of houses with a rateable value of less than £8 per annum, the charge for water is 4½d. per 1,000 gallons, with a minimum of 2s. 5d. per half-year; in other cases the rate is 8½d. per 1,000 gallons, with a minimum of 4s. per half-year. In the former case the meter rent is 1s. 2½d. or 1s. 7d. per half-year, according to size, while in the latter, double these rates are charged.

Part of the tramway system, both in respect of permanent way and rolling stock, belongs to the municipality, but it is leased to a private company, which works it in conjunction with its own system. In return for the concession, which stipulates among other things a fixed fare of one penny for any distance on the municipal lines and a minimum wage for drivers and conductors, the company pays 35 per cent. of the gross receipts of the municipal lines to the town. In respect of its own lines the company pays 5 per cent. of the gross receipts to the town. In addition to the Liège Tramway Company, there are three other undertakings part of whose systems are within the municipal area.

The gas and electricity undertakings both belong to private companies. Gas for lighting purposes is sold at 3s. 5d. per 1,000 cubic feet; when used for heating or power, the charge is only 2s. 3d. per 1,000 cubic feet. All profit beyond that which is sufficient to pay 6 per cent. interest on the capital of the company is divided, the company retaining two-thirds and the municipality taking one-third.

The theatre and the abattoir are also municipal institutions.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

In considering the principal industries of the town it is necessary to bear in mind that Liège is not an isolated community engaged in particular industries, but the largest and best known of an extensive group of communes, all of which are engaged in more or less similar industries, which may be shortly described as coal mining, iron and steel manufacture, engineering, boiler-making, iron and steel constructional work, and small arms manufacture. The town of Liège itself is generally associated with the last-named industry, but coal mining and engineering and boiler works are equally important. Other large industrial communities in the neighbourhood are Herstal, Jupille, Bressoux, Grivegnée, Chênée, Angleur, St. Nicolas, Montégnée, Tilleur, Jeineppe, Ougrée and Seraing, the last of which is the subject of a separate report in this volume.

The small arms industry of Liège, so far as production for the general market is concerned, dates from the seventeenth century. Originally it was entirely a domestic industry and grew up in the hilly districts around Liège, where it frequently helped to support families whose agricultural resources were small. At the present time the industry is highly localised. Gun-barrels are made largely in the valley of the Vesdre, between Liège and Verviers, and also at Jupille. The breech actions and the lock actions of sporting guns are frequently made on the banks of the Meuse and on the Plateau of Herve, whilst the finishers work in Liège itself, or in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. The barrel-mounters are to be found close to the proof-house at Liège. All this localisation applies to the manufacture of sporting guns, an industry still conducted to a considerable extent on the domestic system. The great variety of the work to be produced in this class of small arms, which depends upon the individual tastes of sportsmen, has checked the concentration of the different processes of manufacture under one management, as well as hindered the introduction of machinery to any very great extent. That does not imply, however, that the organisation of the industry has retained its purely domestic character. There has been a tendency for the different units of production to grow in size, and many processes are carried on in small workshops belonging to master-craftsmen who have various assistants to help them, rather than in the homes of the individual workmen. The master-craftsmen work for various manufacturers, and generally speaking deal directly with them, though in the country districts there is a class of middlemen or *recoupeurs* who distribute the manufacturers' work amongst the various workers and afterwards collect it.

The organisation of the military weapon industry is quite different; here the factory system predominates, and the use of machinery is almost universal. The work is very highly specialised, and division of labour is carried to a very high degree. Almost all the numerous small parts are made by automatic machines, which not infrequently are tended by women.

In the small arms industry there are three classes of manufacturers. The first carry on all, or nearly all, of the processes of manufacture in their own establishments. The second

do some of the work in their own establishments, and have some of it done outside, whilst the third class have all the actual work done outside, having only a few employees in their warehouses to inspect the work in the different stages of manufacture, and to examine the arms when completed. Most classes of workmen receive their materials from the manufacturer, with one or two exceptions, such as the barrel-maker, who makes barrels on his own account and sells them to the small arms manufacturers.

The importance of the Liège small arms industry is best shown by the number of arms tested in the proof-house, three tests being compulsory for all double-barrelled breech-loading sporting guns, two for single-barrelled breech-loading sporting guns and one for all pistols and military weapons, though not infrequently sporting guns are submitted to a fourth test, and pistols and military weapons to a second.

In 1906 the following tests were made:—

Single-barrelled guns	...	...	...	...	811,427
Double-barrelled guns	...	...	...	...	563,288
Horse-pistols ...	...	...	...	...	224,615
Pocket-pistols...	...	...	...	...	679,938
Military weapons	...	...	...	...	179,973
Total	...	...	...	...	2,459,241

To show the development of the industry during the second half of the nineteenth century, the total number of tests made in certain years may be quoted.

In 1835 the number of tests made was	...	...	336,612
" 1845	"	"	367,348
" 1855	"	"	714,490
" 1865	"	"	665,907
" 1875	"	"	747,198
" 1885	"	"	840,085
" 1895	"	"	1,786,206
" 1905	"	"	2,682,111
" 1906	"	"	2,459,241
" 1907	"	"	2,696,395

So long as the industry was organised purely on the domestic system, almost all workers, with the exception of the inspectors and viewers working in the manufacturers' warehouses, were necessarily paid at piece rates. With the introduction of the factory system, time wages have become possible, and are paid to a considerable extent in connection with some of the finer work, but taking the industry as a whole, piece wages undoubtedly predominate, though in the case of factory work a minimum wage is not uncommonly guaranteed.

Any attempt to establish the predominant earnings of different classes of workmen employed in the manufacture of firearms is always difficult. Where the work is done on the domestic system in the small workshops of the master-craftsmen, who do work for different manufacturers, it is impossible to trace the earnings. On the other hand, with the introduction of machinery on a fairly considerable scale, there has been a tendency for the earnings of different classes of workpeople employed in large works to become equalised, as much of the work that formerly involved considerable manual dexterity, acquired by long years of training and apprenticeship, has now become little more than machine tending.

Coal Mining.—This industry occupies more than five thousand persons in the town of Liège itself and many thousands more in the surrounding communes. On the whole the seams are thin, often less than two feet, and the hewers are obliged to work lying on their backs or sides (*travail à col tordu*). Not infrequently the dips are very considerable (more than 45 degrees), and in these cases the hewer works alone and for his own account, instead of with a party of four or five for joint account, as is usually the case where the dips are slight. The hours of labour stated in the table below for workers underground are bank to bank times (including intervals) for a week of six shifts; those stated for enginemen are also inclusive of intervals, which are taken as opportunity arises.

The amusements indulged in by the miners have an important bearing on the question of absences from work on Mondays. The most important is pigeon flying. Pigeon-cotes are arranged in the attics or lumber rooms of hundreds of workmen's houses, and almost every week-end races take place, organised by the pigeon flyers' clubs. Prizes are offered for different classes of birds and much betting takes place among the members. The birds are timed to reach home on Sunday morning, and the club meets in

the afternoon or evening to ascertain the winners and distribute the prizes. If, however, the weather is bad the pigeons are delayed and the miners wait for their return on Monday, instead of going to work. Other amusements are cock fighting (which is illegal), cock crowing and skittles.

Machine Construction, Iron Founding and Boiler Making.—These branches of the engineering trades taken together, afford occupation to the largest number of workpeople resident in Liège. The work done is of a very varied kind, including the manufacture of locomotives, automobiles, motor cycles, bicycles, machine tools, boilers, iron and steel constructional work, etc. Several of the works are inside the municipal area, and a good many more are outside in the surrounding communes. There is a little rolling done in the town, but the chief concerns are outside the city limits and are dealt with in the report upon Seraing, where the most important works are situated.

Tanning.—The “*Quai des Tanneurs*” still exists at Liège to mark the former site of this industry, which is now mainly situated down the river in the neighbouring commune of Bressoux, though there are works in the town of Liège itself. The number of workpeople employed in the industry is inconsiderable.

Below a Table is given showing the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of adult males in the principal industries of Liège and its immediate district in June, 1908.

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Building Trades :—</i>		
Bricklayers and Masons	19s. 6d. to 22s.	61
Stonemasons (Cutters)	21s. 1d. to 23s. 9d.	66
Carpenters	21s. 1d. „ 23s. 9d.	66
Joiners	20s. 1d. „ 23s. 9d.	66
Plumbers	19s. 2d. to 24s.	60
Plasterers	18s. 7d. to 23s. 9d.	61 to 66
Painters	18s. 6d. „ 23s. 9d.	66
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers... ..	14s. 8d. „ 17s. 1d.	61
<i>Coal Mining :—</i>		
Underground :		
Hewers	24s. 9d. to 27s. 8d.	54 to 60*
Timbermen	20s. 6d. „ 24s. 2d.	—
Putters and Trimmers	20s. 1d. „ 23s. 7d.	61½ to 72*
Surface :		
Enginemen	21s. 7d. to 24s.	72†
<i>Engineering Trades :—</i>		
Moulders	24s. to 28s. 10d.	58 to 60
Fitters	20s. 5d. to 26s. 5d.	58 „ 60
Turners	21s. 7d. „ 26s. 5d.	58 „ 60
Patternmakers	22s. 10d. „ 25s. 2d.	58 „ 60
Labourers	14s. 5d. to 18s.	58 „ 60
<i>Boiler Making, &c. :—</i>		
Smiths	26s. 5d. to 31s. 2d.	57 to 63
Smiths' Strikers	18s. to 19s. 2d.	57 „ 63
Platers	21s. 7d. to 26s. 5d.	57 „ 63
Riveters	21s. 7d. to 24s.	57 „ 63
Holders-up	15s. 7d. to 16s. 10d.	57 „ 63
Labourers	14s. 5d. „ 16s. 10d.	57 „ 63
<i>Manufacture of Small Arms :—</i>		
Gaugemakers	22s. 10d. to 33s. 7d.	60
Straighteners and Drillers	21s. 7d. „ 27s. 4d.	60
Filers	22s. 10d. „ 28s. 10d.	60
Stockmakers	22s. 10d. „ 30s. 9d.	60
Finishers	22s. 10d. „ 26s. 5d.	60
Viewers	24s. to 33s. 7d.	60
<i>Printing Trades :—</i>		
Hand Compositors	24s.	60
Machine Compositors	26s. 5d. to 30s.	48
Machine Minders	26s. 5d.	60

* Bank-to-bank times.

† Including intervals.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Tanning :—</i>		
Fleshers	19s. 2d. to 24s.	60
Dressers and Curriers	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	60
<i>Gas Works (company) :—</i>		
Gas Stokers	22s. 10d. to 26s. 5d.	—
Yard Labourers	15s. 7d. to 20s. 10d.	65
<i>Electricity Works (company) :—</i>		
Enginemen and Stokers	28s. 1d.	—
Labourers	17s. 9d.	60

Wages at Brussels being taken as 100, the index numbers for the wages of both skilled men and unskilled labourers in the building trades at Liège are 84; wages in the engineering trades are represented by 99 for skilled men and 105 for unskilled labourers, while the index number for the wages of compositors is 91.

The State Railway Administration issues cheap workmen's tickets which enable workmen to go backwards and forwards a considerable journey each day, though, where they live too far or the train service is inconvenient, it is usual to stay from Monday to Saturday at Liège or wherever else they are working and to spend from Saturday evening till Monday morning in their homes in the country. These workmen often inhabit the *café-logements* to which reference is made in the section on housing. Bricklayers and their labourers are one particular class of workpeople whose homes are often in the country, some distance away, and the same is also true of navvies and certain classes of workers in the coal mines. These latter generally come from the Flemish parts of Belgium.

The *Labour Exchange* was established in 1888, under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce and claims to have been the first institution of its kind in Belgium. At the present time it is managed by a committee consisting half of employers and half of workpeople, and its revenue is derived entirely from grants made by the town of Liège (£60), the province of Liège (£20), the State (£24), and the Chamber of Commerce (£4).

The number of applications for work and the number of situations offered vary very considerably from year to year. In the first year there were 3,348 applications and 1,596 situations offered, whilst in 1892 there were 5,453 applications and 3,338 situations offered. In 1900 the position was reversed, and whilst there were only 2,774 applications, 4,740 situations were offered. In 1906 there were 3,469 applications and 1,911 situations offered, whilst the number of situations known to have been filled was 602. In 1907 there were 3,115 applications and 2,160 situations offered, whilst 1,010 situations are known to have been filled.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

In any consideration of working-class housing accommodation at Liège, it is necessary to distinguish between (1) the large houses in the small streets about the centre of the town, (2) the small houses in the narrow courts situated mainly near the centre of the town, and (3) the typical working-class house of comparatively recent construction, with two rooms up-stairs and two down-stairs, a cellar, a lumber room and possibly an attic. Before giving any details with regard to these different classes of houses, it is necessary to draw attention to a point which must be considered as the most striking feature about housing conditions in Liège, namely, the almost universal practice of sub-letting.

At the end of 1900 there were 21,506 houses destined for habitation in Liège, whilst at the same time there were 44,859 households in the town, or 2·09 per house. In 1890 the corresponding ratio was 2·06.

An investigation was made by the Housing Committee several years ago into the conditions of some 1,952 working-class tenements. Of these 1,913 supplied information with regard to the accommodation. 941 or 49·2 per cent. had only one room; 675 or 35·3 per cent. had two rooms; 215 or 11·2 per cent. had three rooms, whilst 82 or 4·3 per cent. had four or more rooms. There is reason to believe, however, that an undue proportion of one-roomed tenements were investigated, and that if all working-class tenements throughout the town had been taken, two-roomed dwellings would have been found to predominate.

According to the internal arrangements, the Liège houses are intended to be occupied by one family, but actually whilst the landlord lets the whole house to one tenant, the latter sub-lets part of it; or the landlord occupies part of the house himself and lets the rest. It is uncommon in Liège to find a landlord subdividing a house and letting the whole of it off in parts, as happens, for example, in Verviers.

It is possible to distinguish two or three different types of sub-letting. On the one hand the house may be too large for the owner or tenant to inhabit alone, and he consequently sub-lets some rooms, probably the two on the first floor, whilst retaining those on the ground floor and the attic, if there is one, for himself. On the other hand, some people make of sub-letting a regular, but secondary business. Thus shopkeepers frequently sub-let rooms situated on the upper floors above their shops, and the same applies to coffee-house and restaurant keepers; though these latter tend to let their spare rooms furnished. In a lower class of *café*, beds, and not rooms, are let for the night. Finally there are some people who make sub-letting their chief means of livelihood: they hire two or three houses in the central part of the town and let off the rooms, singly or in pairs, furnished or unfurnished, as best they can, with a view to making a profit by sub-letting; whilst in the other cases the shopkeepers, *café*-keepers, workmen, etc., in sub-letting superfluous rooms seek only to obtain the accommodation they absolutely require at a reduced rent.

With regard to the large houses in the centre of the town it is almost impossible to make any generalisations. They are three and four-storied buildings, of which the ground floor usually serves as a shop or *café*, kept as a rule by the principal tenant, whilst on each of the upper floors there are two or more rooms. The frontage is sometimes so narrow that it is not possible to have a separate entrance to the upper floors. In this case the building often serves as one of the *café-logements*; these are very common in Liège, on account of the large number of workmen who pass the working days of the week at Liège and return home to the country from Saturday evening till Monday morning. Below, some account is given of one of these institutions, as well as details relating to three typical houses in the central district of the town.

(a.) *Café-logement*.—The house which is about to be described may be considered as typical of many others in the old part of the town. The house is kept by a woman who is helped by a daughter aged 18. The husband is a tailor by trade, and is away all day. The front room on the ground floor is the *café*, 9 feet 9 inches wide and 20 feet long (9 feet 9 inches high). Behind the *café* is the kitchen, 9 feet 6 inches wide and 14 feet 3 inches long. Between the *café* and the kitchen is the staircase, parallel with the street. At the back of the house is a small yard, some 9 feet 9 inches by 11 feet 9 inches, in which are a closet, a urinal, and a sink and water-tap. To reach the yard it is necessary to pass through the kitchen. On the first floor there are two bedrooms. The front one is 9 feet 9 inches by 20 feet (9 feet 9 inches high), and contains four beds, which were occupied by seven lodgers, three bricklayers and four navvies. The back room is 12 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 6 inches, and contained three beds, occupied by six lodgers—three bricklayers and three navvies. On the second floor the front room, 15 feet by 9 feet 9 inches (7 feet 9 inches high), was occupied by the landlady and her husband. The back room, 9 feet 9 inches by 11 feet 9 inches, contained three beds, occupied by four lodgers—a bricklayer, a navvy, a mechanic, and a miner (who slept during the daytime). At the side of the stairs, between the front and back rooms, is a small dark room, 5 feet 9 inches by 8 feet, without any exterior light or ventilation. This was occupied by the daughter. In the attics there is a small front room, 9 feet 9 inches by 11 feet, which contained two beds, occupied by two lodgers, a bricklayer and a joiner. The back attic, 9 feet 6 inches by 27 feet, contained five beds, only two of which were occupied at the time of the enquiry, the one by a navvy and the other by a bricklayer.

The charge for a night's accommodation is $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ for a single bed and $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ for half of a double bed. On the particular occasion described there were 21 lodgers, 14 at $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ and 7 at $2\frac{1}{2}d.$, from whom the landlady consequently received rather more than 3s. for the night. The weekly rent of the whole house was 13s. 1d.

(b.) A small corner house, in the centre of the town, quite close to the Town Hall. The house has 14 feet frontage to the principal street, and 27 feet to a side street. It is five stories high, and contains two rooms on each of the four upper floors. Downstairs there is one room, 11 feet 6 inches by 20 feet, which is used as a *café*; behind are the passage and stairs, with a separate entrance into the side street. In the passage downstairs are the sink and tap, and under the stairs the

closet. The upper floors are all arranged alike, with a front room, 11 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 3 inches, and are reached through the kitchen, the size of which is 11 feet by 11 feet 6 inches. The ground floor is 9 feet 6 inches high; the first, 8 feet 9 inches; the second, 8 feet 3 inches; the third, 7 feet 9 inches; and the fourth (attics), 6 feet 6 inches on an average. The coffee-tavern keeper rented the whole house for 15s. 5d. per week, but did not sleep on the premises at night, and sub-let all the upper rooms in pairs. A single woman occupied the first floor for 2s. 9d. per week; the second floor was let to a family of three for 2s. 7d. per week; whilst a woman and her two daughters paid 2s. 7d. for the two rooms on the third floor. A shopman rented the two attics for 1s. 5d. a week. Thus the principal tenant paid 15s. 5d. per week and received from his sub-tenants 9s. 4d. per week, which reduced the weekly rent of the *café* to 6s. 1d.

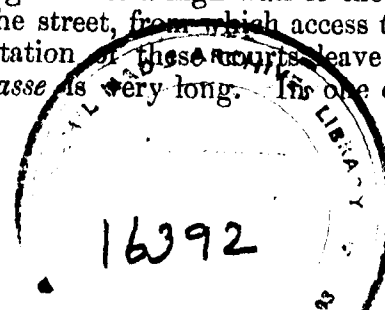
(c.) A house in the centre of the town, of 20 feet frontage and 29 feet depth, with ground floor, first and second stories, and attics. Downstairs there is a shop, about 14 feet square, connected with a kitchen at the back, 12 feet square. From the street a passage, 3 feet 6 inches wide, leads past the shop to the staircase, which is behind, next to the kitchen. On the first and second floors there is a large front room, 18 feet by 14 feet 6 inches, and a back room, 12 feet square. There are two attic bedrooms, lighted by skylights (1 foot 9 inches square), the one 12 feet square, and the other 8 feet 9 inches by 14 feet 6 inches. There is also a lumber room, 9 feet 3 inches by 14 feet 6 inches. The ground floor rooms are 11 feet high; the first floor, 9 feet 9 inches; the second, 9 feet 6 inches; and the average height of the attics is 5 feet 6 inches. The closet is situated on the ground floor, underneath the stairs. There is no water supply in the house. There is a yard at the side of the house, access to which can be gained from the back room downstairs or through a gate opening into the street.

This house, constructed about 1850, is typical of many others in the central parts of the town. It was rented by a widow, who carried on business as a horse butcher. She paid a weekly rent of 16s. 11d., and occupied, together with her family (a daughter of 16, a son of 15, and a brother), the shop, the kitchen behind it, the large front bedroom on the first floor (where the mother and two children slept), and an attic, where the brother slept. The remaining rooms she sub-let. The two back rooms on the first and second floors were occupied by a vegetable dealer, his wife, and child (four years old), the rent being 2s. 7d. a week. The large front room on the second floor and an attic were let to a shoemaker and his wife for 2s. 7d. a week.

(d.) A house in the centre of the town, with ground floor, three upper stories and attics. The house has a frontage of 17 feet, and is 27 feet 6 inches deep. Behind is a small yard, 10 feet 9 inches by 16 feet, part of which is built in to form a store-room, 6 feet 9 inches by 8 feet 6 inches. In the corner of the yard is the closet, and, close by, the water-tap and sink. Downstairs are a front room, 11 feet 9 inches by 13 feet, and a back room, 10 feet 3 inches by 11 feet 9 inches. There is a passage from front to back, 3 feet 6 inches wide at the entrance, and 5 feet wide behind, where the stairs are situated. Access to the yard is gained from the passage. On each of the upper floors there is a large front room, 16 feet by 14, and a back room, 10 feet 3 inches by 11 feet 9 inches. On the ground floor the elevation is 9 feet, on the first floor 9 feet 9 inches, on the second 8 feet 9 inches, on the third 7 feet 3 inches, whilst the average height of the attics is 6 feet. The house, it may be added, is about 90 years old.

In the case of this particular house the landlord lets directly to various small tenants. Thus the two downstairs rooms and the shed in the yard, together with the large front room on the third floor, were let for 7s. 7d. per week to a couple who carried on a grocery business in the front room downstairs. The two rooms on the first floor were rented for 2s. 9d. a week by a coal dealer and his wife. The front room on the second floor was let for 1s. 10d. a week to a bricklayer and his wife. The small back room on that floor was let for 1s. 6d. per week to a gunmaker, wife, and child. The front attic was rented by a single man for 11d. per week. The back room on the third floor and the back attic were vacant at the time the enquiry was made.

The number of houses situated in *impasses* or blind alleys at Liège does not appear to be very considerable, though they are by no means a negligible quantity. Some of these alleys are not more than four feet wide, and the windows of the houses look straight on to a high wall or the back of another row of houses, all built at right angles to the street, from which access to the court is gained. In any case the ventilation and sanitation of these courts leave much to be desired. This is especially so where the *impasse* is very long. In one case visited in the course of the enquiry the court was



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some five feet wide and ninety yards long, and contained a large number of houses, all more or less of the same type. Downstairs there was a long, narrow room some 9 feet 9 inches by 20 feet, with stairs in the corner, leading up to a bedroom of the same dimensions, above which there was an attic and a lumber room; behind was a small yard some 10 feet square. There was also a cellar and a water supply. The weekly rent, including water, was 3s. 3d. In another *impasse*, some 10 feet wide, and a little nearer the centre of the town, a back-to-back house, with 20 feet frontage and 8 feet 3 inches deep, with one room upstairs, one room downstairs, and a lumber room, was let for 3s. 8d. a week, with an extra charge for water.

In the best class of *impasse*, dwellings are even more expensive. In one short entry, 10 feet wide, were noted some four-roomed houses, with two rooms on each floor, with a passage through from the back to the front. The tenants paid 7s. 8d. rent per week, and sub-let the first-floor rooms, each 13 feet by 16 feet 6 inches, for 2s. and 2s. 5d. per week, according as they were situated to the back or front. A back room with a small attic let for 2s. 7d. a week.

Poor class tenements in the centre of the town sometimes fetch relatively high rents in consequence of the system of administering poor relief in the town. For purposes of poor relief the parish is taken as a basis; many of the parishes are rich, and it is well known that they have a considerable sum to distribute in poor relief. On the other hand, in these more or less middle-class parishes the number of working-class tenements is few, and they are consequently in unusual demand by people anxious to benefit by the parish poor relief funds. As a result rents are forced up, and it is contended that it is largely the owners of cottage property who benefit by the poor relief granted in these parishes. In other parishes of the town there is no lack of court houses let at a lower rental.

The typical working-class house of recent or comparatively recent construction is one containing two rooms downstairs, two rooms upstairs, a cellar, a lumber room, and sometimes an attic bedroom. This class of house almost always has a passage leading from the front door direct into the back yard. In this passage is situated the staircase, at right angles to the street, and rising to the first floor without any turn. Above it are the stairs leading to the lumber room and attic (if any). The stairs are generally in the back part of the house, so that the front room on the first floor occupies the whole width of the house.

Where the ground slopes fairly steeply, as is not uncommon at Liège, another arrangement is frequently found, namely, a basement kitchen. In this case the stairs are generally close to the front door, which is on the half-way level between ground floor and basement floor. A small flight of steps leads up to the former, whilst another small flight leads down to the latter. The stairs giving access to the bedrooms are also in two flights, with a landing midway. If access to the back yard is gained through the cellar, the back room on the ground floor, as well as that on the first floor, occupies the whole width of the house. If access to the back yard cannot be gained from the cellar level, there is a passage right through on the ground floor.

In all houses of recent construction it is usual to find a water tap and sink in the passage on the ground floor, but sometimes in the basement kitchen, where that exists. Where water has recently been laid on to older houses, the tap is frequently placed in the yard. The municipal regulations require all new houses to be provided with a water supply, and, as far as possible, the authorities insist on old houses being supplied in the same manner. Where part of a house is sublet, it is the tenant who pays for the water according to the quantity consumed, but he frequently obliges his sub-tenants to make a special payment on that account.

The closets, which are generally on the waste-water system, are almost always in the yard, except in the case of some of the old houses in the centre of the town, where they are sometimes situated in the passage under the stairs.

It will be noted that the practice of sub-letting influences working-class house architecture in two directions. In the first place, the water supply is generally placed in the passage and not in the kitchen, so that it is accessible to the sub-tenant as well as to the tenant. In the second place, there is almost always a through passage from the front to the back of the house, so that a sub-tenant can pass from his rooms on the first floor into the street, or into the yard, where the closet and possibly the water supply are situated, without disturbing the tenant downstairs.

With regard to dimensions, the newer working-class houses all closely resemble one another. The common frontage is from 16 feet 6 inches to 18 feet, whilst the depth of

the house is some 26 or 29 feet. The front room downstairs is some 12 or 13 feet wide and 11 feet 6 inches to 13 feet deep. The back room has about the same depth, but it is somewhat narrower on account of the increased width of the passage, due to the presence of the stairs. Upstairs the front room will be 15 feet to 16 feet 6 inches wide, and 11 feet 6 inches to 13 feet deep, whilst the back room will be the same as downstairs.

The municipal building regulations issued in 1879 are still in force. They regulate, among other things, the height of buildings in proportion to the width of the street. Thus the buildings may not exceed 26 feet 3 inches in height where the road is less than 13 feet wide, 36 feet where the width of the road is from 13 feet to 26 feet 3 inches, 42 feet 9 inches where the width of the road is from 26 feet 3 inches to 32 feet 9 inches, and so on. Another regulation prescribes that rooms on the ground floor and first floor shall be at least 9 feet 9 inches high, on upper floors 9 feet high, and that the minimum height of cellars shall be 7 feet 9 inches.

The following Table shows the predominant weekly rents of working-class dwellings in Liège:—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.					Predominant Weekly Rents.
One room	...	...	...	...	1s. 4d. to 1s. 10d.
Two rooms	...	...	...	...	2s. 3d. „ 2s. 11d.
Three rooms	...	...	...	...	3s. 2d. „ 3s. 8d.

Rent at Liège is comparatively high; Brussels and Antwerp alone of the towns investigated have higher index numbers, viz. 100 and 99 respectively, as compared with 88 at Liège.

The one-roomed tenements referred to in the above Table represent single rooms sub-let principally in the large houses in the centre of the town. Two-roomed tenements also generally represent two rooms sub-let as a *quartier* either in the large old or small new houses. They may consist of a room and an attic. A few are two-roomed houses, but these are not at all common in Liège. Three-roomed tenements frequently represent the two ground-floor rooms and the attic of a small house which remain to the tenant after sub-letting the two rooms on the first floor; or they may consist of three rooms in a large house, or they may constitute a small three-roomed house. Such a house either has two rooms on the ground floor and a bedroom and lumber room above, or one room on the ground floor, a bedroom upstairs and an attic above. The number of working-class families occupying four rooms at Liège is comparatively small, and consequently no rent figures are given for four-roomed tenements.

In considering working-class housing conditions in a town such as Liège, which is entirely surrounded by industrial communes engaged in work similar to that done in the town itself, it is necessary to remember that very many of the workmen live outside the municipal area, though they may still be quite close to their work within the town. In fact many of the houses in the commune of Bressoux are closer to the real centre of Liège and far more readily accessible than houses lying in the upper parts of Liège itself.

The investigations made of recent years by the Housing Committee (*Comité de Patronage des Habitations ouvrières de la ville de Liège et des communes limitrophes*) enable certain interesting comparisons to be made between housing conditions in Liège and the neighbouring industrial communities of Angleur, Bressoux, Grivegnée and Jupille, which may be regarded as practically suburbs of Liège. The figures are based upon information collected from some 4,500 households.

In Liège the average number of rooms per household was 1.72, in Angleur 3.23, in Bressoux 2.54, in Grivegnée 2.85, and in Jupille 3.27.

In Liège the average number of households per house was 3.68, in Angleur 1.17, in Bressoux 1.40, in Grivegnée 1.14, and in Jupille 1.02.

The average weekly rent in Liège was 1s. 7d. for one room, and 2s. 7d. for two rooms. In Angleur the average weekly rent was 1s. 5d. for one room; 2s. 4d. for two rooms, 2s. 8d. for three rooms, and 3s. 4d. for four rooms; in Bressoux the corresponding figures were 1s. 5d., 2s. 4d., 3s. 1d. and 3s. 6d.; in Grivegnée, 1s. 3d., 1s. 11d., 2s. 5d., and 2s. 10d.; and in Jupille, 1s., 1s. 8d., 2s. 1d., and 2s. 7d.

The points brought out by these comparisons are that in Liège households occupy fewer rooms than in the suburbs; that whilst in Liège there are houses containing several

families, in the suburbs such houses are the exception ; and lastly that rents are higher in Liège, though not as much as might be expected when the previous points are taken into account.

In Liège, as in so many Belgian towns, there are building societies established under the Law of August 9, 1889, the bulk of the money lent being borrowed from the State Savings Bank (*Caisse Générale d'Épargne*), usually at 3 per cent. By way of guarantee, there are the mortgages on the different houses constructed and the uncalled capital of the building society. The building societies are of two types, those which only lend and those which build. The majority and by far the most important of the societies belong to the former class.

The two largest building societies in all Belgium have their headquarters at Liège. The oldest is the *Foyer de l'Ouvrier*, founded in 1891. It has a nominal capital of £32,000 and there is an uncalled liability on the part of the shareholders of £28,692. At the end of 1907; 2,955 loans had been effected, the total sum loaned being £280,751, whilst there were 2,404 loans outstanding, representing a sum of £189,755. At the same time the society owed the Savings Bank £211,360 in respect of capital and £5,305 in respect of interest. In the case of 2,317 of the loans there was an insurance policy on the borrower's life for a sum equal to the amount of the loan outstanding ; the cost of this insurance being met by a single premium paid at the commencement and added to the loan. The *Foyer de l'Ouvrier* lends money for building purposes in all parts of the Province of Liège, and it is estimated that not more than one-tenth of the loans effected relate to the town of Liège. The society does not lend more than £140 to any one borrower, and the rate of interest is fixed at $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. per annum. The borrower must provide the site or its value in money. The sum borrowed, together with the life insurance premium, is paid back by means of equal monthly instalments, during a period not exceeding 25 years.

The second most important building society in Belgium is the *Société anonyme de garantie pour favoriser la construction de Maisons Ouvrières dans l'arrondissement de Liège* which was established in 1892 with a nominal capital of £37,620 and an uncalled capital liability of £33,858. This society, unlike the other, only grants loans in the arrondissement. At the end of 1907 it had made 1,571 loans amounting to £222,660, of which 1,308 loans and £163,773 were outstanding. The sum owing by the Society to the Savings Bank was £168,000 in respect of capital and £4,463 in respect of interest. The rules of the Society require that the borrower shall provide the land or its value, and that the sum lent shall not exceed £200. Of the 1,571 loans, 1,336 had been effected in connection with an insurance policy on the life of the borrower. The time of repayment in three-quarters of the loans was for the maximum period allowed, namely, twenty-five years. For the construction of houses within the commune of Liège itself, 170 loans, amounting to £28,882, had been granted at the end of 1907. The average value of each house built, including land, was £225, while the average loan was £170.

The third large building society at Liège is the *Société Liégeoise des Maisons Ouvrières*. This differs from the other two societies, in that it builds houses and then sells them to working-class people ; and furthermore it has no connection with the National Savings Bank. It was established in 1867 with a capital of £16,000, part of which was subscribed by the municipality of Liège and by the Poor Law authorities. From time to time new shares have been issued and the capital amounts at present to £60,000, upon which the Society pays 3 per cent. interest. On December 31, 1907, after an existence of forty years, the Society had built 562 houses, of which 257 are sold and entirely paid for by their purchasers, 184 are in course of being sold on the instalment plan, and 121 are let pending an opportunity of selling them. With a few exceptions all the buildings erected by the Society are at Liège, principally in one of three large groups, Laveu with 161 houses, Cornillon with 159 houses, and Bas-Rhieux with 102 houses. The general policy of the Society has been to construct houses in terraces, with a view to reducing the cost. Some are small and some fairly large, but the houses that sell most readily are those with two rooms upstairs, two downstairs, cellar, lumber room and possibly attic. Experience has shown that it is difficult to dispose of a house costing more than £240 to £260 all told, and of recent years the Society has found it difficult to build a standard type of house at this figure, principally on account of the increasing cost of land. Thus during the last 16 years it has built only 112 houses, or an average of 7 a year, whilst during the first 24 years of its existence 450 houses were erected, or an average of nearly 19 a year. Quite recently the Society bought land just outside the municipal boundary where it is cheaper (less than $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. a sq. foot, whilst in Liège it is almost impossible to find land at 9d. a sq. foot), and where also the building regulations are less severe. Consequently it has been possible to erect houses of the standard type, with about 1,300 square feet of garden, which can be sold for £200 to £220.

It seems probable that in the immediate future the Society may build considerably more houses, as a new municipal regulation provides for cheap loans to working-class people wishing to buy houses. On the ground that improvement schemes then being undertaken by the municipality in the central parts of the town would lead to the disappearance of a certain number of working-class houses, the Town Council decided on June 17, 1907, to favour the purchase or construction of working-class houses within the municipal area, on certain conditions, of which the most important are as follows :—

The town is prepared to lend a workman a sum not exceeding £260, in order to enable him to become the owner of a house. Interest will be calculated at 3 per cent., and a further $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. will be charged to provide a sinking fund. At this rate the sum borrowed will be repaid after 66 years, though the borrower may repay it more quickly if he desires. The borrower is under an obligation to insure his life for at least £40. As in the case where the loan is obtained from an ordinary building society, the owner is not allowed to sub-let to more than one tenant. As a beginning, the Council has voted £12,000 to finance the new scheme.

It will be noted that the municipal loan scheme differs in certain important points from those of the ordinary building societies. The great object was to lend the money as cheaply as possible, so that the monthly instalment might be low, the idea being to offer facilities to classes poorer than those provided for by the building societies. To secure this object it has been necessary to extend the time of repayment from the maximum of 25 years allowed by a society to 66 years. At the same time the rate of interest is lower, so that the annual payment is considerably reduced in this manner.

Again, with the idea of reaching another class of people, the town is prepared to lend £260 to a single borrower, as compared with a maximum of £200 lent by one building society, and £140 lent by the other. Furthermore, the town does not require the borrower to provide the land or its value (which in Liège is equal to about 20 per cent. of the value of the building), a guarantee insisted upon by the societies. Finally, the stamp duty and law charges in connection with the transfer of the property may be paid out of the municipal loan, whilst the societies require the borrower to defray them out of his own pocket. Like the societies, the town takes a first mortgage on the house until it is entirely paid for, but it is evident that the security, for a good many years at least, is very poor. If the borrower dies early, there may be no more than £40 insurance money with which to meet the whole of the outstanding costs of construction. If the borrower, after a few years, allows the contract to lapse, the town is practically certain to lose money.

The new scheme does not seem to appeal to the poorer class of working people in the way originally expected. It is rather the quite young skilled workmen who are purchasing houses under the scheme, as they are able to secure a good modern (say) five-roomed house for a monthly instalment much below the normal rent, even though they insure themselves for a fairly considerable sum, payable 30 or 35 years later. In this way they can hope during their lifetime to become the complete owners of their houses. During the early years, at least, of the contract they count on sub-letting part of the house.

A practical example may be given by way of illustration. Take a five-roomed house value £250, which would be rented for about 5s. 6d. a week. A young compositor of 21 years of age borrows £260 from the town, with which to pay for the house and the legal and transfer expenses. He would be under an obligation to pay monthly to the town some 15s. 2d. by way of interest and sinking fund. Further, he decides to spend 4s. 10d. monthly by way of insurance. This would enable him to receive £121 at 55 years of age, i.e., after the contract of purchase had been in existence for 34 years. Assuming he had paid his instalments regularly, he would still owe the town £185 at the time of receiving his insurance money. If he paid this £121 to the town he would only owe £64, and it would be necessary to continue the monthly instalment of 15s. 2d. only between eight and nine years in order to pay off the debt entirely.

The Housing Committee is authorised by the Act of August 9, 1889, to grant certificates entitling workmen to a remission of 50 per cent. of the duty payable in connection with a purchase or loan effected with the object of securing a house. From the organisation of the Committee in 1890 to the end of 1907, they have delivered 1,012 certificates for the purchase of a house, 3,072 for the purchase of a building plot, and 2,759 for a loan effected with the object of buying or building a house. The approximate number of houses acquired or built by workmen who have received certificates from the Committee is 4,898. The number of certificates delivered each year has been growing fairly steadily since the Act was passed. The figures quoted relate to Liège and the surrounding communes, including such places as Seraing.

RETAIL PRICES.

The town of Liège is well provided with shops, as is only natural in view of the fact that it constitutes the shopping centre for all the surrounding communes. In the middle of the town there are numerous large shops, which, however, cater principally for the middle classes. Working-class people generally buy their food supplies from small shops in their own district. So far as groceries are concerned, there are a large number of "multiple" shops, both of a local and a national character. These shops, besides selling groceries pure and simple, nearly always deal in spirits, wine and beer, and also not infrequently in haberdashery, hosiery and drapery. Belgian law forbids the sale of margarine and butter in the same shop at the same time, and the usual arrangement appears to be for "multiple" shops to restrict themselves to the sale of margarine.

Generally speaking, Belgian shops resemble English more closely than do French. The buildings are usually arranged as shops, and are not mere adaptations of private dwellings. Consequently they have the customary shop windows, are moderately well lighted, and partake less of the character of general country stores.

A certain amount of market garden produce is sold in the early mornings on one of the Liège squares, but this market does not appear to be very important, so far as working-class people, at least, are concerned.

The meat market is more important. The market hall was erected in 1558 and covers an area of 5,900 square feet. For some time past the Town Council have been considering a project for the erection of a more modern and adequate hall. The present one contains 108 stalls, not more than two of which may be held by the same dealer. The rents yield the town £778 per annum, whilst the expenses amount to a little less than half that sum.

There is one fairly important Socialist Co-operative Society at Liège, known as *La Populaire*. It was established in 1887, and at the present time has a central store and two branches in Liège itself, and five branches in neighbouring communes. In 1906 the total sales amounted to £34,465, whilst in 1907 they amounted to £39,092. The net profit in 1906 was £2,220, and in 1907 £2,680. Of the sales in 1907, bread accounted for £15,802, clothing, &c., for £5,485, boots and shoes for £1,618, and groceries for £16,187.

Groceries and other Commodities.

Although Liège is situated in a mining country, coal is not very cheap. The majority of working-class people buy it by the bucket from street hawkers who pass round every day with small barrows, to which generally one or two dogs are harnessed. The purchaser brings out a bucket to be filled, and pays 35 centimes (3½d.) for it. To say that an ordinary household bucket, carelessly filled with this coal, weighs about 20 lb. is probably a fair estimate, and this gives the price as being at the rate of about 1s. 7d. per cwt., but this is for almost the poorest quality of coal, largely slack. Bought in larger quantities, good household coal costs 1s. 4½d. per cwt., whilst commoner coal can be bought at 1s. 2½d. per cwt. Miners generally have a right to coal at half the latter rate, that is, at about 7½d. per cwt. For purposes of comparison with other towns the price of coal has been taken at 1s. 2½d. per cwt.

The summary table of prices at Liège calls for no special comment.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6½d. to 7d.
Sugar, Loaf "	2½d.
Bacon, Salted "	7½d. to 8½d.
Eggs per 1s.	12, 13
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	7½d.
Butter "	1s. 1d.
Margarine "	7d. to 8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	2½d. to 3d.
Flour, Wheaten "	8½d. to 9½d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	4½d. to 5d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal (<i>see text</i>) "	
Paraffin Oil per gallon	6½d. to 7d.

Meat.

The slaughter-house is a municipal institution, erected in 1865 and greatly enlarged in 1903, the total outlay being £46,000. The importation of foreign meat is very considerable; in the case of veal, it is estimated to be seven times as great as the quantity slaughtered at Liège, and in the case of pork about equal to the amount slaughtered in the town.

A large number of the cattle and sheep slaughtered at Liège are of Dutch origin, as its abattoir is one of the six in Belgium where it is permitted to slaughter animals coming from Holland, provided they cross the frontier in sealed waggons and are conveyed thus directly to the abattoir, where they must be slaughtered within 48 hours. A few years ago an attempt was made to introduce into Liège frozen meat, imported at Antwerp, but after a short time, it was given up, as it proved unremunerative.

Attached to the abattoir is a cattle market, but it is not very important, as in 1906 only 4,300 animals of all kinds were sold there, as compared with 97,870 slaughtered at the abattoir.

Returns obtained for the purposes of this enquiry from 212 working-class families, representing 880 persons, showed an average weekly consumption per head of meat of all kinds of 23·7 oz., which is at the rate of 77 lb. per annum. Of this, 34 per cent. was beef, 22 per cent. bacon, 13 per cent. pork, 9 per cent. horseflesh, 8 per cent. *charcuterie*, 7½ per cent. mutton, and 4 per cent. veal. The remainder consisted of rabbits, which formed 1½ per cent. of the whole, and poultry, which constituted 1 per cent.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	7d. to 7½d.
Brisket	5½d. „ 5¾d.
Silverside	9½d.
Shin { with bone	4½d. to 5½d.
{ without bone	5½d. „ 6½d.
Beef Steak	10½d.
Rump Steak	1s. 1d.
Thick Flank	8½d. to 9½d.
Thin Flank	5½d. „ 6d.
Mutton :—	
Leg	9½d.
Shoulder	7d. to 7½d.
Breast	6d. „ 6½d.
Neck { Best End	8½d. „ 10½d.
{ Scrag End	4½d. „ 6½d.
Chops	9½d. „ 11½d.
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	9½d. to 11½d.
Shoulder { with bone	8½d.
{ without bone	9½d. to 10½d.
Ribs	8½d. „ 10½d.
Chops	9½d. „ 11½d.
Leg	11d. to 1s. 0½d.
Pork :—	
Leg	9½d. to 10½d.
Foreloin	8½d. „ 9½d.
Belly	6d. „ 7½d.
Chops	8½d. „ 10½d.

As regards horseflesh, the price of fillet in June, 1908, was 5½d. to 7½d. per lb., of *faux filet* 4½d. to 6d. per lb., and of steak 5½d. to 6½d. per lb.

Representing prices at Brussels by 100, the index number for the price of food other than meat at Liège is 98, for meat it is 95, and for food as a whole 97. For coal the index number is 87, and for food and coal together it is 96. The index number for rent and prices combined is 95.

LOUVAIN.

Louvain, once the capital of the Duchy of Brabant, is now the second (Brussels being the first) city of the Belgian province of that name. About 18 miles east of the capital, on the main line of the State Railway, it is the first stopping-place for fast trains travelling from Brussels towards the German frontier. The town is connected by canal not only with the capital, but also with Malines, Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges, Ostend and other important cities of Belgium, and is traversed by the Dyle, a small unnavigable river, which connects it with Malines and ultimately with the Scheldt. The boundary of the town is marked by an almost circular belt of wide boulevards $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, constructed on the site of the ancient fortifications, and enclosing an area of over 1,000 acres, of which two-thirds still consists of open fields and market gardens. Almost at the centre of the circle formed by the surrounding boulevards stands the ancient *Hôtel de Ville*, or Town Hall, dating from the middle of the 15th century, and considered to be—next to the Brussels Town Hall—the finest specimen of late-Gothic florid architecture in Belgium. From the space (*Grand' Place*) surrounding this building the main streets radiate approximately north, south, east and west, dividing the circle of urban territory into four sectors and crossing the boulevards at points formerly occupied by town gates. Of these four districts, that on the north-east contains practically all that is of importance industrially in Louvain, viz., its breweries, flour mills, saw mills and timber yards, which cluster round the docks provided for the accommodation of the canal craft. In this neighbourhood, but just outside the periphery of the town, are also to be found some important foundries and engineering works, including those of the National Light Railway Company. This quarter of Louvain has for its southern boundary what may be described as the principal street of the town—the *rue de la Station*, a wide, straight thoroughfare about a thousand yards in length, which runs from the railway station (which is just outside the periphery) to the *Grand' Place*. Confronted for the first time with this long and regular perspective of formal-looking, light-coloured houses, opening from a wide ornamental space outside the handsome railway station, the visitor receives the impression of a modern, spacious, and scrupulously clean, but somewhat somnolent town. As regards modernity and spaciousness, however, this impression is apt to be modified on further acquaintance with the place. Within a hundred yards' radius of the *Grand' Place* Louvain still preserves much of its mediæval character, and consists for the most part of a congeries of narrow, irregular and picturesque streets, with footways scarcely wide enough to allow of two people walking abreast, and roughly paved with cobbles or setts. Many of these streets are flanked by alleys and courts of small, whitewashed houses, for the most part occupied by working-class people. Passing from the centre of the town towards the boundary of boulevards on the south, west and north, the main streets quickly assume a rural aspect, and have almost acquired the character of country roads before they reach the lonely boulevards which are traversed for a part of their length by a light railway communicating with neighbouring communes.

Louvain was famous in mediæval times for its woollen cloth, and at a later period for its dyeing mills and tanneries, but of these industries scarcely a vestige survives, and the town is now noted less for any special industry than for its historical associations and antiquities, its scholastic, religious, and charitable institutions, and its markets for agricultural produce. The University, founded in 1426, was suppressed during the French Revolution, but revived in 1817 by the Dutch. Three years after the Declaration of Belgian Independence the University was abandoned by the Government, to be re-opened in 1835 as a Roman Catholic institution. There are at present 41 convents, monasteries and seminaries within the municipal area, while 12 other similar institutions are scattered among the neighbouring rural communes. The number of persons (members of various religious communities) residing in the former now approaches 2,000, and tends to increase year by year. These institutions, together with the churches, the various colleges connected with the University, the almshouses, orphanages, and other establishments for dispensing public charity, besides two large prisons and extensive barracks, are the most conspicuous features in the architecture of a town in which the total number of houses falls short of 9,000, and where few private dwellings exceed two stories in height or accommodate more than a single family.

The population of Louvain, estimated to number 42,219 on the 31st of December, 1907, may be said to be almost stationary, its estimated increase in the period of eight years since the last Census (1900) having amounted to 149, or 0·4 per cent. only. The number of inhabitants at each of the last three decennial censuses is shown below in comparison with the estimated population on the 31st of December, 1907.

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	35,893	—	—
1890	40,624	4,731	13·1
1900	42,070	1,446	3·6
1907 (estimated)	42,219	149	0·4
		(in seven years).	(in seven years)

In the 17 years 1890–1907 the total increase of the population has amounted to less than 4 per cent.

In spite of a great reduction in the mortality figures, the rate of natural growth of the population has declined steadily during the last quarter of a century owing to the declining birth-rate. During the years 1904–8, the average birth-rate per 1,000 of population was 22·6, the average death-rate was 18·7, and the average rate of infantile mortality 156 per 1,000 births. The following Table shows the birth and death-rates per 1,000 of the population, as well as the infant mortality per 1,000 births in each of the years 1904–8 :—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	23·9	18·5	171
1905	22·5	20·4	179
1906	22·2	17·5	134
1907	22·0	17·7	167
1908	22·5	19·5	131

The revenue-producing undertakings of the Municipality of Louvain are the Gasworks, the Canal and the Slaughterhouse. Until the year 1905 the gas supply was in the hands of a company. The last contract with this company was renewed in 1874 for a further period of thirty years from the 1st of January, 1875, and on its termination the municipality undertook the supply. The prices are as follows :—

For communal buildings : 2s. 3½d. per 1,000 cubic feet.
 „ domestic use : { light—3s. 2d. per 1,000 cubic feet.
 { heat—2s. 6d. per 1,000 cubic feet.
 „ motive power : 2s. 6d. per 1,000 cubic feet.

The receipts from the gasworks in 1907 amounted to £30,336, and the expenses to £28,729, leaving a profit of £1,207. The canal showed receipts amounting to £8,346, as compared with an expenditure of £1,182. Of the receipts under this head £5,571 consisted of navigation dues, and £1,580 of dues for loading and unloading on the canal banks. The receipts at the slaughterhouse amounted to £1,091, against £386 spent.

The bulk of the regular revenue of the Municipality is made up of (a) the Communal Endowment Funds, (b) Local Taxation, and (c) Market tolls and dues, &c., and rents from communal property. The Communal Endowment Funds represent one of the main sources of Belgian Municipal revenue. Of the two funds of this kind, one was instituted in order to compensate the communes for the loss of revenue entailed by the abolition of all *octroi* duties in 1860. This fund, which consists of a certain proportion of the State revenue derived from the Postal Service, and from the taxation of wines, liqueurs, beer and vinegar, is divided among the communes year by year, according to certain fixed principles. The sum which accrued to Louvain from this fund in 1907 amounted to £17,974. The second (or “Special”) Endowment Fund is of more recent origin : it dates from 1899, and consists

of a share in the State revenue from new licences and from Customs duties on live stock and meat. Louvain's share of this fund in 1907 amounted to £1,683. The receipts from local taxation amounted in 1907 to £12,668, of which the greater part (£10,588) was obtained by levying, for local purposes, an additional 80 centimes per franc levied by the State under the heads of the *Contribution foncière* and the *Contribution personnelle* respectively. Of the other local taxes, that on new buildings yielded £1,746, that on public amusements (dancing saloons, &c.) £146, and that on waitresses in *cafés* £124. The receipts from market tolls and dues, and from rents from communal property amounted to £4,180.

Among the ordinary expenditure of the municipality the items Public Education and Fine Arts represent a relatively large sum (£10,138) in comparison with the expenditure under the head of Poor Relief (£571). Of the expenditure under the latter head the chief items were £252, representing the town's share of the cost of maintaining persons detained in the State *Depôts* for mendicants, and £200 as a municipal subsidy to a philanthropic organisation for providing poor children with meals at school. Municipal grants in aid of unemployed benefit funds in 1907 amounted to £21 only.

It should be understood, however, that practically the whole cost of the public relief of the poor in Louvain (some £21,000 per annum) is defrayed out of Charitable Endowments controlled by an Administration which is entirely distinct from the Municipality, though its members are appointed and its finances controlled by the latter. The *Conseil Général d'Administration des Hospices et Secours de la Ville de Louvain* is responsible for the following nine institutions for the relief of the poor: (1) a maternity home, (2) a home for orphan boys and aged men, (3) a home for orphan girls, (4) a home for foundlings, (5) a home for aged women, (6) a similar institution for old married couples, (7) a home for the blind and incurable, (8) a lunatic asylum, and (9) a general hospital. In addition to the foregoing, which have an official character, there are very many charitable institutions in the town supported by private philanthropy, and for the most part in the hands of religious communities. Louvain is, in fact, noted among Belgian towns for the number and wealth of its agencies for dispensing public and private relief.

The published statistics as to the distribution of poor-relief in Louvain are not presented in a form from which it is possible to ascertain the number of individuals in receipt of the various kinds of public poor-relief at a given date. There is, however, good reason for supposing that a very large proportion of the working-class population habitually receive such relief in one form or another. The report on medical out-relief, for example, shows that the services of the medical officers of the poor were given gratis in connection with 564 confinements in Louvain in 1907. Since the total number of births recorded among all classes of the population in the town in that year only numbered 947, it would seem that the majority of working-class women, when they are confined, must invoke the assistance of the Poor-Law doctors.

The water supply of Louvain is in the hands of a Company, whose concession does not expire until the year 1929. For domestic consumption the company charges a minimum of 9s. 7d. a year for a supply up to 7,920 gallons. For water consumed in excess of that limit the charge per unit (220 gallons) varies from 1½d. to 3½d., according to the amount of the excess. The town shares to the extent of 25 per cent. in any profits exceeding £2,800, but not exceeding £4,000. On profits exceeding the latter sum, the town's share is 50 per cent., and once the profits exceed £5,000 the town has the right to reduce the prices charged to private consumers, but so that the profits may not be less than £5,000. For this purpose it has a right to inspect the Company's books and papers.

Louvain is still without a tramway system, unless that expression may be applied to a line of horse-drawn cars owned by a company and plying along the *rue de la Station* between the railway station and the *Grand' Place*, a distance of a little over half a mile. Communication by light railway between Louvain and a number of communes on the north-east, south, and south-west is, however, maintained by the *Société nationale des chemins de fer vicinaux*, whose lines are laid along the boulevards on the east, south, and west of the town. Towards the capital of this undertaking the town has subscribed various sums amounting in the aggregate to £24,000 and payable in yearly instalments extending over a period of 90 years. The sum of £816 paid under this head in 1907 corresponded to the town's share in the profits of the company for that year.

The question of supplying Louvain with electricity and with a system of electric tramways has for some time been engaging the attention of the Municipality, but the schemes actually under consideration contemplate the assignment of these services to private enterprise.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES, AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

At the last Belgian industrial census in October, 1896, the number of industrial work-people in Louvain was found to be 6,476, including 1,260 homeworkers and 187 members of households assisting heads of families at their trades. Between that date and the 1st of August, 1908, only 519 persons were added to the population of the town, and, so far as can be judged, the distribution of the occupied working classes among the different trades underwent no material change during that period. From a statement kindly prepared for the purposes of the present enquiry by the Factory Inspector of Louvain and the surrounding district, it appears that at the beginning of the present year (1909) there were altogether about 4,400 adult males employed in factories and similar establishments in Louvain and the outlying communes. Of these, 1,950 work in the metal and engineering trades, 576 in chemical works, 470 in brewing and malting, 412 in cigar-making, 272 in wood-working, and about 200 in flour mills. With regard to the number employed in the building trades, details are wanting, as these trades do not come within the purview of the Inspector of Factories and Workshops. There is, however, no reason to suppose that the number of workpeople now employed in the building trades differs materially from that ascertained on the occasion of the 1896 census, viz., 598.

By far the most conspicuous works of the locality are those of the metal and engineering trades, which are engaged in the manufacture of railway material (iron bridges, girders, turntables, locomotive tenders, railway and tramway carriages and wagons), steel tubes of every description and automobile *chassis*. Some 1,800 men are employed in the manufacture of these articles in three large establishments situated just outside the town boundary on the north-east, in the neighbourhood of the canal. The chemical works (manufacturing sulphuric acid, superphosphates and formic aldehyde) are in the open country at some distance from the town, and cannot be ranked as urban for the purpose of the present enquiry. The principal breweries, flour mills, timber yards and cigar factories, however, all lie within the municipal area.

The level of money wages is considerably lower in Louvain than in Brussels, in spite of the fact that the two towns are only about 18 miles apart and are connected by a frequent and cheap service of trains. The difference is held to be due in part to the fact that the most efficient and enterprising of the workmen of Louvain either migrate to Brussels or obtain employment there and travel to and fro daily with a workman's ticket on the railway, which costs them 1s. 4d. per week. Any shortage thus brought about in the supply of labour for Louvain is made up from the surrounding villages, where wages are so low that even those paid in Louvain attract a sufficient number of work-seekers to that town. Many are of opinion that the exceptionally large number of richly endowed institutions for dispensing public and private charity in the town helps to keep down the level of wages in Louvain.

Labour organizations are but little developed, and are divided into two camps, that of the Christians (Roman Catholics), who are non-militant, and that of the Social Democrats, the former numbering about 710, and the latter about 910 members. The unions with the largest membership are those of the metal workers, of whom 525 are organised, including 375 in the militant and 150 in the non-militant union. Among the journeymen bootmakers (almost all employed in small workshops) 260 are organised, including 200 in the Social Democratic Union. Of 235 men organised in the building trades, the majority (180) belong to the non-militants, but in the only two remaining trades (cigar-making and woodworking) in which there are organisations of both kinds, the Social Democrats are the stronger in point of membership, having about 140 members in each case, as compared with about 60 in each case in the Christian unions. There are Christian unions of tailors, compositors, brickmakers, wagon loaders, and lampmen (railway service), numbering altogether some 200 members, but no corresponding Social Democratic unions.

Strikes are rare, and collective agreements fixing standard rates of wages and other conditions of labour are unknown in Louvain. In almost every trade, however, certain time rates of wages are recognised as locally current, and for the great majority of adult workmen these range between 3½d. and 4d. per hour for skilled men, and between 2½d. and 3d. for unskilled men, while the weekly hours of labour range from 60 to 72.

The following table shows the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour in June, 1908, of adult male workpeople employed in the principal trades and industries of Louvain. The wages stated are time-rates, except where otherwise indicated:—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

					Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Building Trades :—						
Bricklayers and Masons	...	...	...	...	20s. 2d. to 21s. 4d.	72
Stonemasons (Cutters)	...	...	...	...	23s.	72
Carpenters	...	...	...	...	20s. 2d.	72
Joiners	...	...	...	...	20s. 2d. to 20s. 9d.	72
Plumbers, Plasterers and Painters	...	...	...	...	20s. 2d.	72
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	...	...	...	...	17s. 3d.	72
General Labourers	...	...	...	...	14s. 5d.	72
Metal and Engineering Trades :—						
Fitters	...	...	Railway material, { Time	17s. 11d.	64	
			&c. { Piece	19s. 9d. to 21s. 6d.	64	
			Steel tubes	16s. 10d.	60	
Turners	...	...	Railway material, { Time	23s.	64	
			&c. { Piece	25s. 4d. to 27s. 8d.	64	
			Steel tubes	19s. 2d. „ 21s. 7d.	60	
Patternmakers	...	...	Railway material, { Time	23s.	64	
			&c. { Piece	25s. 4d. to 27s. 8d.	64	
			Steel tubes	19s. 2d.	60	
Boilersmiths	...	...	Railway material, { Time	16s. 5d.	64	
			&c. { Piece	18s. to 19s. 8d.	64	
			Steel tubes	21s. 7d. to 24s.	60	
Planers, Drillers, Milling Machine-men, and Mortisers.	...	...	Railway material, { Time	14s. 4d. to 19s. 5d.	64	
			&c. { Piece	15s. 9d. „ 23s. 4d.	64	
			Steel tubes	16s. 10d.	60	
Riveters	...	...	Railway material, { Time	19s. 5d.	64	
			&c. { Piece	21s. 5d. to 23s. 4d.	64	
			Steel tubes	16s. 10d.	60	
Holders-up	...	...	Railway material, { Time	12s. 10d.	64	
			&c. { Piece	14s. 1d. to 15s. 4d.	64	
Steam Hammermen	...	...	Railway material, { Time	35s. 10d.	64	
			&c. { Piece	39s. 5d. to 43s.	64	
Hydraulic Pressmen (steel tubes)	...	...	...	19s. 2d.	60	
Labourers	...	...	Railway material, &c. ...	13s. 10d.	64	
			Steel tubes	12s. to 13s. 5d.	60	
Sawmills :—						
Sawyers	...	...	...	15s. 1d. to 17s. 8d.	63 to 65½	
Other Unskilled Men	...	...	...	12s. 1d. „ 13s. 1d.	63 „ 65½	
Cornmills :—						
Millers	...	...	...	16s. 10d. to 23s.	60 to 72	
Labourers	...	...	...	12s. to 15s. 7d.	60 „ 66	
Breweries :—						
Brewers	...	...	...	14s. 5d. to 15s. 10d.	66	
Maltsters	...	...	...	15s. 10d. to 16s. 10d.	66	
Coopers	...	...	...	16s. 10d. to 18s. 6d.	66	
Cellarmen	...	...	...	14s. 5d. to 15s. 10d.	66	
Labourers	...	...	...	13s. 2d. to 14s. 5d.	66	
Cigar Making :—						
Cigar Makers	...	...	...	15s. 7d.*	—	
Light Railways :—						
Ticket Collectors	...	...	...	20s. 11d.	60	
Engine Drivers	...	...	...	22s. 7d.	60	
Stokers	...	...	...	16s. 10d.	60	
Permanent Way Men	...	...	...	13s. 2d.	60	
Municipal Employees :—						
Carmen (street cleaning)	...	...	...	14s. 5d.	60	
Gas Stokers	...	...	...	19s. 2d.	—	
Gas-yard Labourers	...	...	...	15s. 7d.	72	

* Figure supplied by the Labour Exchange.

Representing the level of wages at Brussels by 100, the index numbers for wages in the building trades at Louvain are 80 for skilled men and 91 for unskilled labourers, while for the engineering trades the index numbers are 82 for skilled men and 84 for unskilled labourers.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

Working-class housing conditions in Louvain compare very favourably with those in Brussels, and this fact, combined with the cheap and rapid railway communication between the two towns, and the higher wages obtainable in the capital, is an inducement for many workmen to live in Louvain and work in Brussels. With very few exceptions every working-class family occupies a whole house containing, as a rule, either four rooms or two. Houses of three rooms are difficult to find. Two classes of small houses may be distinguished: those situated in the courts and alleys (*impasses*), and those situated in thoroughfares. The former, which represent the older type, are almost invariably white-washed, while in the latter the brickwork is left exposed.

With increasing distance from the centre of the town houses of the latter sort, built in long or short rows, tend to become more general, but even in the suburbs groups of the older white-washed cottage-like houses, built in courts or blind alleys, are fairly numerous. As the words "court" and "alley" are usually associated with insufficiency of light and air, some misconception may be prevented by stating here that, in Flemish towns generally, one of the chief objections to this style of building is obviated by the fact that the houses are invariably low, having seldom more than one story above the ground floor, and frequently no upper room whatever beyond a loft or attic with a dormer window. The light and air which are thus freely admitted combine with the practice of whitewashing the house fronts in producing an effect which is the reverse of gloomy. It is true that insanitary housing conditions are more prevalent in the courts and alleys than in the thoroughfares, but this is usually due to the fact that the houses date from a time when the importance of internal air space, properly lined cesspools, a good water supply, and adequate closet accommodation was less generally recognised than now.

The following were found to be the predominant weekly rents of houses of two, three and four rooms occupied by the working classes:—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Two rooms	...	...	...	1s. 7d. to 2s. 3d.
Three rooms	...	...	...	2s. 3d. to 2s. 11d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	2s. 9d. to 3s. 4d.

Rent at Brussels being taken as the base, = 100, the rent index number for Louvain is 65.

The houses obtainable at rents falling within the above limits are not of the most modern construction, for the older houses are still in the majority. The following are some concrete examples of houses of various sizes, which were actually visited in the course of the present enquiry:—

(a.) *Two-roomed Houses.*—1. The house forms one of many similar dwellings built in rows in a working-class street (*Rue du Saint Esprit*) approaching the periphery on the south-west. It consists of a lower room and an upper room. The former is entered direct from the street, (*i.e.*, there is neither forecourt nor vestibule) and measures 13 feet by 11 feet 6 inches. The height from the tiled floor to the ceiling is about 8½ feet. Behind this room is a small space in the nature of a pantry or scullery, a great part of which is, however, occupied by a narrow stairway leading to the upper room, whose measurement from front to rear exceeds that of the lower room by about 2½ feet. The upper room has a sloping ceiling and a dormer window. A small fenced-off portion of the open land at the back serves as a vegetable garden. One closet is provided for every two houses. Water has to be fetched from a stand-pipe in the street. The rent is 2s. 3d. a week. Other houses in the same street and similar in every respect were being let at 2s. per week.

2. In an *impasse* off the *rue des Nains*, near the western periphery, two-roomed houses were let at 1s. 8d. per week. They consisted of a lower and an upper room, the

former entered direct from the alley. Both rooms were 13 feet square; the lower one measured 9 feet from floor to ceiling, while the upper room had a sloping roof and dormer window. The conditions as regards garden, closet accommodation and water supply were identical with those described in the preceding example. The fact that the rents were lower by about 7*d.* per week was due to the houses being situated in an *impasse* or blind alley, as well as to their being somewhat further from the centre of the town than those in the *rue du Saint Esprit*.

3. In the south-eastern suburbs, in a court (*Impasse de la Mare Noire*) some 160 feet long, and 60 feet wide, were 40 two-roomed cottages each let at 2*s.* per week. Each consisted of a lower room and an upper room, the former measuring 16 feet by 18, and the latter 14 feet by 12. The distance from floor to ceiling in the lower room was 9 feet, and in the upper room about 6½ feet. Water had to be fetched from a stand-pipe in the main street, and the closets, of which there were 10 for the 40 houses, were situated in the court. There were no gardens.

(b) *Three-roomed Houses*.—These usually consist of one room below and two above. The ground-floor space is divided into two parts, viz.: the front living room, which is entered direct from the street, and a small compartment at the back, which is entered from the living room, and contains the staircase communicating with the upper rooms; of these one is in front and corresponds to the living room, while the other (much smaller) is at the back and corresponds to the space beneath, containing the staircase. Houses of this description, each having a small back garden, about 40 feet in length, and each with a separate closet, are to be had at 2*s.* 5*d.* a week in the western suburbs. As usual water has to be fetched from a stand-pipe in the street.

It sometimes happens that two long rows of houses of this description are back-to-back. In such cases the back rooms are of necessity windowless, and the garden and closet are in the front of the house. Most of the other examples of three-roomed working-class houses observed in Louvain had the appearance of being converted two-roomed houses, a third room having been obtained by dividing the upper room into two if it happened to have two windows.

(c) *Four-roomed Houses*.—The four-roomed cottage appears to be the usual standard of housing accommodation for working-class families in Louvain. Such cottages invariably consist of two lower and two upper rooms. The latter are, as a rule, reached by a staircase ascending from the back room (or kitchen) on the ground floor. Stairs ascending from the front room or from a vestibule are exceptional. Ground-floor rooms are invariably paved with red or black and white tiles. Of the four-roomed cottages visited, the following were let at rents falling within the predominant range of 2*s.* 9*d.* to 3*s.* 4*d.* per week.

1. *Bankstraat*, in the south-western suburbs, in semi-rural surroundings: This street contains a row of 21 houses of modern appearance, with plain brick fronts. Each has a tiled vestibule with the "best" room on one side, and the kitchen at the end. Each of these rooms (also tiled) measures 13 feet by 11 feet 6 inches, and is 11 feet high. A staircase from the kitchen gives access to the two upper rooms, front and back respectively, of dimensions corresponding to those of the lower rooms, even as regards the height from floor to ceiling. Behind the kitchen is a species of scullery, in the nature of a shed open to the air on one side, and beyond this a small plot of garden (about 25 feet square), in which the closet is situated. These houses contain the additional accommodation of a loft and two cellars. Water for drinking is fetched from a standpipe in the street; to reach this some of the tenants have to walk a hundred yards. The rent charged is 3*s.* 4*d.* per week. Houses very similar to these, but lacking the vestibule and the scullery, are to be had in the neighbourhood for 2*s.* 11*d.* per week, while others, with somewhat larger gardens, but situated about 200 yards from a street standpipe, are let at 3*s.* 2*d.* a week.

2. *Rue de Terreuren*, also in south-west suburbs: Here there are houses similar in character to those described above, but with much smaller rooms (about 10 feet square), and lacking both vestibule and garden; they cost 2*s.* 11*d.* per week. In these the closet accommodation is less satisfactory, the provision being one to every three houses.

3. *Rue Willems*, in the east-central part of the town, and within a short distance of the railway station, contains four-roomed houses, each with small vestibule, garden, and separate closet: they are to be had for 2*s.* 9*d.* per week. These houses have the disadvantage of being situated nearly 400 yards from the nearest standpipe for the supply

of drinking water, the neighbourhood being one in which middle-class houses, each with its own water supply, constitute the majority.

As regards the improvement of working-class housing in Louvain, direct action on the part of the municipality is limited to the granting of a small yearly subsidy towards the expenses of the Housing Committee established for the arrondissement of Louvain under the Law of 1889, and to the provision of a room at the Town Hall for the meetings of the Committee. The total sum received by that body in public subsidies (State, Provincial, and Municipal) in 1907 amounted to £18 only. The greater part of the work of the Committee consists in dealing with claims for the pension of £2 12*s.* per annum to which aged and necessitous workpeople are entitled under the Law of May 10th, 1900. Thus the Committee had to deal with 629 such claims in 1907, as compared with 266 applications for certificates of eligibility to benefit by the provisions of the Working-class Housing Law of 1889. It is worthy of note, moreover, that of the 266 applications of the latter kind only 40 were made by persons belonging to the town of Louvain, the rest being from people residing in the rural communes of the *arrondissement* of that name.

There are in Louvain two societies for promoting the objects of the Working-class Housing Law of 1889—a credit society and a building society. The former (*Société Anonyme de Louvain pour favoriser l'acquisition de Maisons par la Classe Ouvrière*), founded in 1892, aims at enabling a workman to purchase a house for his own occupation on easy terms of payment. Nine-tenths of his purchase money (not exceeding £220) is advanced, and is repayable by monthly instalments extending over 10, 15, 20, or 25 years. The rate of interest charged is 3½ per cent., if the borrower insures his life for the amount, and deposits the policy with the society; otherwise the rate of interest is 4 per cent. Up to the end of 1907 the society had granted 341 loans, amounting to £32,749. Of the share capital of the Society, amounting to £8,000, £7,189 was paid up, while the Society was indebted to the State Savings Bank for loans amounting to £21,000, advanced at 2½ per cent. per annum.

The second society (*Société Anonyme de Louvain pour la construction de Maisons Ouvrières*), also founded in 1892, builds or purchases houses with the object of selling them to workpeople, or letting them to such people at rents sufficiently low to enable the tenants to effect the savings necessary to enable them to accumulate the initial deposit of one-tenth of the cost, and so become purchasers with the assistance of the credit society. Up to the end of 1907 the Society had built or purchased 93 houses. Of its share capital, amounting to £1,200, only £120 had been paid up, and the Society was indebted to the State Savings Bank for loans amounting to £2,052.

RETAIL PRICES.

The organisation of the retail food supply of Louvain presents few features deserving of special notice. The more thrifty and energetic among the housewives procure their supplies of butter, eggs, cheese and potatoes and other vegetables in the open-air markets, held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at prices somewhat lower than they would have to pay at the shops. In the case of butter, for instance, the price is usually from ½*d.* to ¾*d.* per lb. lower in the market. As regards eggs, the question of economy in visiting the market instead of the shops scarcely concerns the working classes, who, it would seem, seldom spend money on eggs.

Groceries and other Commodities.

Among the shops at which groceries and other provisions are retailed, there are four establishments where coffee and sugar are offered at prices which, from their relative lowness, are calculated to attract working-class customers. Of these establishments three are owned by a well-known "multiple" firm, while the fourth is a store, owned by the Social-Democratic Co-operative Society *Le Proletaire*. It is not apparent, however, that these low prices attract the custom of any large proportion of the working classes of Louvain, whose Flemish conservatism and frequent inability to pay ready money (a condition insisted upon at the stores and the "multiple" shops) have enabled the small private dealers to retain the majority of their old customers in the face of their more powerful competitors. In respect to bread, on the other hand, there is reason to believe that the small bakeries, where the dough is still kneaded by hand, have suffered severely

from the competition of the machine bakeries, of which there are two—one belonging to the co-operative society already mentioned, and another owned by a co-operative baking society organised among minor officials of the railway and other public departments.

The following table summarises the data supplied in response to enquiries made among shopkeepers and others in different parts of Louvain as to the prices most usually paid by working-class customers for these articles in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6½d. to 8¾d.
Sugar, Loaf "	2¾d. „ 3½d.
Bacon, Salted "	7¾d.
Eggs per ls.	16
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	8¾d.
Butter "	11d. to 1s. 1½d.
Margarine "	8¾d. to 9½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	3d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d. to 9¾d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	4½d. „ 5d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal per cwt.	1s. 2¾d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	7½d.

Meat.

With the exception of a small quantity of Argentine beef which arrives in sides from Antwerp, the fresh meat supply of Louvain consists of Belgian produce, purchased by the butchers at the local cattle market, which is held every Monday. All cattle and other live stock intended for consumption in the town have to be slaughtered at the public abattoir, where they undergo rigorous inspection. Here it may be mentioned that Louvain has had a public slaughterhouse since 1778, and has therefore possessed such an institution longer than any other town in Belgium. The original slaughterhouse continued in use until April, 1908, when it was superseded by a new abattoir, constructed at a cost of £30,000, and stated to be one of the best-equipped establishments of its kind in Belgium.

The total number of animals slaughtered in Louvain in 1908 was 23,169, of an aggregate (live) weight of 87,516 cwt. Of the total weight 52·1 per cent. represented beef, 32·4 per cent. pork and preparations thereof, and 12·7 per cent. veal. The remaining 2·8 per cent. of the total weight of slaughtered animals represented mutton, horseflesh and goat flesh. These figures show approximately the relative importance of the different kinds of meat in the dietary of the population as a whole, and warrant the conclusion that among flesh foods beef ranks first, and pork with its variants second. In the working-class dietary, however, beef occupies a secondary position. Returns obtained for the purpose of the present enquiry from 91 typical working-class families (consisting of 491 persons) in Louvain, with reference to the weekly consumption and cost of different kinds of food, showed an average *per capita* consumption of 22·6 oz. of meat of all kinds in the week, or 73 lb. in the year. Of the total meat consumption beef represented only 31·5 per cent., while pork, bacon and *charcuterie* together constituted 56 per cent. (pork, 27, bacon, 15 and *charcuterie*, 14 per cent.). Among the other kinds of meat consumed by the working classes the most important is horseflesh, which was found to enter into the total meat consumption to the extent of 8 per cent., while veal, mutton and rabbits were represented in the proportions of 3, 1 and 0·5 per cent. respectively. Not one of the 91 families from whom returns were obtained reported any purchases of poultry.

The predominant retail prices of various cuts of meat in Louvain in June, 1908, are shown in the subjoined table, based upon data obtained from butchers' shops doing business in different parts of the town.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	7½d.
Brisket	5½d. to 5¾d.
Silverside	7¾d.
Shin { with bone	4½d.
{ without bone	5½d.
Beef Steak	9½d. to 9¾d.
Rump Steak	9½d.
Mutton :—	
Leg	9½d.
Shoulder	7d. to 7½d.
Breast	5½d. „ 6d.
Neck { Best End	8¾d.
{ Scrag End	6d.
Chops	8¾d.
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	8½d. to 9½d.
Shoulder (with bone)	7¾d.
Ribs	8¾d.
Chops	9½d.
Leg	9½d.
Pork :—	
Leg	9½d.
Foreloin	8¾d.
Belly	7¾d. to 8½d.
Chops	8¾d.

As regards the purchase of meat for the household, working-class customs in Louvain are similar to those prevalent in Brussels (*see pp. 23–24*). The habit of buying ready-prepared pork savouries (*boudin blanc, boudin noir, pâté de foie* and *kip-kap*) from the *charcutier*, in order to avoid the trouble of cooking, is perhaps even more wide-spread in Louvain than in the capital. There are 39 *charcuteries* in the town, besides the 126 vendors of fresh meat. Fish is also a popular article of food ; not less so, in fact, than either pork or beef, and its sale is centralised at a special covered market conveniently situated in the middle of the town. The sale of horseflesh is confined to two shops, which disposed of 210 horses in 1908. The prices charged for horseflesh in June, 1908, were 5½d. per lb. in the case of fillet or steak, and 4½d. per lb. in the case of *faux filet*.

Prices at Brussels being indicated by 100, the index number for the price of food other than meat at Louvain is 97, for meat it is 91, and for food as a whole, 95. For coal the index number is 87, and for food and coal together 94. The index number for rent and prices combined is 89.

MALINES.

Malines or Mechlin, the fifth town in Belgium in point of population, is situated in the province of Antwerp almost midway on the main line from Brussels (13 miles) to Antwerp (14 miles). Several arms of the river Dyle traverse the town, and the canal uniting Louvain with the Scheldt by way of the Nethe skirts its southern and western sides. Steam tramways run to Antwerp, also to Lierre, to Boom, and to various other places of local importance.

The town lies in a level, fertile plain, and within its boundaries but slight inequalities of surface are observable. Its general aspect is pleasing. Broad boulevards, which have taken the place of the ancient fortifications, surround the main part of the city, which contains several open spaces, while a large number of the private houses have gardens of considerable size. The majority of the houses are painted white, and a general air of cleanliness is everywhere noticeable. The streets, however, are not well paved, and an absence of regular footways is noticeable in many parts. In the centre of the town are a number of streets, such as the *Rue des Béguines* and the *Rue de la Chèvre*, so narrow that two vehicles cannot pass in the roadway.

Malines is predominantly a working-class town, owing its industrial importance partly to the extensive workshops of the State railways, which employ several thousand men, and partly to its long-established, distinctive industry of furniture and chair-making. The lace-making industry, with which its name is still identified, has migrated to other centres, including Bruges, Brussels, and Turnhout; but tram and waggon building, linen and cotton weaving, printing, malting, brewing, and the growing and preserving of vegetables, afford in the aggregate a considerable amount of employment.

As the cathedral city and the place of residence of the Primate of Belgium, having two large theological seminaries for the priesthood and a number of religious communities, Malines is also the chief ecclesiastical centre of the country.

The following Table shows the population of the town at the Censuses of 1880, 1890 and 1900, and also the estimated population at the end of 1907 :—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	42,381	—	—
1890	51,011	8,633	20·4
1900	55,705	4,691	9·2
1907 (estimated)	59,107	3,402	6·1
		(in seven years).	(in seven years).

At the Census of 1900, 71·0 per cent. of the inhabitants of Malines were returned as having been born within the town. The corresponding percentages in 1890 and 1880 were 69·4 and 66·0 respectively.

The following Table shows the birth, death, and infantile mortality rates for the five years 1904–8 :—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	25·5	16·4	140
1905	24·4	15·5	120
1906	24·9	18·6	175
1907	23·5	15·4	124
1908	23·3	15·7	154

The average birth-rate for the period under review is 24·3, while the average death-rate is 16·3. The infantile mortality rate has fluctuated greatly, having been as low as 120 per 1,000 births in 1905, and as high as 175 in 1906, the average rate for the five years 1904–8 being 143.

Municipal enterprise is of little account in Malines. The supply of gas is undertaken by a private company, which has received the concession from the municipality under conditions regulating the prices to be charged, wages to be paid and other matters. No waterworks existed in 1908, but a town water supply is to be established, a contract having been entered into in the latter half of 1908 for the necessary works. Among municipal property may be mentioned the abattoir, cemetery, public library, theatre, music school and employment bureau. There are no tramways within the town.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

In the course of the last thirteen years the most marked industrial development in Malines has been the growth of the *State Railway workshops*, in which, at the close of 1908, some 3,000 hands were employed.

The activities of the railway workshops at Malines are confined to the repair of locomotives and general rolling-stock, no new construction work being undertaken. On five days of the week, work in these shops commences at 6·45 a.m. and ceases at 6·15 p.m., there being an interval of 1½ hours at mid-day and two intervals of 10 minutes each, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon. On Monday, the mid-day interval is reduced to 1¼ hours, and there is an interval of 10 minutes in the morning only, work ceasing at 4 p.m. The net working time is thus 56 hours 10 minutes per week. The wages paid are low, but the hours are shorter than in the other industrial establishments in Malines, and the men enjoy many advantages. They have a right, since 1906, to a pension without contribution. If they wish to insure themselves for the benefit of their wives and children they contribute 4 per cent. of their wages, but this payment must have been made for ten years to entitle the family to benefit at the husband's death. Medical attendance is free, and during illness part wages up to 2s. per day are paid.

The *furniture* industry at Malines has existed for several centuries, but an important branch of this industry, the manufacture of chairs (for other than local needs) is stated to have commenced only at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The specialty of the industry is carved furniture (especially in oak, but also in walnut and mahogany) of all kinds, in ancient and modern styles, while in respect of chair making Malines is noted as the producer of ordinary goods made of beech, elm, and ash, with wooden or plaited straw bottoms, for use in kitchens, in inferior *cafés*, and in churches. While the majority of the chair makers work at home, the greater number of the furniture-makers work in factories. In connection with these trades it may be stated that at the end of 1907 there were in Malines 60 joinery or carpentry yards, 14 wood carvers' works, 17 wood turners' works, 147 furniture factories, and 48 chair factories. No wages agreements exist in these trades, but hourly rates are usually paid to the joiners and cabinet makers and piece rates to the carvers, turners, and wood-moulding machinists. The normal working day in the factories is about eleven hours, but a fair proportion of the workpeople cease work early on Mondays, and the normal week varies from 60 to 66 hours. The day in summer begins at six and ends at seven, with intervals of one hour and a half at mid-day, a quarter of an hour in the forenoon and another in the afternoon.

The home workers in the furniture trade are sufficiently numerous to call for some special remarks. They seldom work alone, but employ one, two, or three improvers or apprentices, to help them in the rougher operations. In a publication of the Belgian Labour Department (1907) on the Furniture Industry at Malines many instances of the wages earned by home workers are cited. One cabinet maker, aged 36 years, working with two improvers, who were paid respectively 1¾d. and 1¼d. per hour, and an apprentice, who received 1s. 7d. per week, manufactured in 16 days objects for which he was paid £5 4s. 10d.; a second cabinet maker assisted by an improver paid 1d. per hour, earned 48s. in 12½ days; a third, aged 45, earned in 12 days £4 9s. 7d., from which had to be deducted the wages of three assistants at 2d., 1¼d., and ½d. respectively per hour; and a fourth, aged 34 years, working alone, earned 19s. 2d. in 6½ days. One wood carver, aged 46, assisted by three improvers, paid respectively 2½d., 1½d., and 1¼d. per hour, and an apprentice ½d. per hour, earned £5 17s. 7d. in 11 days; a second, aged 26, working with an apprentice at a weekly wage of 2s., earned 32s. 2d. in 11 days; and a third, aged 38 years, also working with an apprentice (wage 1s. 7d. per week), received for 12 days' work 41s. These home workers are stated to work at normal times an average of 11 hours per day.

A very large proportion of the chair makers work at home, and, whether working at home or in a factory, their earnings are not so high as those of the cabinet makers and

carvers. A representative factory, which employed 16 chair makers, paid in wages the sum of £143 1s. 7d. for 1,164 days' work (in July, August, and September, 1908), or an average of 2s. 5½d. per day. Of four workmen who worked continuously during these 13 weeks, one (aged 50) earned on an average 19s. 4d., the second (aged 28) 21s. 5d., the third 18s. 9d., and the fourth 16s. 10d. per week. The highest sum earned in one week was 25s. 2d., and on three occasions the sum of 24s. was earned, while the lowest was 13s. 7d. (on four occasions). In general, it may be said that chair makers, who all work at piece rates, earn from 2s. 5d. to 3s. 2d. per day. The women employed in this industry—they are engaged mainly in making the straw-plaited bottoms—are estimated to form about one-third of all occupied, and their wages are extremely low. Complaints are made in this industry that the employer insists upon extra work being done, for which no payment is made; for instance, the men are obliged to pack the chairs and bring them to the different places whence they are to be despatched, without special remuneration. The women who make the straw bottoms to the chairs are also obliged to buy the straw, sometimes from the employer.

The following Table shows the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of men employed in the principal occupations at June, 1908 :—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Building Trades :—		
Bricklayers and Masons	19s. 4d. to 24s.	69 to 75
Stonemasons (Cutters)	21s. to 27s.	69 „ 75
Carpenters	19s. 4d. to 22s. 2d.	69 „ 75
Joiners	19s. 4d. to 24s.	69 „ 75
Plumbers	19s. 4d. „ 21s.	69 „ 75
Plasterers	19s. 4d. „ 24s.	69 „ 75
Painters	16s. 7d. „ 21s.	69 „ 75
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	13s. 10d. „ 15s.	69 „ 75
Railway Repair Works :—		
Locomotive Department :		
Iron Moulders	16s. 4d. to 20s. 2d.	56½
Fitters, Turners, and Smiths	15s. 4d. „ 17s. 3d.	56½
Smiths' Strikers	12s. 6d. „ 13s. 5d.	56½
Boilersmiths (iron)	14s. 5d. „ 16s. 4d.	56½
Machinists	13s. 5d. „ 15s. 4d.	56½
Patternmakers	18s. 3d. „ 19s. 2d.	56½
Painters	14s. 5d. „ 17s. 3d.	56½
Labourers	11s. 6d.	56½
Carriage Department :		
Fitters	14s. 5d. to 16s. 4d.	56½
Turners	14s. 5d. „ 17s. 3d.	56½
Smiths	16s. 4d.	56½
Smiths' Strikers	13s. 5d. to 14s. 5d.	56½
Machinists	14s. 5d.	56½
Joiners	14s. 5d. to 18s. 3d.	56½
Painters	13s. 5d. „ 17s. 3d.	56½
Upholsterers	14s. 5d. „ 15s. 4d.	56½
Sawyers	13s. 5d. „ 15s. 4d.	56½
Roofers	14s. 5d. „ 16s. 4d.	56½
Lampmakers	14s. 5d. „ 15s. 4d.	56½
Labourers	11s. 6d.	56½
High Class Furniture Making :—		
Wood Carvers	26s. 5d. to 31s. 8d.	66
Joiners	23s. 9d. „ 26s. 5d.	66
Carpenters	19s. 6d. „ 22s. 8d.	66
Labourers	12s. to 14s. 5d.	66
Woodworking and Furniture Trades :—		
Sawyers	16s. 10d. to 21s. 1d.	60 to 66
Woodmoulding Machinists	21s. 7d. to 29s.	60 „ 66
Turners	16s. 4d. to 20s. 1d.	60 „ 66
Joiners	16s. 4d. „ 21s. 1d.	60 „ 66
Cabinet Makers	17s. 3d. „ 22s. 2d.	60 „ 66
Wood Carvers	18s. 3d. „ 23s. 9d.	60 „ 66
Chair Makers	14s. 5d. „ 19s. 2d.	60 „ 66
Varnishers, Dyers	13s. to 15s. 10d.	60 „ 66

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Printing Trades :—		
Compositors	18s. 3d. to 20s.	60
Brewing :—		
Brewers	14s. 5d. } and allow-	63
Coopers	19s. 2d. } ance of	63
Draymen	14s. 5d. } beer.	63
Municipal Employees :—		
Paviors	18s. 3d.	60
Paviors' Labourers	12s. 6d.	60
Roadmakers, Road Sweepers and Carmen...	13s.	60
Gas Stokers	19s. 2d.	—
Gas Yard Labourers	12s. to 14s. 5d.	60

Wages at Brussels being taken as 100, the index numbers for the wages of skilled men and unskilled labourers in the building trades at Malines are 81 and 76 respectively; wages in the engineering trades are represented by 71 for skilled men and 74 for unskilled labourers; the index number for the wages of compositors is 72.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

Whilst the middle classes live in the central parts and along the boulevards, the working people (especially those who earn regular wages) prefer to live in the suburbs, i.e., the quarters beyond the Louvain Canal and the arm of the Dyle running along the eastern side of the town. Of the working population the furniture and chair makers and unskilled labourers live in the Old Town, the necessities of their trades obliging many of the former to live in the very centre, while the latter are unable to find, save in the oldest and least desirable streets, the lodgings which they can afford. The main body of work-people dwelling in the centre are congregated in the west and south-west parts, although individual streets with such occupiers are found in every quarter of the town.

The dominant type of dwelling for all classes in Malines is the single-family house. The Census of 1900 returned the number of houses destined for habitation in the town at 10,402, and the number of households at 12,400, which gives an average of 1.19 households per house; the previous census in 1890 showed an average of 1.17. Building, especially as regards workmen's dwellings, has been active since 1900, and the new houses may be said to be almost without exception single-family houses. The communal bye-laws forbid the construction of houses of less than two stories (i.e. ground floor and first floor), and the bulk of the existing workmen's dwellings have at least that number.

The majority of the working-class families inhabit houses containing four, five or six rooms. The four-roomed house possesses two rooms on the ground, and two rooms on the first floor; that of five rooms has the additional room either as an attic or as a kitchen projecting from the main building into the yard; and the six-roomed tenement contains either both these additions, or, less usually, two attics. All houses have a *grenier*, or lumber room not fit for habitation immediately underneath the roof, save when there are two attic rooms over the first floor; and the great majority also possess a cellar or cellars. Gardens are not commonly attached to these dwellings in the central parts of the town, but in the outer areas they are practically universal, though sometimes, owing to their limited size, they are not of great utility. Many workmen, however, rent small plots of ground for the cultivation of potatoes, onions, leeks and other vegetables.

Some characteristic features of working-class dwellings may be noticed. Corridors, which end about the centre of the building, are general in the modern dwellings, houses where the street door leads directly into an apartment being found chiefly in the older houses and in the central parts of the town. The staircase is placed either in the middle of the house separating the front from the back room, or in the front or back room; in the last case it is on the side contiguous with the front room. In a few cases the stairs are in the same position as that which they usually occupy in small English houses—in the second half of a through corridor or passage. The entrance to the cellar lies sometimes in the corridor, but more generally it is situated in the back room. When there are three rooms on the ground floor the third room, which is at the back, has generally a sloping roof

and often the upper portion of the outer wall is made of glass; otherwise this third room resembles the third room on the ground floor in an English workman's house, being an addition built out into the yard. The ceilings of the ground-floor rooms are almost invariably higher than those on the first floor, and the latter are a good deal higher than the ceilings of the attic rooms. The windows of the last-named rooms are less than half the size of the windows of the other rooms, and their width usually exceeds their height. Attic windows built in the roofs of houses are rarely found at Malines. Not infrequently in the older houses access to the attic is obtained by means of a stair which is little more than a ladder communicating with a kind of trap-door. In the kitchens fireplaces are seldom used, stoves with long pipes being regarded by working-class households as more economical. The corridors and kitchens are paved with cement, and the walls are more often papered than whitewashed. The conveniences are found in the yard or garden as the case may be. A municipal water supply not existing at Malines, water is obtained from wells, and the majority of houses are provided with pumps. The homes of the working people in Malines are extremely well kept in the majority of cases, being scrupulously clean, and many efforts at adornment are noticeable. Pottery is popular, and the furniture generally includes several carved objects, such as oak cabinets and oak tables. In the outer parts of the town the front room is usually set apart for the reception of friends; in the central districts, where the bulk of the woodworkers and especially the homeworkers live, one room generally serves as a workshop. The following notes relate to typical working-class houses visited for the purpose of the enquiry:—

Rue St. Jean Berckmans.—Four four-roomed houses in red brick, each with a corridor 3 feet 3 inches broad leading through the house to the kitchen. The stairs were situated between the front and back rooms. The former measured 9 feet 3 inches by 9 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 3 inches, and the latter 13 feet by 11 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 3 inches, while the front room on the first floor had an area of 13 feet by 9 feet 3 inches, being 9 feet 9 inches high, and the back room measured 13 feet by 11 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 9 inches. Behind the house were yard, garden and convenience. Beneath the front room was a cellar. The rent was 2s. 11d. per week.

Rue Moons.—Five newly-built houses in an old quarter, each having two rooms on both the ground and first floors and an attic above; they were let at 3s. 4d. per week. The staircase separated the front and back rooms, of which the dimensions were respectively: 9 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 6 inches and 14 feet by 9 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 6 inches. The front room on the first floor measured 14 feet by 10 feet 3 inches by 9 feet 9 inches and the back room 14 feet by 9 feet 3 inches by 9 feet 9 inches, while the attic facing on to the street measured 14 feet by 10 feet 3 inches by 8 feet 3 inches. There was no garden.

Rue Dodoens.—Four houses, each containing five rooms and an attic and let at 3s. 2d. per week. The front room measured 12 feet 3 inches by 9 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 3 inches, and the back room 14 feet 9 inches by 13 feet by 10 feet 3 inches. The staircase was placed in the back room. The upper front room measured 12 feet 3 inches by 13 feet by 9 feet 9 inches, but the back room had the same area as the rooms below. Each house had cellarge and a garden.

Quartier de Louvain, Rue de Tour.—Some eighteen houses of uniform construction (situated close to the railway works), each having four rooms and an attic, with cellars, yards, and gardens; they were let at rents of 2s. 7d. and 2s. 9d. per week. They had no corridors, and the rooms on the first and ground floors had the same dimensions, viz.—front rooms 11 feet by 9 feet 6 inches by 10 feet 3 inches, back room 11 feet by 10 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 3 inches. The ceilings were a little lower on the first floor. The stairs were in the back room.

Quartier de Louvain, Rue du Marteau.—Fifteen houses containing four rooms, an attic, and a back kitchen, which were let at 3s. 2d. per week. The dimensions were:—Front room, 11 feet by 8 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 9 inches; back room, 13 feet by 12 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 9 inches; back kitchen, 10 feet 3 inches by 7 feet 9 inches by 7 feet 9 inches; corridor, 3 feet 6 inches wide.

The front room on the first floor was wider than the front room below by the breadth of the corridor and its height was 10 feet 3 inches, while the height of the attic was about 8 feet 3 inches. A small garden was attached to each house, which possessed the usual cellar and lumber room.

Grande rue Nievendyke.—Ten new houses in red brick, containing three rooms on the ground floor, two on the first floor and an attic, owned by the same proprietor and let at 3s. 8d. per week. The corridor had a breadth of 3 feet 3 inches, and the stairs (enclosed) were in the kitchen, but the entrance to the cellar lay between the front and back rooms. The ground-floor rooms had the following dimensions: front room 11 feet 9 inches by 8 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 6 inches; back room 11 feet 9 inches by 13 feet by 10 feet 6 inches; second back room 9 feet 6 inches by 13 feet by 11 feet 9 inches. The ceilings on the first floor were only 9 feet 6 inches high, but the front room had a breadth of 13 feet. The inner walls were painted, and the ground-floor rooms and corridor were paved with yellow and black tiles. The gardens were small.

The following table shows, for working-class dwellings of two, three, four, five and six rooms, the predominant rents, in June, 1908:—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Two rooms	...	...	...	1s. 4d. to 1s. 10d.
Three rooms	...	...	...	1s. 8d. „ 2s. 3d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	2s. to 2s. 11d.
Five rooms	...	...	...	2s. 7d. to 3s. 4d.
Six rooms	...	...	...	3s. 2d. „ 3s. 8d.

These rents are seen to be low. The rent index number for Malines is 52, rent at Brussels being represented by 100.

Working-class tenants of houses of which the *revenu cadastral*, or assessed rental value, as fixed some 30 years ago, does not exceed £5 15s. 2d. per annum (for towns of over 40,000 and under 100,000 inhabitants) are exempt from the communal taxes. In this way the vast majority of working-class families in Malines are free from local taxation. It is generally accepted that all rents not exceeding 3s. 11d. per week are exempt. Rents are paid monthly, and a month's notice to quit is necessary.

No regular housing inspection is carried out by the municipality. Neither the town nor the State Railway Works Administration has undertaken any scheme for the construction of workmen's dwellings, and private employers of labour have done little of importance in this direction.

The Housing Committee issued in 1907 100 certificates in respect of the acquisition of houses or of building ground by working people, and 55 certificates authorising loans to be made for the acquisition or construction of working-class houses.

RETAIL PRICES.

The working classes of Malines buy a considerable proportion of their meat and vegetable supplies in the covered markets, which are held daily, and are conveniently situated in the centre of the town. Some 150 butchers (of whom 12 sell horseflesh only) and dealers in *charcuterie* have shops in the various quarters throughout Malines, but a number of these are included among the 114 meat stallholders (10 of whom sell horseflesh) in the markets. The grocers' shops, large and small, sell bacon, ham, lard, and sausages, of which a high percentage are composed mainly of horse-flesh. Two "multiple" grocery firms have each one branch in the town. Co-operation has made much progress. The Co-operative Society of Public Service Workers had an active membership of 1,872 in the last quarter of 1908; and its balance-sheet for 1907 showed a turnover of £18,300, to which the sale of bread contributed £7,413, groceries £4,605, coal £1,499, and the general drapery business £4,430. In 1907, by way of dividend, members were credited with 16 per cent. of the value of their bakery purchases and with 13 per cent. of the amount expended by them on other articles, and these amounts were paid in goods. The bulk of the members are employed in the railway workshops. The Socialist Labour organisation has also established a Co-operative Society for the sale of bread, groceries, general drapery articles, boots, &c., but its operations are far less important than those of the society already mentioned.

The main elements of the general dietary of the working-class households are coffee, bread with butter or margarine, potatoes and other vegetables. Soup made of vegetables

(including potatoes) is usually taken at the chief meal, and it is customary to add a slight meat flavouring by means of bacon fat or other pieces of meat. A very large number of families eat fresh meat on Sundays only; on the week days fresh or salted bacon, ham, and sausage meat of various kinds form the ordinary chief dish. The Malines district being a noted centre of market gardening, vegetables are cheap, tomatoes, cabbage cauliflower, potatoes, peas and asparagus being grown in great abundance.

Groceries and other Commodities.

Coffee is bought by the Malines working people at prices which range from 6½d. to 8¾d. per lb. Pure coffee is never drunk, a large proportion of chicory being invariably mixed with it. The price of chicory is from 1½d. to 1¾d. per lb. Gouda cheese is popular with the working people. Smoked bacon is not sold in the shops, salted bacon and ham being chiefly in demand. The Belgian coal is not in such great demand for household purposes as the German, chiefly on account of its higher price. As the majority of the working-class houses possess cellars it is possible to buy coal in larger quantities than one or two cwts., and stocks are laid down in the season when lower prices rule.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6½d. to 8¾d.
Sugar, Loaf "	3d., 3½d.
Bacon, Salted "	7d. to 8½d.
Eggs per 1s.	12, 13
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	7d. to 8½d.
Butter "	1s. 1d.
Margarine "	7½d. to 8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	2½d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d. to 9¾d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	4½d.
Milk per quart	2d., 2½d.
Coal per cwt.	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 2¾d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	7d.

Meat.

The Brussels market is the chief single source of the beef and mutton supply for Malines, although markets are held at Malines, and in several neighbouring communes. Pigs are reared largely in the surrounding district, while the horses come from Antwerp, the bulk of them having been shipped from London and Hull to that port.

All meat for human consumption must be submitted for examination. All animals must be slaughtered at the municipal slaughter-houses, where the meat inspection takes place.

Returns specially obtained for the purposes of this enquiry from 113 working-class families, consisting of 594 persons, showed an average weekly consumption of 19·1 oz. of meat per head, which is at the rate of 62 lb. per annum. Of this, 37 per cent. was beef, 15·5 per cent. horseflesh, 13 per cent. pork, and 11 per cent. bacon. *Charcuterie* amounted to 8 per cent. of the whole, veal to 6 per cent., mutton and rabbits to 4 per cent. each, and poultry to 1·5 per cent.

The cuts of beef generally bought are the thin flank, silverside and shin. Mutton is not largely consumed by the working people and is not sold in the markets. When the inferior parts are bought by them, they are used to make a sort of Irish stew. Veal is considered a delicacy, while the leg of pork is sold for curing purposes, rarely in a fresh state for immediate consumption. Pigs' ears and feet are often bought, however, and cost about twopence apiece. Horseflesh increases in popularity, and its prices are lower than for other kinds of meat, the fillet costing from 5½d. to 6d. per lb., steak from 4½d. to 6d., and inferior cuts from 2½d. to 3½d. per lb.

The following Table shows the predominant prices of the various kinds of meat in June, 1908, and is based upon a number of returns giving the prices both at private dealers' shops and at the market stalls.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	7d. to 7½d.
Brisket	5½d. „ 6d.
Silverside	7d. „ 7½d.
Shin, with bone	3½d. „ 4½d.
Beef Steak	8½d.
Rump Steak	8½d. to 10½d.
Thick Flank	8½d. „ 10½d.
Thin Flank	4½d. „ 6d.
Mutton :—	
Leg	8½d.
Shoulder	6½d. to 7d.
Breast	5½d.
Neck { Best End	7d. to 8½d.
{ Scrag End	5½d.
Chops	7½d. to 8½d.
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	8½d.
Shoulder, with bone	7d. to 8½d.
Ribs	8½d.
Chops	8½d.
Leg	8½d.
Pork :—	
Leg	7d. to 8½d.
Foreloin	7½d. „ 8½d.
Belly	6d. „ 7d.
Chops	7½d. „ 8½d.

Taken as a whole, the price of meat is lower at Malines than at any other of the towns included in the enquiry, the index number being 84 as compared with 100 at Brussels. The price of other food is represented by the index number 96, and of food as a whole by 93. The index number for coal is 79, and for food and coal together 92. For rent and prices combined the index number is 85, which figure is lower than that obtained for any other of the towns investigated, except Turnhout and Bruges, for which towns the "combined" rent and prices index number is 84.

PATURAGES.

A line drawn from Aix-la-Chapelle to Namur along the valley of the Meuse and thence to Valenciennes in France very fairly indicates the general position of the Belgian coalfield which is naturally divided into five separate basins known as those of Liège, Namur, Charleroi, the Centre (including La Louvière) and the Borinage, or basin of Mons, respectively, the last three being all in the province of Hainault.

The mining district known as the "Borinage" is an ill-defined area with a population of about 130,000, lying west, south-west and south of Mons, comprising some 16 or 18 communes in the arrondissement to which that place gives its name, and is separated from the central basin by a belt of land of varying width in which the coal measures have been denuded; of this group of communes that of Paturages, six miles to the south-west of Mons, forms more or less the centre. The commune of Paturages, or Les Paturages as it was formerly called, had no independent existence prior to 1760. It was, as its name implies, merely the pasture land over which certain contiguous communes had rights of common of pasture.

When, in 1760, Paturages was constituted an independent commune, these rights of common of pasture were set aside, and compensation, in the form of grants of land, was given to each commune and to the *Hospices civils* (or Indoor Poor-Relief Administration) of Mons, which also shared them, so that even to-day the freehold of much of the land of Paturages is owned, not by individuals, but by other neighbouring communes, and as the whole area is only 820 acres the communal position in Paturages is somewhat peculiar.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, these communes began the practice of granting 99 year leases of their lands in Paturages for building purposes. After a number of years the owners of the buildings began to realise that they were only leaseholders and not freeholders, and this seriously checked building operations; the check is, however, in process of removal, for as the leases lapse the extra-communal owners are arranging to sell their freehold rights to purchasers on reasonable terms. One curious result of this land difficulty is that a large portion of Paturages, or what should be Paturages, is not within the commune at all but over the border in the communes of Quaregnon and Wasmes. Even the railway station of Paturages is in the commune of Quaregnon.

The greater part of the commune of Paturages is spread over two spurs of the hills which lie to the south, the spurs themselves running almost due north. In the valley between is a small stream, the Rieu du Coeur, which traverses the commune from south to north, and on the western side of the western spur is another stream, the Ruisseau de Wasmes or Rieu des Rats d'Eau; both streams pass through the commune of Quaregnon, in which they ultimately unite.

The distribution of the houses in Paturages is somewhat peculiar. The town straggles in two lines along the western and northern slopes of the two spurs above mentioned, the eastern spur holding the bulk of the village of Paturages proper, and the western an overgrown hamlet the northern end of which merges into the village of Wasmes. About the middle, these two groups of houses are connected by a transverse line of buildings crossing the valley between the spurs, a bridge over the stream completing the junction, so that the general plan of the agglomeration is that of the letter H. The working-class dwellings are nearly all on the lower ground bordering the streams, while the business premises and the houses of the middle classes are, as a rule, situated on the high ground and for the most part close to the Quaregnon border to the north. The main streets are fairly broad but irregular, the smaller ones narrow and tortuous, the whole place having grown up without plan of any kind.

Paturages is served by a branch line of the State railway, and local passenger traffic is provided for by a system of electric tramways forming part of the national light railway system.

From 1846, when the number of inhabitants was 7,245, to 1890, the population grew steadily, especially in the earlier years, but between 1890 and 1900 the increase was very slight, the number of persons in the commune in the latter year being 10,811; at

the end of 1907 the population was estimated at 11,551. The population returned at the censuses of 1880, 1890 and 1900, and the estimated population at the end of 1907, together with the absolute and percentage increases, between these dates, are shown in the Table below:—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	10,090	—	—
1890	10,739	649	6·4
1900	10,811	72	0·7
1907 (estimated)	11,551	740 (in seven years).	6·8 (in seven years).

The excess of births over deaths in Paturages is considerable. The average birth-rate per 1,000 of population for the five years 1904–8 was 20·8, the highest for any individual year being 22·6 in 1905, and the lowest 18·9 in 1908. The average death-rate per 1,000 of population during the same period was 14·4, the highest 15·8 in 1905 and 1908, and the lowest 11·5 in 1906. The rate of infantile mortality in Paturages is decidedly low, the average per 1,000 births for the above period being 83, with a maximum of 99 in 1907 and a minimum of 56 in 1906. In view of the sanitary conditions described on p. 131, the lowness of the recorded mortality is remarkable.

The following Table shows the vital statistics of the commune for the five years 1904–8:—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	20·8	14·3	85
1905	22·6	15·8	83
1906	20·5	11·5	56
1907	21·3	14·4	99
1908	18·9	15·8	92

In view of the somewhat peculiar communal position of Paturages it is perhaps not surprising that the municipality has taken up no public works of any kind. Even the services most commonly found in other towns, water supply and a public abattoir, do not exist. There is no gas in the town and such electricity as is used is supplied by a private company which also furnishes the power for the system of inter-urban tramways referred to above.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

Employment in Paturages is entirely dependent upon the coal mining industry. The principal mining communities of the Borinage in addition to Paturages are, from N.E. to S.W., Ghlin, Cuesmes, Frameries, Quaregnon, Flénu, Wasmes, Hornu, Boussu and Dour. The commune of Paturages may be considered as typical of the mining communes of the district, although conditions are not identical in all the mines, since some are hotter than others and the dip of the seams is not everywhere the same.

The wages information, which forms the basis of the figures given in the table which follows, was obtained partly in Paturages and to a considerable extent in neighbouring communes, and may be taken as representing the whole of the Borinage.

In the year 1907 there were 23 coal mines at work in the district; these gave employment to 26,307 workers underground, of whom 6,865 were hewers. In addition there were 8,014 employed on the surface, making a total of 34,321 workers. The total quantity of coal extracted was 4,934,000 tons (English). A sum of £1,853,000 was paid in wages and salaries, and working expenses amounted to £1,019,000. The total cost of working was £2,872,000, and the value of the coal raised £3,259,000. Of the 23 companies 19 made a profit of £471,000, whilst four incurred a loss amounting to £84,000. The average selling price was 13s. 2½d. per ton (English); of this 7s. 6d. or 57 per cent. represented wages, 4s. 1½d. or 31 per cent. working expenses, and the balance 1s. 7d. or 12 per cent. profit.

The course of wages of the miners of the Borinage is shown by the following Table :—

Average Daily Earnings of Miners in the Borinage, 1902-7.

—	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Hewers	3 5	3 6	3 4	3 6	4 2	4 8
All Underground Workers ...	3 1	3 1	3 1	3 1	3 7	4 0
All Surface Workers	2 2	2 2	2 2	2 2	2 4	2 6
Underground and Surface Workers together ... }	2 10	2 11	2 10	2 10	3 3	3 8

During 1908 wages showed a considerable decline.

An interesting comparison may be made between the average wages paid in the Borinage and those of the other principal coal districts of Belgium ; this is shown in the following Table :—

Average Daily Earnings in the Principal Coal-Mining Districts of Belgium in the year 1907.

Districts.	Hewers.	All Under-ground Workers.	All Surface Workers.	Underground and Surface Workers together.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Province of Liège (including Liège and Seraing)	5 1	4 5	2 8	4 0
Charleroi (including town of Charleroi) ...	5 8	4 11	2 9	4 3
Centre (including La Louvière)	5 2	4 5	2 11	4 0
Borinage (including Paturages)	4 8	4 0	2 6	3 8
Province of Hainault (Charleroi, Centre, and Borinage districts together).	5 2	4 6	2 9	4 0

From this table it appears that wages in the Borinage are lower than in any of the other districts. This is probably due to the fact that coal mining is practically the only important industry of the Borinage. Iron and steel, glass and other allied industries do not compete to such an extent in the local labour market. As an example : in the whole province of Hainault, 1,734 workmen were employed about blast furnaces alone in the year 1907, of whom 1,630 were in the Charleroi district, 104 in the Centre, and none in the Borinage. In the steel works, all Hainault employed 8,229 men, of whom 6,429 were in the Charleroi district, 1,800 in the Centre and none in the Borinage. In puddling and rolling iron 6,938 men were employed in the whole province of Hainault, of whom 4,970 were in the Charleroi district and 1,968 in the Borinage and Centre combined. It may also be noted that whereas in the other districts a very large number of Flemish hands are employed, the supply of native labour in the Borinage is quite sufficient.

The production of coke in the Borinage is important. In 1907 there were 14 establishments engaged in this industry, with 971 ovens and 1,026 workmen. 724,000 tons of coal were consumed and the production of coke amounted to 539,000 tons, worth on the average 21s. 8d. per ton. The manufacture of briquettes is almost unknown in the Borinage.

In Paturages and the other mining towns of the Borinage the chief amusement of the miners consists in shooting, with bow and arrow, at artificial birds set up at the end of a long pole (*perche*). The shooting meetings are generally the occasion of much drinking and betting.

The following Table shows the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of adult males in the principal occupations at Paturages :—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

—	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Building Trades :—		
Bricklayers and Masons	26s. 5d.	66
Carpenters	26s. 5d. to 27s. 7d.	69
Joiners	19s. 2d. „ 23s. 9d.	60 to 66
Plumbers	21s. 7d. „ 24s. 10d.	69
Plasterers	26s. 5d.	69
Painters	24s. 10d.	69
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	66
Coal Mining :—		
Hewers	24s. 8d. to 25s. 4d.	54 to 66*
Putters and Trammers	22s. 7d.	60 „ 66*
Driftmen	28s. 1d. to 29s. 3d.	48 „ 54*
Road Cutters	23s. 6d.	54 „ 60*
Enginemmen (surface)	28s. to 30s. 10d.	84†
Labourers („)	16s. 10d. to 18s. 3d.	60
Printing Trades :—		
Compositors	21s. 7d.	60
Municipal Employees :—		
Paviors	26s. 5d.	54
Paviors' Labourers	19s. 2d.	54
Electricity Works (Company) :—		
Enginemmen	29s. 6d.	72†
Stokers	27s. 8d.	72†
Electricians	25s. 10d.	72†

* Bank-to-bank times.

† Including intervals.

Representing wages at Brussels by 100, the index numbers for wages at Paturages are 98 for skilled men and 95 for unskilled labourers in the building trades, and 82 for compositors.

The Labour Exchange at Paturages is organised by the *Comité de Patronage*, i.e., by what has been called in these pages the Housing Committee, for the district. It was established about the middle of the year 1895, and at the end of 1907, when it had been in existence about twelve and a half years, there had been offered by employers, through its agency, 7,328 situations, while during the same period the number of applications by workpeople for employment numbered 4,712. In 1907, 862 situations were offered and there were 432 applications for work during the same period. The bulk of the work of the agency consists in the demand for domestic servants, for whom 707 situations were offered in 1907 ; against this number there were only 339 applications for employment. As regards other occupations there were 155 situations offered by employers and 93 applications from workpeople. The Labour Exchange depends entirely for financial support upon grants from certain of the communes, from the province of Hainault and from the State. Its management is in the hands of a committee consisting of an equal number of employers and workpeople with an independent chairman and vice-chairman. The Paturages Labour Exchange differs from most others of the kind in Belgium, in that it serves not only Paturages but the whole of the Borinage.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

As has already been stated, the commune of Paturages consists of two distinct groups of houses. One of these groups is the village of Paturages itself, lying on the extreme north-east of the commune, while the other is the so-called hamlet (*le Hameau*), which covers the greater part of the area of the commune.

The upper parts of the village, round the market place, where the church and the offices of the commune and the principal street (*la Grande Rue*) are situated are occupied by the working classes to a very small extent only. The tenants are chiefly shop

keepers living over their places of business and persons of the middle class, in so far as these dwell in Paturages at all. Leaving out of consideration the upper parts of the village proper, the houses are well spread out, and gardens of fair size are the rule. This is a natural result of the comparative cheapness of land, suitable building plots costing from 1s. to 1s. 8d. per square yard freehold, and the relative sparseness of the population, viz.—11,551 in 1907, on an area of 820 acres, or 14.1 persons per acre. At the present time the usual size of a building plot is about 240 square yards, of which one quarter is generally covered by the house, leaving about 180 square yards for the garden; older houses often have gardens of much greater area.

It is a characteristic of Paturages that each family occupies a separate house; the census returns of 1900 showed that the average number of households per house destined for habitation was 0.99, i.e., practically a house to every family.

In considering the standard of housing in Paturages, it is possible to divide all houses roughly into two classes which may be briefly described as the old type and the new. The former are survivals from the days when Paturages was little more than pasture land, being practically converted farm houses, originally large and roomy single-storied buildings with living rooms, cattle stalls, stables and barn all adjoining one another and all under one roof. These houses have been divided into three or four dwellings, the old loft being frequently transformed into attic bedrooms. As the population increased and the need of more housing accommodation began to make itself felt, single-storied cottages with a wide frontage were erected along the various roads, and in a few cases, in groups in the fields at some distance from the road. The lofts under the sloping roofs of these cottages, though hardly intended for such a purpose originally, were sometimes used as attic bedrooms.

Some of the cottages were small when built and contained only two rooms of modest size, but generally speaking, they were large and commodious with ample room on the ground floor to accommodate a family of considerable size.

In recent years two tendencies have been at work which have greatly modified housing conditions in Paturages:—(a) The subdivision of wide-fronted, large-roomed cottages with no habitable upper rooms into two or more narrow-fronted, small-roomed houses by the conversion of the old lofts into attic bedrooms. In the original house the rooms extended from back to front, now there is a front room and a back room of only half the original depth or less, and very frequently the width has been seriously curtailed. The attic bedrooms resulting from the conversion of the old lofts are at best poor places and often exceedingly bad. (b) The raising of the roofs of transformed cottages in order to provide the new houses with proper bedroom accommodation above the ground floor.

The whole question of the subdivision and transformation of cottages at Paturages is closely connected with the very widespread ownership of cottage property in the commune. The purchase of this class of property appears to have been a favourite form of investment among miners and other residents for many years past. Simple subdivision of the cottage frequently occurred when the owner grew old; he found it unnecessarily large and wished to secure a small income for himself in his old age. The cottage was therefore divided, he living in the best part of it and sub-letting the remainder. If his means allowed, he would have the roof raised and the cottage thoroughly transformed, as the extra expenditure generally proved a profitable investment. Frequently the new houses created by the sub-division of these old cottages are sold, and thus the number of small owners is being continually increased. Modern houses are also frequently occupied by their owners; it is thus not surprising to learn that with about 2,800 dwellings in Paturages there are nearly 1,500 owners of house property in the place.

Modern houses in Paturages are of the four-roomed type so common in Belgium, and consist of two rooms on the ground floor and two above, without passage of any kind. The stairs are situated between the front and back rooms or at the side of the latter, being, however, in either case shut off in some way. The number of these houses is very limited as compared with those of the older type, and they have very frequently been erected by their occupiers, with or without the aid of a building society, to whose operations more detailed reference is made below.

Many of the cottage type of houses, especially when inhabited by their owners, are in a very poor condition indeed and would seem to be more fit for demolition than habitation. This unsatisfactory state of affairs is largely due to the fact that when one member of a family inherits a cottage from his parents he has to pay over to his brothers and sisters their share of the value of the house, and not infrequently this financial burden prevents him from keeping the cottage in a proper state of repair.

The public water supply, if such it can be called, consists of one well, unprovided with either windlass or pump; those who go to it for water having to supply their own ropes and buckets. The number of private wells in the commune is limited, and the inhabitants are largely driven to the use of rain water collected in cisterns, generally placed in the cellar, from which it is obtained by pumping, or to the two sewage-contaminated streams. The Housing Committee of the district, so far back as 1896, pointed out in a detailed report that these two streams were little better than open sewers. The water was analysed and the percentage of organic matter it contained was found to be very excessive. Despite warnings, the dwellers on the banks of these streams used the water from them for drinking purposes with deplorable results.

The working of the upper seams of coal has drained the water from the surface, and the deeper seams have rendered deep well sinking useless; accordingly, very few of the wells can hold out through a dry season, and the cistern supply, generally very meagre, ceases entirely; thus, during a period of small rainfall, the inhabitants of Paturages are placed in an exceedingly unpleasant position. Such was the case in the summer and autumn of 1908, so that in November of that year, at the time of the investigator's visit, almost every house was entirely devoid of a water supply, and had been so situated for many weeks. The people were obliged to beg water from their few more favoured neighbours, walk long distances to obtain it from the public well, or buy it of street hawkers. Though conditions were no doubt specially bad in the autumn of 1908, similar scarcity of water is by no means infrequent; for years the people have been demanding that the local authority should solve the question of water supply, but so far nothing has been done beyond some abortive attempts to arrange joint schemes with neighbouring communes which are in the same predicament.

The sewage disposal arrangements in Paturages are primitive in the extreme; badly constructed cesspools and *puits perdus*, i.e., mere holes in the ground, without lining of any kind and serving the same purpose, are common, and their drainage finds its way, as best it can, to the lower levels. The state of the subsoil of Paturages is thus anything but satisfactory, and though some efforts have been made to remedy these evil sanitary conditions, so far they have had but little result. The surface soil is shallow, rarely more than 30 feet deep and lies immediately over the coal measures, which are of considerable thickness and underlie the whole district. In consequence of the contortion of the strata some of the upper seams crop out on the surface, and these have long ago been worked out and the workings abandoned, with the result that the surface is full of hidden cracks and fissures caused by subsidences.

Apart from quite modern houses erected upon the standard plot, measuring about 16 feet 6 inches by 130 feet, it is impossible to generalise as to the dimensions of working-class tenements. Two, three and four rooms appear to be the most frequent, the usual arrangement being two ground-floor rooms, one upper and two lower rooms, and two lower with two upper rooms respectively.

The following details of a few of the dwellings visited by the investigator will serve to give some idea of the size of houses in Paturages.

(1) A small house at the end of the market place:—Front room 14 feet by 16 feet 6 inches, back room 14 feet square; height 9 feet; stairs at side of kitchen. Upstairs one bedroom and a lumber room. Water supply from a well. Rent 2s. per week.

(2) Small house (sub-division of a former cottage) with two rooms upstairs and two below. Dimensions of front room 9 feet by 11 feet 6 inches, and of back room 9 feet by 13 feet. Water from well and cistern. Rent 2s. 3d. weekly.

(3) A modern new house with front room 14 feet by 11 feet 6 inches; kitchen behind, 15 feet by 14 feet. Stairs between front and back room. Two bedrooms above of similar dimensions. Water from cistern only. Rent 2s. 3d. weekly.

(4) A cottage, with a large room, 11 feet 6 inches by 16 feet 6 inches, and two small ones at the side, one at the back and one at the front, 8 feet 3 inches by 11 feet 6 inches. No upper rooms. One well and one cistern for three houses. Rent 1s. 8d. weekly.

(5) A two-roomed dwelling, with no upper rooms, part of an old cottage:—One large room 15 feet by 16 feet 6 inches, and a small one at the side 7 feet 6 inches by 16 feet 6 inches. Rent 1s. 4d. weekly.

(6) A fairly modern house containing two rooms upstairs and two downstairs. Front rooms 15 feet by 16 feet 6 inches, back rooms 16 feet 6 inches square. Staircase between front and back rooms. Water from cistern. Rent 2s. 7d. weekly.

(7) A two-roomed tenement, originally one room of a cottage. Each room 20 feet by 6 feet 6 inches; height only 7 feet 6 inches. Water from cistern. Rent 1s. 4d. weekly.

(8) A two-roomed house, part of a former cottage; both rooms on the ground floor, each 11 feet 6 inches by 13 feet. Water from cistern. Rent 1s. 4d. weekly.

(9) An old four-roomed house, part of a former cottage:—Two rooms below, each 8 feet 3 inches by 15 feet; two attic bedrooms above of the same size. Rent 1s. 8d. weekly.

(10) A four-roomed house with a large front room, 16 feet 6 inches square, and a small back room, 8 feet 3 inches by 11 feet 6 inches, below and two bedrooms above, of the same size. Stairs at the side of the kitchen. Rent 1s. 10d. weekly.

Such building regulations as exist in Paturages are embodied in the Police Regulations, which require, among other things, that the height of rooms (other than attics) intended for habitation shall not be less than 8 feet 6 inches.

The following summary Table showing the predominant rents of dwellings of various sizes does not call for special comment. The rents do not apply to any of the best type of modern four-roomed houses, as on the one hand these are comparatively few in number, and on the other they are hardly ever let, being almost invariably occupied by their owners.

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Two rooms	...	...	...	1s. 2d. to 1s. 5d.
Three rooms	...	...	...	1s. 6d. „ 1s. 9d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	1s. 9d. „ 2s. 3d.

Rent at Paturages is lower than at any other of the towns included in the present enquiry, the index number being 43, as compared with 100 at Brussels.

Two building societies organised under the law of August 9, 1889, carry on operations in Paturages. The one is the *Foyer de l'Ouvrier Borain* and the other the *Epargne Ouvrière*; both societies have their head offices at Mons. The *Foyer de l'Ouvrier Borain* was founded in 1891, and has a capital of £12,000, on which the uncalled liability is £10,756. Since its establishment it has made 659 loans for the purchase or construction of houses, the total amount lent being £65,190. 484 of these loans, amounting to £38,939, were outstanding on December 31, 1907. At the same time the society owed £36,320 in respect of loan capital, and had paid, in the year 1907, £1,151 in interest on the same, including £971 to the National Savings Bank. The 659 loans of the society have been made in 28 different communes, of which those of Dour and Boussu, with 112 and 107 advances respectively, are the most important. Paturages comes fourth on the list with 52. Taking all the communes together, some two-thirds of the loans have been made to miners, and it is probable that the proportion in Paturages is even greater.

The *Epargne Ouvrière* was established in 1893, and has a share capital of £24,000, of which £19,430 is subscribed but has not been called up. At the end of 1907 this society had effected 1,180 loans for a total sum of £123,832, of which at the same date 1,051 loans, for a total sum of £105,352, were outstanding. On December 31, 1907, £100,480 was owing to the National Savings Bank in respect of borrowed capital, and £2,330 in respect of interest. The society has never published or prepared statistics showing the number of loans granted in different communes, and thus the number for Paturages cannot be stated exactly, but the officers of the society estimated it at about one hundred.

The *Epargne Ouvrière* lends sums at 3½ per cent. per annum, upon the condition that the borrower provides, in money or in land, not less than one-tenth of the value of the house and land, which is to serve as security for the loan. The borrower is under an obligation to live in the house and not to use it, or any part of it, for the sale of alcoholic drinks. The repayments are to be made by monthly instalments.

The type of house generally built with moneys borrowed from one or other of these building societies on the usual building plot of 16 feet 6 inches by 130 feet has, as a rule, two rooms on the ground floor, about 15 feet 6 inches by 13 feet to 16 feet 6 inches; two bedrooms above, and a lumber room over these, the staircase being placed between the back and front rooms. Sometimes there is a passage leading through the house either to the back yard or to the kitchen only, but the commonest arrangement is one in which there is no passage at all, both the front and back rooms occupying the whole width of the house and being in communication. The ground floor is cellared and contains the rain-water tank. The owners of this class of property,

when they have saved sufficient money, or have paid off enough to enable them to borrow a little more, frequently build an addition at the back of the house to serve as a kitchen.

The advantages enjoyed by a workman building his own house in Paturages are the same as in other parts of Belgium under the law of August 9, 1889. They consist in the remission of about half the duties and law charges, including the lawyer's fees, in connection with the transfer and registration of the property and the preparation of the mortgage on which the loan is secured. Further, if the rateable value of the house in a commune with between 3,000 and 20,000 inhabitants does, as in the case of Paturages, not exceed £3 16s. 10d. per annum, which corresponds with an actual weekly rent of about 3s. 8d., all personal taxes, based upon the value, the rent and the number of doors and windows of the house, whether payable to the State, to the Province or to the Commune, are remitted.

RETAIL PRICES.

Groceries and other Commodities.

The market of Paturages is comparatively unimportant, and the town is well supplied by private traders and branch establishments of large firms with shops all over the country. There is a Socialist Co-operative Society doing a considerable trade, of which, as usual, the bakery forms the basis.

The prices paid by the working classes for articles of common consumption are set out in the table below. The conditions of sale and prices of bread and coal require some comment.

Bread.—Every baker is required to be registered and has a number assigned to him, which number, stamped in figures 1½ inches high, must appear on all loaves made by him, with the exception of cakes, fancy articles and loaves of ordinary bread of less than 1·1 lb. in weight. All loaves of and above 2·2 lb., made or sold within the commune, must be marked with dots in the bread, as follows: Loaves of 2·2 lb., two dots; of 3·3 lb., three dots; of 4·4 lb., four dots. These dots must be four-fifths of an inch apart. Scales and weights are to be kept in the baker's shop always ready for use, so that the purchaser or an official may have a loaf weighed at any time. All loaves not stamped as above, or of short weight, may be seized.

Coal.—Miners are entitled to coal at reduced rates, but this arrangement applies to married men only. The price to ordinary purchasers ranges from 8½d. to 9½d. per cwt. Married miners are, however, allowed to purchase up to 8 cwt. monthly at prices varying according to quality from 3½d. to 4½d. per cwt.

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.				Predominant Price.
Coffee	...	...	per lb.	6½d. to 9½d.
Sugar, Loaf	...	...	„	3d. „ 3½d.
Bacon, Salted	...	...	„	8½d.
Eggs	...	...	per 1s.	12, 13
Cheese, Dutch	...	...	per lb.	7d. to 10½d.
Butter	...	...	„	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 2d.
Margarine	...	...	„	6d. „ 8½d.
Potatoes	...	...	per 7 lb.	3d.
Flour, Wheaten	...	...	„	9½d. to 11d.
Bread, White	...	...	per 4 lb.	4½d.
Milk	...	...	per quart	2½d.
Coal	...	...	per cwt.	8½d. to 9½d.
Paraffin Oil	...	...	per gallon	7d.

Meat.

There is no public abattoir in Paturages and butchers are allowed to slaughter on their own premises, subject to certain police regulations. Strangers entering the commune for the purpose of selling meat are required to submit the same to inspection.

Three horse butchers carry on business in the town. The prices charged in June, 1908, for certain cuts of horseflesh were 5½d. to 6d. per lb. for fillet, 5½d. for *faux filet* and steak, and 3½d. for inferior cuts.

The following Table shows the predominant prices paid for meat by the working classes of Paturages in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.					Predominant Price per lb.
Beef—					
Ribs	...	...	...	...	7½d.
Brisket	...	...	...	...	4½d.
Silverside	...	...	...	...	7½d. to 8½d.
Shin (with bone)	...	...	...	...	5½d.
Beef Steak	...	...	...	...	11½d.
Thick Flank	...	...	...	...	10½d.
Thin Flank	...	...	...	...	6d.
Mutton—					
Leg	...	...	...	...	10½d.
Shoulder	...	...	...	...	7½d.
Breast	...	...	...	...	5½d. to 7d.
Neck	Best End	...	...	...	10½d.
	Scrag End	...	...	...	6d. to 7½d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	10½d.
Veal—					
Hindquarter	...	...	...	...	11½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Shoulder (with bone)	...	...	...	...	10½d.
Ribs	...	...	...	...	9½d. to 11d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	9½d. „ 11½d.
Leg	...	...	...	...	10½d. „ 1s. 0½d.
Pork—					
Leg	...	...	...	...	8½d. „ 10½d.
Foreloin	...	...	...	...	10½d.
Belly	...	...	...	...	7d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	10½d. to 11½d.

Returns obtained for the purposes of this enquiry from 42 families numbering 173 persons show an average annual meat consumption per capita of 25 oz. per week or at the rate of 81 lb. per annum, made up as follows :—beef, 59 per cent. ; horseflesh, 10½ per cent. ; pork, 10 per cent. ; mutton, 6 per cent. ; veal, 6 per cent. ; *charcuterie*, 4½ per cent. ; bacon, 2½ per cent. ; rabbits, 1 per cent. and poultry, ½ per cent.

Prices at Brussels being taken as 100 in each case, the index number for the price of meat at Paturages is 95, while for other food it is 101, that for food as a whole being 100. The price of coal is lower than at any other of the towns covered by the investigation, the index number being 54. The index number for prices as a whole is 94, and for rent and prices combined 86.

SERAING.

Although the commune of Seraing contains more than 40,000 inhabitants, it can hardly be described as a town. In the administrative area there are four more or less overgrown villages, joined together by a few roads lined with houses. On the banks of the Meuse, close to the former summer residence of the Prince Bishops of Liège, lies Seraing proper ; about a mile back from the river, and some 190 feet above it, is Lize ; whilst another mile beyond are the Communaux, situated on the heights, about 500 feet above the town hall of Seraing, which stands on the banks of the Meuse. Lize and the Communaux lie almost due south of Seraing proper, whilst the fourth component of the town, Val St. Lambert, lies close to the river, above Seraing, some two miles to the south-west.

Much of the lowland is occupied by large iron and steel works, whilst at many spots on the slopes great black mounds may be seen, indicating the site of coal mines. At Val St. Lambert a considerable area is covered by large glass-works. The remainder of the lowland and part of the slopes and heights are occupied by houses, but the municipal area contains a considerable amount of agricultural and forest land.

In the valley, where the amount of land for building houses is very limited, and where the demand for houses, on account of the proximity to the various works, is the greatest, there has been a strongly marked tendency to build as many houses as possible on a given area. The houses are not large, having two stories at the most, and generally only one. The streets are narrow, and behind the rows of houses lining them are hidden away many more, situated in *impasses* or narrow blind alleys. Here it is very common to find back-to-back houses. It is, however, not only in the valley that these *impasses* are to be found. They exist at Lize and in the parts lying between Lize and Seraing proper.

The explanation of these conditions lies in the very rapid growth of the industrial population of the town, and in the efforts of private enterprise to house the influx of workers—efforts which were for many years practically unfettered by the building regulations of any local authority. The town is consequently not laid out according to any well-defined plan. It can boast of nothing deserving the name of a public square or market place. Shops are to be found scattered throughout the whole municipal area, along the main roads, the largest number being situated in the *rue Léopold* and the *rue Cockerill*, in Seraing proper.

Seraing is a little more than four miles to the south-west of Liège, as the crow flies, but the railway and the main road closely follow the wide bend in the Valley of the Meuse, and the distance is consequently half as great again. The two towns are connected by tramway, railroad and river, and Seraing is little more than an industrial suburb of Liège, although other communes intervene.

The railway belongs to the Nord-Belge Company, and is only a secondary line running from Liège to Flémalle, on the main line from Liège to Namur, Charleroi and Paris. On the river there is a certain amount of goods traffic in addition to small passenger steamers which run every half hour between Liège and Seraing, with intermediate stopping places, the fare for any distance being 1d. second class and 1½d. first class. The trams cross the Meuse at once at Seraing and follow the left bank of the river to Liège, the fares being 3d. second class and 3½d. first class, from the quay at Seraing to the terminus at Liège.

Below is given a Table showing the population of Seraing at each of the last three census years, with the absolute and percentage increase. The estimated population at the end of 1907 is also given.

Year	Population. on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase
1880	27,407	—	—
1890	33,495	6,088	22·2
1900	37,845	4,350	13·0
1907 (estimated)	41,208	3,363	8·9
		(in seven years).	(in seven years).

It will be noted that there has been a steady increase throughout the period covered by the Table. In 1815, just before the first industrial undertaking was established at Seraing, the population was 1,884, in 1830 it was 3,327, and in 1840, 5,100, whilst six years later the census return showed Seraing to have 10,540 inhabitants. At the end of 1907 the estimated population of the town was 41,208.

The following Table shows the birth-rate, death-rate and infantile mortality rate at Seraing during the years 1904-8. The distinct drop in the birth-rate between 1906 and 1908 is worthy of remark. The mortality rates are seen to fluctuate considerably, both the general death-rate and the infantile mortality rate being lowest in 1906 and highest in 1908.

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infant Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	25.5	13.5	131
1905	24.9	14.6	136
1906	25.9	12.8	116
1907	21.9	13.2	132
1908	20.9	15.5	157

For some years the administration of the town was more or less Socialistic, nevertheless the Council has engaged in hardly any undertakings of a trading character. The water supply belongs to the town, and a considerable number of houses are connected therewith.

There is no gas supply in the town, the Town Council a few years ago having preferred to grant a concession to an electrical company, which, however, does not cater for working-class people, who are practically restricted to the use of paraffin oil.

The private tramway company which has lines from Liège to Seraing has a continuation of its lines from the bridge at Seraing proper to Lize and the Communaux at the upper end of the town. The system is worked by electricity, supplied from overhead wires.

The town formerly owned an abattoir, but it was sold a few years ago to a company which wished to extend its works, and no new abattoir has been built up to the present.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

Seraing may be regarded as the Essen or Le Creusot of Belgium, except that, instead of being an isolated town, engaged in mining, metallurgical and engineering industries, and in particular in the manufacture of armaments, it is the most important member of a group of small communes engaged in these industries. The whole group, including Seraing, Ougrée, Jemeppe, and Tilleur, really only form part of the large Liège industrial area; and when this is borne in mind, in addition to the fact that mobility of labour in Belgium is very great, largely owing to the issue of very cheap workmen's tickets on the railways, it will easily be understood that the very close relationship existing between employers and employees in Essen and Le Creusot, which are essentially one-firm towns, does not exist in Seraing. The principal firm of Seraing does not play a very great part in the life of the town, and outside the works the workpeople are quite free to live how they wish. It supports a hospital and an orphanage, and also owns two blocks of 40 houses each on the banks of the Meuse, but experience has proved that Walloon working people object to live in groups as tenants of their employers, and the firm has preferred to show its interest in the housing question by taking shares in the Liège building societies which operate at Seraing. At one time the firm organised a retail store for the sale of bread, groceries, &c., to its workpeople, but the spirit of independence among the workpeople obliged the firm to abandon this in 1870. Another direction in which the firm assists its workpeople is by contributing annually to the State Old Age Pension Fund a sum equal to that contributed by the workpeople.

The great coal-mining, iron and steel, and engineering firm to which the town practically owes its origin and industrial prosperity was established by Mr. Cockerill, a Lancashire man, in 1817; to-day the firm employs about 9,000 workpeople at Seraing. The founder died in 1840, and since then the firm has been carried on as a company. The first blast furnace was established in 1824, and about this time the great development of the transport industries began more especially to interest the firm. In the first place the construction of marine engines received the firm's attention, and in 1835 the first locomotive was built and the first iron rails rolled. Another important branch of the engineering department at Seraing undertaken at an early date was the construction of machinery for mines. In 1863, the firm put into use Bessemer converters, being the first steel works on the Continent to do so. Of recent years the building of gas engines,

in particular those driven by the waste gases of blast furnaces, has become a specialty of the firm. It is only since 1888, when the Belgian Government decided to have its war material made in Belgium, that the firm has developed this branch of enterprise.

In the early years of the organisation of the firm as a company, between 1842 and 1851, some 3,000 to 4,000 workpeople were employed, each on the average earning £24 8s. 10d. per annum. Of recent years some 10,000 workpeople have been employed, and the average earnings per employee were £50 13s. 3d. per annum during the period 1902-6.

Although the firm described above is the most important of its kind, there are others of a similar character in the immediate neighbourhood, one at Seraing itself, one at Tilleur, and one at Ougrée, the last, the result of the amalgamation of several firms, being the most important, and owning blast furnaces, steelworks, rolling mills, and coal mines.

The only important industry at Seraing, in addition to coal mining, iron and steel manufacture and engineering, is the manufacture of glass, table ware, &c., which is carried on by a large firm in that part of Seraing known as Val St. Lambert. The works were established in the old abbey of the Val in 1825, and at the present time occupy between 4,000 and 4,500 workpeople, of whom the majority are women and children. In order to carry on work, the firm requires at least 600 or 700 boys, and as a rule it experiences considerable difficulty in finding them in the neighbourhood. With a view to obtaining an adequate supply of boys from 13 to 15½ years of age, the firm has established a boarding house for apprentices. The firm offers to board and clothe the apprentices and pay a minimum wage of 8s. a month, the boys to work 58 hours a week, either during the day (6 a.m. to 5 p.m.) or at night (6 p.m. to 5 a.m.). The firm makes no definite promises to its apprentices with regard to the future, which depends upon aptitude, skill, and the positions which become vacant. The sums of £4 16s., £6 and £8 a month, which can be earned by men from 30 to 40 years of age, are mentioned by the firm as indicating what the future holds in reserve for good glass workmen.

Building Trades.—In summer the bricklayers, stonemasons and labourers work 12 hours a day, except on Saturday, when they cease work a little earlier than usual, and on Monday, when they start late and sometimes also finish early. In all, they lose about six hours weekly in this way, thus working only 66 instead of 72 hours.

Coal Mining.—Some of the mines belong to the iron and steel firms, and some are independent. Generally speaking the mines are more subject to fire-damp than those at Liège; they are also deeper, and consequently hotter. Furthermore, the dips in the seams are frequently very considerable, which makes the work of the hewers more difficult. All these things have the result that wages are somewhat higher and hours of labour somewhat shorter than at Liège.

The amusements of the miners are practically the same at Seraing as at Liège, viz.—cock-fighting, cock-crowing, pigeon flying and skittles, and absences from work on Monday are not uncommon.

Rolling Mills.—The wages are paid partly by time rates and partly on a bonus system, this accounting for the somewhat wide range in the earnings of certain classes of workpeople.

Municipal Employees.—The municipality employs workmen in connexion with the maintenance of the roads and sewerage and with the water supply only. They enjoy an eight hours' day, which is due to the fact that there was a Socialist majority on the Town Council a few years ago.

The following Table shows the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of adult males in the principal occupations in Seraing in June, 1908:—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Building Trades:—</i>		
Bricklayers and Masons	23s. 9d.	66
Stonemasons (Cutters)	26s. 5d.	66
Carpenters	20s. 2d. to 21s. 1d.	63 to 66
Joiners	20s. 2d. „ 21s. 1d.	63 „ 66
Plumbers	20s. 2d. „ 21s. 1d.	63 „ 66
Plasterers	20s. 2d. „ 21s. 1d.	63 „ 66
Painters	17s. 8d. „ 18s. 6d.	63 „ 66
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers... ..	15s. 10d. to 18s. 6d.	66

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Coal Mining:—		
Underground:		
Hewers	25s. to 28s. 10d.	45 to 54*
Timbermen	21s. 1d. to 24s.	—
Putters and Trammers	20s. 2d. to 21s. 7d.	54 to 64½*
Blast Furnaces:—		
Melters	25s. 2d. to 27s. 7d.	72†
Chargers, Wheelers, &c.	24s. 2d. „ 26s. 3d.	72†
Steel Works:—		
Bessemer { Leading Hands	28s. 10d. to 31s. 2d.	63
{ Second Men	24s. to 26s. 5d.	63
{ Cupola Men	22s. 7d.	63
{ Labourers	18s.	63
Martin { Melters	26s. 5d. to 36s.	63
{ Melters' Helpers	21s. 7d. to 22s. 7d.	63
{ Labourers	20s. 5d.	63
Rolling Mills:—		
First Rollermen	37s. 2d. to 60s.	60 to 63
Second Rollermen	25s. 2d. to 30s. 3d.	60 „ 63
Other Rollermen	21s. 7d. „ 26s. 5d.	60 „ 63
First Heaters	38s. 5d. „ 41s. 3d.	60 „ 63
Second Heaters... ..	24s. to 26s. 5d.	60 „ 63
Other Heaters	20s. 11d. to 22s. 10d.	60 „ 63
Labourers	17s. 3d. to 20s. 11d.	60 „ 63
Engineering Trades.—		
Moulders	24s. to 28s.	58½ to 60
Fitters	21s. 7d. to 24s.	58½ „ 60
Turners	22s. 10d. to 25s. 2d.	58½ „ 60
Smiths	23s. 5d. „ 24s. 5d.	58½ „ 60
Patternmakers	22s. 10d. to 25s. 2d.	58½ „ 60
Labourers	16s. to 16s. 10d.	58½ „ 60
Boiler Making, &c.:—		
Boilersmiths	18s. 11d. to 19s. 10d.	58½ to 60
Other Smiths	22s. 3d. „ 27s. 3d.	58½ „ 60
Riveters	20s. to 21s. 7d.	58½ „ 60
Labourers and Holders up	16s. 2d. to 18s. 7d.	58½ „ 60
Municipal Employees:—		
Navvies	15s. 4d. to 18s. 5d.	48
Sewermen	15s. 4d. „ 18s. 5d.	48
Paviors	19s. 7d. „ 20s. 9d.	48
Paviors' Labourers	15s. 4d. „ 16s. 6d.	48
Waterworks—Turncocks	17s. 3d. „ 19s. 2d.	48
Carmen	19s. 2d. „ 21s. 1d.	48

* Bank-to-bank times.

† Including intervals.

Wages at Brussels being taken as 100, the index numbers for Seraing are as follows:—Building trades, skilled men, 81, unskilled labourers, 91; engineering trades, skilled men, 98, unskilled labourers, 106.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

The general standard of housing accommodation in Seraing is poor. This is probably due to the very limited amount of ground in the valley available for building purposes, and to the rapid growth of the population of the place, to which reference has been made above. Builders, in their attempts to erect as many houses as possible, at the least expense, in the limited valley area of the town, have laid out a few narrow streets and blind alleys there are generally two or three-roomed houses, consisting of one room upstairs and one downstairs, or of these two rooms and an attic. It is very common to find these houses built back-to-back, and even where this is not the case they are frequently built without any window or door at the back.

These narrow courts are by no means limited to the lower part of the town, but exist also at Lize and behind the roads joining Lize and Seraing proper. There are no figures to show what proportion of Seraing houses is situated in *impasses*, but it must be very considerable.

The courts are frequently unpaved, but their condition is generally worst where two rows of back-to-back houses face each other in a narrow yard, as the ventilation is then very defective, and the air is hardly any better outside the houses than inside. During the last few years some of the worst property at Seraing has been destroyed as a result of industrial extensions, but there still remains a considerable amount of poor property.

The average number of households per house destined for habitation in Seraing, according to the census of 1900, was 1.31. With regard to the accommodation contained by working-class houses an enquiry made a few years ago by the Housing Committee concerning 1,550 dwellings showed that 57 or 3.7 per cent. consisted of one room, 800 or 51.6 per cent. contained two rooms, 396 or 25.5 per cent. contained three rooms, 262 or 16.9 per cent. contained four rooms, and 35 or 2.3 per cent. contained five or more rooms. Thus two, three and four-roomed houses are the only important types at Seraing.

On the main roads the commonest type of house is one consisting of two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs, generally with a cellar and lumber room. The house has only a narrow frontage of about 12 feet and contains no passage, it being necessary to pass through the front room to reach the back. Not infrequently this class of house has only one room upstairs; the slope of the roof is greater at the back than at the front, with the result that whilst there is a bedroom to the front on the first floor, there is only a lumber room at the back. The majority of the houses at Seraing have a yard and garden. The houses are almost all built of red brick, though some of the older ones are painted pale green or some other light colour.

In the great majority of working-class houses at Seraing town water is used, though it is generally necessary to fetch it from the nearest street tap, for it is exceptional, in the older houses at least, to find the town water laid on. In the case of one large *impasse* containing some 40 houses, and situated quite close to the centre of the town, the nearest tap is some 200 yards away, and to reach it, it is necessary to cross the railway by a level crossing. In the rural parts of the town, conditions with regard to water supply are not infrequently very bad. It is common for houses to be provided with tubs in which to collect the rain water from the roofs.

Where a supply of the town water is laid on in the newer houses, the tap is frequently found in the cellar near the meter, with a view to saving the cost of installing lead piping. Where the tap and sink are not in the cellars they are usually found in the kitchen. A working-class family pays 4½d. per 1,000 gallons for water, and in addition 4s. 10d. per annum rent for the water-meter.

As regards sanitary equipment, at the present time a fair number of houses are connected with the sewers, but the old cesspool system still predominates.

The system of sub-letting, which is so prevalent in the neighbouring town of Liège, practically does not exist at Seraing, so far as working-class families are concerned. As has already been mentioned, it is exceptional for a working-class house to be provided with a passage. This alone would render sub-letting difficult. On the other hand, there are many families who take in lodgers. Roughly speaking, these are of two classes. The first return home every week-end, using workmen's cheap return tickets, which enable them to travel, for example, 7 miles each way for 6d., 21 miles for 9d., and 40 miles for 1s. These workmen sleep five nights (Monday to Friday) at Seraing and pay about 10d. a week for sleeping accommodation, or about 2s. for bed and coffee and bread before going to work. The rest of the food for the week these lodgers bring with them from their homes, which as often as not are situated in the Flemish country districts, as many Flemish workmen come to Seraing to work in the mines. The second class of lodgers receive full board and lodging, or they have sleeping accommodation, and also have their clothes washed for them, which is a matter of some importance, as the clothes used in the mines have to be washed every day. The sum commonly paid by this class of lodger is from 7s. 5d. to 10s. 4d. a week (the payments are made twice a month). It should be noted that many of the lodgers, as well as members of the family, are engaged in coal mines and iron and steel works where day and night shifts are worked. Hence it frequently happens that the same bedrooms and in some cases even the same beds are occupied both day and night.

In reference to the subject of beds, it may be noted that where there are two bedrooms upstairs, there is hardly ever a bed downstairs, whilst even in two or three-roomed houses the number of kitchen-bedrooms is small. Consequently, the general rule is that the whole family and lodgers, if any, sleep in the one or two upstairs bedrooms, and not infrequently the arrangement is far from satisfactory.

A description of some specimen dwellings may now be given. In the erection of the older houses no uniform plan appears to have been followed, and it is impossible to indicate any typical measurements.

A four-roomed house, with two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs. Front room 15 feet by 12 feet, and back room 15 feet square. Height, 8 feet 3 inches. Upstairs rooms of the same size as those below. Stairs in corner of kitchen. The house is situated on a main road and has a fair sized garden. Weekly rent, 4s. 3d.

A three-roomed house, with a front room 13 feet by 13 feet, and a kitchen 10 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 9 inches. Upstairs, a bedroom over the front room and a lumber room at the back. The staircase is at the side of the kitchen, at right angles to the street.

A two-roomed house, situated in a court, with rooms some 15 feet by 16 feet 6 inches, and very low ceilings. Stairs in corner of room. Weekly rent, 1s. 1d.

A three-roomed house, originally consisting of one room upstairs and one room down, to which a back kitchen has since been added. The two front rooms are some 13 feet square, whilst the back kitchen is 9 feet 9 inches by 15 feet 6 inches. The staircase is at the side of the front room, and the front door opens straight on to it, with only just enough room to swing open. To enter the front room it is necessary to turn half round, and to pass through a second door. The rent is 2s. 9d. a week.

A small house in a court, with a front room 15 feet square, and a back room 9 feet 9 inches by 11 feet 6 inches, and two rooms upstairs of the same dimensions. The staircase is at the side of the back room. Weekly rent, 3s. 2d.

A four-roomed house, with front rooms 11 feet 3 inches by 12 feet 6 inches, and back rooms 8 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 3 inches. The stairs at the side of the kitchen, at right angles to the street. Downstairs rooms 9 feet high, and upstairs rooms 8 feet 3 inches high. Rent, 3s. 2d. a week.

A house of the same size as that described immediately above, only with a lumber room instead of the back bedroom upstairs lets for 2s. 9d. a week.

A small house in a narrow court, with kitchen 10 feet 9 inches by 12 feet 6 inches, and 8 feet high, and bedroom above of the same area, with stairs at side of kitchen; lets for 1s. 6d. a week.

A two-roomed house, in another courtyard, with kitchen 14 feet 6 inches by 17 feet 6 inches, and 8 feet 6 inches high, and bedroom above of same size, lets for 2s. 1d. weekly.

A row of four-roomed back-to-back houses in an *impasse*, with a front room 13 feet square, and a back room, lighted entirely from the front room, 9 feet 6 inches by 10 feet, and two rooms above of the same size. Stairs at the side of the back room. Weekly rent, 2s. 3d.

The municipal building regulations prescribe, among other things, certain limits for the height of buildings and the height of rooms. Thus, where the road is less than 13 feet wide, the buildings are not to exceed 26 feet 3 inches in height; for a road between 13 feet and 26 feet 3 inches wide, the limit for buildings is 36 feet, &c. Section 54 of the regulations requires that all rooms on the ground floor shall be at least 10 feet 6 inches high, on the upper floors 9 feet 9 inches high, and that at least half of every attic shall be not less than 9 feet 3 inches high. The minimum height of a basement kitchen must be 8 feet 3 inches, and of cellars 6 feet 3 inches.

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Two rooms	...	...	...	1s. 8d. to 2s.
Three rooms	...	...	...	1s. 10d. to 2s. 7d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	2s. 3d. to 3s. 4d.

Rent at Brussels being taken as 100, the index number for Seraing is 59.

In considering the predominant rents given in the foregoing table, it is necessary to bear several facts in mind. In the first place there are a large number of *impasses* or narrow alleys, which contain much inferior property, let at a fairly low figure, the inclusion of which tends to reduce the average rent figures for the town. In the second place the municipal area is large and part of it partakes more of a rural than an industrial character, and in the upper or rural part of the town, a considerable way from the works and mines, it is possible to obtain housing accommodation at a distinctly lower price than in the lower or industrial part. This inclusion of a semi-rural district within the town area further reduces the average rent figures. In the third place, in very many of the older houses the upstairs rooms are nothing better than attics, and this lower standard of housing accommodation, as compared with some other towns, also accounts to some extent for the relatively low rents in Seraing. Lastly, it is important to bear in mind that the majority of the better and more modern working-class houses are inhabited by their owners and consequently cannot be taken into account in arriving at the predominant rent figures.

Of these new houses a large number have been erected with money borrowed from building societies organised under the law of August 9, 1889. There are no separate societies operating solely or even principally in the commune of Seraing; but the two large societies established at Liège for the whole province and the arrondissement of Liège respectively, the *Foyer de l'Ouvrier*, and the *Société anonyme de garantie pour favoriser la construction de Maisons Ouvrières dans l'arrondissement de Liège*, both operate at Seraing. The latter society, at the end of 1907, had granted 319 loans in Seraing, the total amount of which was £46,228. The total value of the land built upon was £6,924, and the value of the buildings £51,752. In other words the average loan in Seraing was £145, as compared with £170 in the neighbouring town of Liège. The plots of land in Seraing cost £22 on an average, as compared with £38 in Liège (besides which it is also probable that the average Seraing plot is larger than the average Liège plot), and lastly, the average value of each house in Seraing, including land, was £184, as compared with £225 in Liège. This difference in cost is partly accounted for by the difference in the value of the land and to some extent possibly by the difference in the building regulations, but it is doubtless due to a considerable extent to the fact that the houses built at Seraing are often smaller than those erected at Liège; in particular they have generally less frontage and no through passage on the ground floor. The arrangement of a typical house at Seraing erected by the building societies is as follows: The front door opens directly into the front room, 12 feet wide, 13 feet deep, and 10 feet 6 inches high. Behind is the kitchen of the same dimensions. Between them, parallel to the street, is the staircase, 2 feet 6 inches wide. On the first floor there are two rooms of the same area as those below, but only 9 feet 9 inches high. The house has also lumber room and cellar.

There are no exact figures showing to what extent the other building society, the *Foyer de l'Ouvrier*, has operated at Seraing, but there is good ground for believing that it has effected as many, if not more, loans than the other society, which places the number of building society houses in Seraing at between six and seven hundred, and there are undoubtedly many other cases in which workmen have erected houses without the intervention of a building society. Where this class of house is let, which is a somewhat rare occurrence, the rent is probably from 4s. 1d. to 4s. 7d. a week, the amount depending to some extent upon the size of the garden and upon whether or not there is an attic bedroom. Houses of the Liège type, with a 16 feet 6 inches to 18 feet frontage and a passage, are rarely occupied by working-class people in Seraing, unless they be foremen or highly paid workmen, and in most of these cases they would be the owners.

Two firms, which are the largest employers of labour at Seraing, take an interest in the housing of their workpeople. It is the experience of the iron and steel firm that workpeople do not care about being housed by their employers, and the firm owns only two groups of 40 houses each. Of recent years it has tried to encourage its workpeople to buy their own houses by taking shares in the different building societies which operate at Seraing and district. According to the latest information available, 930 workmen of the firm own 1,132 houses, acquired under the auspices of building societies; the houses either belong absolutely to the workmen now, or will do so as soon as they have completed payment of the instalments. The 1,132 houses are spread over Seraing and the neighbouring communes.

The Seraing glass firm has followed an entirely different policy from that of the iron and steel firm. It has erected groups of houses in its grounds and lets them at a moderate rent, or for nothing, to its workpeople. In 1896, the firm placed at the disposal of its

workpeople 195 houses, consisting of 735 rooms, which provided accommodation for 1,014 persons. At the present time the numbers are somewhat larger. All employees who are not provided with a house belonging to the firm receive a special allowance of 4s. a month as rent-money.

RETAIL PRICES.

In regard to shop conditions, Seraing offers several points of interest. Although it is only a comparatively small place, it contains a very large number of selling organisations of various types, and the position of the small shopkeeper is very unsatisfactory, owing to the large amount of competition he has to face. The markets are of little importance, and the principal factors to be taken into consideration are the following:— (1.) Three canteens or stores organised in connection with three large firms; (2.) seven or eight Socialist or "Neutral" co-operative societies; (3.) a score of so-called "*groupes économiques ou alimentaires*"; (4.) more than thirty branches of some half dozen national and local "multiple" shops; (5.) general dealers with tied houses; (6.) hawkers. A short account of these organisations may now be given.

Canteens.—These so-called *économats* or *magasins alimentaires* have to be especially authorised by the Government, according to the law of August 16th, 1887. One canteen in connection with a coal mine exists at Seraing, and has a turnover of some £6,000 per annum. All profits are distributed to purchasers in the form of dividend on the amount purchased. Another, established by an iron and steel firm, is situated just outside the boundary of the town, at Ougrée. Everything is sold to the workpeople at cost price, the amount of the turnover being some £12,000. The workmen are at perfect liberty to buy elsewhere if they choose. The third canteen is a co-operative store connected with the glass-making firm at Val St. Lambert. It was established in 1867, and converted into a co-operative society in 1879. During these twelve years, its turnover was about £12,000 per annum, and the amount paid to purchasers in dividend about £600 per annum. At the present time the turnover of the *Société Coopérative du Magasin Alimentaire des Ouvriers du Val-Saint-Lambert* is over £30,000 per annum. All these canteens deal in the articles, other than butcher's meat, mostly consumed or used by working-class people.

Co-operative Societies.—There are several co-operative societies at Seraing, the two most important being the *Emulation Proletarienne* and the *Union Ouvrière*. Others are the *Ouvriers du Progrès*, the *Economat*, the *Justice*, the *Fraternité*, and the *Loyale*.

The *Emulation Proletarienne* has some 1,080 members, and an annual turnover of nearly £50,000. The business is done from the central store and six branch shops, grocery and bread forming the basis of the business. This society, which is the largest in the town, is a Socialist organisation.

The *Union Ouvrière* is a "Neutral" society with some 700 members, whose annual turnover is approximately £27,000. It has two branches in addition to the central store, and deals in groceries, bread, pork and butcher's meat, boots and shoes, and clothing of various kinds. The dividend paid to the members is 14 per cent.

The remaining co-operative societies (excluding the former canteen at Val St. Lambert, mentioned above) are small and comparatively unimportant.

Groupes économiques ou alimentaires.—A group is a kind of primitive co-operative society, which appears to exist only at Seraing and in the immediate neighbourhood. Originally these societies were formed by a few families joining together to make their principal purchases in common, and afterwards distributing them. By degrees they were established on a more permanent footing, each hiring a house to serve as a shop, store-room and office, and the membership grew. At the present time the *groupes alimentaires* generally have from 30 to 80 members, whilst there is one which has as many as 120; on the other hand, several limit their membership to 60. A group is managed by a committee, which is appointed every six months, and is paid by a commission on the total sales. The members of the committee attend at their house three or four times a week during the afternoon (*i.e.*, in the case of those working night shifts) and evening. Two or three times a month the committee receive commercial travellers in the evening, and make their purchases and pay their accounts.

The groups are formed by means of shares, generally of £1 each. They bear no interest, but entitle a member to that amount of credit when out of work, and frequently a member holds several shares on that account. When an unemployed member's credit is exhausted he is sometimes assisted by means of a general levy paid by all the other members, or by

the *caisse de solidarité*, where that exists. This is supported by means of regular weekly contributions from all members, and is established with a view to suppressing general levies.

No sales are made to the public. Members and committee-men frequently assemble at their house at the beginning of the week to drink together and to discuss their cock-crowing competitions, pigeons, &c. At the end of the week the committee are busy selling. At least two committee-men must be present at the same time, there being two locks on the doors, and no one being willing to trust anyone else sufficiently to leave him in charge alone. The groups sell practically everything, keeping groceries, wines, spirits, tobacco, haberdashery, hosiery and other lines of goods in their houses, whilst the rest they sell by means of coupons drawn on certain shops in the town. Bread they buy from the co-operative or private bakers. They give credit for a fortnight, the miners paying one week and the metal-workers the other, after receipt of the fortnight's pay. The profits are used for group and Socialist propaganda, and for paying a dividend on purchases.

The total number of groups at Seraing is 20 or 25; similar organisations exist in some of the neighbouring communes, such as Ougrée and Jemeppe, and they are all associated in the *Fédération cantonale des groupes alimentaires de Seraing*, each group contributing to the funds in proportion to the number of its members. The Federation discusses questions of general interest to the groups, the conduct of purveyors, candidates for municipal elections, &c.

General Dealers with Tied Houses.—This system does not exist to a very great extent in Seraing itself, but it is very common in some of the small neighbouring communes. A general dealer with a certain amount of capital at his disposal buys up as many working-class houses as he can in his district, and lets them at moderate rents, choosing as far as possible large families and those who take in lodgers. He makes it a condition of letting his houses, that the tenants shall make all their purchases at his shop, where he charges from 10 to 20 or even 30 per cent. more than ordinary shops. As a result he is practically unable to sell to the general public and has to content himself with the custom of his tenants, but in view of the fact that he keeps a general store and sells almost everything, and that the number of his tenants may be very considerable, 100 to 150 being fairly common, he is not infrequently able to carry on a distinctly lucrative business.

Hawkers.—The number of hawkers at Seraing is said to be out of all proportion to the population of the place. This, however, is partly explained by the very large area of the commune.

Groceries and other Commodities.

The following summary table of prices paid by working-class people calls for no comment, except as regards coal. The miners obtain their coal at reduced rates of about 5d. per cwt. Other working-class people frequently obtain their coal direct from the mines, in quantities of 2 or 4 cwt. at once, at prices ranging from 6½d. to 9½d. per cwt. according to the quality taken. For coal delivered at the house by small dealers, the minimum price of 9½d. per cwt. was usually paid in June, 1908, though higher prices were frequent.

Predominant Prices Paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6½d. to 7½d.
Sugar, Loaf "	2½d., 3d.
Bacon, Salted "	7½d.
Eggs per 1s.	10 to 12
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	7d., 8½d.
Butter "	1s. 2½d.
Margarine "	8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	3d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	5d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal per cwt.	9½d.
Paraffin oil per gallon	7d.

Meat.

As there is at present no public abattoir, butchers are allowed to slaughter at home, or they import their meat from neighbouring abattoirs.

Returns received from 85 families, representing 388 persons, showed an average weekly consumption per head of meat of all kinds of 24 oz., which is at the rate of 78 lb. per head per annum. Of this amount, 32 per cent. was beef, 25 per cent. bacon, 14 per cent. *charcuterie*, 9 per cent. pork, 7 per cent. horseflesh, 6 per cent. veal, 4 per cent. mutton, and 3 per cent. poultry. None of the 85 families reported any consumption of rabbits.

The following summary table of prices requires no comment :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.					Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—					7d.
Ribs	...	...	...	...	5½d. to 5¾d.
Brisket	...	...	...	...	8¾d. „ 9½d.
Silverside	...	...	...	...	4¾d. „ 5½d.
Shin	{ with bone	...	...	...	6d. „ 6½d.
	{ without bone	...	...	...	8¾d. „ 10½d.
Beef Steak	...	...	...	...	8¾d. „ 11½d.
Rump Steak	...	...	...	...	7½d. „ 9½d.
Thick Flank	...	...	...	...	5½d. „ 6½d.
Thin Flank	...	...	...	...	8¾d. to 10½d.
Mutton :—					7½d. „ 8¾d.
Leg	...	...	...	...	6d. „ 7d.
Shoulder	...	...	...	...	7¾d. „ 9½d.
Breast	...	...	...	...	5½d. „ 7d.
Neck	{ Best End	...	...	...	9½d. „ 1s. 0¼d.
	{ Scrag End	...	...	...	9½d. „ 1s. 0¼d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	9½d. „ 1s. 0¼d.
Veal :—					9½d. to 11d.
Hindquarter	...	...	...	...	7d. „ 8¾d.
Shoulder	{ with bone	...	...	...	7¾d. „ 10½d.
	{ without bone	...	...	...	7¾d. „ 9½d.
Ribs	...	...	...	...	8¾d. „ 10½d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	8¾d. „ 10½d.
Pork :—					8¾d.
Leg	...	...	...	...	8¾d.
Foreloin	...	...	...	...	7d. to 7¾d.
Belly	...	...	...	...	8¾d.
Chops	...	...	...	...	8¾d.

The prices of horseflesh per lb. in June, 1908, were 5¾d. to 6½d. for fillet, 5½d. for *faux-filet*, 5½d. to 6d. for steak, and 4½d. for inferior cuts.

Representing prices at Brussels by 100, the index number for the price of meat at Seraing is 93. For other food, the index number is higher than at any other of the towns investigated, viz.—104. The level of food prices as a whole is indicated by 102, while the index number for the price of coal is 57. For food and coal together the prices index number is 96, the index number for rent and prices combined being 90.

TOURNAI.

Tournai is the largest town in the province of Hainault, and, while not its capital, it is the administrative centre of the second arrondissement of that province. It was formerly a fortress, and is still a garrison town ; it is also the seat of a bishop, and an important judicial centre. It is situated on the river Scheldt, which divides it into unequal parts, and is about six miles from the French frontier and 52 miles by rail west-south-west of Brussels. The surrounding country is very fertile, and produces a considerable amount of corn, flax, fruit, and vegetables, for which markets are held periodically in the town.

Tournai is a town of many industries, but all are small, and for the most part they are represented by one, two, or three establishments. Several of the historical industries of the place, such as tapestry and carpet weaving, which is said to have employed over five thousand workpeople at the beginning of last century, and the manufacture of paper, porcelain, and faience, disappeared some years ago, and even cloth weaving has fallen into decay, having been excelled by the industry of Verviers and Roubaix. An endeavour is being made to resuscitate carpet weaving, but comparatively few workers are engaged in the single factory devoted to this industry.

There are four spinning factories, viz., one of cotton, one of wool, and two of flax and tow, and a small amount of woollen weaving is done. The engineering trades are represented by several foundries, machine shops, and boiler works.

The tanning industry is ancient and one of the most important in Belgium. Only sole leather is prepared, and twelve firms, employing some 500 workmen, are engaged in this industry.

Hosiery used to be one of the principal sources of employment in the town, and during the first half of the last century as many as 1,600 looms were in use, the weavers working at home, but this industry has likewise decayed, though it still employs some hundreds of workers, chiefly women and girls.

The printing trade is important here, and one firm alone employs several hundred workpeople, its work being chiefly of an ecclesiastical kind. Other notable industries are distilling, soft soap boiling, chocolate manufacture, in which a number of small works are engaged, and beer brewing.

Quarrying, lime burning, and the manufacture of cement are also industries which are closely identified with Tournai, and are a source of considerable employment and of great wealth. The quarries are situated on the banks of the Scheldt between Tournai and Antwerp and are some thirty in number, employing in normal times at least 4,000 men. The cement made is a natural cement of high quality, and it is largely exported, both by water and rail. A subsidiary industry is the manufacture of artificial stone and encaustic tiles. The soil of the neighbourhood also furnishes excellent bricks.

The river, which flows through the town from south-east to north-west, is a serious hindrance to intercourse between the two halves of the commune owing to the unfavourable levels, but it is of considerable use for trade, being navigable by vessels up to 300 tons. There is a regular service of vessels between Tournai and Antwerp during the greater part of the year. The busiest part of the town is that on the left bank.

The population of Tournai has increased but slowly during recent years. The increase between the census of 1900 and 1907 was estimated at 2,573, yet during the 51 years from 1856 to 1907 it was only 6,753 (from 30,824 to 37,577), or 21·9 per cent. The following table shows the population at the last three decennial censuses and the estimated population at the end of 1907 :—

Year.					Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	...	...	...	...	32,566	—	—
1890	...	...	...	...	34,442	1,876	5·8
1900	...	...	...	...	35,004	562	1·6
1907 (estimated)	...	...	...	...	37,577	2,573	7·4
					(in seven years).		(in seven years).

For many years the growth of the town has been due in diminishing degree to natural increase of population, and the greater part of the increase in the number of inhabitants in recent years is owing to excess of arrivals over departures.

Nevertheless, the census of 1900 showed that of 35,004 persons enumerated 23,198, or 66·3 per cent., were born in the commune. Tournai had then a foreign population of 1,276, 1,055 being French. For a long time there has been a steady decline of the birth-rate, and although there has been a simultaneous fall of the death-rate it has not made up for the deficiency. Since 1904 the birth-rate has fallen from 20·7 to 17·8 per 1,000 inhabitants, while the death-rate, which was 18·7 in 1904 and 18·8 in 1905, was 17·2 in each of the years 1906-8. The average rate of infantile mortality during the period 1904-8 was 125 per 1,000 births. The following table shows the birth and death rates per 1,000 inhabitants and the infantile mortality rate per 1,000 births for each of the years 1904 to 1908 :—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904 ...	20·7	18·7	129
1905 ...	18·1	18·8	131
1906 ...	19·3	17·2	107
1907 ...	19·0	17·2	121
1908 ...	17·8	17·2	139

The commune of Tournai has an area of 3,863 acres, and a large portion of this area is *extra muros*, i.e., situated outside the old lines of fortifications. The demolition of these was begun in 1860 and was completed ten years later, their place being taken by boulevards and open spaces. So long as the walls existed the town could not extend outside, with the result that all increase of population implied growing congestion within the enclosure. Like all the old fortified towns of Belgium, therefore, Tournai is very compactly and in part even densely built; most of its streets are narrow though regular in plan, and there are many yards, alleys, and courts consisting of very inferior and often dilapidated house property. Considerable improvement has, however, taken place during recent years, and in the construction of all new streets and the boulevards on the outskirts ample proportions have been insisted on. While the number of inhabitants per acre of municipal area increased from 7·7 in 1866 to 8·5 in 1880 and 8·9 in 1890 and 1900, the number per acre of area built upon decreased from 97 in 1866 to 91 in 1880, 79 in 1890, and 76 in 1900. The most striking public buildings are the Cathedral, the Belfry, the *Hôtel de Ville*, the Railway Station (regarded as one of the finest in the country), and the Cloth Hall, in the spacious *Grand Place*.

In spite of many recent renovations Tournai still preserves the character of an ancient town, and its aspect as seen from the summit of the Belfry is very picturesque. Few houses have more than two stories in addition to the ground-floor; in the older streets inhabited by the working classes most houses consist of ground-floor, first floor, and a loft; and low houses consisting of the ground-floor only, or ground-floor and loft, are common. Brick is the almost universal building material, this being faced with stucco, painted white or yellow in the case of good houses and shops, while red tiles are the usual roofing material. Private gardens are rare, but planted spaces are being set apart in increasing number by the public authority. All the streets are paved with setts or cobbles.

The only public services in municipal hands are the water supply, the abattoir, and the construction and care of the streets. The gasworks belong to a Company, and there is no electric light. The town is also virtually without tramways, for the Tournai district lines of the *Société nationale des chemins de fer vicinaux* only serve some of the outer districts of the municipal area and in the main unite Tournai with some of the surrounding suburbs. These lines, 48 miles in length, are worked by the communes affected, which have formed a company for the purpose. They pay to the parent company a percentage of the gross revenue in return for the use of the lines and the rolling stock. Among the enterprises carried on by the town are a theatre and a concert hall, a library, museums of art, antiquities, and natural history, academies of fine arts and music, a school of arboriculture and horticulture, a domestic economy school, an industrial school in which instruction is given in the heating of steam boilers and management of steam engines and in industrial electricity, a *crèche*, etc. There is a *Conseil de Prud'hommes*, but it has no permanent offices. The only covered market is one for meat; open markets are held in the squares and streets, and cattle and horse markets are held weekly and monthly respectively. The number of charitable institutions and agencies in the town, for the most part carried on by ecclesiastical bodies, is exceptionally large.

A noticeable feature of the social life of the town is the abundance of its facilities for public drinking. The total number of the hotels, restaurants, and popular drinking places, called *estaminets*, is 1,026, equal to one for every six houses and every 37 inhabitants. No authority is necessary to the opening of an *estaminet*, and the result is that there are whole streets which consist of little else. A large proportion of these *estaminets* are working-class dwellings in which the front room—or a portion of it, partitioned off—is set apart as a public bar; in such cases the turn-over is often insignificant. The town levies no direct tax upon *estaminets*, but it shares in the proceeds of the tax imposed by the State on all premises upon which alcoholic beverages are retailed.

The budget of Tournai for 1908 showed an ordinary expenditure of £44,766. In addition to local supplements to the State property, personal, and trading taxes, the municipality imposes, for its exclusive benefit, taxes on horses, carriages, dogs, steam and gas engines, balconies and carriage gates, hawking, and on new buildings, the last tax being based on the cubical contents of the structure erected.

The local Savings Bank had at the end of 1907 13,531 depositors, with accumulated funds of £181,873, or £13 8s. 10d. per account, comparing with 11,514 depositors, accumulated funds of £155,584, and £13 10s. 3d. per account in 1900. Accounts are opened in the names of all the scholars in the elementary schools, and rewards are offered to them for the encouragement of thrift. Reference is made below to the expenditure upon outdoor relief.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

It is impossible to speak of a staple industry in relation to Tournai. The textile trades employ collectively a very large proportion of the workpeople who are engaged in establishments subject to inspection, but, as has already been explained, these trades are diverse in character and individually they are for the most part unimportant. The sole-leather tanning trade is localised in Tournai to an exceptional degree, yet the majority of the tanneries employ comparatively few workpeople. The town is known far and wide for its Portland and Roman cement, but most of the quarries and cement works are outside the municipal area. Hence the character of Tournai as a town of many but small industries.

The census of December, 1900, showed that there were then resident in the town 962 industrial employers engaged in productive and manufacturing processes of various kinds, while the industrial workpeople enumerated numbered 7,648, viz., 5,310 males and 2,338 females. No recent classification of industrial workpeople is available, and the only data of the kind that exist apply to the establishments visited by the district Factory Inspector. For this reason the textile and engineering trades are the only ones for which figures even approximately exact can be given. The Factory Inspector estimated that the weaving and spinning factories employed in 1908 1,739 workpeople, of whom 553 were males and 777 females of 16 years and upwards, and 92 males and 317 females between 12 and 16 years. The hosiery factories employed 313 persons, of whom 206 were females of 16 years and upwards, and 99 boys between 12 and 16 years, but a larger number of persons are employed as home workers in this industry. In engineering works 502 workpeople were employed, only 36 of these being under 16 years of age.

The hours of labour range from ten to twelve per day, according to the industry, eleven being most usual. It is a common practice, however, to cease work early on Mondays, usually at 4.30 or 5.0. The short Monday is unpopular with the employers, and while some of them have succeeded in abolishing it, the tradition dies hard, and the workpeople engaged in the unskilled trades especially cling to it with great tenacity. A twelve hours day is worked in the building trades, and at brickworks, while ten hours constitute a day's work at limestone quarries, cement works and tanneries, and in the printing trades. In addition to the Church festivals; holidays of two or three days are observed both at carnival time, in the first week of Lent, and at the local "feast" or *Kermesse*.

There is little organisation amongst the working classes of Tournai. There are Christian or Roman Catholic unions of metal workers, wood workers, and printers, and Socialist unions of metal workers, wood workers, printers, and chocolate makers, but the combined membership of all these organisations does not exceed 400, and their influence upon the labour movement is insignificant. No wages agreements exist, and the workers show little disposition to cultivate community of interest.

There is no public Labour Bureau, but rudimentary agencies of the kind exist in connection with the *Maison des Ouvriers*, an institution which has been provided under Roman Catholic auspices for the welfare of the working classes. The commodious building which has been erected for the purposes of this Labour Club contains a large assembly hall, with bar attached, which is used on Sundays and weekday evenings for meetings, fêtes, and recreation. The three Christian trade unions have their offices here, though they are only open twice a week, and sickness and old age pension funds, a savings bank, and a musical society are attached to the Club, whose members pay the nominal subscription of 10 centimes (1*d.*).

Notes are added regarding the conditions of labour prevailing in the more important trades.

Building Trades.—A large proportion of the workmen engaged in the building trades live outside Tournai. This is almost wholly the case with the bricklayers and masons, who come from the villages of Rumes, Guignies, Taintignies, etc., and either travel to and fro every day or live in lodgings and return home once a fortnight. Similarly many carpenters and plasterers come from Vaulx, Froyennes, and Ere. These rural workmen often have small farms, or at least a little land upon which tobacco and other crops can be cultivated. It is said that the best bricklayers and masons go to Lille, Roubaix, and towns in the Pas-de-Calais, where the wages are higher than in Belgium. There is little difference in the wages paid to skilled men in this group of trades. Bricklayers and masons, plasterers, and plumbers all receive 20*s.* 2*d.* per week of 72 hours, and carpenters, joiners, and painters receive 18*s.* 5*d.*; the wages of bricklayers' and masons' labourers are 14*s.* 5*d.* per week. It may be noted that contractors for public works are required by the municipal authority to pay rates considerably in excess of those ruling in the open market. With equal hours the stipulated wages of bricklayers and masons, plasterers and plumbers engaged on public works are 24*s.* 2*d.*, of carpenters and joiners, 25*s.* 11*d.*, and of bricklayers' and masons' labourers, 15*s.* 7*d.* Wages are invariably paid by the hour.

Engineering Trades.—In these trades piece-work is so rare as to be negligible, but in one establishment visited a bonus was paid on output. The usual range of wages in ordinary machine shops is from 19*s.* to 21*s.* 10*d.* for skilled men, and from 12*s.* 6*d.* to 15*s.* 7*d.* for labourers. There has been no recent change in the rates of wages, but it was stated that there had been an increase of about 20 per cent. during the past ten years. Rates are fixed by the hour, and payment is weekly or fortnightly. In several works notice is dispensed with on both sides, but in others a week's notice is usual, though employers seldom hold departing workmen rigidly to this condition.

Textile Trades.—Comparatively few men are employed in the spinning mills. The flax is spun wet. The one weaving factory produces the cheaper cotton cloths for men's dress. The great majority of the workers in the hosiery trade are women and girls, though men are employed on stocking knitting machines. In addition to stockings and socks, "sweaters" are largely made. Home work is gradually being superseded by the factories, yet many workers of both sexes still work at home.

Quarries, Lime and Cement Works.—The great majority of the men employed in the quarries, lime and cement works and brickfields live in the villages lying to the south of Tournai. They are for the most part paid by piece, and when in full work in summer high wages can be earned, quarrymen earning from 23*s.* 2*d.* to 28*s.* 10*d.*, stonecutters from 24*s.* 10*d.* to 28*s.* 10*d.*, cement makers from 20*s.* 2*d.* to 26*s.* 5*d.*, and brick-moulders from 33*s.* 7*d.* to 38*s.* 5*d.* The brickmakers work in gangs, composed, as a rule, of four men and three or four boys. Some 200 men are employed at the four brickyards in the neighbourhood. The hours worked at the quarries and cement works are from 54 to 60 per week, and at brick works 72. An allied trade is the manufacture of encaustic tiles, the wages ranging from 15*s.* 2*d.* to 17*s.* 7*d.* for 65 hours' work.

Chemical and Soap Works.—There is no chemical industry in the narrower sense, but there are several small allied trades. Two works belonging to one firm are employed in the distilling of alcohol and the manufacture of crude potash; there are two soft soap manufactories, and at one of the latter linseed oil-cake is made.

Tanning.—The tanning trade is important at Tournai, and the wages paid to the more skilled workers often exceed those paid to mechanics in the machine shops, from 24*s.* to 25*s.* 7*d.* per week being common. Ox and cow hides are mostly tanned, and many come from abroad, while, on the other hand, the leather is largely exported.

Printing Trades.—The printing trade is important at Tournai. There are several newspaper offices and two large book printing works, as well as a number of small establishments. There is little difference in rates of wages as between book and news-

paper printers, the usual range being from 19*s.* 2*d.* to 20*s.* for a week of 59 or 60 hours, and in newspaper offices hand and machine compositors are paid the same rates. As the daily newspapers are produced in the afternoon there is no night work. The wages of pressmen are about the same as those of compositors, except in the case of men engaged in high-class work, of which much is done, chiefly of an ecclesiastical kind.

Food and Drink Trades.—The food and drink group of trades includes seven or eight chocolate and confectionery manufactories, employing altogether some 200 work-people, many being juveniles. The highest wages are earned by the confectioners, but as these are few in number and their work is of a special kind the range is wide, from 18*s.* 6*d.* to 24*s.*, while ordinary chocolate makers earn from 14*s.* 5*d.* to 16*s.* 10*d.* In addition to a large number of private bakers, there are two co-operative bakeries. There is little difference in the rates of wages paid, though in the co-operative bakeries fewer hours are worked than in private establishments, most of which are very small. As a rule the workmen receive a loaf of bread weighing 2½ lb. each working day as a perquisite. There are nearly a dozen breweries in the town and the immediate locality. The wages of brewers are no higher than those of unskilled labourers in boiler works. Free beer, of an inferior quality ("small" or "half" beer) may be drunk *ad libitum* on the premises.

Public Services.—As the water supply and the ordinary maintenance and scavenging of the streets, with the abattoir, are the only public services in municipal hands, the town is not a large employer of labour, the men usually engaged in the foregoing services only numbering from 30 to 40. Gas is supplied by a company. The light railways only numbering from 30 to 40. Gas is supplied by a company. The light railways belonging to the *Société nationale des chemins de fer vicinaux* are leased to an association of local communes and worked by steam. The wages of drivers, stokers and conductors vary with the years of service. Drivers are paid 3*s.* per day during the first year, 3*s.* 2*d.* during the second, 3*s.* 5*d.* during the third, and a maximum of 3*s.* 7*d.* during the fourth. Conductors receive 2*s.* 2*d.* per day for the first six months, 2*s.* 5*d.* for the second six months, and 2*s.* 7*d.*, 2*s.* 10*d.*, 3*s.* and 3*s.* 2*d.* for the second, third, fourth and fifth years. Stokers begin at 2*s.* 5*d.* per day for the first year and rise to 2*s.* 7*d.* and 2*s.* 10*d.* in the two following years. The hours are somewhat indefinite, 15 hours' attendance being required daily of the drivers and stokers, but deducting intervals the number actually worked per week by all three classes of men is 84, while 27 days per month are paid for.

The following table shows the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour for adult males prevailing in all the principal trades and industries in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Building Trades :—		
Bricklayers and Masons	20 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>	72
Stonemasons (Cutters)	25 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	72
Carpenters, Joiners	18 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	72
Plumbers, Plasterers	20 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>	72
Painters	18 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	72
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	14 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	72
Engineering Trades :—		
Moulders	19 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> to 21 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	62½ to 65
Fitters	19 <i>s.</i> to 21 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	62½ „ 65
Turners	19 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> to 21 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	62½ „ 65
Smiths	20 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i> „ 24 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i>	62½ „ 65
Patternmakers	19 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i> „ 22 <i>s.</i> 11 <i>d.</i>	62½ „ 65
Labourers	12 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> „ 15 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i>	62½ „ 65
Spinning Mills :—		
Flax :		
Hacklers... ..	16 <i>s.</i> to 17 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i>	66
Dryingloft Men	14 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	66
Labourers	13 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i> to 14 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	66
Cotton :		
Scutchers	14 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	66
Carders	14 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	66
Spinners (self-acting)	20 <i>s.</i>	66
Piecers	12 <i>s.</i> to 14 <i>s.</i> 5 <i>d.</i>	66
Labourers	12 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	66

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Spinning Mills—continued.		
Wool :		
Spinners	22s. 5d. to 24s.	66 to 67½
Piecers	12s. to 16s.	66 „ 67½
Dyers	14s. 5d.	66 „ 67½
Labourers	14s. 5d.	66 „ 67½
Cloth Weaving :—		
Warpers	21s. 7d.	64
Weavers	20s.	64
Finishers, Dyers, and Labourers	16s. 10d.	64
Hosiery Factories :—		
Stocking Knitters (men)	24s.	60 to 66
Labourers	14s. 5d.	60 „ 66
Limestone Quarries, Lime Burning and Cement Works :—		
Excavators	16s. to 19s. 2d.	54 to 60
Quarrymen { Time	21s. 7d.	54
{ Piece	23s. 2d. to 28s. 10d.	54
Stonecutters { Time	21s. 7d.	54
{ Piece	24s. 10d. to 28s. 10d.	54
Limeburners	20s. to 26s. 5d.	54 to 60
Cement Makers	20s. 2d. to 26s. 5d.	54 „ 60
Loaders and Unloaders	21s. 7d. to 24s.	54 „ 60
Labourers	14s. 5d. to 19s. 2d.	54 „ 60
Encaustic Tile Manufacture :—		
Mixers	15s. 2d.	65
Tile Makers (machine)	17s. 7d.	65
Labourers	15s. 2d.	65
Brick Works :—		
Clay Getters	20s. 2d. to 23s.	72
Moulders	33s. 7d. to 38s. 5d.	72
Labourers	17s. 3d.	72
Chemical and Allied Trades :—		
Distillation of Spirits, &c. :		
Distillers, Rectifiers, Evaporators	16s. 10d.	65
Coopers	16s. 10d.	60
Labourers	12s.	60
Soft Soap and Oil Cake Manufacture :		
Grinders	22s. 5d. to 24s.	66
Pressmen	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	66
Soap Boilers	19s. 2d. „ 20s. 5d.	69
Labourers	13s. 2d.	69
Tanning :—		
Fleshers	22s. 5d. to 25s. 7d.	59 to 60
Pitmen	20s.	59 „ 60
Scourers, Dressers, Polishers, and Finishers	24s. to 25s. 7d.	59 „ 60
Beaters (rollers)	22s. 5d. to 25s. 7d.	59 „ 60
Yardmen	13s. 7d.	59 „ 60
Printing Trades :—		
Compositors (hand and machine)	19s. 2d. to 20s.	59 „ 60
Pressmen	20s. to 24s.*	59 „ 60
Bookbinders	24s.	59 „ 60
Food and Drink Trades :—		
Baking :		
First Bakers { Private Bakeries	18s. 5d. to 19s. 2d.†	60 „ 66
{ Co-operative Bakeries	19s. 2d. „ 20s. 5d.†	54 „ 60
Other Men { Private Bakeries	14s. 5d. „ 16s. 10d.†	60 „ 66
{ Co-operative Bakeries	12s. to 16s. 10d.†	54 „ 60

* The higher figure is for high-class book-printing.

† With 2½ lb. of bread each working day, valued at 1s. 3d. per week.

‡ In one case with the same allowance of bread.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
Food and Drink Trades—continued.		
Beer Brewing :		
Brewers	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	60 „ 63
Coopers	16s. 10d. „ 19s. 2d.	60 „ 63
Labourers	12s. to 14s. 5d.	60 „ 63
Draymen	24s.	—
Chocolate and Confectionery Manufactories :		
Chocolate Makers	14s. 5d. to 16s. 10d.	60 to 66
Confectionery Makers	18s. 6d. to 24s.	60 „ 66
Labourers	12s. to 13s. 2d.	60 „ 66
Municipal Employees :—		
Road Maintenance—		
Paviors	24s.	60
Paviors' Labourers	16s.	60
Road Makers	16s. 10d.	60
Road Sweepers	16s.	60
Water Works (distribution)—		
Turncocks	16s. 10d.	60
Gas Works (Company) :—		
Gas Stokers	19s. 2d. to 20s. 5d.	—
Yard Labourers	14s. 5d.	60
Light Railways :—		
(See page 149.)		

Representing the level of wages at Brussels by 100, the index number for wages in the building trades at Tournai is 76 both for skilled men and for unskilled labourers. Wages in the engineering trades are indicated by 86 for skilled men and 91 for unskilled labourers, while compositor's wages are represented by the index number 74.

In connection with some of the larger works sickness and old age pension funds—the latter affiliated to the State fund—are carried on, and the employers in several cases make contributions bearing a fixed proportion to those paid by the work-people. The whole of the employers in the tanning trade have combined to form a joint old age pension fund for their workers. The latter pay 20 centimes (2d.) per week on wages not exceeding 14s. 5d., and 25 centimes (2½d.) on wages above that sum, and the employers and the Leather Exchange contribute variable amounts. The fund is affiliated to the *Caisse Nationale*, and pensions are claimable at 50, 60, or 65 years according to individual circumstances.

In Tournai, more than in the larger towns of Belgium generally, the administration of outdoor relief has an intimate bearing upon the remuneration of labour. Here as elsewhere in Belgium the service of public charity is exercised by the *Bureau de Bienfaisance*, which is a very wealthy foundation, owning valuable real estate to the extent of about 3,500 acres, and funded capital to the amount of £109,300, yielding together in 1907 a revenue of £11,100. A large part of this revenue is expended on the hospitals and dispensaries for whose maintenance the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* is responsible, yet the accounts for 1907 show that £3,877 was directly distributed in relief, either in money or kind, the principal items of expenditure being as follows :—Money grants, £1,234; bread (117,761 loaves), £1,177; coal, £728; milk and eggs, £268; coverlets and bedding, £115; rents, £85. For a long time the opinion has been forcing itself upon the public mind that the policy of the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* has had the effect of creating an unnecessarily large amount of pauperism. The funds at its disposal are ample, and even excessive, for during the past 15 years there has been a deficit on but two occasions, and these funds are generously distributed, with the result that the working classes show a disposition to look to the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* for help in most of those temporary domestic difficulties against which, given adequate earnings, the exercise of ordinary thrift might be expected to provide. The number of persons assisted has, indeed, notably decreased in recent years, yet it is still very large. The following table gives the number of separate families and individuals

assisted habitually or temporarily by the *Bureau de Bienfaisance* at various times during the past 42 years :—

Year.	Estimated Population.	Number assisted habitually.		Number assisted temporarily.		Total assisted.		Per cent. of population assisted.
		Families.	Individuals.	Families.	Individuals.	Families.	Individuals.	
1865	31,832	1,992	7,416	927	4,852	2,919	12,268	38.5
1869	32,546	1,921	7,054	891	4,820	2,812	11,874	36.5
1870	32,781	1,927	6,785	874	4,933	2,801	11,738	35.8
1871	32,857	1,969	7,059	923	5,116	2,992	12,175	37.1
1873	33,167	2,120	7,214	886	5,532	3,006	12,746	38.1
1874	33,728	1,938	6,877	735	4,530	2,673	11,407	33.8
1877	33,444	2,167	7,727	792	5,062	2,959	12,789	38.2
1881	34,297	1,989	7,292	1,587	6,881	3,576	14,173	41.3
1886	36,311	2,136	8,123	1,706	7,270	3,842	15,393	42.4
1891	34,444	2,213	9,430	1,033	5,478	3,246	14,908	43.3
1898	36,380	1,914	6,786	1,153	4,712	3,067	11,498	31.6
1901	35,223	—	—	—	—	1,898	7,642	21.7
1902	35,612	—	—	—	—	2,082	8,150	22.9
1906	37,284	490	1,257	1,567	6,808	2,057	8,065	21.6
1907	37,483	546	1,358	1,376	5,938	1,922	7,296	19.5

It will be seen that, though there was considerable fluctuation in the number of persons assisted during the period covered by this table, the proportion of the total population permanently or temporarily in receipt of relief fell from more than one in three in 1865 to about one in five in 1907, yet the latter figure compared with less than one in eight at Courtrai, a neighbouring town with about the same population. The real significance of the public charity of Tournai is only seen, however, when the number of recipients of temporary relief is considered. These formed in 1907 15.8 per cent. of the estimated population, while the recipients of permanent relief formed 3.6 per cent. At Courtrai the corresponding percentages were 1.5 and 11.2. A special report upon the recipients of relief in 1907, placed before the Town Council in connection with a proposal to reorganise the entire system of public charity, stated that of the 7,296 persons assisted in that year, 1,703, or 23.3 per cent., were males above the age of 15 years, and of these 1,556, or 91.4 per cent., were in work or capable of working; the earnings of 60.7 per cent. of the recipients of relief in normal work ranged from 1s. 7d. to 2s. 5d. per day, and only 2.5 per cent. earned more than 2s. 5d. per day. The existence of an opulent foundation whose funds are in substance the "right of the poor," and the facility with which relief can be obtained on many pretexts which are not contemplated, for example, by the English poor law, have unmistakably exerted an influence prejudicial to self-reliance and thrift. As to this, the opinion of thoughtful men of all classes—employers, social and religious leaders, and working men—may be regarded as unanimous.

The question of the administration and influence of the Belgian *Bureau de Bienfaisance* is being widely discussed at the present time, and various schemes of reorganisation are advocated. A proposal put forward at Tournai is that part of the yearly revenue, now devoted to wholesale doles, should be applied in promoting provident societies and in improving the system of elementary and technical education, with a view to diminishing the amount of unskilled labour, which is now a fruitful source of the excessive pauperism.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

The working classes are fairly diffused throughout the whole of the town. Several of the new streets and the boulevards which have been laid out on the sites of the old fortifications, particularly in the neighbourhood of the Place Crombez, the Park, and the Palais de Justice, are almost entirely occupied by middle-class residents, but this cannot be said of entire quarters of the town. On the other hand, many districts, like those on the periphery of the old enclosure to the north-east and the south, are overwhelmingly inhabited by the working classes and the poor, who are found both in small cottages and in tenements, known here as *quartiers*. There are few tenement buildings of large size, for houses of one and two stories in addition to the ground floor and the loft are predominant here, but it would seem that the one-family house is gradually losing ground. The census of 1890 showed that there were in Tournai 5,660 houses destined

for habitation and 7,870 households, giving a ratio of 1.39 households per house; and in 1900 the houses numbered 5,747 and the households 8,489, giving a ratio of 1.48.

There are two predominant types of working-class dwellings—the cottage of four rooms, two below and two above, with a loft in addition, and the tenement of two rooms. There are cottages of two and three rooms, and also tenements of three and even four rooms, but they are the exception; dwellings consisting of a single room can hardly be said to exist. In buildings of both the types referred to the widest diversity of quality is found. On the whole, housing conditions at Tournai do not reach a high standard, and a visitation of a large variety of dwellings of all kinds, situated in every part of the town, does not give a favourable impression. The best dwellings are naturally found on the outskirts, for these are of latest construction; in the older districts there is much inferior and even dilapidated property. The municipal authorities are not slow to intervene when complaints of insanitary conditions come to their notice, though no systematic inspection of houses exists.

It may be noted that the building regulations relating to the construction of new houses stipulate that buildings facing the street shall consist of at least one story in addition to the ground floor, and that the façade shall in this case have a minimum height of 24 feet 7 inches. The maximum height of buildings depends upon the width of the adjacent streets; thus it is 62 feet 3 inches in streets which are 52 feet 6 inches wide or upwards; 59 feet in streets from 46 feet to 52 feet 6 inches wide; 55 feet 9 inches in streets from 39 feet 3 inches to 46 feet wide; 52 feet 6 inches in streets from 32 feet 9 inches to 39 feet 3 inches wide; 49 feet 3 inches in streets from 29 feet 6 inches to 32 feet 9 inches wide; 42 feet 9 inches in streets from 23 feet to 29 feet 6 inches wide; 39 feet 3 inches in streets from 19 feet 9 inches to 23 feet wide; and 36 feet in streets from 13 feet to 19 feet 9 inches wide. The height of rooms on the ground floor may not be less than 11 feet 6 inches, and that of rooms above, except attics, not less than 9 feet 9 inches. It will be understood that in an old town like Tournai, which is only just beginning to overcome the disadvantages of its earlier fortified position, these standard measurements do not generally apply to existing streets and houses.

An almost invariable feature of the tenement house is the passage or *couloir*, which conducts into the kitchen or runs through to a small back yard. The passage gives access to the front room (or rooms if the house be a double one) and also to the stairs. Not only the passage but the kitchen and often the whole of the ground floor rooms are tiled, an arrangement which conduces to that frequent use of the pail and scrubbing-brush, which is so characteristic of orderly Belgian households. The usual size of the room is from 10 to 12 feet square with a height of from 9 to 10 feet. The staircase and landing above are, as a rule, very narrow. A loft and a cellar—or a share of these—are almost universal. Water is obtained from the town's supply, or from pumps outside, and the water-closets are always in the yard. The windows all open outward, and appear to be habitually used.

There is evidence that many of the tenement buildings were formerly inhabited by middle-class families, which have moved into more convenient dwellings in pleasanter parts of the town. *Quartiers* of this kind are generally much superior to the ordinary type—the rooms larger, the approaches more airy, and the structure more substantial.

In such buildings rooms 15 feet square and 12 feet high are not uncommon, and in view of the accommodation offered the rents compare very favourably with those of the more restricted tenements in the purely working-class streets.

The working-class one-family houses are found for the most part in rows, on the outskirts of the town, but also in the old alleys and *cités*, and less frequently amongst the tenement buildings. The usual accommodation consists of four rooms, a sitting-room and a kitchen downstairs, and two bedrooms above, with a loft for storage purposes and a cellar; occasionally there is a small pantry in addition. Many of these houses have passages, opening into the front sitting-room and the kitchen; the latter is invariably placed behind, looking on to the backyard, where the conveniences are found. Here, likewise, the ground floor is generally tiled. Many of the cottages of recent erection outside the site of the demolished walls have small gardens, which are unknown in the town so far as working-class dwellings are concerned. The following were the measurements of a good modern cottage of this class which was visited:—Front (sitting) room, 20 by 16 by 10 feet; kitchen, 12 by 10 by 10 feet; with two bedrooms of corresponding size. The staircase was ascended from the front room. The four rooms of another dwelling of this class were 10 feet square, and in addition to the loft there was a small washhouse.

The worst houses in Tournai are those in the courts, *enclos*, and *cités*. These groups and blocks of inferior dwellings, lying behind streets which are themselves dingy and squalid, are very numerous and are to be found in most of the older districts. They are inhabited by the poorest classes, but Tournai is a town of poor people, and many of their tenants are unskilled workmen in receipt of the full rate of wages common to their class. The houses are both of the one-family and the tenement type; and the accommodation consists of two, three, or four rooms. The size of the living-rooms downstairs is generally ample—measurements of 13 feet by 13 feet by 10 feet, 16 feet by 12 feet by 10 feet, 12 feet by 12 feet by 11 feet were noted—but the buildings are neglected, and their appearance within and without comfortless; on the other hand, the rents are very low, and it cannot be doubted that the existence of these courts and *cités* sensibly alleviates the problem of low wages in Tournai. A dwelling of two rooms can be had in this situation for between 1s. 6d. and 1s. 10d. per week, and one of three rooms for 2s. 9d. or 3s.; lofts and cellars are often included in these rents. The water supply and the closets are in the common courtyard.

The interior of a typical working-class dwelling is generally neat, in spite of a certain paucity of furniture. The tiled floors of the lower rooms facilitate cleanliness, and however poor the family may be there will be lace curtains before the windows and many small china ornaments upon the mantelpiece and shelves. The walls are often papered, but carpets and rugs are uncommon. Where a room can be set apart as a parlour, it is generally furnished with a centre table, chairs placed at regular intervals round the walls, sometimes a chest of drawers, and invariably a collection of cheap porcelain vases and other ornaments. Fireplaces are usually provided, but they are built up, since the customary heating and cooking appliance is an iron stove, which stands away from the wall and is connected with the flue by a tin-plate pipe, the upper surface of which, being flat, can be used for warming plates.

In the following table the usual weekly rents, as shown by data collected for this report, are given for the two predominant types, viz., the tenement dwelling of two rooms and the cottage of four rooms:—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Type of Dwelling	Predominant Weekly Rents.
Tenement of two rooms	1s. 6d. to 2s. 5d.
Cottage of four rooms	3s. 8d. „ 4s. 1d.

Rent at Brussels being taken as base, = 100, the rent index number for Tournai is 74.

No local taxes fall directly upon the working classes, and the town supplies water, for domestic use only, without charge, to all dwellings of the rental usually paid by these classes; the charge to other householders is a meter rent of from 6s. 5d. to 12s. per annum, covering a supply of 22 gallons daily, with 1d. per 22 gallons beyond this quantity. Rents are usually paid fortnightly or monthly, and in many cases in advance.

The house refuse, deposited at the street doors in boxes, tins, or any other convenient receptacles, is collected at all hours of the day by the town scavengers.

Recognising the defective conditions amid which a large part of the working classes live, many of the public-spirited citizens of Tournai have united to form building societies, complying with the requirements of the law of August 9, 1889, for the purpose of enabling thrifty workmen to obtain and become owners of houses suited to their needs both as to accommodation and cost. There are three societies of the kind at Tournai, one of which has enabled some 500 workmen to acquire their own dwellings. The societies either build or lend money on mortgage up to a variable proportion of the costs of erection, protecting themselves further by means of insurance policies upon the lives of their debtors. While the societies are able to borrow money from the State Savings Bank at 3 per cent., they lend at 4 per cent., and restrict to 3 per cent. the interest paid to shareholders. The majority of the houses have been built outside the town or in neighbouring villages where land is cheap. The houses are of brick, with stone base, and as a rule contain downstairs a living-room and a kitchen, with passage, and three bedrooms above, with an attic and a loft in addition. A yard, in which are the pump and the w.c., and a garden are attached. It is found that a substantially-built house of the kind described, with a piece of land having a frontage of about 18 feet, and a depth of 130 feet, can be provided for about £240. The borrower

is expected to pay down at least one-tenth of the cost, and the balance is payable by instalments in from 10 to 25 years, according to the terms of the contract. The law on the subject offers to the owners of these houses certain exemptions from taxation, and its working is superintended by an official Housing Committee (*Comité de patronage*), representative of the entire arrondissement of Tournai.

A society known as the *Société anonyme pour la construction d'habitations ouvrières* has existed for many years for the purpose of erecting dwellings, which it lets to suitable tenants at low rents. Its capital is £7,660, divided into £20 shares, of which nearly two-thirds are held by public-spirited townspeople, who only receive 3 per cent. interest on their money, and the rest by the *Bureau de Bienfaisance*, which has also lent the society £4,800 at the same rate of interest. Up to the present the society has built, at a total cost, including land, of £13,358, 80 houses, one a tenement house occupied by eight tenants, the others self-contained cottages. The tenements contain two, three and four rooms, with loft and cellar, and are let at from 10s. to 16s. per month, according to the size and story. The cottages are situated on the outskirts of the town, and contain likewise two, three, or four rooms, with loft, cellar and garden, and the rents range from 8s. to 20s. per month. The society has hitherto been able to earn a net interest of 3½ per cent. upon its invested capital, and it has formed a reserve fund of £1,996.

Although the great majority of workmen employed in the trades and industries of Tournai live in the town, the operation of the several building societies and the transport facilities offered by the national light railway system have induced many of their number to settle in the surrounding villages. The lines of the light railways, which converge near the railway station, provide easy communication with the districts between Tournai and the communes of Péruwelz, 15 miles distant by the line; Templeuve, 7 miles distant; and Ath, 25 miles distant; within which districts are a multitude of rural communes. Cheap workmen's tickets are issued by the week for six and seven single journeys, or the same numbers of journeys to and fro. A ticket for six double journeys of 5 miles each way costs 1s. 3d.; for 10 miles the cost is 1s. 10d., and for 20 miles 3s. 1d. During 1907 the municipal authority issued to 756 workpeople the certificates of residence which are necessary to entitle them to obtain these cheap tickets on the State railway and the local light railways.

RETAIL PRICES.

The only covered market in Tournai is a small meat market. A market for butter, eggs, and poultry, all of which come in large quantities from the surrounding rural districts, is held every Saturday in one of the public squares; a market for vegetables, which are likewise to a large extent grown locally, is held daily on the *Quai Notre Dame*, where the fish market is held. There is also an open market for fruit, and every Saturday the *Grand Place* is used for a corn market and for the sale of household requisites, dress goods, remnants, &c.

The town is well supplied with provision shops, few of which are on a large scale. Few of the grocers sell bread, and many do not sell bacon. There are over 70 bakers in addition to 44 pastry cooks. Pork is as a rule bought of the *charcutier*. Butter and cheese in limited variety may be obtained of many grocers, but they are usually sold in special shops for farm produce. The co-operative movement has obtained a firm hold in the town, but without appearing to threaten the prosperity of private tradesmen. There are two co-operative societies which trade in groceries, but one of these, the *Avenir*, are two co-operative societies which trade in groceries, but one of these, the *Avenir*, whose members are for the most part employees on the railway and in the public services generally, has also a large bakery; the total sales of this society in 1908 amounted to £9,513, of which about one-quarter was bread, and the usual dividend is 9 or 10 per cent. There is also a co-operative bakery, the *Emulation*, the shareholders and customers of which belong exclusively to the working class. It sells some 44,000 lb. of bread per month, but does not distribute a dividend in money, its dividend being, in its own words, "cheap bread"; its bread is certainly the cheapest in the town. There is also a co-operative brewery in the neighbourhood. In their endeavour to meet the competition of the co-operative societies many grocers have resorted to the bonus system, and such traders are largely patronised by the working classes.

Groceries and other Commodities.

The coffee generally used costs 8½d. per lb. and it is often bought in conjunction with bonus tickets entitling the holder to a useful gift on the purchase of a given quantity. Coffee is still roasted at home in many working-class households and ground coffee is

virtually unknown. Pure coffee is, however, seldom drunk, large quantities of chicory being generally added. In addition to Dutch *cheese*, costing in June, 1908, from 8½d. to 10½d. per lb., a Belgian cheese from the Herve district is largely eaten. The *sugar* mostly bought is machine-cut "loaf," which is sold in a great variety of prices, the predominant range being from 3d. to 4d. Candy sugar is also an article of common domestic use. *Butter* cost in June, 1908, from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 2d. per lb.; there is only a small consumption of *margarine*, which cost 8½d.

Only wheaten *bread* is eaten. It is baked in long and round loaves of 2·2 or 3·3 lb., the round loaf predominating. The price in June, 1908, was from 4½d. to 5d. per 4 lb., the lower figure being charged by the *Emulation* co-operative bakery.

Two kinds of fuel are sold for domestic use, pit *coal* costing in June, 1908, 1s. 2½d. per cwt. and pressed balls, or *boulets*, costing slightly less. Briquettes are sold, but as a rule only for industrial use. Coal is generally bought by one or two cwts. at a time.

The following were the prices usually paid by the working classes for certain articles of common consumption in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	8½d.
Sugar, Loaf "	3d. to 4d.
Bacon, Salted "	8½d.
Eggs per 1s.	10 to 12
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	8½d. „ 10½d.
Butter... .. "	1s. 1d. „ 1s. 2d.
Margarine "	8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	2½d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d. to 10½d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	4½d. „ 5d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal per cwt.	1s. 2½d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	6½d. to 7½d.

No comparative statistics of prices are collected by the municipal authorities, but a return of the prices paid for supplies delivered by contract to the public hospitals shows that during the past six years there has been a considerable advance in the price of bread, for which 4½d. per 4 lb. was paid in 1908 against 3d. and 3½d. from 1902 to 1904. The price of meat fluctuated, but the net result was an advance of 1½d. per lb. Milk was almost stationary, and butter advanced ¾d. per lb., returning in 1908 to the price at which it stood in 1900.

Meat.

All the meat killed at Tournai for human food is required to pass through the municipal abattoir, but a certain amount of the local supply comes from the neighbouring villages, and though this is inspected before it enters the market it does not figure in the abattoir returns. These returns relate only to the number of animals slaughtered; no record is kept of the weight of meat.

The cattle come for the most part from the Courtrai market and from Brussels; the sheep and calves are of local origin, though a number of carcasses of sheep come from Brussels; while the pigs are from the Ghent district, from Flanders and from the locality. A few sheep are imported from America, but no dead meat comes from abroad. The horses killed for food are mostly local; there is only one horse butcher, and it appears from the abattoir returns that the trade in horse-flesh tends to decrease. The working classes eat much more beef than any other kind of meat. Their consumption of mutton is almost entirely confined to the winter months, and in general little is eaten in summer, the reason being that mutton is used for ragoûts, for which winter roots are necessary. The total number of sheep slaughtered in the four months May to August of 1908 was 258, or only about half the average number per month during the remainder of the year. There were in the town in 1908 73 butchers and 41 *charcutiers*. Returns of weekly expenditure on food obtained for the purposes of this enquiry from 46 working-class households, representing 238 persons, showed a consumption of meat amounting to 19·4 oz. per head per week, equal to 63 lb. per annum. Of the meat consumed, 57 per cent. was beef, 13 per cent. veal, 10 per cent. pork, 5 per cent. mutton, and 0·5 per cent. horse-flesh, while 9 per cent. consisted of *charcuterie*, 2 per cent. of bacon, 2 per cent. of rabbits and

1½ per cent. of poultry. The *charcuterie* includes a considerable amount of sausage, of which the kinds most in demand are: salami, made of beef, pork and other ingredients, and costing 2s. 2d. per lb.; Solingen, a cheap sausage, likewise made of beef and pork, and costing 8½d.; ham, all of pork, costing 1s. 5½d., and Boulogne, made of pork and horse-flesh, and costing 1s. 5½d. per lb.

The following Table shows the prices usually paid by the working classes for various cuts of beef, mutton, veal, and pork in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	7d. to 8½d.
Brisket	5½d.
Silverside... ..	8½d.
Shin { with bone	4½d. to 5½d.
{ without bone	6d. „ 7d.
Beef Steak	9½d. „ 11½d.
Rump Steak	11½d. „ 1s. 1d.
Thick Flank	8½d.
Thin Flank	7d.
Mutton :—	
Leg	8½d. to 10½d.
Shoulder	7d. „ 8½d.
Breast	5½d. „ 6d.
Neck { Best End	10½d.
{ Scrag End	5½d. to 7d.
Chops	8½d. „ 10½d.
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	8½d. to 10½d.
Shoulder, with bone	7½d. „ 10½d.
Ribs	9½d.
Chops	10½d.
Leg	10½d. to 11d.
Pork :—	
Leg	8½d. to 10½d.
Foreloin { sold by lb.	8½d.
{ sold by ½ lb.	1s. 0½d.
Belly	7d. to 8½d.
Chops	8½d. „ 10½d.

Prices at Tournai are comparatively high. Taking prices at Brussels as 100, the index numbers for Tournai are as follows :—Food, other than meat, 102; meat, 96; food as a whole, 101; coal, 87; and food and coal together, 99. The index number for rent and prices combined is 95.

TURNHOUT.

Turnhout, an industrial town of about 23,000 inhabitants in the province of Antwerp, is the Belgian centre of the manufacture of coloured paper of various kinds, of paper for art printing, of cardboard boxes, and of playing cards. Lace-making by hand is a very important industry for women, of whom about two thousand work at it in their homes. Among the minor sources of employment may be mentioned the manufacture of cigars, of drill, of ticking for mattresses and damasks, and the metal trades.

The town is situated in the Campine, an extensive plain of north-eastern Belgium which has been reclaimed to a considerable extent but is still largely unfertile and covered with heath, marshes, and pine trees. Antwerp lies west-south-west at a distance of 33 miles by rail and 25 miles by steam tramway, the journey by either route usually occupying nearly two hours; and the Dutch frontier is some seven miles to the north. Two other steam tramways serve the town; while a branch of the Meuse and Scheldt Junction Canal provides communication by water with Antwerp.

The population of the town, which amounted to 13,590 in 1866, has increased steadily in recent years, as will be seen from the following Table:—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase.	Percentage Increase.
1880	16,670	—	—
1890	18,747	2,077	12.5
1900	20,887	2,140	11.4
1907 (estimated)	23,010	2,123	10.2
		(in seven years).	(in seven years).

The rate of growth of recent years has, however, been considerably less than that indicated by the excess of the birth-rate over the death-rate, so that there must have been a considerable net emigration from this town to other places. The bulk of the inhabitants are indigenous; at the census of 1900, 78 per cent. of the population were returned as having been born in the town.

The following Table shows the birth, death and infantile mortality rates for each of the years 1904–8:—

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	38.1	18.1	196
1905	35.5	18.4	183
1906	36.2	18.4	215
1907	36.1	18.8	146
1908	35.1	16.6	185

The birth-rate of Turnhout is exceptionally high, averaging 36.2 per 1,000 of population for the period under review. In each year in the above Table it is seen to be double or almost double the death-rate. The infantile mortality rate shows no improvement in recent years, and for the years 1904–1908 averaged 185 per 1,000 births.

Turnhout is a prosperous yet quiet and rather isolated town. Save for the Town Hall Square and a few central streets where the houses are painted white and possess two or more stories, the greater part of the town is composed of streets of single-storied houses in red brick, with red-tiled roofs. The streets are broad and well kept, and the footways are better paved than those found in the majority of large Belgian towns. The town is wanting in compactness and has many isolated streets, lanes, and rows of houses extending into the open country. The population being predominantly working-class, there are few considerable middle-class residences. The public buildings include the old castle of the

Dukes of Brabant, which once served as a court of justice and a prison, but a new building has been erected to serve the latter purpose.

The municipality undertakes the supply of water and the care of the streets. There is a municipal market, but no public abattoir. A private company provides gas, but no electric power or light works exist in the town. The municipality owns about 175 acres of land.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

Turnhout is known chiefly as the seat of the manufacture of wall-paper and of playing-cards; indeed, the paper industry, more especially the manufacture of marbled "end papers" (of the kind employed for the inside of covers of ledgers), of cardboard, and of paper for chromo-lithography, affords the main source of employment for male labour. At the present time some 1,500 persons—almost wholly males—are estimated to find regular employment in it. In lace-making and embroidery only women are employed, and the industry has expanded in the last ten years. Cigars are made by six firms employing some 225 persons, of whom less than 10 per cent. are women, while another half-dozen firms employ each three or four workpeople. The metal trades employ about 200 men in foundry, boiler-making and engineering work.

Of the two labour organisations in Turnhout the Catholic organisation receives more support than the Socialist. The former, presided over by a Roman Catholic clergyman, possesses an office with a permanent secretary, an assembly room and *café*, and conducts an employment bureau. The working classes of Turnhout are not, however, much given to agitation, and agreements fixing standard rates of wages do not exist in any of the trades.

Paper Trades.—The usual weekly hours in this trade amount to 65½. The day begins at 6.30 in winter, and at 6 in summer, and there are three pauses, the first from 8 to 8.30, the second from 12 to 1.30, and the third from 4 to 4.15. Piece work is general in all branches of this trade, and the wages for skilled men rarely exceed 19s. 2d. per week. Wages are paid either weekly or fortnightly. As has already been observed, few women are employed in these trades.

Building Trades.—The working day in summer is very long, beginning at five in the morning and ending at seven, or in some cases eight in the evening. An hour's pause for dinner is generally taken, also half-an-hour in the morning and in the afternoon.

Cigar Manufacture.—Makers of cigars of the ordinary straight form are paid 5s. 7d. to 6s. 5d. per 1,000 cigars, and usually earn from 14s. 5d. to 16s. a week of 60 to 63 hours; makers of superior cigars, however, usually earn from 19s. 2d. to 20s. a week. The sorters and packers are paid time-rates of wages, usually receiving 14s. 5d. a week of 60 to 63 hours.

Textile Trades.—The weavers, dyers, and bleachers of drill, ticking, &c., are paid by the piece, while the finishers receive time wages. The weavers are all men, the cop-winders being women. The women work 10½ hours per day, but the men work 11. The former earn from 8s. to 9s. 7d. per week of 61½ hours.

The number of women engaged in lace-making has already been stated to be very large. They work in their houses at the manufacture of bone or pillow lace, and they can earn from 4s. 10d. to 7s. 2d. per week of sixty or more hours. Some special schools exist for the teaching of this form of lace-making, these schools being held often in ordinary cottages. The children pay 3½d. per week for several hours instruction per day.

The following Table shows the predominant wages and the usual weekly hours of labour of men employed in certain principal occupations at Turnhout in June, 1908:—

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Building Trades:—</i>		
Bricklayers and Masons	20s. 2d. to 21s. 10d.	72 to 78
Carpenters and Joiners	18s. 5d. to 20s. 2d.	72
Plumbers	17s. 3d. „ 20s. 2d.	72
Plasterers	20s. 2d. to 23s.	72
Painters	18s. 9d. to 21s. 10d.	78
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	14s. 5d. to 15s. 7d.	72 to 78

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Engineering Trades :—</i>		
Moulders	18s. 6d. to 21s. 1d.	60 to 66
Fitters	18s. 6d. „ 21s. 1d.	60 „ 66
Turners	19s. 2d. „ 22s. 7d.	60 „ 66
Smiths	19s. 2d. „ 23s. 9d.	60 „ 66
Patternmakers	17s. 9d. „ 22s. 8d.	60 „ 66
Labourers	12s. to 14s. 5d.	60 „ 66
<i>Manufacture of Drill, Ticking, &c. :—</i>		
Weavers { Better Men	19s. 2d. to 20s.	66
{ Ordinary	14s. 5d. „ 16s.	66
Dyers	16s. 10d. to 20s.	66
Bleachers	19s. 2d.	66
Finishers	14s. 5d. to 16s. 10d.	66
Unskilled Labourers	14s. 5d.	66
<i>Manufacture of Coloured Papers, Playing Cards, &c. :—</i>		
Gilders and Book-binders	21s. 7d. to 23s. 2d.	65½
Other Skilled Men	16s. 7d. „ 19s. 2d.	65½
Unskilled Men	14s. 5d.	65½
<i>Printing Trades :—</i>		
Compositors	16s. 10d.	65½
<i>Brewing :—</i>		
Brewers	13s. 7d. to 15s. 2d.	80 to 90*
<i>Cigar Manufacture :—</i>		
Cigar Makers { on Ordinary Work	14s. 5d. to 16s.	60 to 63
{ on Better Work	19s. 2d. „ 20s.	60 „ 63
Sorters and Packers	14s. 5d.	60 „ 63
<i>Gasworks (Company) :—</i>		
Stokers { Summer	19s. 2d.	—
{ Winter	21s. 9d.	—

* Including Sunday labour.

Taking wages at Brussels as 100, the wages index numbers for Turnhout are 79 for skilled men and for unskilled labourers in the building trades, 84 for skilled men and 85 for unskilled labourers in the engineering trades, and 64 for compositors.

HOUSING AND RENTS.

The one-family house is universal in Turnhout. The Census of 1900 showed that 4,263 houses destined for habitation existed in the town, while the number of households was 4,261; the previous Census (in 1890) returned the number of houses at 3,930, and of households at 3,738.

The great majority of the wage-earning families live in two and three-roomed single-storied cottages, although a tendency is observable in the case of the houses built in the last few years to add a second story to the back half of the cottage. This addition of a story to the back rather than to the front of the cottage is due to the municipal tax, which rates single-storied frontages at the rate of 3d. per foot, and two or more storied frontages at the rate of 5½d. The three-roomed cottage is far more common than that of two rooms, and conforms to one of two types: it possesses two rooms in the front and one behind, or one room in front and one at the back, with the third room above the latter. The two-roomed dwelling is composed simply of one room in front and one at the back. The street door admits directly to the living room or bedroom. The back room of the commoner kind of three-roomed dwelling—two rooms downstairs and one upstairs—is usually on a lower level than the front room, and the ceiling is also lower. The living room or kitchen is paved with red tiles, and long-piped stoves are in general use. Bed recesses are found in all the older houses in one, and often in two rooms; and many of the newest houses are similarly fitted. Cellars and small gardens are very general, but yards are extremely rare, and forecourts may be said to be non-existent. A pathway generally runs at the back of a row of houses, and separates the latter from their gardens, which are not divided by partition walls or other permanent boundaries. Along this pathway the conveniences (generally primitive and doorless) and other small out-houses are ranged.

Some notion of the nature of the accommodation afforded by typical working-class tenements of two and three rooms may be gathered from the following measurements and notes upon houses visited for the purposes of this enquiry :—

Vianenstraat.—Four houses of two rooms each. The front room measured 13 feet by 16 feet 6 inches, and had a height of 9 feet 9 inches; the back room measured 16 feet 6 inches square, but its height was only 8 feet 3 inches.

Cruishuisstraat.—Some eighteen houses, rather old, each having two rooms with whitewashed walls, tiled floors, and bed recess both in front and back rooms. The front room measured 15 feet by 16 feet 6 inches, with a height of 7 feet 6 inches, while the back room had an area of 10 feet 9 inches by 16 feet 6 inches, and a height of 6 feet 3 inches. Each house had a garden attached.

A large number of houses in the same street, with one front and one back room and an attic room above the latter, were rented at 1s. 10d. per week. The dimensions of the rooms were: front room, 16 feet 6 inches by 18 feet by 10 feet 3 inches; back room, 13 feet by 18 feet by 7 feet 3 inches; attic room, 13 feet by 18 feet by 6 feet 6 inches; gardens were attached to these houses.

Creuse Plein.—Some 25 houses of the same type and size (two rooms and attic room) were let at 1s. 9d. per week. The back room, in which was a bed-recess, measured 10 feet 9 inches by 13 feet by 9 feet 3 inches, while the front room measured 15 feet by 13 feet, with a height of 9 feet 9 inches. The attic room had the same area as the back room, but its height was somewhat less.

Nouveau Bassin.—Six houses of recent construction with two lower rooms, and an attic room, were let at a rental of 1s. 8d. per week. The attic room was a good one, an upper story being built at the back portion of the house, of which the windows, however, were only about half the size of those on the ground floor. The back room had a bed recess. The measurements were as follows: front room, 16 feet 6 inches by 13 feet by 10 feet 3 inches; back room, 16 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 3 inches; attic room, 16 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 9 inches by 8 feet 9 inches. These houses had gardens.

The municipality has not built any workmen's dwellings, nor have the manufacturers erected any houses for their employees. A very small proportion of the working-class families own their dwellings.

Houses in Turnhout are let on yearly tenancies; tenants enter and leave, as a rule, upon the 15th of March, and notice of leaving is required to be sent in on, or before, October 1st of the preceding year. Rents are paid every three months or annually. Many house owners insist upon the production of a certificate from an intending tenant's employer to the effect that he will guarantee the payment of the rent. In such cases it is a very general practice for the workpeople to deposit a portion of their wages each week with their employer, who keeps the money till the rent—in such cases for the year—becomes due.

Water is obtained from wells, working-class houses being rarely supplied with town water, which is brought to Turnhout from a distance of some four miles. The cost of a private supply of town water for a household amounts to about 3½d. per week. The municipality has, however, placed a number of public standpipes in different working-class streets.

The following Table shows the range of rents most usually paid by working-class households occupying dwellings of two and three rooms :—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.				Predominant Weekly Rents.
Two rooms	...	...	...	1s. 1d. to 1s. 6d.
Three rooms	...	...	...	1s. 6d. to 2s.

These rents are seen to be very low; the level of rents at Brussels being taken as the standard, and represented by 100, the index number for Turnhout is 44, which is lower than that for any other of the towns included in the present enquiry, except Paturages.

The above rents do not include taxes. The state taxes based on the assessable rental value do not fall upon the working classes, as those houses only which are assessed at 48s. or over per annum are subject to such taxes. This sum represents an actual rent of from 2s. 2d. to 2s. 3d. per week, which is more than workmen pay. The municipal taxes payable by the bulk of the working-class tenants do not exceed 8s. to 12s. per

annum, while a large proportion are altogether exempt from such. When they happen to be owners of the houses which they occupy they have to make an additional payment of 3d. per foot of frontage when the cottage has one story, and 5½d. per foot when it has more.

RETAIL PRICES.

The working classes purchase most of their household commodities at the small dealers' shops. A small co-operative society, with two trading sections, has been organised by the working people. One section, with 90 members, sold bread to the value of £280 in 1908, while the other section, with 85 members, sold coffee, chicory, rice, sugar and clothes in the same year to the value of £120. Two "multiple" firms have each a branch in Turnhout, and sell the usual grocery articles and various domestic utensils. Markets are not important; every Saturday an open market is held at which meat, poultry, vegetables, various articles of clothing, calicos, boots, &c., are exposed for sale, but no groceries or provisions, save butter, which is sold in a special covered butter market.

The basis of the dietary of the Turnhout working man consists of coffee, bread, butter or margarine, potatoes, and vegetables. Fresh meat is not largely consumed, but salted pork and bacon and various meat preparations composed mainly of pork are very popular. In the Campine potatoes are grown with success, and many of the Turnhout working-class households either cultivate them in their little gardens or rent plots apart from their dwellings for this purpose. This practice is stated to be less in vogue than formerly, however, the reasons given being that the sale price of potatoes has sensibly diminished, that the rent of plots conveniently situated has increased, while owing to the time for commencing work in the paper mills having been made earlier by a half-hour, the workmen have little time to tend their plots.

Groceries and other Commodities.

Coffee, mixed with chicory, is the universal domestic beverage, and the working people drink it generally twice daily. The price of coffee ranges from 6½d. to 8½d. per lb., while chicory costs about 1½d. per lb. Pure milk is sold universally at 1½d. per quart, and separated milk at 1d. Potatoes are usually bought in large quantities—25, 50, or 100 kilogrammes (55 lb., 110 lb., or 220 lb. respectively), the cost of the last-named quantity being at the rate of from 1s. 8d. to 2s. 3d. per cwt. When sold in small quantities the usual price is about 2½d. per 7 lb.

The following Table shows the predominant prices of certain principal commodities at Turnhout in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6½d. to 8½d.
Sugar, Loaf "	3d., 3½d.
Bacon, Salted "	6d. to 7d.
Eggs per 1s.	16
Cheese, Dutch per lb.	7d. to 8½d.
Butter "	11d. to 1s. 0½d.
Margarine "	7½d. to 8½d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	2½d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d.
Bread, White per 4 lb.	5½d.
Milk per quart	1½d.
Coal per cwt.	1s. 2½d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	7d.

Meat.

There is no abattoir in the town, and the butchers kill their meat upon their own premises. The municipality, however, obliges them to declare each animal slaughtered, and to pay for its inspection by a municipal official.

With respect to the dead meat introduced from outside, the larger proportion is pork and bacon, but no exact figures as to the yearly consumption of outside-killed meat are available.

Returns specially obtained for the purposes of this enquiry from 53 working-class families, consisting of 292 persons, showed an average weekly consumption of 18·4 oz. of meat per head, which is at the rate of 60 lb. per annum. Of this 50 per cent. was beef, 16 per cent. bacon, 15 per cent. horseflesh, and 12 per cent. pork. *Charcuterie* amounted to 5 per cent. of the whole and veal to 2 per cent. The consumption of rabbits and poultry indicated by the returns was practically, and of mutton absolutely, nil.

A large number of butchers are established in the different quarters of the town, and at the weekly market meat is sold at 12 stalls. There are two dealers in horseflesh, and much of this meat is employed in making *charcuterie*. When sold as fresh meat the steak costs from 4½d. to 5½d. per lb., while the other parts, used for stewing, cost about 3d. per lb.

The following Table shows the predominant prices of the different cuts of the various meats at Turnhout in June, 1908 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	6d. to 8½d.
Brisket	5½d. „ 6d.
Silverside	6½d. „ 8½d.
Shin { with bone	4d., 4½d.
{ without bone	5½d. to 6d.
Beef Steak	7½d. „ 8½d.
Rump Steak	8½d.
Mutton :—	
Leg	7½d. to 8½d.
Shoulder	6d. „ 7½d.
Breast	4½d. „ 5½d.
Neck, Scrag End	4½d.
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	8½d.
Shoulder { with bone	7½d. to 8½d.
{ without bone	8½d. „ 10½d.
Ribs	7½d. „ 8½d.
Chops	8½d. „ 10½d.
Leg	8½d.
Pork :—	
Leg	7d. to 7½d.
Foreloin	7d. „ 8½d.
Belly	6d.
Chops	7½d. to 8½d.

Taken as a whole, prices at Turnhout are low. Representing prices at Brussels by 100, the index number for the price of food, other than meat, is 95; for meat it is 85, and for food as a whole 93; for coal the index number is 87, and for food and coal together 92. The index number for rent and prices combined is 84 (as at Bruges), the lowest obtained for any town included in the present Report.

VERVIERS.

The town of Verviers, situated 78 miles by rail east of Brussels, and only about 7 miles from the German frontier, stretches for about two miles along the banks of the little river Vesdre. This river, which joins the Ourthe at Chênée, 2½ miles from Liège, flows through a deep winding valley separating the rich pastures of the plateau of Herve, famous for its cheese and butter, on the north, from the poor, rocky district of the Ardennes on the south.

The steep slopes which bound the valley on the north-east have necessitated its extension towards the west, where the river valley is broader and somewhat more level. The buildings have naturally followed the greater convenience of the site, and the town has spread accordingly in this direction. With the exception of a new residential quarter of an almost purely middle-class character, which has been laid out on the slopes lying in the south-west portion of the town, in which there are broad avenues and boulevards planted with trees, the streets are generally narrow, and the open spaces few and small; this is, however, only to be expected in view of the local physical conditions. The principal streets run east and west along the valley.

Being on the main line to Cologne from both Paris and Brussels, Verviers is favourably placed as regards transport facilities. The international expresses at present avoid the main station (Verviers-ouest), which is a terminus, and stop at the smaller one (Verviers-est), at the other end of the town. A new main-line through station is in course of construction near the present terminus.

On the 15 miles of railway which join Liège to Verviers, there are no fewer than 13 stations, serving as many small manufacturing centres, the population of which is occupied, near Liège, in the production of small arms and general metal working, while higher up the industry changes to that of wool, of which Verviers and neighbourhood is the great Belgian centre.

The Vesdre, at one time, provided the mills with water and also served as a channel into which waste water was discharged. At the present time it serves the latter purpose only, in addition to receiving the town sewage at a point below Verviers. Along the banks are seen hardly anything but mills and the backs of the poorest type of working-class houses. At very few points is there a path along the riverside.

The area within the communal boundaries is 1,155 acres, and it would appear that so far back as 1890 the town of Verviers proper had reached the limits of its growth, the number of its inhabitants in 1907 being actually somewhat smaller than in that year. The explanation of this may be found in the local physical conditions, and the practical exhaustion of all the available building land. Any later increase in the population and industry of the district has taken place in the neighbouring communes of Ensival, Lambermont and Dison.

The population of Verviers in 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1907 is shown in the following Table:—

Year.	Population on 31st December.	Increase (+) or decrease (—).	Percentage increase (+) or decrease (—).
1880	40,944	—	—
1890	48,907	+ 7,963	+ 19·4
1900	49,067	+ 160	+ 0·3
1907 (estimated)	48,756	— 311	— 0·6
		(in seven years)	(in seven years)

The vital statistics of the town for the period 1904–8 are set out in the Table below. The birth-rate has remained almost steady since 1905; in 1904 it was 18·5 per 1,000 of population, and in the other four years it has varied between 17·1 and 17·6. The movement of the death-rate, however, has been irregular; in 1904 it was 13·2, and in 1908 16·4, the average for the period being 15·0. When it is remembered that Verviers is a textile town, in which a large number of women are employed both night and day, the infantile mortality appears to be remarkably low.

The average for the period 1904–8 was 126 per 1,000 births, with a maximum of 150 in 1905, and a minimum of 108 in 1907.

Year.	Birth-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death-rate per 1,000 of Population.	Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births.
1904	18·5	13·2	116
1905	17·6	16·0	150
1906	17·1	15·1	138
1907	17·3	14·3	108
1908	17·2	16·4	120

Owing to the insufficiency of the water drawn from the Vesdre to meet the growing needs of the town and its industries, the authorities decided about forty years ago to form a reservoir of pure soft water, for the service of the town and neighbouring communes, by damming the valley of the Gileppe, a small tributary of the Vesdre. The work was begun in 1869 and completed in 1878, and a reservoir covering some 200 acres and capable of holding 2,700,000,000 of gallons of water was constructed. The water is carried to Verviers by an aqueduct 5½ miles long, and distributed in the town and neighbouring communes at a low price, greatly to the benefit, not only of their industries, but of their health. At the present time, of a total length of 44 miles of service pipes, 27 miles are within the commune and 17 miles outside. Within the town very few of the houses are now supplied from wells; these are regularly inspected, and, if found contaminated, are closed, the town water service being laid on. The municipality charges for the water on various scales, according to the use to which it is put; nominally, supply by meter is compulsory, but certain trades and occupations pay a fixed annual rate, according to the nature of the business conducted on the premises. Householders may also pay for their water on a scale based on the amount of municipal rates paid annually by them; those who pay no rates are charged 2s. per annum; those who pay on an income of £40 are charged 4s.; between £140 and £260 the charge is 12s.; while those who pay municipal rates on an income of £760 and above are charged 24s. per annum for their water supply. When more than one person in a household is separately rated the water charge is cumulative. If supplied by meter the price is about 6½d. per 1,000 gallons. Manufacturers pay about 2½d. per 1,000 gallons, and, if using a certain quantity per annum for wool-washing, &c., the price is reduced to about 3d. per 1,000 gallons. The mean price of water used for industrial purposes in 1906 was 3·6 centimes per cubic metre, or about 1½d. per 1,000 gallons.

The water-carriage system of sewerage is now obligatory in Verviers, and there are but few houses not connected with the sewers.

The gas supply is in the hands of a private company, which charges 3s. 7½d. per 1,000 cubic feet. Until the concession to this company lapses, in a few years' time, the town is, by one of its clauses, prevented from granting any concession for electric lighting. In 1907 the gas company contributed from its profits the sum of £1,533 to the municipal funds.

The tramway system of Verviers consists of about 12½ miles of track. About 3 miles, which have been recently laid in connection with some important street improvements, belong to the town, but are leased to the company, which owns the rest of the plant and manages the whole system.

The "Conditioning house," in which the town has a considerable financial interest, is an important institution in Verviers. In 1907, 14,168 tons of products, composed as follows, passed through the house:—

	Tons.
Washed and carbonised noils and flocks	10,602
Noils	326
Woollen yarn	198
Worsted tops	1,032
Worsted yarn	1,562
For weighing only	448
Total	14,168

In 1906 the total figure was 13,068 tons, and in 1905, 17,853 tons. The share of the profits received by the town in 1907 was £607.

Other municipal institutions are the theatre, the abattoir, and the pawnshop.

OCCUPATIONS, WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

The town of Verviers, with the neighbouring communes of Dison, Hodimont, Andrimont, Lambermont, Ensival, and Pepinster, constitutes the great centre of the wool and worsted industries of Belgium, and these industries afford employment to far more workpeople in that part of the country than any other trade.

The original industry of the district was the manufacture of woollens, and it was not until the year 1876 that worsted manufacture was introduced. It has, however, become exceedingly important, and at the present time gives employment to a few hundred more workpeople than the woollen industry, though, on account of the more numerous and complicated processes involved in the production of worsted as compared with that of woollen yarn, the output of the latter considerably exceeds that of the former. A large amount of woollen yarn is exported, chiefly to the English and Scotch markets, whilst a certain amount of worsted yarn is bought by English hosiery manufacturers. Some of the woollen and a considerable proportion of the worsted yarn is woven and finished in the Verviers district.

The organisation of these industries at Verviers is particularly interesting in view of some of the contrasts it offers with conditions in Yorkshire. The basis of the industry is the scouring and carbonising of the raw wool; this is greatly facilitated by the abundant supply of pure, soft water secured to the district by the damming of the Gileppe referred to above. The principal part of the scouring and carbonising of wool at Verviers is done on commission for Belgian and other foreign wool merchants or spinners, usually for Belgian. Continental wool spinners prefer to buy wool scoured and carbonised and of the particular quality desired, rather than unsorted raw wool, of which the yield is uncertain. There are in Verviers, however, three or four wool-spinners who scour and carbonise their own wool, despite the large capital outlay on plant required. The latter circumstance, combined with the fact that the necessary facilities—abundant water supply of proper quality especially—are not obtainable everywhere, has caused the scouring and carbonising of wool to become a separate industry on the Continent. English spinners, on the other hand, almost invariably carry out these operations themselves, a method which has the advantage of affording greater facilities for mixing different kinds of wool and permitting certain economies in the washing.

In wool-spinning, two types of organisation are to be found in Verviers—(a) work for the spinner's own account (*à forfait*); and (b) work on commission. The latter class of business is relatively unimportant, though the number of spinners on commission actually exceeds that of the spinners on their own account, there being 21 of the former and 16 of the latter in the Verviers district. None of the former employs as many as 100 hands, while among the latter there are firms with as many as 500 to 600.

In the *Worsted Industry* there are two classes of mills, those which wash, comb, and spin, and those which spin only; among the latter there is one which spins on commission. The worsted spinners buy tops which frequently have been combed on commission at Bradford, or at Roubaix. Sometimes it is the worsted spinner who sends the wool to be combed on commission, but more usually it is the wool merchant. There are no commission combers as at Bradford and Roubaix, and there is no firm engaged solely in combing; those who comb also spin.

For the *Weaving of Wool and Worsted* yarns there are some 3,000 looms in the Verviers district, of which about three-quarters are to be found in the sheds of large manufacturers, while the remainder belong to small master weavers working on commission (*façonniers*). These small men usually hire room and power in mills which are entirely let out in this way. Among the manufacturers owning weaving sheds there are a few, working on a very large scale, who scour, carbonise, and spin their wool, and comb and spin their worsted, but the majority buy their yarns, or have them spun on commission. There is another class of manufacturers (*fabricants en chambre*) who do not even own any looms, but have all their weaving done on commission. It is these men, as well as other manufacturers, who give employment to the small master weavers.

The *finishing of the cloths* is done partly by large manufacturers in establishments of their own, and partly by independent finishers working on commission. The finished goods are generally sold through commission agents.

Wool Scouring and Carbonising.—Since May 1, 1906, a list of rates of wages to be paid for the different classes of work has been agreed upon between the employers' and workers' organisations. Further, in consequence of the workmen's efforts, the wages

are now largely based upon time instead of piece-rates, and as a result the earnings of some of the workmen show a considerable diminution. The hours of work are from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., with half an hour for breakfast at 8 o'clock, one hour for dinner at mid-day, and a quarter of an hour for coffee at 4 p.m. When the work is carried on night and day, as is generally the case during the busy season, the night shifts work from 7 p.m., to 6 a.m., with 1½ hours of rest and 9½ hours of actual work. During the slack season, which occurs in the late summer and early autumn, after the last of the Cape wool is washed and before the new Australian supplies arrive, there is no night work, and even short time during the day is not uncommon.

Wool Spinning is carried on night and day all the year round. The actual hours worked by the day shift are 66 weekly, 9½ hours being worked on Mondays, and 11½ on other week days. The actual working time of the night shift is an hour shorter than that of the day shift, viz., 10½ instead of 11½ hours. Formerly night work ceased at 6 o'clock on Sunday morning, but now it stops at midnight on Saturday, so that the night shift completes 5½ nights only in the week. The hourly rate of wages is somewhat higher for night work than for day work, with the result that the earnings are about the same. Piece workers, e.g., spinners and piecers, earn, however, somewhat less by night than by day, but, as the night shift of one week is the day shift of the next, and wages are paid fortnightly, the earnings tend to equalise themselves. Women under 21 and boys under 16 are not permitted to work at night and the work is so arranged that they always form part of the day shift, their places being taken at night by other hands above these age limits. As such workers, owing to the shorter hours, would suffer loss if paid by the piece there is a personal arrangement between them and the corresponding day shift workers by which the earnings are equalised.

Worsted Combing and Spinning.—As in the case of wool-spinning, it is customary to work night and day shifts, but the night work is done on five nights only, not five and a half as in the case of wool. Formerly six were worked in the case of wool and five and a half in the case of worsted. The general arrangement of the shifts is the same for both the wool and worsted industries. The origin of the custom of working night and day in the Verviers wool and worsted industries is not very clear. The expense of the plant is hardly a sufficient reason, as this would apply not only to Belgium but to other countries where the custom does not exist. Further, the capital outlay represented by a worsted mill is much greater than that by a woollen mill, yet it is in the latter that most night work occurs. The local physical conditions above referred to (p. 164) seem to afford a possible explanation. No enlargement of the mills is possible except at a prohibitive cost, and consequently the only method of increasing the output is to work day and night.

Wages in the worsted industry are higher than in that of the woollen. The reasons for this are various. In the first place, the worsted industry is of recent introduction, and in order to attract workpeople it was necessary to offer higher wages at the outset, and these have been retained ever since. Secondly, the conditions of work in the worsted industry are not so comfortable as in that of the woollen; the rooms contain more steam, and the spinning mules are worked at a higher speed, and require more attention. Thirdly, the trade unions of the worsted operatives have always been more powerful than those of the woollen hands, and have succeeded in obtaining better terms for their members. Lastly, the wool spinners of Verviers produce yarn largely for sale on foreign markets in which they have to meet keen competition, while the worsted yarns produced are very largely woven on the spot into cloth, the value of which is greatly dependent on novelty and fashion; the margin of profit is thus larger, and manufacturers are able to give a better price for worsted yarn.

Weaving.—In this branch of either industry night work is not usual, except during times of great pressure. The majority of the weavers are men, though women are employed to some extent; both are paid piece rates.

The most interesting question connected with weaving is that of the tending of two looms by one operative in the case of certain classes of simple goods. This practice first became general in Verviers about 1895, and was the nominal cause of the strike in that year. Ten years later there were large numbers of two-loom weavers, who earned about one third more than those in charge of a single loom, but about that time the operatives' unions began a serious opposition to the system, and it has since greatly diminished in Verviers. As a result the weaving of certain classes of goods in the town is no longer profitable, and the work is now done in certain German towns, where the two-loom system exists, or the goods are woven in Flanders, where the wages are much lower than in Verviers, on the single loom system.

Finishing.—In this branch of the wool and worsted industry night work is exceptional. At one time the workmen were largely paid by the piece, but the unions insist on day wages being paid as far as possible, and time rates are now prevalent.

Engineering Trades.—The majority of the workmen employed in these trades in Verviers and neighbourhood are occupied in the construction or repair of textile machinery. The plant of the woollen and worsted mills of the locality is, however, by no means all of local or even of Belgian make; much is imported from England. The predominating method of payment in the engineering trades is by time.

Leather Trades.—A wages agreement exists in these trades, payment being by time at the rate of 3s. 2d. per day for leather belting makers, and 2s. 10d. for labourers. The hours of labour are 11 on Monday and 12 on other week-days, with intervals for meals amounting to 1½ hours on Monday and 1½ on other days. The number of apprentices in any one shop is limited to 10, and must not exceed one per five workmen at any time.

Food Preparation Trades.—Standard rates have been established for chocolate makers, confectioners, and pastrycooks, viz., 19s. 2d. for a normal week of 59 hours.

A Table indicating the predominant weekly wages and hours of labour of adult males in the principal trades of Verviers is given below. The particulars shown for the textile trades relate to day shifts only (see p. 167).

Predominant Weekly Wages and Hours of Labour of Adult Males in the Principal Occupations in June, 1908.

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Building Trades :—</i>		
Bricklayers and Masons	24s.	60
Stonemasons (Cutters)	24s.	60
Carpenters	21s. 7d. to 24s.	60
Joiners	19s. 2d. „ 24s.	60
Plumbers	16s. 10d. „ 24s.	60
Plasterers	19s. 2d. „ 24s.	60
Painters	16s. 10d. to 21s. 7d.	60
Labourers	14s. 5d. „ 19s. 2d.	60
<i>Engineering Trades :—</i>		
Moulders	24s. to 26s. 5d.	58 or 59
Fitters	19s. 2d. to 24s.	57 „ 58
Turners	19s. 2d. „ 24s.	57 „ 58
Patternmakers	21s. 7d. „ 24s.	57 „ 58
Labourers	15s. 7d. to 16s. 10d.	57 „ 58
<i>Wool Scouring and Carbonising :—</i>		
Scourers	16s. 10d. to 18s.	67½
Carbonisers	18s. to 21s. 7d.	67½
<i>Wool Spinning :—</i>		
Carders	19s. 2d. to 24s.	66
Spinners	21s. 7d. „ 24s.	66
Piecers	14s. 5d. to 16s. 10d.	66
<i>Worsteds Spinning :—</i>		
Scourers	17s. 9d. to 18s. 3d.	66
Combers	19s. 2d. „ 20s. 8d.	66
Spinners	30s. 5d. „ 34s. 10d.	66
Big Piecers	24s. 4d. „ 27s. 10d.	66
Piecers	21s. 3d. „ 24s. 4d.	66
<i>Wool and Worsteds Weaving :—</i>		
Warpers	24s. to 29s. 9d.	66
Sizers	24s. „ 28s. 10d.	66
Weavers (one loom)	21s. 7d.	66
<i>Wool and Worsteds Finishing :—</i>		
Dyers (piece goods)	15s. 10d. to 18s.	66
Scourers	16s. 7d. to 18s. 3d.	66
Fullers	16s. 7d. „ 18s. 3d.	66
Raisers	15s. 7d. „ 17s. 6d.	66
Piece-driers	18s. to 20s. 5d.	66
Croppers	20s. 5d. to 22s. 4d.	66
Pressers	19s. 2d. to 24s.	66
Shrinkers	19s. 2d. „ 24s.	66

	Predominant Weekly Wages.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour.
<i>Leather Trades :—</i>		
Leather Belting Makers	19s. 2d.	62½
Labourers	16s. 10d.	62½
<i>Boot and Shoe Trades :—</i>		
Clickers	21s. 3d. to 24s. 8d.	56 to 60
Pressmen	21s. 3d. „ 24s. 8d.	56 „ 60
Lasters	22s. 5d. to 28s.	56 „ 60
Welters, Vampers, &c.	24s. to 28s. 10d.	56 „ 60
Machine-men	24s. „ 28s. 10d.	56 „ 60
Finishers	20s. 2d. to 24s.	56 „ 60
<i>Printing Trades :—</i>		
Compositors and Machine Minders	19s. 2d. to 21s. 7d.	60
<i>Food, &c., Trades :—</i>		
Chocolate Makers, Confectioners, and Pastry-cooks	19s. 2d.	59
<i>Public Services :—</i>		
Roads Department (contract work)—		
Road Makers	19s. 2d. to 24s.	60
Road Sweepers	16s. 10d.	60 to 72
Carmen	20s.	60 „ 72
Labourers	16s. 10d. to 19s. 2d.	60
Waterworks (municipal)—		
Turncocks	21s. 6d. to 25s. 9d.	—

Wages at Brussels being represented by 100, the index numbers for Verviers are as follows :—Building trades, skilled men 85, unskilled labourers 89; engineering trades, skilled men 91, unskilled labourers 105; compositors 77.

The trade union organisation of Verviers and district is said to be the strongest in Belgium at the present time. It is of quite recent origin, practically dating from the year 1906, in which year, as the result of a long series of partial strikes, a general lock-out took place in the wool and worsted industries.

The movement towards association is by no means limited to the workpeople. In 1906 the great majority of the employers in the wool and worsted industry organised the *Fédération des Industries Textiles de Verviers et de l'Arrondissement* on a permanent footing, with offices and paid officials. The employers hold their meetings in sections, according to the branch or branches of the industry in which they are interested, and discuss the questions which immediately concern them. Any decisions they may arrive at on such a matter as wages are submitted to the whole federation for confirmation.

The following Table, compiled from information collected by M. L. Dechene from trade union sources, and published in his recent work, "*L'avènement du régime syndical à Verviers*," will give an indication of the strength of the trade union movement at the end of 1906, and of its great growth since 1900.

Table showing the Membership of the Trade Unions in the Principal Industries of Verviers and District in 1900 and 1906.

	Number of Trade Unionists in 1900.		Number of Trade Unionists in 1906.		
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.	Total.
Worsteds Spinners and Piecers	900	—	1,300	1,800	3,100
Wool Spinners and Piecers	250	—	3,200	400	3,600
<i>Wool and Worsteds :—</i>					
Weavers	150	—	2,300	200	2,500
Scouring and finishing	100	—	3,200	800	4,000
Others	—	—	715	992	1,707
Engineering and Metal Trades	90	—	1,450	—	1,450
Boot and Shoe industry	30	—	1,050	450	1,500
Others	110	—	3,060	—	3,060
Totals	1,630	—	16,275	4,642	20,917

HOUSING AND RENTS.

The peculiarities of the site of Verviers and the fact that practically all the available building land was exhausted so long ago as 1890 have been already referred to. Lateral expansion being, therefore, all but impossible, it has been necessary to develop the tenement-house system of dwellings. In 1900 the number of households per house destined for habitation was 2.75, which was approximately the same as the number at the previous Census in 1890, viz., 2.71. Very similar conditions prevail in the most important of the neighbouring communes, namely, Dison, where the number of households per house in 1900 was 2.64. Verviers has, in fact, more households per house than any other commune in Belgium, except Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, one of the communes included in Greater Brussels.

If only the working-class quarters of Verviers be considered, the number of households per house is considerably higher than that indicated by the Census figures. A recent investigation by the local Housing Committee showed the average number of tenements per house in such quarters to be 5.15, the details being as follows :—

Number of Families per House.	Houses occupied by the Number of Families stated in Col. 1.	
	Number.	Per Cent.
One	83	12.9
Two	57	8.9
Three	97	15.1
Four	81	12.6
Five	89	13.9
Six	57	8.9
Seven	59	9.2
Eight	25	3.9
Nine	33	5.1
Ten and over	61	9.5
Total	642	100.0

Of all the tenements included, 32 per cent. consisted of two rooms and 23 per cent. of three rooms, while the number of tenements of one room, of four rooms, and of five rooms and over was about the same, viz., 15 per cent. of the whole.

The typical working-class house in Verviers has a frontage of 20 to 23 feet, and has two entrances, one leading into the ground floor tenement, which frequently serves as a shop or *café*, and the other into a passage which traverses the house from front to back, and contains the stairs. The staircase occupies one of two positions; it is either at the end of the passage, divided into two half-flights by a landing lighted by a window overlooking the backyard; or it is in a recess, half-way along the passage, in which case it is more or less spiral, and is lighted by a skylight in the roof.

In all houses with a frontage of 20 feet and upwards, the upper floors contain two rooms to the front, a large one with two windows and a small one with only one; in order to reach the second room, it is generally necessary to pass through the first.

If the stair is at the end of the passage, there is usually only one room at the back of the house. If, as above described, it is in a recess off the middle of the passage, there are two rooms at the back, as at the front, and, as in these cases the houses are somewhat deeper than those in which the stair is at the end of the passage, there is a space behind the stair, between the front and back rooms. This is often divided into two, providing each room with a small dark closet; sometimes, however, it is not divided, but forms part of either the front or back tenement; it is either not lighted at all, or lighted only by means of a glazed partition, which separates it from another room. The Housing Committee, in the course of their enquiry above referred to, found 126 rooms used for sleeping or cooking, or both, which received no natural light at all, and 216 rooms which received such light indirectly only. Of these 342 rooms, 171 were used as kitchens only, 13 as kitchens and bedrooms, and 158 as bedrooms only.

Another fairly common feature in the houses of Verviers is a small addition built on behind, and consisting of one room on the ground floor and one above, the main building being two or more stories higher. In order to reach the rooms in this annexe, it is generally necessary to pass through the back rooms on the corresponding floor of the main building. The attic rooms of houses in Verviers usually have plastered ceilings. Land being very dear in Verviers, the backyards are generally very small and inadequate to the purpose of drying clothes.

A working-class family in Verviers usually occupies what is called a *quartier* in a large house. A *quartier* is not necessarily, nor even usually, self-contained, in which respect it differs from an *apartement* or flat. It may be necessary to cross the common landing in order to reach a second room belonging to the same *quartier*, or the rooms may even be on different floors. A large proportion of the rooms have no separate entry and can only be reached through some other room. None of the rooms in these houses are specially fitted up as kitchens; each tenant provides his own stove and arranges his *quartier* as he pleases. The provision of water and a sink in any of the rooms is quite exceptional.

The system of sub-letting, which is so common in the neighbouring town of Liège, does not prevail in Verviers; the owner of the house lets it in single rooms or *quartiers* directly to the tenants, collecting the rents either personally or through a house agent, the latter plan being perhaps the more usual. The common term of agreement is for one year, the working classes paying their rent as a rule monthly, and the middle classes quarterly. Notice of removal must be given by registered letter, six months in advance for a ground floor tenement, and three months for any other. On the outskirts of the town there are smaller houses occupied by their owners, who frequently let part to a single family. In Verviers itself, and still more in the neighbouring commune of Dison, several old mills have been converted into tenement dwellings, and a few large block dwellings have been erected in Verviers, but these are the exceptions, and sometimes occupy the position of back houses. A few of them exist as back houses in courts, behind a row of other houses facing the street. In these cases, the court is usually parallel with the street, but here and there courts at right angles to the street, containing houses of a very poor type, are to be met with.

The general water supply of Verviers has already been described (p. 165). As mentioned above, it is rare to find a tenement with its own water supply, a tap for the use of the whole house being as a rule placed in the yard or in the passage on the ground floor. Although the water carriage system is in general use, the provision of closets is very inadequate. The Housing Committee found that the average was one for every 0.88 very inadequate. The Housing Committee found that the average was one for every 0.88 very inadequate. The Housing Committee found that the average was one for every 0.88 very inadequate. Cases of gross insufficiency of closet houses, or 4.54 tenements, or 14.29 persons. Cases of gross insufficiency of closet accommodation were found to be not uncommon, e.g., one convenience for 79 persons and one for 69 persons, despite article 74 of the Municipal Building Regulations, which requires that all houses shall have "sufficient" closet accommodation.

Other regulations determine the height of buildings in relation to the width of the street; thus, when the width of the street is 49 feet 3 inches or more, the buildings may be 59 feet high; they may reach a height of 49 feet 3 inches when the street is 39 feet 3 inches wide, and a height of 36 feet when the street is only 26 feet 3 inches wide. The minimum height allowed for rooms is 9 feet 9 inches on the ground floor, 9 feet 3 inches on the upper floors, and in basements, attics, and annexes, 8 feet 6 inches. It is further provided that all new buildings shall have a courtyard of not less than one-tenth of the area of the building.

The following are details of some typical dwellings visited :—

Impasse Saucy.—One of a series of large houses in the centre of the town with 22 feet frontage and a depth of 36 feet. It consists of the ground floor and four upper floors. The staircase is in the centre of the house, and on each floor there are four rooms, two at the front and two at the back. The first-floor dimensions are as follows: Front rooms, 12 feet 9 inches square, and 7 feet by 16 feet 6 inches respectively, both 9 feet high; the back rooms are of the same size. The rooms on the upper floors are of the same area, but somewhat lower. On the ground floor the front rooms are narrower on account of the passage leading to the stairs. The house contains 10 tenements of two rooms and three single attic rooms. The weekly rents are as follows :—

	2 Front Rooms.	2 Back Rooms.
Ground floor	1s. 10d.	1s. 10d.
1st floor	1s. 10d.	1s. 8d.
2nd floor	1s. 9d.	1s. 7d.
3rd floor	1s. 8d.	1s. 4d.
4th floor	1s. 2d.	1s. 1d.

Two attics at 6½d. and one at 5½d.

The closets are in a passage at the side of the house, and the water-tap is in the yard.

Rue des Fabriques.—A house with 19 feet frontage and a depth of 33 feet 6 inches, with small annexe at back. The dimensions of the two front rooms on the first floor are 10 feet 6 inches by 14 feet, and 7 feet by 14 feet respectively; back room, 12 feet by 15 feet, and room in annexe 7 feet 3 inches by 9 feet 9 inches. The whole ground floor is let to a shopkeeper. On the three upper floors the two front rooms are

let together, and the back rooms with the rooms in the annexe. Consequently there are six two-roomed tenements, which are let for 2s. 4d. and 2s. per week on the first floor, 2s. 1d. and 1s. 11d. per week on the second floor, and 2s. 1d. and 1s. 9d. per week on the third floor, the front tenements in each case fetching the higher rent.

The staircase is at the back of the house, next to the back room, and is arranged with a landing at the half flights. The closet and the water-tap are in the yard, access to which is gained by the through passage downstairs.

Rue des Hospices.—One of a large block of five houses bequeathed to the municipality. All contain numerous two-roomed tenements. On each of the four floors there is a passage traversing the house from back to front. There are two front tenements and two back tenements on each floor. The dimensions of the rooms of one front tenement are 9 feet 9 inches by 14 feet 6 inches and 6 feet 6 inches by 14 feet 6 inches respectively; this tenement let for 1s. 6d. per week. The rooms of the other front tenement measure 9 feet 9 inches by 14 feet 6 inches and 7 feet 6 inches by 14 feet 6 inches respectively; this let for 1s. 6d. per week. In one of the back tenements the rooms measure 7 feet 9 inches by 12 feet and 8 feet 6 inches by 12 feet respectively, and let for 1s. 2d. per week; those of the other back tenement measure 7 feet 6 inches by 12 feet and 9 feet 9 inches by 12 feet, and let for 1s. 2d. per week. The height of the rooms in all these tenements is 8 feet 6 inches. The tenements on the upper floors have the same area, but the ceilings are lower and the rents somewhat less. This particular house, containing 16 households, consisting of 51 persons, has one water-tap in the passage on the ground floor, and one water-closet in the passage on the first floor.

Rue Marie Henriette.—A house with 23 feet frontage and a depth of 33 feet. The ground floor, with a separate entrance, is let as a shop. There is a passage from the street to the yard, with stairs at the end of the passage. There are four rooms each on the first, second, and third floors, two at the back and two at the front. The rooms of the front tenements measure 8 feet 3 inches by 17 feet and 13 feet by 17 feet, and are 9 feet 3 inches high. These tenements let for 2s. 9d., 2s. 6d., and 2s. per week on the first, second, and third floors respectively. The rooms of the back tenements measure 6 feet 6 inches by 13 feet and 8 feet 3 inches by 13 feet respectively, and are 9 feet 3 inches high, these tenements letting for 1s. 9d., 1s. 7d., and 1s. 6d. per week on the first, second, and third floors respectively. Closet and town water supply in the yard.

Rue Courte.—A house with 23 feet frontage and a depth of 29 feet 6 inches. There is a passage from the street to the back yard, with staircase at the end of the passage. The closet and water supply are in the yard. There are two rooms on the ground floor, one measuring 16 feet 6 inches by 14 feet and the other 15 feet by 12 feet 9 inches; both are 9 feet 6 inches high. This tenement, together with an attic, is let for 2s. 9d. per week. On the first floor are two rooms at the front, one measuring 7 feet 3 inches by 14 feet, and the other 13 feet 6 inches square and one room at the back measuring 15 feet by 13 feet. The height is 9 feet. These three rooms, together with an attic, let for 3s. 4d. per week. The corresponding three rooms on the second floor (8 feet 6 inches high), with an attic, are let for 2s. 11d. weekly.

Rue des Souris.—A house with 23 feet frontage and a depth of 34 feet 6 inches. On the ground floor there is a through passage, with stairs in a recess in the centre. On the three upper floors there are front, middle, and back rooms. The dimensions are—front rooms, 17 feet 6 inches by 12 feet; middle (dark) room behind stairs, 6 feet 6 inches by 7 feet, and back room, 17 feet by 12 feet. The back and middle rooms on the first floor, together with an attic, are let for 2s. 2d. weekly; the front and middle rooms on the second floor for 1s. 8d. weekly; the back room on the second floor for 1s. 2d. weekly.

Rue de la Nouvelle Montagne.—A new house with a frontage of 20 feet and a depth of 29 feet 6 inches. It consists of ground floor, two stories above, and attics. There is also an annexe on the ground floor, a passage from the street to a yard, and a staircase with landings at half flights at the end of the passage. There is a supply of water on each floor and there are two closets in the yard. The downstairs dimensions are—front room, 14 feet by 11 feet 3 inches; back room, 13 feet by 14 feet; both 9 feet 9 inches high; and annexe, 9 feet by 15 feet 6 inches and 9 feet 6 inches high. These three rooms, together with an attic, let for 4s. 7d. weekly. On the first and second floors there are two front rooms, 7 feet 6 inches by 12 feet and 11 feet by 12 feet respectively, and a back room, 13 feet by 14 feet. All these are 9 feet 3 inches high. The three rooms on the first floor, together with an attic, let for 3s. 5d. weekly, and the three rooms on the second floor, together with an attic, let for 3s. 1d. weekly.

The predominant weekly rents of one, two, three, and four-roomed working-class tenements in Verviers are shown in the following Table :—

Predominant Rents of Working-class Dwellings.

Number of Rooms per Dwelling.					Predominant Weekly Rents.
One room	...	...	...	...	11d. to 1s. 4d.
Two rooms	...	...	...	...	1s. 6d. to 2s.
Three rooms	...	...	...	...	1s. 10d. to 2s. 9d.
Four rooms	...	...	...	...	2s. 4d. to 3s. 8d.

Representing rent at Brussels by 100, the index number for rent at Verviers is 61.

The municipality of Verviers has not directly entered upon any schemes of housing. There are, however, certain blocks of houses which have been bequeathed to the town Indoor Poor Relief Board (*Administration des Hospices*). In recent years the Outdoor Poor Relief Board (*Bureau de Bienfaisance*) has constructed a large block of tenements, containing about 100 rooms, each 11 feet 6 inches square. A passage, containing a water-closet and water-tap, gives access to every group of four rooms. Access to the upstairs rooms is gained by an exterior staircase and gallery. With each room are let a small piece of garden, and a share of cellar space. The weekly rents are :—one room, 1s.; two rooms, 1s. 10d.; and three rooms, 2s. 9d. The original idea was to let these tenements to persons assisted by the Bureau, but it has been only partially carried out.

In Verviers, as in every commune of Belgium, a workman who buys or builds a house, and uses no part of it for the purposes of a shop or *café* is entitled to the following remissions of taxes :—(1) Exemption from the personal tax (*contribution personnelle*) provided the assessable rental (*revenu cadastral*) of the house does not exceed £5 15s. 2d. where the population is between 40,000 and 100,000, as is the case in Verviers. This assessable rental would correspond with a rent of from 4s. 7d. to 6s. 2d. weekly. (2) A reduction of 50 per cent. for registration and mortgage duties, provided that the area is less than 25 ares (five-eighths of an acre). The duty for registering the deed of purchase of a house or piece of land is 2·70 instead of 5·50 per cent., and the transfer duty is 0·65 instead of 1·25 per cent. (3) A reduction of 50 per cent. in the legal fees.

There are two building societies at Verviers, the *Crédit Immobilier de l'Ouvrier* and the *Société Anonyme Verviétoise pour la Construction d'Habitations Ouvrières*, of which only the former is established under the law of August 9th, 1889. It was founded in 1893, and has a share capital of £12,000, of which £10,784 has not been called up. At the end of 1907 it had 318 loans for a total of £43,129 outstanding, and since its foundation it had made 356 loans amounting to £53,502. On December 31st, 1907, it owed the National Savings Bank £41,520 in respect of borrowed capital, and £1,070 in respect of interest. It is only in recent years that the society has been very active. Up to the end of 1902 it had made only 74 loans, or an average of about eight a year, whilst the annual average for the five years 1903–1907 has been 52. Up to the end of May, 1908, the total number of loans made was 396, representing £63,400. Of these loans 56 only have been made in Verviers, many more have been made in some of the neighbouring communes, e.g., 65 in Stembert, 36 in Andrimont, 20 in Heusy, and 10 in Lambermont, whilst the rest, or a little more than half, are divided amongst 43 other communes of the arrondissement of Verviers. The rules of the society fix £200 as the maximum loan. The rate of interest charged is 3½ per cent. The money is repaid by monthly instalments during 10, 15, 20, or 25 years. The society now requires that every borrower shall insure his life with the National Savings Bank for the sum outstanding at any given period of the contract. The insurance is effected by means of a single premium, and in case of the borrower's death at any time whilst the house is being purchased, it will belong absolutely to his heirs without the payment of any further sums, provided the monthly instalments are not in arrears.

The *Société Verviétoise pour la Construction d'Habitations Ouvrières* was established about 1866 as a private company, which it still is to-day. Its policy is to build houses and then either sell or let them. No returns are published showing the extent of its operations, which take place at Verviers and in the immediately surrounding communes, but they are certainly less important than those of the building society described above.

RETAIL PRICES.

Perhaps the most noteworthy point in connection with conditions of retail trade at Verviers is that, in spite of the labour movement being so highly developed, co-operation has almost entirely failed. Attempts have been made from time to time to organize a large co-operative society, and on one occasion a large and striking building was erected, known as the *Maison du Peuple*, which was intended to be the centre of the co-operative and trade union movement; but so much money was spent on the building that it had to be sold to satisfy the creditors, and it is at present unoccupied. The only surviving example of working-class co-operation is a small co-operative bakery.

The markets at Verviers are quite unimportant, and the principal trade is in the hands of the "multiple" stores and private shops.

In respect of dietary and mealtimes the habits of the Verviers workman resemble generally those of the manufacturing towns of the North of France. Coffee and bread and butter, or (especially when butter is dear) a *compôte* of various fruits, locally known as *sirop*, are taken at 8 a.m.; at noon there is a light meal, consisting largely of fried potatoes and other foods which can be purchased ready cooked; coffee and bread and butter are taken again at 4 p.m., and at 8 is the principal meal of the day.

The employment of women in the factories greatly interferes with home cooking, and the necessity for employing some one to look after the children whilst the mothers are at work makes the occupation of *gardeuse d'enfants* a common one in Verviers.

Groceries and other Commodities.

Bread.—The police interpret the word "bread" to mean white bread, made from wheaten flour. All loaves weighing 1 lb. or more are required to be marked with the baker's initials, and if not of pure wheaten flour, they must bear a star in addition.

Butter and Margarine.—The police regulations require that all margarine shall be sold on one market place, and all butter on another. The regulations for the sale of margarine are based upon the Royal Decree of March 11th, 1895 (*See Appendix, p. 193*), and are both strict and explicit. Margarine must not contain more than 5 per cent. of butter, and must not contain any colouring matter; it must not be offered for sale in any shop in which butter is sold, nor in any shop directly communicating with such an one. Furthermore, all shops in which margarine is sold, and all carts carrying margarine for sale, must display prominently a notice "*Vente de margarine*" (Margarine sold here) in characters not less than 8 inches high. All vessels or papers in which margarine is offered for sale or delivered to houses must be clearly marked "Margarine" in characters not less than 1 inch in height.

The predominant prices of certain commodities of general consumption are shown in the following Table :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes in June, 1908.

Commodity.	Predominant Price.
Coffee per lb.	6½d. to 8½d.
Sugar, Loaf "	2½d.
Eggs per 1s.	12, 13
Butter per lb.	1s. 1d.
Margarine "	7d.
Potatoes per 7 lb.	2½d. to 3d.
Flour, Wheaten "	9½d.
Bread, White... .. per 4 lb.	5½d.
Milk per quart	2½d.
Coal per cwt.	1s. 6½d.
Paraffin Oil per gallon	7½d.

Meat.

The regulations for the slaughtering of animals and for the inspection of meat in Verviers are somewhat strict. No animal which has once entered the abattoir may leave it alive without the express permission of the Director, and slaughter elsewhere than in the abattoir is not allowed, except in cases of disease or accident, and even then the whole animal must be brought to the abattoir for inspection and decision as to its disposal.

The hawking of horseflesh is expressly forbidden, and horse-butchers are required to exhibit a sign at least three feet long declaring their trade. At the present time there are four horse-butchers in the town. The wholesale mutton business is almost entirely in the hands of one dealer. Many of the sheep are imported alive from Germany and from South America, and are fattened in the neighbouring commune of Stembert, slaughtered there, and then sent to Verviers or elsewhere for sale. This wholesale dealer has one retail shop at Verviers for the sale of mutton.

Returns obtained for the purposes of this enquiry from 61 working-class families, containing 273 persons, showed an average weekly meat consumption amounting to 24·1 oz. per head, or at the rate of 78 lb. a year. Of the total, beef constituted 40 per cent., bacon 17 per cent., *charcuterie* 15 per cent., pork 12 per cent., veal 11½ per cent., and mutton 3 per cent., the remaining 1½ per cent. being made up of horseflesh, poultry, and rabbits in about equal proportions. The consumption of horseflesh is exceptionally low.

The following Table exhibits the predominant prices paid by the working classes for various cuts of beef, mutton, and veal in June, 1908, and pork in March, 1909 :—

Predominant Prices paid by the Working Classes.

Description of Cut.	Predominant Price per lb.
Beef :—	
Ribs	7d. to 7½d.
Brisket	4½d. „ 5½d.
Silverside	7d. „ 7½d.
Shin, with bone	4½d. „ 5½d.
Beef Steak	10d.
Rump Steak	10d.
Thick Flank	10d.
Thin Flank	4½d. to 5½d.
Mutton :—	
Leg	9½d. to 10½d.
Breast	4½d. „ 5½d.
Neck { Best End	9½d. „ 10½d.
{ Scrag End	4½d. „ 5½d.
Chops	9½d. „ 10½d.
Veal :—	
Hindquarter	9½d., 9½d.
Shoulder { with bone	6½d.
{ without bone	7½d.
Ribs	9½d., 9½d.
Chops	9½d., 9½d.
Leg	9½d., 9½d.
Pork :—	
Leg	10½d.
Foreloin	9½d.
Chops	10½d.

Taking the level of prices at Brussels as 100, the index number for the price of meat at Verviers is very low, viz.—85. The index number for the price of other food is 102, and that for food as a whole 98. The price of coal is considerably higher at Verviers than at any other of the towns included in the present Report, the index number being 109. For food and coal together, the prices index number is 100, while that for rent and prices combined is 94.

APPENDICES.

- I.—SUMMARY TABLE—WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.
- II.—SUMMARY TABLE—RENTS.
- III.—SUMMARY TABLE—RETAIL PRICES.
- IV.—SPECIMEN WORKSHOP AND COLLIERY RULES, AND CONDITIONS
OF MUNICIPAL EMPLOYMENT.
- V.—WORKPEOPLE'S PENSIONS AND BENEFITS.
- VI.—LAWS AND REGULATIONS RELATIVE TO THE PREPARATION
AND SALE OF FOOD.
- VII.—BUILDING LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

APPENDIX I.

WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR.

PREDOMINANT WEEKLY WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR IN THE BUILDING TRADES IN JUNE, 1908.

(A).—Weekly Wages of Bricklayers, Masons, Carpenters and Joiners.

Town.	Bricklayers and Masons.	Stonemasons (Cutters).	Carpenters.	Joiners.
Antwerp ...	23s. 5d.	23s. 5d.	23s. 5d.	23s. 5d.
Bruges ...	16s. 5d. to 19s. 11d.	—	16s. 5d. to 19s. 11d.	16s. 5d. to 19s. 11d.
Brussels ...	23s. 9d. " 27s. 7d.	26s. 5d. to 27s. 7d.	25s. 4d. " 28s. 8d.	23s. 9d. " 29s.
Charleroi ...	21s. 3d. " 23s. 7d.	25s. 2d. " 30s. 3d.	27s. 9d. " 30s. 3d.	22s. 8d. " 25s. 2d.
Courtrai ...	20s. 2d.	23s. to 25s. 11d.	20s. 2d.	20s. 9d. " 23s.
Ghent ...	21s. 11d. to 24s. 2d.	20s. 1d. to 23s.*	21s. 8d. to 22s. 8d.	21s. 8d. " 22s. 8d.
La Louvière ...	24s. to 26s. 5d.	22s. 2d. " 27s. 8d.†	24s. to 26s. 5d.	21s. 7d. " 26s. 5d.
Liège ...	19s. 6d. to 22s.	24s. to 26s. 5d.	21s. 1d. to 23s. 9d.	20s. 1d. " 23s. 9d.
Louvain ...	20s. 2d. to 21s. 4d.	23s.	20s. 2d.	20s. 2d. " 20s. 9d.
Malines ...	19s. 4d. to 24s.	21s. to 27s.	19s. 4d. to 22s. 2d.	19s. 4d. " 24s.
Paturages ...	26s. 5d.	—	26s. 5d. " 27s. 7d.	19s. 2d. " 23s. 9d.
Seraing ...	23s. 9d.	26s. 5d.	20s. 2d. " 21s. 1d.	20s. 2d. " 21s. 1d.
Tournai ...	20s. 2d.	25s. 11d.	18s. 5d.	18s. 5d.
Turnhout ...	20s. 2d. to 21s. 10d.	—	18s. 5d. to 20s. 2d.	18s. 5d. to 20s. 2d.
Verviers ...	24s.	24s.	21s. 7d. to 24s.	19s. 2d. " 24s.

* "Blue" Stone.

† "White" Stone.

(B).—Weekly Wages of Plumbers, Plasterers, Painters and Labourers.

Town.	Plumbers.	Plasterers.	Painters.	Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers.
Antwerp ...	23s. 5d.	23s. 5d.	23s. 5d.	18s. 2d.
Bruges ...	—	—	16s. 5d. to 19s. 11d.	10s. 11d. to 14s. 3d.
Brussels ...	23s. 9d. to 27s. 7d.	23s. 9d. to 27s. 7d.	21s. 1d. " 24s. 10d.	18s. 6d. " 19s. 4d.
Charleroi ...	25s. 2d. " 30s. 3d.	21s. 3d. " 23s. 7d.	17s. 8d. " 20s. 2d.	16s. 6d. " 18s. 11d.
Courtrai ...	20s. 2d. " 23s.	20s. 2d. to 23s.	20s. 2d. " 23s.	14s. 5d. " 15s. 7d.
Ghent ...	19s. " 23s.	23s. to 25s. 11d.	19s. 6d. " 22s. 6d.	17s. 3d.
La Louvière ...	24s. to 26s. 5d.	24s. " 26s. 5d.	19s. 2d. " 23s. 9d.	16s. 10d. to 21s. 1d.
Liège ...	19s. 2d. to 24s.	18s. 7d. to 23s. 9d.	18s. 6d. " 23s. 9d.	14s. 8d. " 17s. 1d.
Louvain ...	20s. 2d.	20s. 2d.	20s. 2d.	17s. 3d.
Malines ...	19s. 4d. to 21s.	19s. 4d. to 24s.	16s. 7d. to 21s.	13s. 10d. to 15s.
Paturages ...	21s. 7d. to 24s. 10d.	26s. 5d.	24s. 10d.	16s. 10d. " 19s. 2d.
Seraing ...	20s. 2d. " 21s. 1d.	20s. 2d. to 21s. 1d.	17s. 8d. to 18s. 6d.	15s. 10d. " 18s. 6d.
Tournai ...	20s. 2d.	20s. 2d.	18s. 5d.	14s. 5d.
Turnhout ...	17s. 3d. to 20s. 2d.	20s. 2d. to 23s.	18s. 9d. to 21s. 10d.	14s. 5d. to 15s. 7d.
Verviers ...	16s. 10d. to 24s.	19s. 2d. " 24s.	16s. 10d. to 21s. 7d.	14s. 5d. " 19s. 2d.

(C).—Weekly Hours of Labour in the Building Trades.

Town.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour (excluding intervals).	Town.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour (excluding intervals).	Town.	Predominant Weekly Hours of Labour (excluding intervals).
Antwerp ...	65	Ghent ...	66 to 72*	Paturages ...	60 to 69*
Bruges ...	68½ to 71½	La Louvière ...	60 " 66	Seraing... ..	68 " 66*
Brussels ...	66 " 69	Liège ...	60 " 66*	Tournai ...	72
Charleroi ...	59 " 63*	Louvain ...	72	Turnhout ...	72 to 78*
Courtrai ...	72	Malines... ..	69 to 75	Verviers ...	60

* In these cases, the hours of labour vary according to occupation. The details for the separate occupations are as follows:—

Occupation.	Charleroi.	Ghent.	Liège.	Paturages.	Seraing.	Turnhout.
Bricklayers and Masons	58	72	81	66	66	72 to 78
Stonemasons (Cutters)	63	66 to 72	66	—	66	—
Carpenters	63	66	66	66	63 to 66	72
Joiners	63	66	66	66	63 " 66	72
Plumbers	63	66 to 72	66	66	63 " 66	72
Plasterers	59	72	61 to 66	66	63 " 66	72
Painters	63	66 to 72	66	66	63 " 66	72
Bricklayers' and Masons' Labourers	59	72	61	66	66	72 to 78

PREDOMINANT WEEKLY WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR IN THE ENGINEERING TRADES IN JUNE, 1908.

(A).—Moulders, Fitters and Turners.

Town.	Predominant Hours of Labour per week (excluding intervals).	Predominant Weekly Wages.		
		Moulders.	Fitters.	Turners.
Antwerp ...	60	—	21s. 7d.	24s.
Bruges ...	64	23s.	17s. 11d.	20s. 6d.
Brussels ...	56 to 60	—	20s. 4d. to 23s. 7d.	21s. 11d. to 26s. 9d.
Charleroi ...	58 " 63	19s. 2d. to 25s. 6d.	20s. 1d. " 23s. 2d.	20s. 1d. " 23s. 2d.
Courtrai ...	62½ " 63	—	22s. 6d. " 27s. 9d.	20s. to 27s. 9d.
Ghent ...	60	20s. to 21s. 7d.	19s. 2d. " 20s. 8d.	20s. 2d. to 21s. 7d.
La Louvière ...	59 to 63	26s. 5d. to 31s. 2d.	23s. 8d. " 28s. 10d.	23s. 5d. " 31s. 2d.
Liège ...	58 " 60	24s. to 28s. 10d.	20s. 5d. " 26s. 5d.	21s. 7d. " 26s. 5d.
Louvain ...	60 " 64	—	16s. 10d. " 17s. 11d.	19s. 2d. to 23s.
Malines ...	56½	16s. 4d. to 20s. 2d.	15s. 4d. " 17s. 3d.	15s. 4d. to 17s. 3d.
Seraing ...	58½ to 60	24s. " 28s.	21s. 7d. to 24s.	22s. 10d. " 25s. 2d.
Tournai ...	62½ " 65	19s. 2d. " 21s. 10d.	19s. to 21s. 10d.	19s. 2d. " 21s. 10d.
Turnhout ...	60 " 66	18s. 6d. " 21s. 1d.	18s. 6d. to 21s. 1d.	19s. 2d. " 22s. 5d.
Verviers ...	Moulders, 58 to 59 Others, 57 to 58	24s. to 26s. 5d.	19s. 2d. to 24s.	19s. 2d. to 24s.

(B).—Smiths, Patternmakers and Labourers.

Town.	Predominant Hours of Labour per week (excluding intervals).	Predominant Weekly Wages.		
		Smiths.	Patternmakers.	Labourers.
Antwerp ...	60	21s. 7d.	24s.	14s. 5d.
Bruges ...	64	20s. 6d.	20s. 6d.	12s.
Brussels ...	56 to 60	22s. 5d. to 26s. 6d.	25s. 1d. to 27s. 10d.	14s. 10d. to 16s. 1d.
Charleroi ...	58 " 63	20s. 11d. " 23s. 3d.	—	13s. 11d. " 17s. 3d.
Courtrai ...	62½ " 63	17s. 8d. " 22s. 6d.	17s. 6d. to 20s. 2d.	12s. 7d. to 14s.
Ghent ...	60	20s. 10d. " 26s. 5d.	19s. 2d. to 20s.	13s. 6d. to 14s. 5d.
La Louvière ...	59 to 63	26s. 5d. " 31s. 2d.	24s. to 28s. 10d.	16s. 10d.
Liège ...	58 " 60	—	22s. 10d. to 25s. 2d.	14s. 5d. to 18s.
Louvain ...	60 " 64	—	19s. 2d. to 23s.	12s. to 13s. 10d.
Malines ...	56½	15s. 4d. to 17s. 3d.	18s. 3d. to 19s. 2d.	11s. 6d.
Seraing ...	58½ to 60	23s. 5d. " 24s. 5d.	22s. 10d. " 25s. 2d.	16s. to 16s. 10d.
Tournai ...	62½ " 65	20s. 2d. " 24s. 7d.	19s. 5d. " 22s. 11d.	12s. 6d. to 15s. 7d.
Turnhout ...	60 " 66	19s. 2d. " 23s. 9d.	17s. 9d. " 22s. 8d.	12s. to 14s. 5d.
Verviers ...	57 " 58	—	21s. 7d. to 24s.	15s. 7d. to 16s. 10d.

PREDOMINANT WEEKLY WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOUR OF COMPOSITORS AND GAS WORKERS IN JUNE, 1908.

Town.	Compositors.		Gas Stokers.		Gas-yard Labourers.	
	Weekly Wages.	Weekly Hours of Labour (excluding intervals).	Weekly Wages.	Weekly Wages.	Weekly Hours of Labour (excluding intervals).	Weekly Hours of Labour (excluding intervals).
Antwerp ...	20s. 6d.	57	23s. 10d.	16s. 10d.	60	60
Bruges ...	18s. 10d. to 21s. 2d.	58½ to 60	18s. 5d.	15s. 5d.	60 to 65	69
Brussels ...	26s. 5d.	57	26s.	18s. 2d. to 21s.	—	—
Charleroi ...	21s. 7d. to 24s.	60	—	—	—	—
Courtrai ...	16s. to 17s. 3d.	57 to 60	16s. 10d.	13s. 2d. to 15s. 7d.	63	63
Ghent ...	20s. 2d.	60	22s. 1d. to 23s. 8d.	15s. 10d.	66, * 57†	66
La Louvière ...	21s. 7d. to 23s. 7d.	59 to 60	21s. 7d.	19s. 2d.	60	60
Liège ...	24s.	60	22s. 10d. to 26s. 5d.	15s. 7d. to 20s. 10d.	65	65
Louvain ...	—	—	19s. 2d.	15s. 7d.	72	72
Malines ...	18s. 3d. to 20s.	60	19s. 2d.	12s. to 14s. 5d.	60	60
Paturages ...	21s. 7d.	60	—	—	—	—
Tournai ...	19s. 2d. to 20s.	59 to 60	19s. 2d. to 20s. 5d.	14s. 5d.	60	60
Turnhout ...	16s. 10d.	65½	19s. 2d. " 21s. 9d.†	—	—	—
Verviers ...	19s. 2d. to 21s. 7d.	60	—	—	—	—

* Summer.

† Winter.

APPENDIX II.

RENTS.

Town.	Predominant Weekly Rents for Dwellings of			
	One Room.	Two Rooms.	Three Rooms.	Four Rooms.
Antwerp	—	2s. 7d. to 3s. 10d.	3s. 2d. to 4s. 5d.	3s. 8d. to 4s. 10d.
Bruges	—	1s. 8d. „ 2s.	1s. 11d. „ 2s. 7d.	2s. 3d. „ 3s. 2d.
Brussels	1s. 7d. to 2s. 5d.	2s. 5d. „ 3s. 8d.	—	—
Charleroi	—	1s. 10d. „ 2s. 7d.	2s. 5d. to 3s. 2d.	2s. 11d. to 4s. 1d.
Courtrai	—	—	—	2s. 1d. „ 3s. 4d.
Ghent	—	—	2s. 2d. to 2s. 7d.	2s. 10d. „ 3s.
La Louvière	—	—	—	3s. 4d. „ 3s. 8d.
Liège	1s. 4d. to 1s. 10d.	2s. 3d. to 2s. 11d.	3s. 2d. to 3s. 8d.	—
Louvain	—	1s. 7d. „ 2s. 3d.	2s. 3d. „ 2s. 11d.	2s. 9d. to 3s. 4d.
Malines	—	1s. 4d. „ 1s. 10d.	1s. 8d. „ 2s. 3d.	2s. „ 2s. 11d.
Paturages	—	1s. 2d. „ 1s. 5d.	1s. 6d. „ 1s. 9d.	1s. 9d. „ 2s. 3d.
Seraing	—	1s. 8d. „ 2s.	1s. 10d. „ 2s. 7d.	2s. 3d. „ 3s. 4d.
Tournai	—	1s. 6d. „ 2s. 5d.	—	3s. 8d. „ 4s. 1d.
Turnhout	—	1s. 1d. „ 1s. 6d.	1s. 6d. to 2s.	—
Verviers	11d. to 1s. 4d.	1s. 6d. „ 2s.	1s. 10d. „ 2s. 9d.	2s. 4d. to 3s. 8d.

Dwellings of five rooms are frequently occupied by the working classes at Ghent and Malines, the predominant weekly rents for such dwellings ranging from 3s. to 3s. 7d. at Ghent, and from 2s. 7d. to 3s. 4d. at Malines; dwellings of six rooms are frequently occupied by the working classes at Malines, the predominant weekly rents ranging from 3s. 2d. to 3s. 8d.

APPENDIX III.

RETAIL PRICES.

PREDOMINANT PRICES OF COFFEE, SUGAR, BACON AND EGGS IN JUNE, 1908.

Town.	Coffee, per lb.	Sugar (Loaf), per lb.	Bacon (Salted), per lb.	Eggs, per 1s.
Antwerp	7½d. to 8½d.	3d., 8½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	12, 13
Bruges	6½d. „ 7½d.	2½d. to 3d.	8½d.	16
Brussels	6½d. „ 7d.	2½d. „ 3½d.	7d.	12, 13
Charleroi	6½d. „ 8½d.	3d.	7d. to 8½d.	12, 13
Courtrai	6d. „ 7d.	3d.	6½d. „ 7d.	13 to 16
Ghent	7½d. „ 9½d.	2½d. to 3d.	7d. „ 8½d.	14
La Louvière	7½d. „ 8½d.	3d.	7½d.	10
Liège	6½d. „ 7d.	2½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	12, 13
Louvain	6½d. „ 8½d.	2½d. to 3½d.	7½d.	16
Malines	6½d. „ 8½d.	3d., 3½d.	7d. to 8½d.	12, 13
Paturages	6½d. „ 9½d.	3d. to 3½d.	8½d.	12, 13
Seraing	6½d. „ 7½d.	2½d., 3d.	7½d.	10 to 12
Tournai	8½d.	3d. to 4d.	8½d.	10 „ 12
Turnhout	6½d. to 8½d.	3d., 3½d.	6d. to 7d.	16
Verviers	6½d. „ 8½d.	2½d.	—	12, 13

PREDOMINANT PRICES OF CHEESE, BUTTER, MARGARINE AND POTATOES IN JUNE, 1908.

Town.	Cheese, Dutch, per lb.	Butter, per lb.	Margarine, per lb.	Potatoes, per 7 lb.
Antwerp	7d. to 9½d.	1s. 1d. to 1s. 2d.	7½d. to 8½d.	2½d. to 3d.
Bruges	7½d. „ 8½d.	11½d. „ 1s. 1d.	8½d.	2½d.
Brussels	7½d. „ 10½d.	1s. 1d. „ 1s. 2d.	7d. to 8½d.	3d.
Charleroi	8½d.	1s. 1d. „ 1s. 2d.	8½d. „ 8½d.	3d.
Courtrai	8½d.	1s. 0½d. „ 1s. 1d.	8½d.	3d.
Ghent	8½d. to 9½d.	1s. 0½d. „ 1s. 1d.	6½d. to 8½d.	3d.
La Louvière	7½d. „ 8½d.	1s. 2d.	8½d.	3d.
Liège	7½d.	1s. 1d.	7d. to 8½d.	2½d. to 3d.
Louvain	8½d.	11d. to 1s. 1½d.	8½d. „ 9½d.	3d.
Malines	7d. to 8½d.	1s. 1d.	7½d. „ 8½d.	2½d.
Paturages	7d. „ 10½d.	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 2d.	6d. „ 8½d.	3d.
Seraing	7d. „ 8½d.	1s. 2½d.	8½d.	3d.
Tournai	8½d. „ 10½d.	1s. 1d. to 1s. 2d.	8½d.	2½d.
Turnhout	7d. „ 8½d.	11d. to 1s. 0½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	2½d.
Verviers	—	1s. 1d.	7d.	2½d. to 3d.

PREDOMINANT PRICES OF FLOUR, BREAD, MILK, COAL AND PARAFFIN OIL IN JUNE, 1908.

Town.	Flour, Wheat, per 7 lb.	Bread, White, per 4 lb.	Milk, per quart.	Coal, per cwt.	Paraffin Oil, per gallon.
Antwerp	9½d. to 1s. 0½d.	4½d.	2½d.	1s. 1½d. to 1s. 3½d.	6½d. to 7d.
Bruges	9½d.	4½d., 4½d.	2½d.	1s. 0½d.	7d. „ 7½d.
Brussels	9½d.	4½d.	2½d.	1s. 5d.	6½d. „ 7d.
Charleroi	9½d.	4½d.	2½d.	9½d. to 1s. 0½d.	7d.
Courtrai	8½d. to 9½d.	4d. to 4½d.	2½d.	1s. 1½d. to 1s. 2½d.	6½d. to 7d.
Ghent	9½d. „ 11d.	4d. „ 4½d.	2½d.	1s. 1½d.	6d. to 7d.
La Louvière	9½d. „ 10½d.	3½d. „ 4½d.	2½d.	11½d. to 1s. 1½d.	7d.
Liège	9½d. „ 9½d.	4½d. „ 5d.	2½d.	1s. 2½d.	6½d. to 7d.
Louvain	9½d. „ 9½d.	4½d. „ 5d.	2½d.	1s. 2½d.	7½d.
Malines	9½d. „ 9½d.	4½d.	2d., 2½d.	1s. 0½d. to 1s. 2½d.	7d.
Paturages	9½d. „ 11d.	4½d.	2½d.	8½d. to 9½d.	7d.
Seraing	9½d.	5d.	2½d.	9½d.	7d.
Tournai	9½d. to 10½d.	4½d. to 5d.	2½d.	1s. 2½d.	6½d. to 7½d.
Turnhout	9½d.	5½d.	1½d.	1s. 2½d.	7d.
Verviers	9½d.	5½d.	2½d.	1s. 6½d.	7½d.

PREDOMINANT PRICES OF BEEF PER LB. IN JUNE, 1908.

Town.	Ribs.	Brisket.	Silverside.	Shin (with bone).
Antwerp	7d.	5½d.	8½d.	2½d. to 3½d.
Bruges	7d. to 7½d.	5½d. to 6d.	7½d. to 8½d.	4½d. „ 5½d.
Brussels	8½d.	4½d. „ 6d.	11d.	4½d.
Charleroi	8½d.	5½d. „ 6d.	9½d. to 11½d.	5½d.
Courtrai	7½d.	5½d.	7½d.	5½d. to 6d.
Ghent	8½d.	5½d. to 6d.	8½d.	4½d. „ 5½d.
La Louvière	7½d.	5½d.	8½d. to 11½d.	4½d.
Liège	7d. to 7½d.	5½d. to 5½d.	9½d.	4½d. to 5½d.
Louvain	7½d.	5½d. „ 5½d.	7½d.	4½d.
Malines	7d. to 7½d.	5½d. „ 6d.	7d. to 7½d.	3½d. to 4½d.
Paturages	7½d.	4½d.	7½d. „ 8½d.	5½d.
Seraing	7d.	5½d. to 5½d.	8½d. „ 9½d.	4½d. to 5½d.
Tournai	7d. to 8½d.	5½d.	8½d.	4½d. „ 5½d.
Turnhout	6d. „ 8½d.	5½d. to 6d.	6½d. to 8½d.	4d., 4½d.
Verviers	7d. „ 7½d.	4½d. „ 5½d.	7d. „ 7½d.	4½d. to 5½d.

Town.	Beef Steak.	Rump Steak.	Thick Flank.	Thin Flank.
Antwerp	11d.	—	11d.	6d.
Bruges	9½d.	9½d.	—	5½d. to 6d.
Brussels	10½d. to 11d.	1s. 0½d.	11d.	7d.
Charleroi	10½d. „ 11½d.	11½d. to 1s. 0½d.	10½d.	5½d. to 7d.
Courtrai	10½d. „ 11½d.	11½d. „ 1s. 0½d.	—	5½d. „ 7d.
Ghent	8½d.	8½d.	8½d.	5½d. „ 6½d.
La Louvière	9½ to 11½d.	11½d. to 1s. 0½d.	10½d.	7d.
Liège	10½d.	1s. 1d.	8½d. to 9½d.	5½d., 6d.
Louvain	9½d., 9½d.	9½d.	—	—
Malines	8½d.	8½d. to 10½d.	8½d. to 10½d.	4½d. to 6d.
Paturages	11½d.	—	10½d.	6d.
Seraing	8½d. to 10½d.	8½d. to 11½d.	7½d. to 9½d.	5½d. to 6½d.
Tournai	9½d. „ 11½d.	11½d. to 1s. 1d.	8½d.	7d.
Turnhout	7½d. „ 8½d.	8½d.	—	—
Verviers	10d.	10d.	10d.	4½d. to 5½d.

PREDOMINANT PRICES OF MUTTON PER LB. IN JUNE, 1908.

Town.	Leg.	Shoulder.	Breast.	Neck.		Chops.
				Best End.	Scrag End.	
Antwerp ...	9½d.	6d. to 7d.	4½d. to 5½d.	8½d.	5½d. to 7d.	8½d. to 11d.
Bruges ...	8½d.	6½d. „ 8½d.	5½d. „ 6½d.	7½d. to 9½d.	5½d. „ 7d.	8½d. „ 9½d.
Brussels ...	8½d.	6d.	4½d. to 6d.	8½d.	5½d.	9½d. to 10½d.
Charleroi ...	9½d. to 10½d.	7d. to 7½d.	5½d. „ 6d.	8½d. to 10½d.	5½d. to 7½d.	9½d. „ 10½d.
Courtrai ...	10d.	7½d.	6d.	8½d. to 11d.	5½d. to 6d.	8½d.
Ghent ...	8½d. to 9½d.	7d. to 7½d.	5½d. to 6d.	8½d.	6d.	8½d. to 9½d.
La Louvière ...	9½d. to 10½d.	7½d.	5½d. „ 6d.	9½d.	6d.	10½d.
Liège ...	9½d.	7d. to 7½d.	6d. to 6½d.	8½d. to 10½d.	4½d. to 6½d.	9½d. to 11½d.
Louvain ...	9½d.	7d. „ 7½d.	5½d. to 6d.	8½d.	6d.	8½d.
Malines... ..	8½d.	6½d. to 7d.	5½d.	7d. to 8½d.	5½d.	7½d. to 8½d.
Paturages ...	10½d.	7½d.	5½d. to 7d.	10½d.	6d. to 7½d.	10½d.
Seraing... ..	8½d. to 10½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	6d. to 7d.	7½d. to 9½d.	5½d. to 7d.	9½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Tournai ...	8½d. „ 10½d.	7d. to 8½d.	5½d. to 6d.	10½d.	5½d. „ 7d.	8½d. to 10½d.
Turnhout ...	7½d. to 8½d.	6d. „ 7½d.	4½d. to 5½d.	—	4½d.	—
Verviers ...	9½d. to 10½d.	—	4½d. „ 5½d.	9½d. to 10½d.	4½d. to 5½d.	9½d. to 10½d.

PREDOMINANT PRICES OF VEAL PER LB. IN JUNE, 1908.

Town.	Hindquarter.	Shoulder (with bone).	Ribs.	Chops.	Leg.
Antwerp ...	7½d. to 9½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	8½d. to 11d.	11d.	9½d. to 11d.
Bruges ...	8½d. to 10½d.	7½d. „ 9½d.	9½d.	10½d.	10½d. to 11d.
Brussels ...	9½d. „ 11½d.	7½d. „ 9½d.	9½d. to 10½d.	9½d. to 11½d.	9½d. to 10½d.
Charleroi ...	11½d. to 1s. 0½d.	10½d.	10½d.	11½d.	9½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Courtrai ...	9½d.	8½d. to 10½d.	10½d.	10½d. to 11½d.	10½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Ghent ...	8½d. to 9½d.	8½d.	8½d.	8½d.	8½d. to 9½d.
La Louvière... ..	10½d. „ 11½d.	8½d. to 10½d.	8½d. to 10½d.	10½d.	10½d.
Liège... ..	9½d. „ 11½d.	8½d.	8½d. „ 10½d.	9½d. to 11½d.	11d. to 1s. 0½d.
Louvain ...	8½d. „ 9½d.	7½d.	8½d.	9½d.	9½d.
Malines ...	8½d.	7d. to 8½d.	8½d.	8½d.	8½d.
Paturages ...	11½d. to 1s. 0½d.	10½d.	9½d. to 11d.	9½d. to 11½d.	10½d. to 1s. 0½d.
Seraing ...	9½d. to 11d.	7d. to 8½d.	7½d. „ 9½d.	8½d. „ 10½d.	—
Tournai ...	8½d. to 10½d.	7½d. „ 10½d.	9½d.	10½d.	10½d. to 11d.
Turnhout ...	8½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	8½d. to 10½d.	8½d.
Verviers ...	9½d. „ 10½d.	6½d.	9½d. „ 10½d.	9½d. „ 10½d.	9½d. „ 10½d.

PREDOMINANT PRICES OF PORK PER LB. IN JUNE, 1908.

Town.	Leg.	Foreloin.	Belly.	Chops.
Antwerp ...	8½d. to 10½d.	8½d. to 10½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	8½d. to 10½d.
Bruges ...	7½d.	7d. „ 8½d.	6d. „ 7d.	8½d.
Brussels ...	8½d. to 9½d.	8½d. „ 9½d.	6d. „ 8½d.	9½d. to 10½d.
Charleroi ...	8½d. „ 9½d.	8½d. „ 10½d.	7½d. „ 8½d.	10½d.
Courtrai ...	8½d.	7½d.	7d.	8½d.
Ghent ...	7½d. to 8½d.	7½d.	6d. to 7½d.	7½d. to 8½d.
La Louvière ...	8½d.	8½d.	7½d.	9½d. „ 10½d.
Liège ...	9½d. to 10½d.	8½d. to 9½d.	6d. to 7½d.	8½d. „ 10½d.
Louvain ...	9½d.	8½d.	7½d. „ 8½d.	8½d.
Malines ...	7d. to 8½d.	7½d. to 8½d.	6d. „ 7d.	7½d. to 8½d.
Paturages ...	8½d. „ 10½d.	10½d.	7d.	10½d. „ 11½d.
Seraing ...	8½d.	8½d.	7d. to 7½d.	8½d.
Tournai ...	8½d. to 10½d.	8½d.	7d. „ 8½d.	8½d. to 10½d.
Turnhout ...	7d. „ 7½d.	7d. to 8½d.	6d.	7½d. to 8½d.
Verviers (March, 1909) ...	10½d.	9½d.	—	10½d.

APPENDIX IV.

SPECIMEN WORKSHOP AND COLLIERY RULES, AND CONDITIONS OF MUNICIPAL EMPLOYMENT.

- (i.) *Workshop Rules in the Engineering Trade at Tournai.*
- (ii.) *Colliery Regulations ("Centre" Coalfield).*
- (iii.) *Regulations relative to Minimum Wages and Maximum Hours of Labour in the execution of Public Works at Ghent (May 13th, 1896).*
- (iv.) *Regulations applying to Workpeople employed on Public Works at Charleroi (Extracts).*
- (v.) *Regulations applying to Workpeople employed on Public Works at Tournai (Extracts).*

(i.) *Workshop Rules in the Engineering Trade at Tournai.*

1.—No workman can be engaged unless he possess a book or certificate from the workshop in which he was last employed. Children and lads must conform to the provisions of the law of December 13th, 1889, and be in possession of the book required by Article 10 of that law.

2.—The signal for the opening of the workshop is given 10 minutes and 2 minutes before the time of going in. The door is closed punctually at the hour. No one is entitled to remain in the workshops during meal-times. In certain cases permission may be given for breakfast to be taken in the workshops. No preparation for departure is allowed before the hour has struck and the signal has been given.

3.—Work is reckoned by the half-hour and paid for on the fourth day after the (completed) fortnight.

4.—The working day is 11 hours, divided as follows:—from 6 a.m. to 8.30 a.m., from 9 a.m. till noon, from 1 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.

Overtime is paid at the same rate as ordinary time.

On Mondays and on days following a holiday the hours are as follows:—from 7 a.m. to 8.30 a.m., from 9 a.m. till noon, from 1 p.m. till 4 p.m.

The present article may be modified according to the time of year. In this case a notice will be posted on the door of the shop and workmen will be informed the evening before.

As regards children and lads employed from time to time in the workshop, the present article shall be applicable only within the limits of the law of December 13th, 1889.

5.—Every workman shall receive a ticket showing his number. On his entrance he shall hang this ticket in its proper place on a board placed for this purpose at the entrance of the workshop, and on his departure he shall take the ticket away. Except in the case of unforeseen circumstances a workman may not absent himself from work. Any workman arriving late in the morning shall not be allowed to enter before 9 o'clock.

Unexplained absence for more than a quarter of a day shall be punished by a fine equivalent to a fifth of the daily wages of the offender.

6.—It is strictly forbidden to make any collections whatever, to organise lotteries, or to affix notices of any kind in the workshops.

7.—Workmen are expressly forbidden to manufacture or take away tools or any other articles for their personal use under penalty of being dismissed and reported to the police or to the *Conseil de Prud'hommes*.

8.—All workmen are held pecuniarily responsible for the tools entrusted or delivered to them by the storekeeper.

9.—Strangers and dismissed workmen are forbidden to enter the workshop.

10.—No workman is allowed to leave the establishment without permission during the hours of work.

11.—A workman may discharge himself without giving notice beforehand, and similarly a dismissed workman shall leave the workshop immediately he receives notice.

An exception can be made to this rule in the event of agreement between the workman and the foreman, but such cases must be considered exceptional, and may not be cited by either of the parties as a breach of the rule.

The wages account of a workman who is dismissed or leaves voluntarily shall be settled on the same day.

12.—Workmen are strictly forbidden:—1. To use machines or tools other than those which have been especially assigned to them for their work. 2. To readjust belting which has fallen. A workman is specially detailed for this duty. 3. To enter the workshop and remain there in a state of intoxication. Every breach of the present regulations will be punished by a fine. The sums received in fines will be paid into a mutual assistance fund for the benefit of the workmen.

13. Every workman who meets with an accident while at work shall conform to the special regulations which apply in such a case.

14.—Every workman receives a copy of the present rules at the time of his engagement, and the fact of his entering service shall be regarded as implying his acceptance of them.

The law of December 13th, 1889, is displayed in the workshops, and the present rules are deposited in the records of the *Conseil de Prud'hommes* of Tournai conformably with Article II. of the said law.

(ii.) *Colliery Regulations ("Centre" Coalfield).*

Abstract of Regulations based on the law of June 15th, 1896, as to Workshop Regulations; on the law of March 10th, 1900, as to the Labour Contract; and on the law of December 24th, 1903, as to Compensation for Accidents during work.

General Regulations.

Art. 2.—A workman may not engage himself for a class of work in which he is not efficient. He may be subjected on his engagement to a medical examination in the presence of an agent of the Company. If he be in receipt of a pension for injuries, he must make a declaration to that effect under pain of dismissal. Any workman who shall have concealed some corporal defect which diminishes his capacity may be dismissed at once. In the event of accident, he must submit himself to the treatment of the Company's special medical staff. The Company disclaim all responsibility for any relapse caused by the workman's own negligence while under treatment. Every workman must notify the Company, without delay, and without quitting the works, of any injury received by him while at work.

Art. 3.—In the event of sickness or injury not received while at work, the workman must be treated by one of the Company's medical staff, chosen by himself; 75 centimes is deducted per month from the wages of each workman for payment of these services. A Fund is established for assisting families in the case of sickness or injury not caused while at work, or of injury received while at work causing incapacity for not more than a week. This Fund is created by a deduction of half per cent. on wages, by the produce of fines, and by donations which may be made from time to time.

Art. 4.—The Company is affiliated to the "General Accident Assurance Fund of the Coal-mining Industry of the districts of Charleroi and the Lower Sambre."

Art. 7.—Every workman, on being engaged by the Company, shall deposit a sum equal to five days' wages as guarantee of the fulfilment of his engagement.

Art. 8.—The regular holidays are Sundays and general holidays, the feast of Ste. Barbe and the day after; also the Monday and Tuesday of the local *Kermesse*, if notice be given.

In the case of lack of orders or material, accidents to machinery or shafts, inadequate attendance of workmen, or any other case of paramount necessity, it may be necessary to stop work entirely or in part without giving compensation. Similar cases are the overhauling and repairing of machinery and engines, special work above or below ground, and the despatch of the coal raised. In cases of paramount necessity certain workmen may be selected for duty on holidays, in which case they may take their holidays the following week if so disposed. When absent owing to illness or other unavoidable causes, the workman is required to inform his immediate superior on the first day of absence; if not he shall be considered, after an absence of two days, as dismissed, and shall forfeit the deposit referred to in Art. 7 by the application of Art. 12.

Art. 9.—The payment of wages for the previous fortnight shall take place on the 7th and 22nd of each month, or on the day before when these dates fall on a holiday; the deductions authorised by law for subscriptions to Provident Assistance and Medical Funds, fines or compensations, supply of tools, blasting powder, oil, rents of houses and plots of land, damage to tools and articles entrusted to workmen, and advances of pay shall be made on these days.

Art. 11.—A fortnight's notice shall be given on either side; it shall be notified on the last workday of the fortnight to the head office.

Art. 12.—Sets out the reasons for instant dismissal. A workman may be dismissed at any time on compensation equivalent to five days' wages being paid to him.

Arts. 13 and 14.—Relate to fines and deductions. Fines shall not exceed one-fifth of the daily wages, and shall be paid into the Assistance Fund of the Company. Deductions from wages as compensation for defective work, etc., shall belong to the Company.

Art. 15.—Provides that notice of penalties incurred shall be made to the parties concerned on the same day, or as soon as possible afterwards.

Art. 16.—States that the sanitary regulations in force are those contained in the general Mining Regulations of April 28th, 1884, with some additions.

Art. 17.—Provides that foremen and others shall render every possible aid in case of an accident.

Underground Work and Surface Work connected therewith.

Art. 20.—The distribution of lamps for the day shifts commences at 4.45 a.m. and ends at 5.25 a.m. The cage is at the service of the day shift at 5 a.m. for the descent, which continues until the last workman, who has received his lamp, has descended; and at 3 p.m. for the ascent of all the workmen of this shift by cages-full, in the order of the completion of their work. In the same way, the cage is at the service of the night shift at 3 p.m. for the descent, and at 1 a.m. for the ascent.

These hours do not apply to the descent of young workmen protected by law, nor to certain classes of workmen connected with preparatory work, the upkeep of the shafts, etc. Breakdowns of machinery, or cases of paramount necessity may retard the hours indicated above. The time of work underground shall not be shortened on account of such delay. In the event of an accident during work, the workmen shall obey the orders to ascend given to them by the foremen, and those at work, whether above or below ground, shall receive wages in proportion to the time spent on work.

Art. 21.—The intervals for rest cannot be fixed either as to duration, or as to the time at which they may be taken, and they shall be fixed solely by consideration of the circumstances, natural or accidental, under which work may be interrupted without hindering the process of extraction.

Art. 22.—Coal hewers and underground stone workers are paid by piece and contract rates; labourers, loaders, trammers, etc. receive a fixed time wage varying with the nature of their work, their age and strength, and shall carry out work ordered by the foremen of a maximum duration of 12 hours daily. Every person employed by the Company engages to carry out any work he may be ordered to do.

Art. 23.—Hewers are paid by the square metre of surface excavated; measurements are made by chain or by compass if necessary, in the presence of the workmen and under their supervision, unless they shall have absented themselves. The width of the cuttings is taken at least twice a week, and oftener if thought necessary. The progress of the cuttings is measured at the end of each fortnight by means of the chain. Stone-work is paid by the running metre according to dimensions indicated, or in exceptional cases by a measure agreed upon, and the measurement is made by means of a chain at the end of each fortnight, simultaneously with the measurement of the work on the seam, provided no objection be raised. When the usual average of cutting has not been reached, the rate of wages shall be diminished proportionally. In this case the contract shall terminate whenever the management shall think fit.

Compensation or extra wages in payment for specially difficult work are granted and withdrawn on the spot by simple verbal notification made by the chief engineer or his deputy to the parties concerned.

Every change in rates of wages for contract work shall come into effect a week after notice given; if the new rate is refused the workmen shall be paid at the usual daily rate of workmen of the same class and employed according to the requirements of the various services.

Every workman paid by contract rates may on any day apply for a change in wages by means of a week's notice given to the chief foreman of his department.

Piece-rates of wages paid by special written and signed contracts may not be increased or decreased before the completion of the work executed in accordance with the terms of the contract.

Repairing Shops and Surface Work other than extraction, sorting and the manufacture of Coke.

Art. 24.—The working-day begins at 6 a.m. and ends at 6 p.m.

Art. 25.—The intervals for rest are a quarter of an hour at 8 a.m., half an hour at noon, and a quarter of an hour at 4 p.m.

Art. 26.—Workmen in the shops are paid by the hour except for certain work which is given out to contract.

Manufacture of Coke and Patent Fuel.

Art. 28.—The working-day begins as a rule at 6 a.m. but sooner or later according to the requirements of the work. The day's work of each person employed shall not exceed twelve hours save in exceptional cases.

Art. 29.—There shall be three intervals for rest, one of one hour and two others of a quarter of an hour each. These intervals are not fixed for special times; in determining their duration allowance shall be made for natural interruptions in the work.

Art. 31.—Workmen are paid by day, piece, and contract rates.

Art. 32.—Regulations concerning the hours of work of women, lads and children are contained in articles, 4, 6, and 7 of the Royal Decree of 15th March, 1893.

Order relating to the Safety of persons employed.

Arts. 33-39.—Provide for proper precautions being taken in using the cages.

Arts. 40-49.—Deal with the maintenance of ventilation, the carrying of naked lights, and the precautions to be taken when explosives are used.

Arts. 50-58.—Deal with the precautions to be taken in the management of trucks and the passage of miners along inclined planes in the workings.

Arts. 59-62.—Deal with timbering and the precautions to be taken to ensure the sides and roofs of the galleries being properly supported.

Art. 63.—Deals with the methods of ascent in the cages and the duties of those in charge of the winding machinery, and orders the use of a safety belt by all miners.

Arts. 63-64.—Provide that the workmen must wear a leather cap at all times when below ground, and forbids interference with any mechanical appliances other than those entrusted to the workman himself.

Arts. 66-71.—Provide for the proper use of signals in ascending and descending the shaft, and for proper caution in those workmen who deal with machinery in motion.

Arts. 72-73.—Contain special regulations to ensure health, safety and good conduct.

(iii.) *Regulations relative to Minimum Wages and Maximum Hours of Labour in the execution of Public Works at Ghent (May 13, 1896).*

1.—In all specifications for public works, or works towards which communal subsidies are granted, the minimum wages to be paid by the contractors to the various classes of workmen employed shall be stated.

2.—The specifications shall also show the proportion of improvers, viz. apprentices under 20 years of age, and of old or decrepit workmen—which proportion the contractors may not increase—and the minimum wages to be paid to them.

3.—A representative of the Communal Executive (*i.e.*, Mayor and Aldermen) shall have the right to be present at the payment of wages, which must take place every week.

The contractor shall keep a special register, the sheets of which shall be numbered, in which he shall write every week opposite the names of the workmen employed in work done for the town, the wages payable to them.

The initials of the contractor, placed at the bottom of each sheet, shall be taken to indicate that these wages have been paid by him.

4.—Work shall not be permitted in the Town work-yards on Sundays and official holidays except in cases of urgency or with the consent of the Communal Executive.

5.—Work done on the usual working days during the usual hours of work shall be paid for as ordinary work.

6.—Work done on Sundays or holidays or out of the usual hours of work shall be paid for as special work.

7.—Usual hours shall be between 6 a.m. and 7.30 p.m., and shall not exceed ten.

8.—Special work shall be paid for at the rate of time and a half.

9.—The contractor shall be held responsible to the Communal Administration for the strict observance, on the part of the sub-contractors, of the above regulations.

10.—The contractor shall be required to post the preceding regulations in the workshop or work-yard and to see that they remain so posted during the whole period occupied by the work, in a place appointed for that purpose by the representative of the Communal Executive.

11.—The Communal Executive shall have the right to exact from a contractor for any breach of these regulations a penalty of from 5 to 100 francs.

It may also declare the offending contractor excluded from undertaking municipal work for a stated period.

The clause relative to these penalties shall be inserted in every schedule of conditions.

12.—The Communal Executive shall see that similar stipulations are made in the specifications for works subsidised by the town.

13.—A table of wages for all occupations shall be adopted by the Communal Council and annexed to the present regulations.

These minimum wages shall be fixed according to the rates usually paid in the town.

14.—In drawing up the table referred to in Art. 13 and fixing the proportion of improvers, etc., referred to in Art. 2, the Communal Council shall take the advice of competent associations, notably the Council of Industry and Labour.

(iv.) Regulations applying to Workpeople employed on Public Works at Charleroi.

(Extracts.)

Art. 35.—Workmen employed or provided by the contractors must be strong, vigorous, and capable in their particular occupations. Contractors are obliged to dismiss, on the written demand of the Authorities, all workmen who do not possess these qualities.

Art. 48.—The contractor must pay his workmen for each hour of work at the minimum rate of wages adopted by the Permanent Committee.

The contractor shall furnish the authorities with the wages sheet certified by him as correct; failure, on the part of the contractor to produce this account in the last two days of the fortnight, shall entail a penalty of 10 francs for each day's delay.

When it shall be proved that a workman has been paid at a rate lower than the fixed minimum, the contractor shall be obliged to refund the difference to the workman, and he shall also be liable to a fine equal to this sum, but not less than 50 francs.

In the case of a repetition of the offence the minimum amount of the fine shall be increased to 100 francs, and the contractor may also be excluded in future from municipal contracts.

In special cases, of which the Communal Executive (i.e., Mayor and Aldermen) shall be the judge; the employment of workmen who, on account of their age or from some other special cause, do not come up to the usual standard of efficiency, may be authorized under certain conditions.

The contractor shall insure his workmen against the accidents and risks usual in their occupations or trades, under pain of a fine of 10 francs for each workman not insured, for each day of delay in completing this formality.

Whenever required by the agent of the communal authorities, he shall prove by the production of premium receipts and policies that he has faithfully fulfilled his obligations in this respect.

(v.) Regulations applying to Workpeople employed on Public Works at Tournai.

(Extracts.)

Art. 56.—The Works Department shall have power to reject workmen whose capacities do not entitle them to the prescribed rate of wages. It shall also have power to dismiss workmen for insubordination, drunkenness or dishonesty.

Workmen whose dismissal the Works Department shall consider necessary on account of inefficiency, or for the other reasons above stated, shall be dismissed immediately by the contractor, who shall be subject to a fine of 20 francs per day as long as such workmen are retained, and shall be responsible for any loss or damage caused by negligence or bad work on their part.

Art. 57.—The contractor, whenever requested by the authorities, shall provide, both for piece work and day work, the number of workmen indicated in the working rules, each possessing according to his class the qualities required to insure good and sound work.

The labourers and apprentices employed must be at least 16 years of age, and of sound constitution.

Art. 59.—Contractors shall pay the workmen by the day and not by the job. They shall at all times supervise their workmen, whether they be working by the day or per square metre. Whenever required by the Works Department they shall be present at the works to accompany the officials inspecting the works.

Art. 78.—The rate of payment indicated in the schedule of conditions is for a day of 10 hours of actual work.

Art. 88.—If it shall be found necessary to work during the night in case of urgency, the contractor shall conform with the directions prescribed by the Works Department. In this event time and a half shall be reckoned, between the hours of 8 p.m. and 5 a.m., if the authorities are satisfied with the work done.

Art. 89.—In the case of works connected with wells, cisterns or cess-pools, as well as repairs to towers and steeples, the workmen engaged in dangerous portions of the work shall be paid at one and a half times the usual rate per hour. The increase does not apply to the fitting of cisterns.

Art. 90.—Contractors shall be compelled to insure, at their own expense, without the Town and its officials being in any way liable, all workmen, labourers, and apprentices employed by them in works for the Municipal Administration, against all accidents and disablement, resulting from such works. They shall, at their own responsibility and risk, take all measures of precaution necessary to ensure the health of their workpeople or agents, and their protection against accidents. Consequently they shall conform, in executing their contracts, with all prescriptions and measures of precaution and security imposed by the law of July 2nd, 1899, and with those of the general regulations of March 30th, 1905, relative to the measures to be taken to ensure the health and safety of the workmen in industrial and commercial enterprises, which come under the law of December 24th, 1903, as well as with the special measures enjoined by the Royal Decree of March 31st, 1905, for adoption in the building trade, civil engineering works, and earth works in general.

APPENDIX V.

WORKPEOPLE'S PENSIONS AND BENEFITS.

- (i.) Rules of the Old Age Pension Fund established for the Leather Trade at Tournai.
- (ii.) "Le Bon Grain" Co-operative Society—Regulations relative to Benefits.

(i.) Rules of the Old Age Pension Fund established for the Leather Trade at Tournai.

Art. 1.—A mutual benefit society is founded at Tournai, January 28th, 1906, under the title of "Pension Fund of the Leather Exchange of Tournai," for the employees and workmen of tanners and leather merchants of the canton of Tournai connected with the Tournai Leather Exchange. It is the object of this society to assist its active members to become members of the Pension and Insurance Funds guaranteed by the State.

Art. 2.—(a.) The society is composed of active members, patrons, and honorary members. The Council decides upon the admission of members.

(b.) The active members are those who share in the benefits of the society. By the mere fact of their admission and payment of a subscription they undertake (1) to conform with the rules and regulations of the society, (2) to accept the regulations and scale of charges of the Pension Fund guaranteed by the State.

(c.) Patrons and honorary members are those who by their gifts, advice, and subscriptions contribute to the prosperity of the society without participating in the advantages which it affords. They have the right to be present at meetings but have no voice in the deliberations except when they form part of the council of administration.

Art. 3.—In order to be admitted to the position of active member it is necessary: (a) To be an employee or workman of a tanner or leather merchant of the canton of Tournai; (b) To live within the district covered by the society; and (c) To be of good character.

A minor under 18 years of age and not independent, must previously obtain the consent of the person who stands to him *in loco parentis* or of his guardian. He has no right to vote at the meetings of the society until he has reached the age of 18 or achieved his independence.

A married woman may be admitted or remain a member unless her husband shall object. She must produce the consent of her husband in order to become a shareholder, and to join the Insurance Society.

Art. 4.—Active members shall pay a weekly contribution fixed as follows:—(a) 20 centimes (10.40 francs per annum) for those whose weekly wage does not exceed 18 francs. (b) 25 centimes (13 francs per annum) for those whose weekly wage is not less than 18 francs.

Voluntary contributions may be made to any amount whatever. Members connected with the Insurance Fund must pay every month a sum equal to one-twelfth of the annual premium payable according to the regulations. The rules of the society shall determine the manner in which the subscriptions shall be collected.

Art. 5.—(a.) Patrons and honorary members are admitted without regard to age, dwelling-place, or other condition. They shall pay an annual subscription the amount of which is left to their own discretion. The Leather Exchange of Tournai, in the capacity of honorary member, shall pay the quota voted by the general meeting of members; nevertheless, the Leather Exchange reserves to itself the right to curtail or even discontinue its quota. (b.) Patrons and honorary members may make payments for the benefit of such active members as they choose. (c.) Similarly the society may receive from donors payments for the benefit of named members.

[Articles 6, 7, and 8, relate to withdrawals and dismissals.]

Art. 9.—The affairs of the society shall be managed by a council, comprising one or more honorary presidents, one president, one or more vice-presidents, a secretary, an assistant secretary, a treasurer, and four commissioners. An assistant treasurer may be appointed if circumstances require. All these offices shall be honorary. Decisions of the council shall be governed by an absolute majority of the votes of the members present.

Art. 10.—Members of the council shall be elected for six years at the general meeting by the patrons, honorary members, and active members of at least 18 years of age, or independent. They shall be chosen from among the patrons and honorary members, except the commissioners who shall be active members (one being an employer and two being workmen). All members of the council shall conform to the conditions of eligibility required by Art. 12 of the law of June 23rd, 1894.

Art. 11.—One half of the council shall be re-elected every three years; the members to retire shall be chosen by lot. Retiring members shall be eligible for re-election.

The replacement of administrators, deceased or retired, shall take place at the general meeting next ensuing; the new administrator thus elected shall fulfil the duties of the one he replaces.

[Arts. 12 and 13 relate to the duties of members of the council.]

Art. 14.—The council shall meet at least once a quarter, and at any other time if summoned by the president. The chief business at these meetings shall be the verification of the books of the secretary, the accounts of the treasurer, and the payments made during the preceding quarter.

Art. 15.—Every year, during the month of February, a general meeting shall be held, to which all active members, patrons, and honorary members shall be summoned. The treasurer shall make a complete report on the position, accounts, and operations of the society up to and including December 31st. After the statement of accounts has been approved, the meeting shall proceed to the partial re-election of the members of the council of administration.

Further, the president shall have the right to summon an extraordinary general meeting if he consider it necessary. He must do so within 15 days, if so requested by the council or on a written request, with reasons given, signed by at least a quarter of the active members.

Art. 16.—(a.) The moneys received by the society shall be paid either into the members' fund or into a special fund. The members' fund is composed of payments made by the active members to the Pension Fund or to the Insurance Fund and, further, of payments made by donors to the account of a member named. (Art. 5.)

(b.) The special fund of the society is composed of:—(1) Subscriptions of patrons and honorary members. (2) Private gifts and legacies. (3) Grants made by public authorities, including the annual subsidies referred to in Art. 12 of the law of May 10th, 1900, with the exception of the bonuses of encouragement granted *pro rata* on payments made to the Pension Fund, which shall be distributed amongst the pension accounts of the active members, according to the regulations subject to which they have been granted; (4) Various receipts, including those from the fines provided for by the standing orders of the society; (5) Interest on the special fund itself.

The special fund must be deposited in the name of the society in the National Savings Bank, or be invested either in Belgian State funds or other securities guaranteed by the State, or in Belgian provincial or communal stock conformably with Art. 18 of the law of June 23rd, 1894.

Art. 17.—After payment of the expenses of management the council shall determine every year the amount to be deducted from the special fund for payment into the Pension or Insurance Fund, for the benefit of the active members who have regularly fulfilled their obligations, and have been members for at least one year.

Contrary to the preceding paragraph, in the first year and on that occasion only, the funds derived from private donations shall be distributed among the members three months after the date of the founding of the society.

The council shall also have power to decide that a part of the sum so distributed shall be specially granted to active members who have distinguished themselves by their thrift.

If the sum to be distributed does not permit of a payment of at least one franc on each account, the distribution may be made by order of seniority. The members to whom a share has been granted shall not participate in any further distribution until all other members shall have received a grant.

Art. 18.—The funds may not under any circumstances be used for any purpose other than that to which they are expressly assigned by the regulations.

Art. 19.—Subscriptions and voluntary contributions of members are to be paid into a Savings Bank account, pending the time of payment into the Pension Fund. Every three months (in the first fortnights of March, June, September, and December) the sums due, which must in each case represent an exact number of francs, shall be paid into the members' pension accounts.

Art. 20.—The individual pension books of the Fund shall be deposited with the treasurer.

Art. 21.—The members shall specify:—(1) The age at which they desire payment of the pension (from 55 to 65 years); (2) The mode of payment desired (*i.e.*, a lump sum paid out, or capital invested for the benefit of their heirs or legatees).

Art. 22.—At the request of a member the council shall take steps either to repay to the insured person, after he has entered into the enjoyment of his pension, the amount of the redemption value of the capital reserve, or to acquire for him, upon the present value of the capital reserved, a temporary pension until his entrance into enjoyment of the deferred pension.

Art. 23.—When a member is in one of the positions specified in Art. 50 of the law of March 16th, 1865, under which he can demand the pension before the usual age, the council shall take the necessary steps to effect this conformably with Chapter IV of the Royal Decree of June 21st, 1868.

Art. 24.—On the decease of an active member the council shall take the steps necessary for the payment to the heirs of the sum of the 25 francs allowed from the Pension Fund for the funeral expenses of members whose poverty is established, and who shall have died after entering into enjoyment of their pension, and also for the repayment of moneys paid as capital to be invested for the benefit of the heirs or legatees of the deceased. The subscriptions and voluntary contributions of the deceased which have not been deposited in the Pension Fund, shall be remitted to his heirs or legatees.

Art. 25.—Every active member may execute a life-insurance policy in which he may specify according to his discretion:—(a.) The person or persons to whom the assured capital shall be paid by the Insurance Fund. (b.) Whether the insurance is to be arranged with or without a medical examination. (c.) Whether the insurance is to be "endowment" or for life. In case of an endowment insurance, he

shall state the term of insurance, whether 10, 15, 20 or 25 years, or the age at which the insurance shall expire, viz., 50, 60, or 65 years, and in case of whole life insurance the age at which the payment of premiums shall cease in the event of survival, viz., 50, 60, or 65 years.

The payments made by members to the Insurance Fund, possible subscriptions from donors (Art. 5, § c.), and the sums allocated by the Council (Art. 17) shall be placed to the credit of the members until the time fixed by the policy at which the treasurer shall pay the insurance premium. At the request of the beneficiary, the council of administration of the society shall take the necessary steps to obtain the redemption value of the insured capital conformably with the resolutions made by the general council of the National Savings Bank Pensions Fund, June 25th, 1891, approved by Royal Decree, dated July 6th, 1891 (Art. 10), 4th June, 1896, approved by Royal Decree dated June 16th, 1896 (Art. 14), and July 27th, 1899, approved by Royal Decree of December 4th, 1899 (Art. 15).

On the decease of a member who is assured, the council shall explain to the beneficiaries the formalities to be observed in order to obtain payment of the insured capital.

The subscriptions and voluntary contributions of a deceased member, which are intended for the Insurance Fund and which have not been credited to it, shall be remitted to his heirs or legatees.

(ii.) "Le Bon Grain" Co-operative Society, Morlanwelz-Mariemont.

Regulations relative to Benefits.

(Extracts from Articles of Association.)

The "Bon Grain" society, established in 1891, carries on a flour mill, a bakery, a brewery and a vinegar manufactory. Although the undertaking is in form a limited liability company, its operations are those of a co-operative society, the profits being distributed either in money bonuses or in pensions or other benefits. The following regulations apply to the benefits granted:—

Pension Fund.

Art. 52.—Only members and check-book holders are entitled to pensions.

Art. 53.—All, rich and poor alike, are entitled to share the benefits of the Pension Fund, but the committee, nevertheless, request the rich to waive their claims in favour of the workers and the poor.

Art. 54.—The Pension Fund is composed of 85 per cent. of the profits of the "Bon Grain" after payment of bonuses.

Art. 55.—The pensions commenced on January 1st, 1897, before which date receipts were paid into the reserve pension fund. From January 1st, 1897, subject to any contrary decision of the committee, the reserve pension fund. From January 1st, 1897, subject to any contrary decision of the committee, at least 10 per cent. of the profits of the past financial year shall be paid into the reserve pension fund.

Art. 56.—Claims for pensions must be addressed to the director of the "Bon Grain" before January 1st. Claims which reach him after that date are deferred till the following year.

Art. 57.—Every member shall obtain his pension on January 1st, of the year which follows the completion of his sixtieth year, provided that he have regularly consumed the Society's bread, flour, and beer during the previous five years without interruption. (Members receive duplicate tickets which they may give to relatives or friends, and goods bought by the latter enhance the members' pensions, but the holders of these tickets themselves receive the half-yearly bonuses).

Art. 58.—The member shall enjoy a pension proportionate to the resources of the Fund, and to the number of loaves and hectolitres of beer purchased by him. Membership of a Christian association is not obligatory, but the pensioner who is a member of a workmen's Christian society shall obtain an increase of pension proportionate to the number of his tickets of attendance. The pension committee each year shall fix the value of the tickets of attendance in imaginary loaves. A member who purchases food for himself and such members of his family as live in the same house, exclusively from the "Bon Grain," may have his contribution supplemented by a sum sufficient to assure a minimum of 50 francs per annum. Moneys so raised in advance, in order to assure this minimum of 50 francs, shall be made good during the ensuing year, as soon as it is possible to do so in consequence of rights acquired. The minimum pension of 50 francs shall be raised to 80 francs after 10 years' enjoyment of the pension.

Art. 59.—Every woman, whether widow or spinster, who has personally been a member of the "Bon Grain" for at least five years, shall obtain the whole pension if she fulfil the other conditions required.

Art. 60.—Widows whose husbands have not been pensioners, must hold the certificate of membership in their own name for a period of five years, before being entitled to the pension. In every case the goods purchased before the death of the husband shall count in calculating the pension.

The wife of a deceased pensioner shall continue to enjoy one half of the pension of the husband, provided, in every case, that she is at least 60 years of age. The same number of tickets of attendance as her husband obtained in the last year of his life shall be placed to her credit each year. The minimum of 50 francs mentioned above is reduced to 25 francs, and the minimum of 80 francs to 40 francs.

Art. 61.—In calculating the benefits given, the agents of the Society who sell bread or beer are considered to have bought 600 grammes of bread each day for each person living in their house. These agents shall not be permitted to obtain duplicates of their check-books.

Art. 62.—Before being allowed a pension the member must furnish a birth certificate.

Art. 63.—If a member leave his house and reside in a commune in which the bread of the "Bon Grain" is not obtainable, he shall remain in possession of the rights acquired up to the day of his departure. If a pensioner cease to supply himself with the produce of the "Bon Grain" during a half year he shall forfeit his right to a pension.

Art. 64.—The payment of pensions takes place every three months on the presentation of a certificate that the pensioner is still alive.

Art. 65.—On the death of a pensioner the pension to be paid to the heirs shall not extend to the month in which the death took place, but shall cease on the last day of the preceding month.

Art. 66.—The committee shall remit 25 francs to the family of a member whose funeral has taken place according to the rites of the Roman Church. The family shall still enjoy this benefit, even if the member be connected with a society which pays the funeral expenses. The funeral expenses of a woman to whom her husband's pension has reverted must be borne by the family.

Assistance Fund.

Art. 67.—Another provident society is affiliated to the "Bon Grain," viz., an assistance fund, established for the benefit of sick or injured members, certified by a doctor to be incapable of work.

The "Bon Grain" grants assistance consisting of loaves, in proportion to the amount previously consumed, to the widow and children on the death of a member who has been connected with the Assistance Society for at least five years without "interruption."

Art. 68.—Membership of this society is optional. Members of the "Bon Grain" are therefore not compelled to join.

Art. 69.—In order to enjoy the advantages of this society, the member shall authorize the committee to deduct three francs from the sum which is remitted to him at the end of each half-year.

Art. 70.—Every member who has been connected with the Assistance Society for at least three months, receives in the case of incapacity for work:—One loaf a day during the first quarter; one loaf every two days during the second quarter; one loaf every three days during the third quarter; one loaf every four days during the fourth quarter; one loaf every five days during the fifth quarter; one loaf every six days during the sixth quarter; and one loaf a week if the incapacity be permanent.

To be entitled to all these advantages a member must reply "yes" to the question "Are you a member of the Assistance Society?" which is printed on the envelope and counterfoil of the half-yearly bonus coupon. Every member who neglects to reply "yes" on the envelope on February 1st, and August 1st of each year, shall be considered to have resigned and, from these dates, shall forfeit all his rights to assistance.

No new member has any right to assistance until three months after his admission.

Art. 71.—If the sickness last only three days, no assistance is granted. If it last 10 days, the assistance is granted as from the fourth day, i.e. seven loaves. If it last more than 10 days, the assistance is granted as from the first day, i.e. 11 days, 11 loaves, and so on. In the case of injury, bread is given from the day after the accident.

Incapacity for work occurring within less than six months after the resumption of work following a previous incapacitation, is considered to be a continuation of the former incapacitation, so far as the right to a supply of bread is concerned.

The orders are sent by post immediately on the receipt of the medical certificate of recovery. If the sickness last longer than a month, the orders shall be remitted at the end of each month, on written request to this effect previously sent to the Director.

Art. 72.—The amount of assistance given may be increased or diminished according to the number of members in receipt of assistance and the state of the Fund.

Art. 73.—Assistance ceases when a member has reached the age of 60, inasmuch as all members over 60 years of age are regarded as being pensioners of the "Bon Grain."

Art. 74.—Any member who shall be considered to profit illegitimately from the advantages of the Assistance Fund, shall be dismissed from the "Bon Grain" Society.

Art. 75.—The sick member shall be visited frequently by the bread deliverers, or by inspectors sent by the Director.

Art. 76.—A member shall forfeit his rights to relief from the Assistance Fund if he be found in a state of drunkenness, or engaged in work of any description, or in a place of amusement.

APPENDIX VI.

LAWS AND REGULATIONS RELATIVE TO THE PREPARATION AND SALE OF FOOD

- (i) *General Laws and Regulations relative to the Preparation and Sale of Food.*
- (ii) *Regulations relative to the Abattoir, Sale of Meat, &c. at Courtrai.*

- (i) *General Laws and Regulations relative to the Preparation and Sale of Food.*

MEAT.

Extracts from Law of August 4th, 1890.

Art. I.—§ 5. Butchers' meat shall not be allowed either to be sold or exposed for sale, unless certified by inspection to be fit for consumption.

§ 6. In the case of fresh meat this inspection should be particularly directed to the internal organs of the animals.

§ 7. For this purpose there may be imposed on the parties concerned a tax not exceeding the cost of inspection; the rate shall be determined either by the Government, or by the Communal Council, subject to the Royal assent.

§ 8. All other charges for the inspection of butchers' meat, especially the charge for double-stamping (*double estampille*), shall be prohibited after the date fixed by royal decree.

Law of December 30th, 1895.

Art. I.—Fresh butchers' meat from horses, asses and mules, is not allowed entrance unless the respiratory organs are attached. Prepared or preserved meat of these animals is not allowed entrance under any conditions.

Art. II.—Art. 1 of the law of August 4th, 1890, relating to the adulteration of articles of food, is extended by the following clause:—"In communes which exact a second inspection of imported fresh or prepared butchers' meat taken from animals killed in a public slaughter-house, the sanitary service of which is in charge of a veterinary surgeon, the Government shall have power to subject this second inspection to such conditions as may be judged necessary for safeguarding the freedom of trade."

Art. III.—Paragraph 7 of the above-mentioned article is extended as follows:—"As regards meat imported into the kingdom, a tax, not exceeding the cost of inspection, the amount of which shall be determined by the Government, may be levied at the expense of the importers."

The following regulation is inserted at the end of paragraph 8 of the same article:—"The appointment of inspectors of meat shall be made either by the commune, subject to the approval of the Minister, or if not by the commune, by the King *ex officio*. The proceedings for the withdrawal of the authority entrusted to these agents shall be conducted in the same manner."

Royal Decree of February 9th, 1891, modified by the Royal Decrees of March 1st, and September 7th, 1892, February 7th, 1893, July 20th, 1894, and January 29th, 1896.

The slaughtering of animals, the sale of fresh butchers' meat, the sale of fresh poultry and game, the manufacture of comestibles from meat, as well as the sale of these comestibles, and the transport of fresh or prepared meat, shall henceforth be regulated by the special rules hereunder, independently of the laws and decrees relating to the trade in articles of food generally, to the public regulations concerning dangerous, unhealthy or unsuitable establishments, and to the sanitary regulations concerning domestic animals, as well as of the regulations on the subject, brought by the communes within the limits of Art. 78 of the municipal law.

§ 1. Slaughtering of animals.

Art. I.—Animals for slaughter, including pigs, of which the flesh, viscera, fat and blood are intended for public consumption, shall be examined after slaughter by the inspector appointed either by the communal council, subject to the approval of the Minister, or, if not by the municipality, by the King.

The authority of the inspectors appointed by the Communal Council, either before or after the coming into force of the present decree, may be withdrawn from them, either temporarily or permanently, by the Communal Council. It may be withdrawn by the King, *ex officio*, the inspector and the Communal Council being previously heard. (Royal Decree of March 1st, 1892.)

Arts. II. and III.—These inspectors shall preferably be qualified veterinary surgeons; if not, they must fulfil certain conditions laid down by the Government.

Art. IV.—Independently of the inspection after slaughter, the communes shall have power, if they think fit, to require animals intended to be slaughtered on their territory to undergo a preliminary examination before slaughter. The details of such preliminary inspection shall be arranged by the communes, and they shall bear all the expenses connected therewith.

Art. V.—After slaughter and before the animal is cut up, the inspector shall visit the place of slaughter, and inspect the carcass and viscera—within 12 hours in summer, and within 24 hours in winter. This article further prescribes that the viscera shall not be tampered with, or the contents of the thorax disturbed before the inspection—in solid parts the trachea and larynx are to be intact—and that note is to be made of drugs administered, if the animals have been ill, and of the nature of the malady.

Art. VI.—If, after the inspection made after slaughter, the flesh, viscera, &c., are regarded as fit for consumption, the inspector shall affix a stamp of a prescribed pattern, bearing the name of the commune, on each quarter at least, or on each half-carcass in the case of lambs, kids or sucking-pigs.

Art. VII.—If the inspection prove that the animal is entirely or in part unfit for consumption, the burgomaster shall be immediately informed of the fact by the inspector and shall decide, after consultation with the inspector, whether it may be removed entirely or in part to an ordinary knacker's yard, or whether the carcass shall be destroyed in accordance with the sanitary regulations.

Art. VIII.—Ministerial instructions shall determine in what cases the flesh, viscera, &c., shall invariably be declared unhealthy.

Art. IX.—If the party concerned do not accept the decision of the inspector a further inspection shall be made by a veterinary surgeon chosen by the former. In the event of disagreement the matter shall be referred to a third inspector, who shall also be a veterinary surgeon, chosen by the Mayor, or failing this to the Government, whose decision shall be final.

Art. X.—The expenses of inspection shall be charged to the party concerned. In the case of an additional inspection the expenses shall be borne by him, if the decision of the original inspector is confirmed, and by the municipality in the contrary case. These expenses shall be paid to the inspectors according to the rates fixed by Royal Decree of December 20th, 1891.

Art. XI.—The slaughtering and cutting up of horses, asses or mules intended for public consumption can only take place in a slaughter house or "abattoir," entirely separated from the knacker's yard.

The Mayor, however, shall always have power to authorise the slaughter, on the spot, of a horse, ass, or mule intended for public consumption, in the event of the removal of the animal being rendered impossible by reason of a serious accident.

The stamp applied by the inspector to the horseflesh must bear the word "Horse."

§ 2. Sale of fresh Butchers' Meat, as well as Viscera, Fat and fresh Blood.

Art. XII.—It is forbidden to sell, expose or keep for sale, any meat, viscera, fat or fresh blood of animals slaughtered in Belgium, under conditions that do not comply with the present regulations. These products must further be in a good state of preservation.

Art. XIII.—Fresh butchers' meat imported from a foreign country is only admitted in the form of whole carcasses, half-carcasses, or fore-quarters, and on condition that the lungs are attached.* Before being exposed for sale, imported fresh meat, viscera and fat must (1) be accompanied by a certificate of good quality, issued in Belgium by an inspector, holding the diploma of "veterinary surgeon," (2) bear a special stamp, affixed by the inspector conformably with the rules of Art. 6, with the inscription "Foreign." In the case of viscera or fat, the stamp may be affixed to the receptacles which contain them.

Art. XIV.—The inspection of fresh meat imported from a foreign country shall be made by an inspector expert either on the frontier, or at the place of destination, or at any other place selected by the importer. The expenses shall be borne by the importer and calculated at the usual rate. Re-examinations must be made in the manner stated in Arts. IX. and X.

Art. XV.—The sale of fresh horse, ass, or mule meat may not take place except in shops provided with a board bearing the notice "Horsebutcher" in large letters. In the case of an animal slaughtered on the premises of a private individual on account of an accident, if the meat have been found to be healthy, conformably with the present regulations, it may be sold at the shop of the said private individual. The keeper of a horsebutcher's shop may not carry on, in his shop, a trade in any other kind of meat.

§ 3. Sale of Poultry, Game and Tame Rabbits.

Art. XVI.—The sale of poultry, game and tame rabbits in the markets and the shops of provision merchants, shall be under the strict supervision of the meat inspectors or inspectors specially appointed for the purpose. In the case of a dispute, proceedings shall be taken as directed in Arts. IX. and X.

§ 4. Manufacture or Preparation of Foods composed of Meat, Viscera, Fat or Blood.

Art. XVII.—The manufacture or preparation from meat, viscera, fat or blood, of foods such as minced meats, sausages, polonies, puddings, salt, smoked or "jerked" meat, preserved meat, extract of meat, "peptones," fats, margarine, various kinds of *charcuterie*, tripe or fancy preparations, intended for sale, can only take place in such establishments as butchers' shops, porkbutchers' shops, tripe shops, factories for the salting and preparation of meat, restaurants, &c., and not in knackers' yards.

[Individuals who slaughter pigs on their own premises shall be allowed to prepare for sale, by salting or smoking, part of the flesh of these animals, on condition that each portion intended for sale be inspected before being sold or exposed for sale. Royal Decree of February 3rd, 1893].

Art. XVIII.—In the preparation of the above-mentioned foods in the establishments referred to in the previous article there shall not be used any meat, viscera, fats, &c., other than such as come from animals slaughtered or imported into Belgium under the conditions prescribed by the present regulations. Such meat, viscera, &c., as well as all other raw material used must, moreover, be in sound condition.

§ 5. Sale of prepared Meat, Viscera, Fats, &c.

Art. XIX.—All butchers, porkbutchers, tripe merchants and other provision dealers, as well as hotel and restaurant keepers, are forbidden to sell, expose or keep for sale any meat, viscera, fat, bacon, &c., prepared in Belgium in contravention of the prescription of Arts. XVII. and XVIII.

Art. XX.—Foods prepared abroad from meat, viscera, fat, &c., such as foreign bacon and hams, shall, before being exposed for sale, be certified as satisfactory by the inspector at the expense of the importer at the usual rates and at the place selected in accordance with Art. XIV. If the inspector consider these articles fit for consumption, he shall stamp each portion or package with the inscription "Foreign." Re-examination must be made in the manner prescribed by Arts. IX. and X.

Art. XXI.—Restaurant keepers and all other provision merchants are forbidden to sell or expose for sale prepared horseflesh without clearly indicating the kind of meat, or to mix horseflesh with other meat with intent to defraud (Royal decree of July 20th, 1894).

MILK.

Royal Decree of November 18th, 1894.

Independently of the stipulations contained in the general regulations and especially of the clause prohibiting the putting of articles of food intended for sale into contact with lead, alloys of lead such as the coating of certain tinned iron with zinc or galvanised iron, alloys of zinc such as brass, tinned or untinned, enamels containing lead, &c.,† the preparation and sale of the milk of cows or other animals is subjected to the following regulations:—

Art. I.—Milk deprived of part of its cream may not be sold, exposed or transported for sale except in receptacles labelled in a conspicuous place in legible characters, "Skimmed Milk."

Art. II.—It is strictly forbidden to sell, expose, keep or transport for sale for human consumption under any name whatever:—

1. Milk mixed with water or any extraneous substances such as preservatives.
2. Beestings; milk tainted with infectious germs (sour, glutinous, putrid, bitter, blue or red milk, &c.), either by reason of an abnormal state of the animal or of a defective diet, or on account of the dirty condition of the stables, dairy or transport apparatus, or from any other cause, such as careless handling.

* Law of June 18th, 1887, which establishes an entrance duty on animals and meat. The sole article of the law of January 30th, 1892, runs:—"The regulation contained in Art. I. of the law of June 18th, 1887, by which fresh butchers' meat may be imported into Belgium only in the form of whole carcasses, half-carcasses or fore-quarters, and on condition that the lungs are attached, is abolished so far as fresh mutton is concerned."

† The exception made in the case of utensils of untinned brass only in momentary contact with articles of food is not applicable here. Utensils of copper (untinned) which come into contact with milk must also be considered as prohibited.

3. Milk of animals in the food of which poisonous herbs have been mixed, of animals that have received poisonous substances as medicine, or animals affected by contagious or infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis, rabies, apthous fever, symptomatic anthrax, pyæmia, septicæmia, diphtheria, acute inflammation of the udder, or chronic inflammation of the udder with suppuration, jaundice, &c.

Art. III.—The name and address of the dairyman shall be inscribed in perfectly legible characters on the vehicle or the receptacles used for the carriage of milk.

BUTTER AND MARGARINE.

Royal Decree of March 11th, 1895.

Art. I.—The term butter is exclusively reserved for the fatty substance extracted by the churning of milk or cream, with or without the addition of colouring matter and salt.* Nutritive fats closely resembling † but distinct from butter shall be designated by the term margarine.

Art. II.—The trade in margarine and butter is subject to the following regulations:—

1. Margarine intended for sale may contain only the minimum proportion of butter caused by the addition of milk or cream which is generally considered indispensable in the manufacture, i.e., 5 per cent. of butter at most. It must be of a natural colour and must not show a deeper yellow colouring than is stipulated for by the Minister of Agriculture, Trade, Labour and Public Works.‡ These regulations relative to the maximum proportion of butter and the colour of margarine are not, however, applicable to material prepared in factories for direct exportation.
2. Margarine and butter must not be sold or exposed for sale in the same place (warehouse, shop, stall, &c.), or in places contiguous and communicating with one another.§ Butter merchants or producers of butter are also forbidden to keep margarine, even for their own private use in places where butter is exposed or kept for sale, or in vehicles which serve for the carriage of butter. Margarine may not be brought into the markets unless it be deposited in places specially assigned by the communal authorities.
3. All establishments (warehouses, shops, stalls, &c.), in which margarine is sold, exposed, kept or prepared for sale, as well as vehicles which serve for the carriage of margarine must bear in a conspicuous place the notice "Margarine for sale," inscribed in perfectly distinct characters at least 20 centimetres high, unaccompanied by any other remarks.
4. All the receptacles or covers in which margarine is exposed or kept for sale or delivery shall bear the inscription "Margarine," inscribed in perfectly distinct characters at least 2 centimetres high, unaccompanied by any other remarks. If the margarine be in the form of cakes or loaves, these cakes and loaves shall be cubic in form and shall be further marked with a perfectly legible stamp bearing the word "Margarine" as well as the name or title of the manufacturer or seller, except when the wrappings are marked in this way.
5. The receptacles or covers in which the margarine shall be delivered or forwarded shall bear besides the inscription "Margarine" inscribed in distinct characters at least 2 centimetres high, the name or title as well as the address of the seller.
6. When goods are forwarded the bills, invoices, or bills of lading must indicate, if such be the case, that the contents of each package are sold as margarine.

Art. III.—It is strictly forbidden to sell, expose, keep or transport for sale:—

1. butter made from condemned milk;¶
2. butter or margarine which is spoiled or tainted;
3. butter or margarine to which antiseptics or glycerine have been added;
4. margarine which has not been prepared as an article for human food with animal fats made or imported conformably with the regulations relating to the meat trade.¶¶

Ministerial Decree of March 30th, 1895.

Art. I.—Margarine intended for sale in Belgium may not show a deeper yellow colouring than that prescribed in the specially prepared colour tables (which are kept for inspection at the communal buildings and at the police stations).

Art. II.—In cases of disagreement recourse shall be had to an examination of three separate samples in accordance with the regulations contained in the Royal decrees of February 28th, 1891, and October 8th, 1894. (See part I. of the regulations relating to the sale of genuine and of artificial butter.)

* Butter must consist of the fatty substance of milk, but allowance is made for imperfections in the process of extraction. It is considered to be adulterated when it contains the other elements of milk (water, caseine, lactose, mineral compounds) in a greater proportion than results from a proper extraction of milk, but not if the purchaser be previously informed of this peculiarity, and if the article be sold as butter which contains water or milk in an unusual degree. The artificial colouring of butter may be effected only with inoffensive matter.

† The analogy consists in the resemblance of the physical and organic characteristics—consistency, colour, smell, taste, &c., of a nutritive fat and butter, a resemblance which is calculated to deceive the senses, and cause confusion as to the identity of the two articles.

‡ See below, Ministerial Decree of March 30th, 1895.
§ This condition does not prevent a tradesman from selling butter and margarine at the same time on condition that he uses for the sale of each of these products, places which are quite separate and which do not communicate otherwise than by the public way. A communication by means of an annexe which is part of a private dwelling, although open to the public is not permitted.

¶ See Art. 2 (paragraphs 2 and 3) of the regulations as to the sale of milk given above.
¶¶ The regulations relating to the meat trade forbid:—A.—the manufacturers of margarine to use—(a) indigenous fats, fresh or prepared (oleo-margarine) which were not inspected at the time of the slaughtering of the animals from which they were derived; (b) foreign fats not duly inspected at the time of their entry into Belgium; or fresh fats not accompanied by a certificate of good quality issued in Belgium by an expert veterinary surgeon or not stamped "Foreign," or prepared fats (oleo-margarine) not so stamped; (c) fats or other raw material in bad condition:—B.—The retailers of margarine to sell, expose or keep for sale; (a) produce manufactured in the country in contravention of the regulations cited above; (b) produce imported from abroad and not inspected at the time of entry into Belgium or not bearing the stamp "Foreign."

FLOUR, BREAD, &c.

Royal Decree of September 28th, 1891.

§ 1. Preparation of Flour.

Art. I.—It is strictly forbidden to add, to any extent whatever, to flour intended for public consumption, any mineral matter, especially pipe-clay, china-clay, chalk, pulverised bones, sulphate of barytes, sulphate of zinc, carbonates or bicarbonates of potash or soda, carbonates of magnesia, &c.

Art. II.—It is also forbidden to convert into flour intended to be sold for human consumption:—

1. Grain which is not cleared as far as possible from all earthy matter and harmful products. [Darnel, cockled wheat, cow wheat, &c., are included among the harmful products.]
2. Grain which is spoilt or damaged—for example, ergoted grain. [Besides ergoted grain, grain attacked by poisonous fungus such as rust, smut, bunt, &c., grain contaminated by parasites, germinated or fermented grain.]

§ 2. Sale of Flour.

Art. III.—In the following regulations flour is understood to be the product of the grinding of the grain of wheat.

Every flour other than wheaten must bear the name of the plant from which it is produced (rye, barley, oats, beans, peas, haricots, rice, maize, potatoes, &c.).

Every mixed flour must bear a special name to indicate its composition (farine de méteil) or the name of each of the components.

Art. IV.—It is forbidden to sell, expose, keep, import or transport for sale:—

1. Wheaten flour or flour of other kinds, prepared in contravention of Arts. I. and II. [In every case grocers, confectioners, &c., are allowed to sell under a special name as confectionery, flour mixed with various substances, such as certain kinds of artificial leaven (chemical leaven, fermenting powders, &c.), on the strict condition, that such substances shall not be dangerous to health.]
2. Flour spoiled in any way. [Flour which is obviously spoiled by heating, acid or putrid fermentation, mouldiness, &c.]

Art. V.—It is forbidden to sell or expose for sale under the name of flour (wheaten flour), rye-flour, barley-flour, &c., a flour which does not contain after removal of the bran all the constituent elements of the grains or substances after which it is named, or which contains extraneous matters.

As regards ordinary or wheaten flour, the bolted flour must not lose at 100° Centigrade, more than 18 per cent. of its weight and, when dried at this temperature, it must not contain more than 1 per cent. of mineral matter (ash) or less than 8½ per cent. of dry gluten.

Art. VI.—It is forbidden to sell or expose for sale for human consumption, without a clear intimation to the purchaser or the public, flour of one cereal mixed with the flour of another cereal or another vegetable substance. [The regulations relating to mixed flour do not apply to wheaten flour containing an insignificant quantity (for example, 2 or 3 per cent.) of flour derived from other grains which are not dangerous to health, such as rye, barley, oats, or certain leguminous plants. The above-mentioned quantity corresponds with the quantity of strange grain which is found in wheat which has undergone careful cleaning.]

Consequently the sacks or receptacles in which the flour so mixed is placed for sale, or which are used by the manufacturers, wholesale or semi-wholesale merchants, importers, exporters, consignors, or consignees of this mixed flour must bear in distinct and indelible characters the name of the flour or substance used for the mixture.

Moreover, if the mixed flour, intended for sale, is contained in closed sacks or receptacles, the inscription must give the name or title of the manufacturer or seller. [It will be noticed that the inscriptions referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Art. VI. are necessary in the case of retail trade only in so far as the display of goods for sale, and not the delivery of goods, is concerned. *Art. IV.* of the Royal Decree of April 30th, 1897, relating to produce intended for the food of animals reads thus:—“Produce (intended for animals) such as certain kinds of cereal flour equally useful for human food, may not be exposed, kept or transported for sale or delivery unless it bear in distinct characters an inscription indicating that it is not intended for human food.”]

Art. VII.—When goods are forwarded the manufacturers, merchants, senders or consignees of mixed flour must indicate on the bills, invoices, or bills of lading for each particular package, that the contents are sold as flour mixed with some other substance specified.

§ 3. Manufacture of Bread.

Art. VIII.—In the manufacture of bread and similar products intended for sale, the use of flour prepared in contravention of Arts. I. and II. of the present regulations, or of spoiled flour, is forbidden.

Art. IX.—The introduction, in however small a proportion of any mineral substance except common salt (sodium chloride) and water into bread and similar products intended for sale, is forbidden.

It is especially forbidden to add alum, sulphate of copper, sulphate of zinc, carbonates, or bicarbonates of the alkalies or alkaline earths, soap or lime-water.

Art. X.—In the manufacture of bread and similar products intended for sale the use is forbidden of:—

1. Adulterated yeast. [By adulterated yeast is understood yeast mixed with extraneous matter. The use of yeast, to which a small quantity of starchy matter has been added, is always permitted.]
2. Utensils made in contravention of the regulations of December 10th, 1890, relating to the use of dangerous utensils or appliances. [Especially kneading-troughs lined [on the inside with zinc sheets or galvanised iron.]
3. Wood (for the heating of ovens) painted with colours containing lead or arsenic.

§ 4. Sale of Bread.

Art. XI.—The word “bread,” as used in the present regulations, is applied exclusively to bread made from wheaten flour.

Every similar product made from flour which is not wheaten must bear the name of the flour from which it is made (rye-bread, meslin, &c.).

Bread which contains other substances besides flour, yeast or leaven, water and salt, is called fancy bread or by other trade names.

Art. XII.—The sale or exposure for sale, under the name of wheaten bread, or simply of bread, rye-bread, &c., of any produce containing substances different in nature from the normal constituents—flour, yeast or leaven, salt and water—is forbidden.

Art. XIII.—Every loaf of and exceeding half a kilogramme in weight sold, exposed, transported, or kept for sale, as wheaten bread, must be marked with a stamp bearing the initials of the baker.

Mixed bread or bread made with another flour must bear, in addition to the stamped initials of the baker, a special mark in the form of a star. [“Mixed bread” is bread made with a mixture of various kinds of flour, or with an addition of potatoes in a proportion exceeding 2 or 3 per cent.]

Art. XIV.—It is forbidden to sell, expose, transport, or keep for sale:—

1. Bread or similar products manufactured in contravention of the conditions prescribed in Arts. VIII., IX. and X.
2. Spoiled bread. [As examples of spoiled bread may be mentioned mouldy bread or bread having an obviously bad taste.]

§ 5. Pastry, Gingerbread, Confectionery, &c.

Art. XV.—In the manufacture of pastry, gingerbread, confectionery, &c., the use of flour prepared in contravention of the conditions prescribed in Arts. I. and II. of the present regulations, as well as of spoiled raw material or deleterious substances [such as certain colouring matters, chromate of lead, various compounds of aniline, &c.] is forbidden.

The use of utensils made in contravention of the conditions prescribed by the regulations of December 10th, 1890, especially utensils in which the articles of food come into contact with sheet-zinc or galvanised sheet-iron, or into prolonged contact with brass or even with copper (in which case the formation of verdigris is highly probable) is forbidden.

A small proportion (in no case exceeding 1 per cent.) of salts of potash or soda, soap, alum or carbonate of ammonia is allowed.

Art. XVI.—It is forbidden to sell, expose, keep or transport for sale any of the above products made in contravention of the conditions prescribed in the preceding article, or which are in a bad state of preservation.

Art. XVII.—All closed sacks, wrappings or receptacles, in which the pastry, ginger-bread, confectionery, &c., to be sold wholesale or semi-wholesale, is enclosed, must bear the name or title of the manufacturer or dealer.

(ii) Regulations relative to the Abattoir, Sale of Meat, &c., at Courtrai.

Art. XII.—The slaughtering of cattle within the municipal boundary of Courtrai elsewhere than at the public abattoir is forbidden.

Art. XIII.—The Communal Authorities may nevertheless authorize butchers residing in the hamlets of Sainte-Anne and het Hooghe, and the districts of Walle, Pottelberg and la Bagnette, to kill cattle, intended for sale, on their private premises in places named in a special warrant, which shall always be revocable.

Art. XIV.—Private individuals may slaughter pigs on their own premises for consumption in their own household. The Communal Authorities shall also have power to give permission for the slaughter, by private individuals on their own premises, of other cattle for the same purpose. Notice of each intended slaughter must be sent to the director of the abattoir at least 24 hours previously.

Art. XVI.—Exceptions may be made to Art. XII. in the case of the owner of an animal which, in consequence of an accident, cannot be conveyed to the abattoir, or when it is recognised that the transport of such animal would be dangerous to the public safety, or in any other exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Communal Authorities.

Art. XVII.—A charge shall be made in the cases specified in Arts. XIII., XIV., and XVI. if the slaughtering be done by the abattoir staff.

Art. XX.—After slaughter and before cutting-up, while the skin is naturally adhering, either wholly or in part, the inspector shall visit the abattoir, or if the animal has been killed outside the abattoir in accordance with the regulations of Arts. XIII., XIV., and XVI., the place of slaughter, within 12 hours in summer, and 24 hours in winter, and proceed to the inspection of the carcase and the internal organs, which shall be placed at his disposal.

Before the arrival of the inspector the abdominal viscera shall be removed *en bloc*, and kept in their natural positions. The thoracic organs shall remain attached to the animal. In the case of solipeds, in addition to the organs referred to above, the trachea and the larynx shall also remain attached. The inspector shall note in a register the description of the animal, as well as its state of health. In the event of the animal being unhealthy, the inspector shall deliver to the party of advancement, information obtained as to the nature of the drugs administered, the manner of slaughtering, and the approximate amount of the money loss incurred in those cases in which part of the meat must be rejected as unfit for consumption. This certificate must be produced to the authorities whenever required.

Art. XXI.—If, on inspection made after slaughter, the meat, entrails, &c. are considered fit for consumption, the inspector shall mark with a stamp of a prescribed pattern, bearing the name of the commune, at least each quarter, or in the case of lambs, goats or sucking pigs, each side.

Art. XXII.—If the inspection prove that the animal is entirely or in part unfit for food, the Mayor shall be immediately informed of the fact by the inspector and shall decide, after consultation with him, whether the carcass may be conveyed wholly or in part to an ordinary knacker's yard, or whether it should be destroyed in accordance with the sanitary police-regulations.

Art. XXIII.—It is forbidden to sell, carry or expose for sale, or deliver at houses, throughout the whole extent of the municipality of Courtrai, butchers' meat, viscera, &c., intended for human food, which have not been inspected by the officer detailed for the purpose. If they have been already inspected in another commune, the inspector shall further mark them with a stamp.

Art. XXIV.—Inspection of meat imported from other communes or from abroad shall be made at the public abattoir, within the hours appointed for this purpose by the Communal Authorities. After a minute examination the inspector shall stamp the meat which he considers healthy and fit for consumption.

Art. XXV.—He shall make the cuts necessary in order to assure himself of the actual state of the meat.

Art. XXVI.—Suspected or diseased meat shall be seized and secured in a building specially designated for this purpose by the administration. A certificate in duplicate, with cause assigned, shall be drawn up by the inspector for each seizure; the quantity and condition of the meat seized shall be stated therein. He shall immediately forward one of the duplicates to the Commissioner of Police, and the other to the Communal Authorities.

Art. XXVII.—Fresh meat may not be introduced into the abattoir except in the form of quarters in the case of large, and half-carasses in the case of small animals. The lungs must be attached and may be separated only when the meat has been certified as healthy. Loins, legs of mutton, and calves' heads are considered as quarters for this purpose.

Meat not killed in the commune but already stamped within the Kingdom, may be introduced in pieces or in indivisible packages.

Art. XXX.—The hawking, exposure for sale, or sale of fresh meat is forbidden in streets or public places not appointed for such purpose by the Communal Authorities, which shall take all measures they consider proper for fixing the days, hours, and conditions of sale.

Art. XXXI.—All unstamped meat found in the possession of butchers or dealers in meat, either in the markets where the sale is allowed, or in warehouses, shops, or stalls, shall be considered to be for sale, even although concealed or hidden from public view.

Arts. XXXIV. and XXXV.—The inspection tax for meat shall be at the following rates:—Horses, horned cattle, and large cattle, 50 centimes; half a calf, 25 centimes; half a pig, 25 centimes; half a sheep, 25 centimes; half a young calf, lamb, goat, or sucking pig, 10 centimes; loins, legs of mutton, calves' heads, 20 centimes; foreign meat, by piece or indivisible package, 25 centimes; foods referred to in Article XLV. at the rate of 1 centime per kilo., with a minimum charge of 20 centimes.

Art. XXXVI.—This tax shall be charged on (1) meat killed within the municipal boundaries of Courtrai, outside the public abattoir, either by fraudulent avoidance of the terms of Art. XII., or by special permission given in the cases mentioned in Arts. XIII., XIV., and XVI., when no slaughter-tax shall have been charged; (2) meat brought into the town for sale, either from other Belgian communes or from abroad, not having been inspected elsewhere.

Art. XXXVII.—If the party concerned do not accept the decision of the inspector, a further inspection shall be made by a veterinary surgeon chosen by the former. In the event of disagreement, the matter shall be referred to a third inspector, who shall also be a veterinary surgeon, chosen by the Mayor; or failing this, to the Government, whose decision shall be final.

Art. XXXVIII.—The expenses of inspection shall be charged to the party concerned. In the case of an additional inspection the expenses shall be borne by him if the decision of the original inspector is confirmed, and by the Municipality in the contrary case. These expenses shall be paid to the inspectors according to the rate fixed by Royal Decree of December 20th, 1891.

Art. XL.—Fresh horse, ass, or mule meat may only be sold in stalls bearing the notice "Horse butcher" written in large characters.

In the event of slaughter taking place on private premises on account of accident, the meat, if certified to be healthy in accordance with the present regulations, may be sold on these private premises.

A horsebutcher may not sell meat of any other kind in his shop.

Art. XLI.—The sale of poultry, game, and tame rabbits in the halls, markets, or at the shops of provision merchants shall be carefully supervised by the inspector of meat or the officials specially appointed for this work.

In the case of disagreement, proceedings shall be taken as stated in Arts. XXXVII. and XXXVIII.

Art. XLII.—The manufacture or preparation from meat, viscera, fat, or blood, of foods such as minced meats, sausages, polonies, puddings, salt, smoked, or "jerked" meat, preserved meat, extract of meat, "peptones," fats, margarine, various kinds of *charcuterie*, tripe, or fancy preparations, intended for sale, can only take place in such establishments as butchers' shops, pork butchers' shops, tripe shops, factories for the salting and preparation of meat, restaurants, &c., and not in knackers' yards.

Individuals who slaughter pigs on their own premises shall be allowed to prepare for sale, by salting or smoking, part of the flesh of these animals, on condition that each portion intended for sale be inspected before being sold or exposed for sale.

Art. XLIII.—In the preparation of the above-mentioned foods, in the establishments referred to above, there shall not be used any meat, viscera, fats, &c., except such as are derived from animals slaughtered or imported into Belgium under the conditions prescribed by the present regulations. Such meat, viscera, &c., as well as all other raw material used must, moreover, be in sound condition.

Art. XLIV.—All butchers, pork butchers, tripe merchants, and other provision dealers, as well as hotel and restaurant keepers, are forbidden to sell, expose, or keep for sale any meat, viscera, fat, bacon, &c., prepared in Belgium in contravention of the terms of Arts. XLII. and XLIII.

Art. XLV.—Foods prepared abroad from meat, viscera, fat, &c., such as foreign bacon and hams, shall, before being exposed for sale, be certified as satisfactory by the inspector, at the expense of the importer, at the usual rates, either at the abattoir, or at the place of destination, or any other place selected by the importer.

If the inspector consider these articles fit for consumption, he shall affix to each portion or package a stamp bearing the inscription "Foreign." Re-examinations must be made in the manner stated in Arts. XXXVII. and XXXVIII.

Art. XLVI.—Restaurant keepers and all other provision merchants are forbidden to sell prepared horseflesh without clearly indicating the kind of meat, or to mix horseflesh with other meat with intent to defraud.

Art. LXI.—All blood (with the exception of pig's blood), dung, residues, and offal shall belong to the town.

Art. LXII.—Pig's blood, fat, suet, and hides shall be removed by the owners to places appointed for the purpose by the director; they shall be taken from the abattoir on the day of slaughter, or, at latest, the day after.

Art. LXIV.—All foetus shall be buried. If the owner of the animal claim the skin of the foetus it shall be handed to him.

APPENDIX VII.

BUILDING LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

- (i.) *Law relative to Workmen's Dwellings and the formation of Housing Committees.*
- (ii.) *Workmen's Dwellings and Institutions for the Promotion of Thrift—Royal Decree as to the Organisation and Duties of Housing Committees.*
- (iii.) *Municipal Regulations relative to Insanitary Dwellings at Liège.*

- (i.) *Law of 9th August, 1889, relative to Workmen's Dwellings and the formation of Housing Committees as modified by the laws of 30th July, 1892, 18th July, 1893, and 16th August, 1897.*

Art. I.—There shall be established in each administrative *arrondissement* one or more committees whose duties shall be:—

- (a.) To encourage the building and the letting of sanitary workmen's dwellings and their sale to working men either for cash or by annual payments.
- (b.) To study from all points of view the sanitary condition of houses inhabited by the working classes and the hygiene of those localities in which such dwellings have been specially built.

(c.) To encourage thrift and insurance and also loan, benefit and pension societies.

These Committees shall be called "Housing Committees" (*Comités de Patronage*), and shall consist of not less than 5, and not more than 18 members nominated for 3 years as follows:—3 to 10 by the Standing Committee of the Provincial Council, and 2 to 8 members by the Government. They may be divided into sections and the Committees and their sections shall have a secretary nominated by the Standing Committee.

The functions of these Committees and their relations with the Government on the one hand and with the provincial and communal administrations and the medical boards on the other, shall be regulated by Royal decree to the end that there may be no interference with the powers of these bodies in matters of Hygiene and Public Health.

Art. II.—A Housing Committee may institute and distribute prizes for order, cleanliness and thrift. They may accept for this purpose gifts and legacies of personal property and also subsidies from public bodies.

Subsidies for the purpose of covering working expenses may also be allotted to these Committees by public bodies (Law of 16th August, 1897).

Art. III.—Housing Committees or certain of their members delegated for the purpose, shall indicate to the communal administration, to the provincial authority, or to the Government such measures as they think should be taken.

They shall report annually to the Minister of Agriculture and to the Ministry of Industry and Labour. Such report will be forwarded to the Higher Council of Public Health (*Conseil supérieur d'hygiène*) and a copy of such parts of it as concern them will be sent to individual communes.

Art. IV.—Before decreeing an expropriation by zones in a working-class quarter or quarters, the Government will consult the Housing Committee as to the conditions of re-sale of the land to be expropriated.

Art. V.—The (National) Savings Bank and Pension Fund is authorised to advance a portion of its available moneys, by way of loan, to further the building or the purchase of workmen's dwellings after previous consultation with the Housing Committee.

All such loans, according to their form and duration shall be entered as temporary or permanent allocations of moneys, as the case may require, in the books of the respective funds.

Art. VI.—The general council of the (National) Savings Bank shall determine the rates of interest and the conditions of such loans, subject to the approval of the Minister of Finance.

Art. VII.—In default of payment on the date at which they fall due, of moneys due to the Bank, foreclosure shall ensue in accordance with the terms of Arts. 4 to 9 of the law of 5th May, 1872.

The demand (for foreclosure) shall be addressed to the President of the Court of First Instance. The Court will take cognisance of opposition to the order and the Civil Registry will be notified thereof.

Art. VIII.—The (National) Savings Bank and Pension Fund is authorised to consider policies of insurance on the life of the borrower, taken out for the purpose of guaranteeing the repayment of loans agreed upon for the building or purchase of a house within a given period, or on the death of the assured person, should it occur before the agreed date of payment.

The general conditions as also the terms of such insurances shall be submitted for Royal sanction. The Royal decree will state the actuarial tables, the rate of interest and the allocation of the costs of administration which shall have formed the basis for the calculation of the scale of payments.

Art. IX.—The provinces, communes, *Administrations des Hospices* and *Bureaux de Bienfaisance* are empowered to accept gifts and legacies for the construction of workmen's dwellings.

Art. X.—Workmen or ex-workmen no longer capable of work who, not being owners of real estate other than that which they occupy or cultivate, occupy as owners, or rent as tenants from a non-resident lessor any house or dwelling place whose cadastral assessment does not exceed :—

72 francs in communes of less than 3,000 inhabitants			
96 " " "	3,000 but less than 20,000 inhabitants		
120 " " "	20,000 " 40,000 "		
144 " " "	40,000 " 100,000 "		
171 " " "	100,000 inhabitants and over		

shall be exempt from the personal tax on the assessable rental value, the door and window tax, and from income tax and all analogous provincial or communal taxes. For the application of this scale of exemptions the communes are classified according to the total population shown at each decennial census and the assessments of houses not then made, or not then made as separate and distinct messuages, shall be determined as for the *contribution foncière* (real estate tax).

In all cases in which an inhabited area covers parts of several communes, these communes, or their collective inhabited areas may, so far as the question of assessment as governing the right to exemption is concerned, be classified, by Royal decree, in the category to which the most populous commune belongs.

Exemption cannot be claimed :—1. By workmen who sub-let or part with their rights over a portion of their dwelling house either to more than one sub-tenant, or for use as a shop, or for any other kind of commerce soever. 2. By workmen who cultivate more than 50 ares, or more than 100 ares, according as among the plots, other than the garden, there is or is not one of which the assessable rental value is more than 50 francs per hectare. (Law of July 18, 1893).

Art. XI.—Societies whose sole object is the purchase, sale or letting of dwellings for the working classes can take upon themselves the status of limited liability or co-operative societies without losing their civil character, provided always that in so doing they conform, in the first case, with Section IV., and in the second case with Section VI., and in the two cases with Section VIII. of the Law of May 18, 1873, as modified by the law of May 22, 1886.

Art. XII.—Resolutions and minutes determining the formation, reconstitution, or dissolution of societies having for their object the operations set out in Article XI. are exempt from stamp duty and may be registered free of charge, provided that they do not include any clauses which render them liable to the proportional, *ad valorem* registration duty. Extracts, copies or deliveries of such resolutions and minutes are also exempt from stamp duty and shall give no cause for claim by the Registry for any fees or dues thereon.

Art. XIII.—All deeds and documents, over a private signature, not covered by the terms of the previous article, and all registrations exclusively concerning the administration of the Society, as well as powers of attorney given by the founders for the constitution of the Society and by the members thereof affecting their relations with the Society shall be exempt from stamp duty and the formality of registration. (Law of July 30, 1892, Art. I.).

Art. XIV.—Sales or awards to the societies above indicated, or to public bodies, of real estate intended for the purposes of workmen's dwellings, are liable only to a registration duty of 2·70 per cent., and to a transfer duty of 0·65 per cent.

The same reduction applies to sales or awards to workmen of real estate intended to serve them as dwelling places or for the building of a dwelling, provided that the area of the land, whether built upon or not, does not exceed 25 ares.

The status of the workman and the object of the acquirement must be established by a certificate from the Housing Committee which shall be attached to the deed. In this event, the construction of the house must be completed within 18 months from the date of the execution of the deed. (Law of July 30, 1892).

Art. XV.—Such deeds of sale and award as are referred to in the preceding article are registered and the transfers executed on account. The debtor may pay the dues compounded for on the documents executed by him in the course of each year, by five annual instalments. The first shall fall due on the 1st of March of the year following.

All sums not paid up by a society at the moment of its winding up shall become due and demandable at once.

The vendor remains liable for all dues owing by the purchaser.

Art. XVI.—The formal documents relating to loans or to the opening of credits in favour of the societies above named, or of public bodies, drawn with a view to the construction or purchase of real estate for the purposes of workmen's dwellings are registered at the rate of 0·30 per cent. if the contract covers a period not exceeding one year, and at 0·65 per cent. if for more than one year, even in the case of a guarantee by a third party. Receipts for the moneys advanced are subject to a tax of 0·30 per cent.

These provisions are applicable to loans and to credits opened for the benefit of persons belonging to the working classes, but are subject to the following conditions :—

1. The moneys to be exclusively employed in the purchase or construction of a house which is in use, or is intended to be used, as a dwelling by the purchaser, or for the purchase of land with the same object.
2. In the latter case the house must be built within 18 months of the purchase of the land.

3. A certificate by the Housing Committee attesting the object of the transaction and the status of the borrower must be attached to the deed. The formal documents relating to the loan and the opening of credit must set out the proposed application of the moneys and the status of the borrower or person credited therewith. Acknowledgments of moneys received by the borrower from the lender are free of stamp and registration duty.

Art. XVII.—With reference to the second paragraph of Art. XIV. and Clause 2 of the third paragraph of Art. XVI., if the house be not built within the term specified, the duties on transfers, loans and openings of credit become payable on the ordinary scale, and the payment of these duties or any balance thereof must be made within two months of the expiry of the above-named specified time.

The rights of the Treasury for the recovery of the said duties shall not lapse until two years after the expiry of the specified time.

Art. XVIII.—The stamp duty on share certificates and bonds issued by the Societies named in Art. XI. is fixed as follows :—five centimes on those of 50 francs and under ; 10 centimes on those of 50 but not exceeding 100 francs ; 20 centimes on those above 100 but not exceeding 200 francs, and so on, at the rate of 10 centimes per 100 francs or fraction thereof, for those exceeding 200 francs, but not exceeding 400 francs.

Art. XIX.—Documents emanating from the Housing Committee, including certificates delivered to workmen, but *excluding* the deeds relating to loans or borrowings, are free of stamp and registration duty.

Art. XX.—Art. 6 of the law of July 5th, 1871, is repealed. Nevertheless, dwellings built previous to January 1st, 1889, by limited companies formed with the object of purchasing, selling or letting houses intended to serve as workmen's dwellings, shall continue to enjoy the benefit of the exemptions granted by Arts. I. and II. of the law of March 28th, 1828. The law of August 12th, 1862, as to the duties on registration and mortgage transfers, and the law of June 20th, 1867, as to the limited liability of workmen's dwellings companies are repealed.

Art. XXI.—The personal tax, due for the last two quarters of the financial year 1889, including the provincial and communal quotas, shall not be levied on those taxpayers who, as a result of the terms of Art. X., shall cease to be liable therefor and, if already paid, the amount shall be returned to them.

The tax shall be considered as void and shall not be reckoned in drawing up the electoral lists. The repayment shall be made as a matter of course.

(ii) *Workmen's Dwellings and Institutions for the Promotion of Thrift.*

Organisation and Duties of Housing Committees (Royal Decree of October 9th, 1895).

Whereas a law was enacted bearing date August 9th, 1889, regarding workmen's dwellings and the formation of Housing Committees ; and whereas a Royal decree was issued on July 7th, 1891, in execution of the law aforesaid, and for the regulation of the organisation and duties of such Housing Committees ; inasmuch as these regulations are in need of amendment as the result of the creation of a Ministry of Industry and Labour ; on the advice of Our Minister of Industry and Labour and of Our Minister of Agriculture and Public Works, We have decreed and decree as follows :—

Art. 1.—The number of Housing Committees to be established in each administrative *arrondissement*, the area of action of each of these Committees, as also the number of their members, shall be fixed by us, on the advice of the Standing Committee of the Provincial Council.

Art. 2.—These Committees shall consist of five members at least, and of 18 members at most, nominated for a period of three years, as follows :—Three to ten by the Standing Committee of the Provincial Council, two to eight by Royal decree.

The secretary shall be nominated by the aforesaid Standing Committee from among all the members of the Housing Committee without distinction.

The Committees may, within the area of their action, nominate correspondents.

Art. 3.—The functions of a member of a Housing Committee shall be performed without pay. Certain allowances, in the form of attendance fees, may however be made to the Secretary and working-men members, in so far as the funds of the Committee may permit.

Those members who do not live in the neighbourhood of the meeting place of the Committee, or who are sent to make enquiries on its behalf, within its area of action, may have their travelling expenses repaid to them.

Art. 4.—Each Committee shall elect from among its members a president and a vice-president. A second vice-president may be elected when the Committee is divided into three sections.

The Committees shall appoint a treasurer or charge the secretary with the duties of treasurer.

Art. 5.—The Committees may delegate to certain of their members the power to place themselves in direct relation with the Communal administrations, the Provincial authorities, the Provincial Medical Commission, or with the Government, and to lay before them such measures as they think proper to be taken.

Art. 6.—Every Committee may be divided into sections, one of which shall have specially in charge the development of thrift and insurance, and of loan, mutual assistance and pension societies.

The special duties of each section and, if need be, the area of action of each shall be fixed by Our Minister of Commerce and Labour, on the proposition of the Committee, and the advice of the Standing Committee of the Provincial Council.

Art. 7.—The presidency of each section shall be exercised by the president or by the vice-president of the committee.

The president and the secretary shall *ex officio* be members of all sections.

Committees consisting of three sections may nominate an assistant secretary to each.

Members of the Committee shall have the right to attend the meetings of all sections, even of those upon which they do not sit.

Art. 8.—The duties of the president shall be :—To summon general meetings of the Committee, to receive correspondence, decide the order of business, supervise the execution of regulations, countersign receipts for moneys, orders for payments and together with the secretaries, sign the extracts from the minutes, decisions, or certificates provided for by the law.

Art. 9.—In the event of the absence or of the inability of the president to attend, his place shall be taken *ex officio* by the vice-president or by the senior of the vice-presidents, if there be more than one. A vice-president shall exercise the functions of president of the section to which he is attached.

In this capacity he shall summon the meetings of the section, receive from the president the correspondence proper to that section, decide the order of discussions, and supervise the execution of regulations.

Art. 10.—The secretary shall keep the correspondence, prepare the minutes of meetings, transcribe into a special register, kept for the purpose, all decisions and resolutions, despatch all written matter, have charge of the library, the archives and general property.

Art. 11.—The treasurer shall give receipts for moneys paid and pay upon orders signed by the president.

The treasurer is responsible for moneys in his custody. He will control the disposal or withdrawal of funds under orders signed by the president and secretary. He shall prepare, every year, a financial statement which he shall submit for the approval of the Committee at their January meeting.

This statement shall be divided into two parts, one of which shall embrace the working expenses of the Committee, and the other, prizes for order, cleanliness and economy.

The amount of cash in hand shall never exceed 300 francs. Any balance shall be deposited with the National Savings Bank and transferred to the ledger account of the Public Debt, or be employed in a manner to be determined by the Ministry of Industry and Labour.

Art. 12.—Every Committee shall, so far as possible, meet at least once a month. The sitting in the month of January shall be specially devoted to :—

1. The adoption of the general report on the work of the preceding year.
2. The audit of the receipts and expenditure.
3. The voting of the budget for the current year.

This budget, together with the balance-sheet, shall be forwarded to the Provincial Governor, who will submit them to the Standing Committee of the Provincial Council and for the approval of the Minister of Labour.

Art. 13.—The funds controlled by the Committee shall be composed as follows :—

1. Of credits placed at their disposal by the Government, the province or the communes, for the purposes of the Committee.
(Every Committee is required to prepare annually, before the 15th October, a provisional budget, and to transmit it directly to the Ministry of Industry and Labour).
2. Of gifts and legacies and of subsidies from the public authorities for the institution and distribution of prizes for order, cleanliness and economy.

The expenses of the Committees comprise on the one hand, office expenses, and the fees for attendance of the secretary and working-men members, travelling expenses, and the cost of propaganda set out in the provisional budget, and duly approved; and on the other hand the cost of the prizes for order, cleanliness and economy distributed in money or in kind.

Art. 14.—The Committees shall in each year prepare a report on their work and on all important events in connection with it occurring in the past year.

This report shall especially set out the composition of the executive and of the sections, the number of general sittings, meetings of sections, special commissions and of the officers, the attendances of each member, the various acts of the Committee; delivery of certificates, conferences, prize distributions, &c., the chief questions discussed by the Committee, and its observations on the sanitary state of working-class dwellings and of the localities in which they have been specially built.

Such report is to be approved by the Committee during the month of January, and a copy at once sent to the Minister of Industry and Labour, who will submit it to the Standing Committee of the Provincial Council. A second copy shall at the same time be addressed to the Minister of Agriculture and Public Works, who will submit it to the Higher Council of Public Health.

Each commune shall be supplied with a copy of such part of the report as may concern it.

Art. 15.—The duties of the Housing Committee shall be as follow :—

- (a.) To promote the construction and letting of healthy workmen's dwellings and their sale to workmen, either for cash or by deferred payments. To this end they shall study and seek to adopt such arrangements as shall best facilitate the acquirement of his dwelling by the workman. They shall assist the formation of limited liability or co-operative societies having this end in view. They shall aid the work of the public authorities, of societies and of private individuals, by examining building plans and by supplying model plans prepared according to the scheme of the Higher Council of Public Health.
- (b.) To examine and study all matters relating to the sanitary condition of houses occupied by the working classes, and of the sites on which such houses have been specially built. To this end they shall exercise a general and permanent supervision over workmen's dwellings in densely populated quarters, and shall collect statistics on the condition of working-class dwellings. They shall inquire into the best means of keeping such areas in a state of cleanliness. They shall inspect dwellings (with the consent of the occupiers) and make note of the condition in which they are kept, and shall specially observe whether such dwellings are of sufficient size and air capacity, and are properly supplied with water. They shall see that the drains and sewers are in proper working order, and that dust and rubbish are regularly removed. They shall inquire into the causes of sanitary defects and into the steps necessary for their removal. They shall further inform the principal tenants or the proprietor as to the measures to be taken to put the dwelling into a proper sanitary condition.

When they shall deem it advisable, and especially in the case of dwellings which do not admit of serious improvement, they shall warn the local authority and if need be the Provincial Medical Committee as to the state of such dwellings, and the action to be taken under the circumstances.

- (c) To encourage thrift and life insurance as well as loan, mutual assistance and pension societies. To this end the committees may put themselves in relation with both employers and their workmen; they shall do what they can to spread ideas of economy and thrift among the working classes. They shall give their advice, when occasion requires, to the permanent committee on mutual aid societies with regard to demands for legal recognition put forward by them.

Art. 16.—The committees shall correspond directly with the Government, the provincial authorities, the Communal administrations within their sphere of action, the National Savings Bank, the permanent committee of mutual aid societies, and the Provincial Medical Commission.

The Committees, or such of their members as may be delegated for the purpose, shall advise the local or Provincial authorities, and the Provincial Medical Commission, as well as the Government, of such measures as they think necessary to be taken.

All communications from the Committees relating to the sanitary state of workmen's dwellings, or of areas in which they have been specially provided, are to be addressed to the Minister of Agriculture and Public Works, all other communications to the Ministry of Industry and Labour.

The committees shall express an opinion on all questions submitted to them by the Government, the provincial authorities, the permanent committee of mutual aid societies, or by the Provincial Medical Commission.

They may also be consulted by the local administrations on matters which come within their competence.

Art. 17.—Housing Committees may institute and distribute prizes for order, cleanliness and thrift, and may receive for this purpose gifts, legacies and subsidies from public bodies.

Art. 18.—Whenever a question of expropriation by zones, in areas specially inhabited by a working-class population, shall arise, the Provincial Governor shall communicate the fact to the Committee concerned, and this Committee shall give an opinion as to the conditions of resale of the lands comprised in such expropriation which they think should be imposed. The docket shall be thereupon submitted to the Standing Committee of the Provincial Council, and transmitted to the Minister of Agriculture and Public Works.

Art. 19.—Before delivering to the parties concerned the certificates provided for in Art. 14, § 2, and Art. 16, § 3 of the law of August 9th, 1889, the committees shall assure themselves of the status of the workman, and of the nature of the financial operation contemplated.

Such certificate should be dated and signed in the name of the committee by the president and secretary; it should clearly state the name, place of abode and occupation, and should attest the status of the workman and the object of the financial operation contemplated.

Such certificate shall be forwarded to the beneficiary for the purpose of being attached to the deed of sale, award, loan or credit.

The Committee shall take care to draw the attention of the interested party to the conditions under which he enjoys the benefit of the law, and especially to that which regards the term of 18 months for the building of the house.

Art. 20.—Documents, bills, placards, notices and certificates emanating from the committees are free of stamp and registration duty.

Such acts of the Committee as of necessity require registration, shall undergo the formality without fee.

Art. 21.—The Committee shall have the right of free transmission by post of all their communications, especially those addressed to public authorities, the permanent commission of mutual aid societies, limited liability or co-operative societies for the construction of workmen's dwellings and mutual aid societies within the limits fixed or to be fixed by the Government.

Art. 22.—The committees shall draw up an order for the regulation of their proceedings, a copy of which shall be forwarded to the Minister of Industry and Labour, and to the Standing Committee of the Provincial Council.

Art. 23.—Our Ministers of Industry and Labour and of Agriculture and Public Works are charged with the execution of the present decree.

(iii.) *Municipal Regulations relative to Insanitary Dwellings at Liège. (August 11, 1884).*

Art. 1.—A fine of from one to six francs, or imprisonment of from one to three days shall be inflicted on :—

1. Persons who occupy, or let to others, for continuous use, premises (a) which do not directly receive air and daylight from outside; (b) which have no suitable ventilation and which do not afford the necessary volume of air to each inhabitant; (c) the humidity of which cannot be removed by suitable means; (d) the floors of which are neither paved nor boarded.
2. Persons who keep within their dwellings (a) pigs, goats, or sheep, in any number whatsoever; (b) dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea-pigs, pigeons, fowls, geese, ducks, birds and other domestic animals in a number out of proportion to the size of the dwelling.
3. Persons who do not cause to be removed, each day, from the interior of their dwellings, matter which gives off unhealthy emanations.
4. All proprietors, leaseholders, chief tenants, sub-tenants or occupiers, who keep or allow to be kept, without official authorization, in the yards of their houses, dung or other filth not enclosed in covered, impermeable, and properly ventilated pits or receptacles.
5. All proprietors, leaseholders, chief-tenants, sub-tenants, or occupiers of houses or dwellings occupied by more than one family, when they do not (a) whitewash, at periods fixed by the Mayor, the interior of the premises occupied by the persons, as well as the alleys, staircases and corridors, leading to these premises; (b) sweep and wash down, each day of the week at hours fixed by the Mayor, these same alleys, staircases, and corridors.
6. Persons who shall have deposited in the yards, alleys, passages, staircases and corridors of houses and dwellings occupied by more than one family any material whatever which may produce or tend to produce dampness or emit unhealthy exhalations.

Art. 2.—All the persons mentioned in sections 4 and 5 of the preceding article shall be liable to fine or imprisonment unless they prove that they have taken the necessary precautions to prevent the prohibited nuisance.

Art. 3.—A fine of from ten to fifteen francs or imprisonment for three to five days shall be inflicted on all proprietors, leaseholders, chief-tenants, sub-tenants, or occupiers of houses or dwellings recognized as being insanitary or unhealthy from causes other than those mentioned in Art. I., when they have not conformed with the sanitary measures prescribed by the Mayor.

Art. 4.—In every case the Mayor shall have power to condemn the houses and dwellings mentioned in Arts. 1 and 3.

Art. 5.—Except in cases of special urgency the notice of condemnation shall be made after consultation with the Medical Committee, the Health Committee or some other competent body.

Art. 6.—On the front or the principal door of a condemned house or dwelling a notice with these words shall be posted: "House (or Dwelling) condemned as insanitary." A report of the posting of this notice shall be drawn up.

Art. 7.—The Mayor shall always have power to order the immediate evacuation of a condemned house or dwelling.

Art. 8.—A fine of fifteen francs or imprisonment for five days, alternatively or together, shall be inflicted on:—

1. Persons mentioned in Article 3 who shall permit others, even without receiving payment therefor, to inhabit a condemned house or dwelling.

2. Persons who shall continue to occupy, or who shall take steps with a view to occupying, under any conditions whatever, a condemned house or dwelling.

3. Persons who shall remove the notice affixed or who render the wording illegible.

Art. 9.—The notice of condemnation shall be communicated to the Council at its next meeting.

Art. 10.—A copy of the notice shall be sent immediately to the *Bureau de Bienfaisance*.

Art. 11.—The condemnation may be removed if it is recognized that the repairs executed by the parties concerned have had the effect of removing the danger to the public health.

Art. 12.—In the event of a renewal of the offence within the year of condemnation, the maximum fine or imprisonment prescribed by the present regulations shall be inflicted.

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Brussels 6, 7; Antwerp 27; Bruges 39, 40; Courtrai 59; Ghent 71; La Louvière 84; Tournai 146, 152; Turnhout 159.
- Eggs, Prices (Retail) of, at—
Brussels 22; Antwerp 36; Bruges 45; Charleroi 55; Courtrai 69; Ghent 80; La Louvière 93; Liège 106; Louvain 116; Malines 124; Paturages 133; Seraing 143; Tournai 156; Turnhout 162; Verviers 174.
- Electric Lighting and Power Supply at—
Brussels 6; Antwerp 27; Charleroi 48; Ghent 73; Liège 96; Paturages 127; Seraing 136; Verviers 165.

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Electricity Works :

Hours of Labour in, at—

Charleroi 51 ; Liège 99 ; Paturages 129.

Wages in, at—

Charleroi 51 ; Liège 99 ; Paturages 129.

Embroidery (*see* "Lace-making").

Employment Bureaux at—

Brussels 7 ; Antwerp 31 ; Charleroi 52 ; Ghent 73 ; Liège 99 ; Malines 119 ; Paturages 129 ; Tournai 148 ; Turnhout 159.

Engineering and Metal Trades :

General Notes on, at—

Antwerp 28 ; Bruges 40 ; Charleroi 49, 50 ; Courtrai 63 ; Ghent 73 ; La Louvière 83, 87 ; Liège 98 ; Louvain 111 ; Malines 119 ; Seraing 136, 137 ; Tournai 148 ; Verviers 168.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Brussels 10 ; Antwerp 30 ; Bruges 40 ; Charleroi 51 ; Courtrai 63, 64 ; Ghent 74 ; La Louvière 88, 89 ; Liège 98 ; Louvain 112 ; Malines 119, 120 ; Seraing 138 ; Tournai 149 ; Turnhout 160 ; Verviers 168.

Wages in, at—

Brussels 10 ; Antwerp 30, 31 ; Bruges 40 ; Charleroi 51 ; Courtrai 63, 64 ; Ghent 73, 74 ; La Louvière 88, 89 ; Liège 98 ; Louvain 112 ; Malines 120 ; Seraing 138 ; Tournai 148, 149 ; Turnhout 160 ; Verviers 168.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Brussels 8 ; La Louvière 85 ; Louvain 111 ; Tournai 147 ; Turnhout 159.

Exports at—

Brussels 1, 2 ; Antwerp 26 ; Courtrai 57 ; Ghent 71, 74.

F.

Female Labour (*see* "Women and Girls").

Finance, Municipal (*see* "Municipal Undertakings, Properties, and Finance").

Finishing, Textile :

Hours of Labour in, at—

Courtrai 64 ; Tournai 150 ; Turnhout 160 ; Verviers 168.

Wages in, at—

Courtrai 64 ; Tournai 150 ; Turnhout 160 ; Verviers 168.

Firearms Industry :

General Note on, at—

Liège 96, 97.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Liège 98.

Wages in, at—

Liège 98.

Fish, Consumption of, at—

Courtrai 70 ; Louvain 117.

Flax and Linen Industry :

General Notes on, at—

Courtrai 57, 59-63 ; Ghent 73, 74.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Courtrai 62-64 ; Ghent 75 ; Tournai 149

Wages in, at—

Courtrai 64 ; Ghent 75 ; Tournai 149.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Courtrai 59-62 ; Ghent 73, 74.

Flour and Corn Milling :

Hours of Labour in, at—

Courtrai 65 ; La Louvière 89 ; Louvain 112

Wages in, at—

Courtrai 65 ; La Louvière 89 ; Louvain 112

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Louvain 111.

Flour, Prices (Retail) of, at—

Brussels 22 ; Antwerp 36 ; Bruges 45 ; Charleroi 55 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; La Louvière 93 ; Liège 106 ; Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Paturages 133 ; Seraing 143 ; Tournai 156 ; Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 174.

Food, Drink, and Tobacco Trades :

General Notes on, at—

Antwerp 29 ; Bruges 40 ; Courtrai 63 ; La Louvière 87 ; Tournai 149 ; Turnhout 159 ; Verviers 168.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Brussels 11 ; Antwerp 29-31 ; Bruges 40, 41 ; Courtrai 63, 65 ; Ghent 75 ; La Louvière 89 ; Louvain 112 ; Malines 121 ; Tournai 150, 151 ; Turnhout 160 ; Verviers 168, 169.

Food, Drink, and Tobacco Trades—*cont.*

Wages in, at—

Brussels 11 ; Antwerp 29-31 ; Bruges 40, 41 ; Courtrai 63, 65 ; Ghent 75 ; La Louvière 89 ; Louvain 112 ; Malines 121 ; Tournai 150, 151 ; Turnhout 159, 160 ; Verviers 168, 169.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Brussels 8 ; La Louvière 85 ; Louvain 111 ; Tournai 149.

Food Habits of the Working-classes (*see* "Dietary").

Food Inspection, and Regulations as to the Sale of Food, at—

Antwerp 36 ; Charleroi 56 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 79, 80 ; Liège 106 ; Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Paturages 133 ; Tournai 156 ; Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 174, 175.

Food, Prices (Retail) of, at—

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Food, Regulations as to the Sale of (*see* "Food Inspection, &c.").

Foreign Population in—

Antwerp 25 ; Charleroi 53 ; Tournai 146.

Friendly Societies at—

Courtrai 64.

Fuel (*see* "Coal").

Furniture Trades :

General Notes on, at—

Courtrai 63 ; Malines 119.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Brussels 11 ; Courtrai 65 ; Malines 119, 120.

Wages in, at—

Brussels 11 ; Courtrai 65 ; Malines 119, 120.

Workpeople, Number of, in Woodworking and Furnishing Trades, at—

Brussels, 8.

G.

Gardeners (*see* "Horticulture").

Gas Supply at—

Brussels 6 ; Antwerp 27 ; Bruges 32 ; Charleroi 48 ; Courtrai 59 ; Ghent 73 ; La Louvière 84 ; Liège 96 ; Louvain 109 ; Malines 119 ; Tournai 149 ; Turnhout 159 ; Verviers 165.

Gas Works :

Hours of Labour in, at—

Brussels 12 ; Antwerp 31 ; Bruges 41 ; Courtrai 65 ; Ghent 75 ; La Louvière 89 ; Liège 99 ; Louvain 112 ; Malines 121 ; Tournai 151.

Wages in, at—

Brussels 12 ; Antwerp 31 ; Bruges 41 ; Courtrai 65 ; Ghent 75 ; La Louvière 89 ; Liège 99 ; Louvain 112 ; Malines 121 ; Tournai 151 ; Turnhout 160.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Antwerp 30.

Ghent, 71-81.

Glass Trades :

General Notes on, at—

Charleroi 50 ; La Louvière 87 ; Seraing 137.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Charleroi 50, 51 ; La Louvière 89 ; Seraing 137.

Wages in, at—

Charleroi 50, 51 ; La Louvière 89 ; Seraing 137.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

La Louvière 85 ; Seraing 137.

Glovemaking at—

Brussels 8.

Groceries, Prices (Retail) of, at—

Brussels 22 ; Antwerp 35, 36 ; Bruges 44, 45 ; Charleroi 55 ; Courtrai 68, 69 ; Ghent 79, 80 ; La Louvière 92, 93 ; Liège 106 ; Louvain 115, 116 ; Malines 124 ; Paturages 133 ; Seraing 143 ; Tournai 155, 156 ; Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 174.

Guns (*see* "Arms").

H.

Harbour Labourers (*see* "Dock Labourers").

Hatmaking :

Hours of Labour in, at—

Brussels 10.

Wages in, at—

Brussels 10.

Holidays at—

Brussels 12; Antwerp 28; Bruges 39; Ghent 73; La Louvière 86; Tournai 147.

Home Work at—

Brussels 8; Bruges 40; Courtrai 58-60, 62; Louvain 111; Malines 119, 120; Tournai 147, 148; Turnhout 158, 159.

Horseflesh:

Consumption of, at—

Brussels 23; Antwerp 36; Bruges 45; Charleroi 56; Courtrai 69; Ghent 80; La Louvière 94; Liège 107; Louvain 116; Malines 124; Paturages 134; Seraing 144; Tournai 156; Turnhout 163; Verviers 175.

Prices (Retail) of, at—

Brussels 23; Antwerp 36; Charleroi 56; Courtrai 69; Ghent 81; La Louvière 94; Liège 107; Louvain 117; Malines 124; Paturages 133; Seraing 144; Turnhout 163.

Supply, Sources of, at—

Courtrai 69; Ghent 80; La Louvière 93; Louvain 116; Malines 124; Tournai 156.

Horticulture:

General Notes on, at—

Bruges 40; Ghent 74.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Bruges 41; Ghent 75.

Wages in, at—

Bruges 41; Ghent 75.

Hosiery Manufacture:

General Note on, at—

Tournai 148.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Tournai 150.

Wages in, at—

Tournai 150.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Tournai 147.

Hospices at—

Brussels 18, 19; Bruges 41, 43; Ghent 77, 78; Louvain 110; Verviers 173.

Hours of Labour at—

Brussels 9-12; Antwerp 28-31; Bruges 39-41; Charleroi 49-51; Courtrai 62-65; Ghent 73-75; La Louvière 86-89; Liège 98, 99; Louvain 111, 112; Malines 119-121; Paturages 129; Seraing 137, 138; Tournai 147-151; Turnhout 159, 160; Verviers 167-169.

Housing and Rents at—

Brussels 12-20; Antwerp 32-34; Bruges 41-44; Charleroi 52-55; Courtrai 66-68; Ghent 75-78; La Louvière 90-92; Liège 99-105; Louvain 113-115; Malines 121-123; Paturages 129-133; Seraing 138-142; Tournai 152-155; Turnhout 160-162; Verviers 170-173.

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Accommodation at—

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Comités de Patronage [Housing Committees] (see "Housing Legislation," below).

Inspection of, at—

Bruges 42; Tournai 153.

Legislation—

Brussels 12, 13, 17-19; Liège 105; Paturages 133.

Lodgings at—

Charleroi 53-54; La Louvière 91; Liège 99-103; Seraing 139.

Provision of, by Building and similar Societies (often municipally supported), at—

Brussels 18-20; Antwerp 34; Bruges 43, 44; Charleroi 55; Courtrai 67, 68; Ghent 77, 78; La Louvière 91, 92; Liège 104; Louvain 115; Paturages 132; Seraing, 141; Tournai 154, 155; Verviers 173.

Provision of, by *Bureaux de Bienfaisance*,* *Hospices*,* and *Municipalities*,* at—

Brussels 18, 19; Antwerp 34; Bruges 43; Ghent 77, 78; Liège 105; Louvain 115; Tournai 155; Verviers 173.

Provision of, by Employers, at—

Courtrai 67; Ghent 77; La Louvière 91; Seraing 136, 141, 142.

Regulations at—

Charleroi 54; Courtrai 67; Liège, 102, 103; Malines 121; Paturages 132; Seraing 140; Tournai 153; Verviers 171.

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Brussels, 13-15; Antwerp 32; Bruges 42; Courtrai 66; Ghent 76, 77; La Louvière 90; Liège 99, 103; Malines 121; Paturages 130; Seraing 139; Tournai 152, 153; Turnhout 160; Verviers 170, 171.

Tenancy, Conditions of, at—

Brussels 17; Bruges 43; Courtrai 67; Ghent 77; La Louvière 91; Malines 123; Tournai 154; Turnhout 161; Verviers 171.

* Often provide large portions of capital of Building Societies, for which see above.

I.

Imports at—

Brussels 1, 2; Antwerp 26; Courtrai 57; Ghent 71.

Infantile Mortality at—

Brussels 3; Antwerp 26; Bruges 39; Charleroi 47; Courtrai 58; Ghent 72; La Louvière 82; Liège 95; Louvain 109; Malines 118; Paturages 127; Seraing 136; Tournai 146; Turnhout 158; Verviers 164, 165.

Insurance, Workmen's (see "Accident Insurance," "Old Age Pensions," "Sick Funds," and "Unemployment Funds").

Iron and Steel Works (see also "Metal and Engineering Trades"):

General Notes on, at—

Charleroi 49; La Louvière, 83, 87.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Charleroi 49, 51; La Louvière 88; Seraing 138.

Wages in, at—

Charleroi 49, 51; La Louvière 88; Seraing 137, 138.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Charleroi 49.

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Jute Sack Weaving:

Hours of Labour in, at—

Courtrai 64.

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La Louvière 82-94.

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Brussels 7; Antwerp 31; Charleroi 52; Ghent 73; Liège 99; Malines 119; Paturages 129; Tournai 148; Turnhout 159.

Labourers in Various Trades (see also "Dock Labourers"):

Hours of Labour of, at—

Brussels 10-12; Antwerp 28-31; Bruges 39-41; Charleroi 50, 51; Courtrai 63-65; Ghent 73-75; La Louvière 86-89; Liège 98-99; Louvain 111, 112; Malines 120, 121; Paturages 129; Seraing, 137, 138; Tournai 148-151; Turnhout 159, 160; Verviers 168, 169.

Wages of, at—

Brussels 10-12; Antwerp 28-31; Bruges 39-41; Charleroi 50, 51; Courtrai 63-65; Ghent 73-75; La Louvière 86-89; Liège 98, 99; Louvain 111, 112; Malines 120, 121; Paturages 129; Seraing 137, 138; Tournai 148-151; Turnhout 159, 160; Verviers 168, 169.

Lace Making and Embroidery Trades:

General Notes on, at—

Bruges 40; Turnhout, 158, 159.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Bruges 40; Turnhout 159.

Wages in, at—

Bruges 40; Turnhout 159.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Bruges 40.

Leather (see "Boot and Shoe Trades" and "Tanning").

Leather Belting Makers:

Hours of Labour of, at—

Verviers 168, 169.

Wages of, at—

Verviers 168, 169.

Licensed Premises:

Brussels 4; Courtrai 59; La Louvière 84; Tournai 147.

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Lighting (see "Electric Lighting and Power Supply" and "Gas Supply").

Limeburning and Quarrying:

General Note on, at—

Tournai 148.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Tournai 150.

Wages in, at—

Tournai 150.

Linen and Flax Industry:

General Notes on, at—

Courtrai 57, 59-63; Ghent 73, 74.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Courtrai 62-64; Ghent 75; Tournai 149.

Wages in, at—

Courtrai 64; Ghent 75; Tournai 149.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Courtrai 59-62; Ghent 73, 74.

Linseed Oilcake Manufacture :

Hours of Labour in, at—

Courtrai 65.

Wages in, at—

Courtrai 65.

Lithographers :

Hours of Labour of, at—

Antwerp 29, 30 ; Bruges 41 ; Courtrai 65 ; Ghent 75.

Wages of, at—

Antwerp 29, 30 ; Bruges 41 ; Courtrai 65 ; Ghent 75.

Local Taxation at—

Brussels 17, 18 ; Antwerp 34 ; Bruges 43 ; Courtrai 67 ; Ghent 77 ; La Louvière 84, 91 ;
Louvain 109, 110 ; Malines 123 ; Tournai 147, 154 ; Turnhout 160-162 ; Verviers 173.Lodgings (*see* "Housing").

Louvain 108-117.

M.

Machine Construction (*see* "Engineering Trades").

Malines 118-125.

Margarine, Prices (Retail) of, at—

Brussels 22 ; Antwerp 36 ; Bruges 45 ; Charleroi 55 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; La
Louvière 93 ; Liège 106 ; Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Paturages 133 ; Seraing 113 ;
Tournai 156 ; Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 174.

Markets at—

Antwerp 35 ; Bruges 39, 44, 45 ; Charleroi 48 ; Courtrai 59, 68 ; Ghent 79, 80 ; La
Louvière 84, 92 ; Liège 106, 107 ; Louvain 115-117 ; Malines 123, 124 ; Paturages 133 ;
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Meat :

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Brussels 23, 24 ; Antwerp 36 ; Bruges 45 ; Charleroi 56 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; La
Louvière 94 ; Liège 107 ; Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Paturages 134 ; Seraing 144 ;
Tournai 156, 157 ; Turnhout 163 ; Verviers 175.

Inspection of, and Regulations as to sale of, at—

Antwerp 36 ; Charleroi 56 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ;
Paturages 133 ; Tournai 156 ; Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 174, 175.

Prices (Retail) of, at—

Brussels 23, 24 ; Antwerp 37 ; Bruges 46 ; Charleroi 56 ; Courtrai 69, 70 ; Ghent 81 ;
La Louvière 94 ; Liège 107 ; Louvain 117 ; Malines 124, 125 ; Paturages 133, 134 ;
Seraing 144 ; Tournai 156, 157 ; Turnhout 163 ; Verviers 175.Regulations as to sale of (*see* "Inspection, &c." *above*).

Supply, Sources of, at—

Brussels 22 ; Antwerp 36 ; Bruges 45 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; La Louvière 93 ; Liège 107 ;
Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Tournai 156 ; Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 175.Metal and Engineering Trades (*see also* "Iron and Steel Works") :

General Notes on, at—

Antwerp 28 ; Bruges 40 ; Charleroi 49, 50 ; Courtrai 63 ; Ghent 73 ; La Louvière 83, 87 ;
Liège 98 ; Louvain 111 ; Malines 119 ; Seraing 136, 137 ; Tournai 148 ; Verviers 168.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Brussels 10 ; Antwerp 30 ; Bruges 40 ; Charleroi 51 ; Courtrai 63, 64 ; Ghent 74 ; La
Louvière 84, 89 ; Liège 98 ; Louvain 112 ; Malines 119, 120 ; Seraing 138 ; Tournai 149 ;
Turnhout 160 ; Verviers 168.

Wages in, at—

Brussels 10 ; Antwerp 30, 31 ; Bruges 40 ; Charleroi 51 ; Courtrai 63, 64 ; Ghent 73, 74 ;
La Louvière 88, 89 ; Liège 98 ; Louvain 112 ; Malines 120 ; Seraing 138 ; Tournai 148,
149 ; Turnhout 160 ; Verviers 168.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Brussels 8 ; La Louvière 85 ; Louvain 111 ; Tournai 147 ; Turnhout 159.

Milk, Prices (Retail) of, at—

Brussels 22 ; Antwerp 36 ; Bruges 45 ; Charleroi 55 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; La Louvière
93 ; Liège 106 ; Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Paturages 133 ; Seraing 143 ; Tournai
156 ; Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 174.

Milling, Corn and Flour :

Hours of Labour in, at—

Courtrai 65 ; La Louvière 89 ; Louvain 112.

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Courtrai 65 ; La Louvière 89 ; Louvain 112.

Workpeople, Number of, Employed in, at—

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Minimum Wages and Maximum Hours on Public Works at—

Brussels 9, 10 ; Antwerp 28 ; Bruges 39, 40 ; Courtrai 63 ; Ghent 73 ; Tournai 148.

Mining (*see* "Coal Mining").Mortality Rates (*see* "Death-rates" and "Infantile Mortality Rates").

"Multiple" Firms, at—

Brussels 20 ; Antwerp 35 ; Bruges 44 ; Charleroi 55 ; Courtrai 68 ; Ghent 78, 79 ; La
Louvière 92 ; Liège 106 ; Louvain 115 ; Malines 123 ; Paturages 133 ; Seraing 142 ;
Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 174.

Municipal and Public Employees :

Hours of Labour of, at—

Brussels 12 ; Antwerp 31 ; Charleroi 51 ; Courtrai 65 ; Ghent 75 ; La Louvière 89 ; Louvain
112 ; Malines 121 ; Paturages 129 ; Seraing 137, 138 ; Tournai 151 ; Verviers 169.

Number of, at—

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Wages of, at—

Brussels 12 ; Antwerp 31 ; Charleroi 51 ; Courtrai 65 ; Ghent 75 ; La Louvière 89 ; Louvain
112 ; Malines 121 ; Paturages 129 ; Seraing 138 ; Tournai 151 ; Verviers 169.Municipal Taxation (*see* "Local Taxation").

Municipal Undertakings, Properties, and Finance at—

Brussels 5, 6, 7, 18 ; Antwerp 27, 31 ; Bruges 39 ; Charleroi 48 ; Courtrai 59 ; Ghent 73, 77 ;
La Louvière 84 ; Liège 95, 96, 99, 106, 107 ; Louvain 109-111 ; Malines 119 ; Seraing
136 ; Tournai 146, 147 ; Turnhout 159 ; Verviers 165, 166.

Mutton :

Consumption of, at—

Brussels 23 ; Antwerp 36 ; Bruges 45 ; Charleroi 56 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; La Louvière
94 ; Liège 107 ; Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Paturages 134 ; Seraing 144 ; Tournai 156 ;
Turnhout 163 ; Verviers 175.

Prices (Retail) of, at—

Brussels 23 ; Antwerp 37 ; Bruges 46 ; Charleroi 56 ; Courtrai 70 ; Ghent 81 ; La Louvière
94 ; Liège 107 ; Louvain 117 ; Malines 125 ; Paturages 134 ; Seraing 144 ; Tournai 157 ;
Turnhout 163 ; Verviers 175.

Supply, Sources of, at—

Brussels 22 ; Antwerp 36 ; Bruges 45 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; La Louvière 93 ; Liège 107 ;
Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Tournai 156 ; Verviers 175.

N.

Nailmaking and Wiredrawing at—

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Nut and Bolt Works :

General Note on, at—

La Louvière 87.

Hours of Labour in, at—

La Louvière 89.

Wages in, at—

La Louvière 89.

O.

Occupations, Wages, and Hours of Labour at—

Brussels 7-12 ; Antwerp 27-31 ; Bruges 39-41 ; Charleroi 48-52 ; Courtrai 59-65 ; Ghent
73-75 ; La Louvière 84-90 ; Liège 96-99 ; Louvain 111-113 ; Malines 119-121 ;
Paturages 127-129 ; Seraing 136-138 ; Tournai 147-152 ; Turnhout 159, 160 ; Verviers
166-169.

Oil, Paraffin, Prices (Retail) of, at—

Brussels 22 ; Antwerp 36 ; Bruges 45 ; Charleroi 55 ; Courtrai 69 ; Ghent 80 ; La Louvière
93 ; Liège 106 ; Louvain 116 ; Malines 124 ; Paturages 133 ; Seraing 143 ; Tournai 156 ;
Turnhout 162 ; Verviers 174.

Oilcake Manufacture :

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Courtrai 65 ; Tournai 150.

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Courtrai 65 ; Tournai 150.

Old Age Pensions :

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Louvain 115 ; Malines 119 ; Seraing 136 ; Tournai 148, 151.Overcrowding (*see* "Housing").

P.

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Turnhout 159.

Hours of Labour in, at—

Brussels 11 ; Turnhout 159, 160.

Wages in, at—

Brussels 11 ; Turnhout 159, 160.

Workpeople, Number of, in, at—

Brussels 8 ; Turnhout 159.

- Paraffin Oil, Prices (Retail) of, at—**
 Brussels 22; Antwerp 36; Bruges 45; Charleroi 55; Courtrai 69; Ghent 80; La Louvière 93; Liège 106; Louvain 116; Malines 124; Paturages 133; Seraing 143; Tournai 156; Turnhout 162; Verviers 174.
- Pastry Cooks (see also "Confectionery Trades"):**
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- Pensions, Old Age:**
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- Population, Foreign, of—**
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- Pork:**
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 Brussels 23; Antwerp 36; Bruges 45; Charleroi 56; Courtrai 69; Ghent 80; La Louvière 94; Liège 107; Louvain 116; Malines 124; Paturages 134; Seraing 144; Tournai 156; Turnhout 163; Verviers 175.
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 Brussels 23; Antwerp 37; Bruges 46; Charleroi 56; Courtrai 70; Ghent 81; La Louvière 94; Liège 107; Louvain 117; Malines 125; Paturages 134; Seraing 144; Tournai 157; Turnhout 163; Verviers 175.
 Supply, Sources of, at—
 Brussels 22; Antwerp 36; Bruges 45; Courtrai 69; Ghent 80; La Louvière 93; Liège 107; Louvain 116; Malines 124; Tournai 156; Turnhout 162.
- Potatoes, Prices (Retail) of, at—**
 Brussels 22; Antwerp 36; Bruges 45; Charleroi 55; Courtrai 68, 69; Ghent 79, 80; La Louvière 93; Liège 106; Louvain 116; Malines 124; Paturages 133; Seraing 143; Tournai 156; Turnhout 162; Verviers 174.
- Pottery Trades:**
 General Notes on, at—
 Courtrai 63; La Louvière 87.
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