SKIBBEREEN AND CASTLETOWN BOARDS OF GUARDIANS.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 24 June 1862;—for,

COPIES of EXTRACTS "of CORRESPONDENCE with the SKIBBEREEN and CASTLETOWN BOARDS of GUARDIANS and the POOR LAW INSPECTORS with the POOR LAW BOARD since November’ 1861."

Note.—It has been assumed that Correspondence relating to Distress in the two Unions named is what is required by the Order.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin, 12 July 1862. B. BANKS, Chief Clerk.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 18 July 1862.
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TOWN BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AND THE POOR LAW INSPECTORS WITH THE POOR
LAW BOARD SINCE NOVEMBER 1861.

--- I. ---

SKIBBEREEN UNION.

(No. 24,611/61.)

No. 1.—LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONERS TO THE BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,
26 November 1861.

SIR,

ADVERTING to their letter of the 10th October last, on the subject of the loss
of the potato crop in the present year, and the probable increase of applicants
for relief, the Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor
in Ireland, desire to inform the Board of Guardians of Skibbereen Union, that
they have had under consideration the propriety of a temporary increase in the
number of relieving officers in some of the unions in the west of Ireland, which
contain inhabited districts remote from the Union workhouse, in order that in
any case of sudden and urgent necessity arising in such districts, the provisional
powers of the relieving officer may be available for the immediate relief of desti-
tion, and especially for the conveyance of persons in extreme distress or sick-
ness to the workhouse.

There is at present, as the Commissioners believe, only one relieving officer
for the entire union, resident in Skibbereen.

The Commissioners request the views of the Board of Guardians on the sub-
ject, in reference to such districts as those around Glandore, Drinagh, Dromo-
league, Baltimore, &c.

By order of the Commissioners,

To the Clerk, Skibbereen Union. (signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

(No. 25,486/62.)

No. 2.—EXTRACT FROM GUARDIANS’ MINUTES OF 28TH NOVEMBER 1861.

Read letter, No. 24,611/61, dated 26 November 1861. Subject, the appoint-
ment of additional relieving officers.

Ordered,—The guardians beg in reply to inform the Commissioners that when-
ever the necessity for an additional relieving officer arises, they are prepared to
make such appointments as will insure immediate attention to all persons re-
quiring relief.

(No. 26,704/61.)

No. 3.—EXTRACT FROM MR. HORSEY’S HALF-YEARLY REPORT;
Dated 20 December 1861.

THERE is no indication at present of any severe pressure on the workhouse, but
it is to be apprehended that considerable distress will exist among the labour-
ing classes and artisans in the town of Skibbereen in the course of the coming
spring.
CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO

Skibbereen Union.

(No. 7153/62.)

No. 4.—EXTRACT from Guardians’ Minutes of 27th March 1862.

Samuel Horsley, esq., inspector, having read a communication from the Commissioners relative to the employment of head or other constables as temporary relieving officers, this Board is of opinion that no such course is necessary in this Union, the ordinary arrangements for receiving applications for relief being sufficient, and the Board is further of opinion that it is unnecessary to go to the expense of providing spring vans for the conveyance of destitute sick persons to the workhouse, at the expense of the Union; but if Mr. Horsley will recommend to the Commissioners to make a free grant of any of the military ambulances mentioned by him, the Board will gladly pay the cost of its transmission from Dublin to the Union.

Adopted.

(No. 7153/62.)

No. 5.—LETTER from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,
9 April 1862.

Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland acknowledge the receipt of the minutes of proceedings of the Board of Guardians of the Skibbereen Union on the 27th ultimo, when it appears the subject of providing a covered vehicle for the conveyance of sick or infirm poor persons to the workhouse, was brought under the guardians’ notice by Mr. Horsley, Poor Law Inspector; and in reference to the Minute of the Board, the Commissioners desire to state, for the Guardians’ information, that they yesterday forwarded by railway to Bandon, one of the ambulances lately placed at their disposal, addressed to “the Guardians of Skibbereen Union.”

By order of the Commissioners,

(signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

To the Clerk, Skibbereen Union.

(No. 9045/62.)

No. 6.—LETTER from the Commissioners to Mr. Horsley, Poor Law Inspector.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,
19 April 1862.

Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland, forward for your information, a copy of a constabulary report which has been referred to them from the Chief Secretary’s department, relating to the circumstances attending the death of Ellen Saunders, in the Skibbereen Union; and the Commissioners request that you will be so good as to make inquiry on oath into the case, and to report to them on the subject, returning the document with your report.

By order of the Commissioners,

(signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

To Samuel Horsley, Esq., Poor Law Inspector.
SKIBBEREEN AND CASTLETOWN UNIONS.

(Enclosure in No. 6.)

COPY CONSTABULARY REPORT.

Police Report, County of Cork.

Skibbereen, 15 April 1862.

In forwarding the annexed, I beg to state that the deceased was on the morning of her death, and a few minutes before it, making preparation for the market. There was no evidence that she died from want. She had some money, but the house in which she lived is miserably bad.

(signed) Bernard Potter,
Sub-Inspector.

VERDICT.

"That the said deceased (Ellen Saunders) at Skibbereen in said county, was found dead in her bed on the 12th inst. that she died from disease of the heart, and other complaints produced by privation and exposure to cold."

(No. 949962.)

No. 7.—REPORT from Mr. Horsley, Poor Law Inspector.

Gentlemen, Skibbereen, 23 April 1862.

Advertising to the Commissioners’ communication of the 19th instant, I beg to state that on this day I enquired into the circumstances attending the death of an aged woman named Ellen Saunders, on whose body an inquest was held on the 14th instant, and I have now the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of the Commissioners, the minutes of evidence given on oath before me with reference to the case, and also the depositions made before the coroner; and beg to make the following report with reference thereto.

The evidence of the nearest relatives of the deceased, namely that of her son and brother, as well as that of John Copithorne and Thomas Sullivan, proves incontrovertibly that her death was not caused by want or privation; that in fact, up to the time of her death, she had for her class in life plenty of food, clothing, and money, and had not endured any hardship.

The evidence of Dr. Donovan, medical officer of the Skibbereen dispensary district, further proves, that for some months before her death the deceased suffered from derangement of the heart and stomach, and that her sudden death was probably attributable to one or other, if not to both of those maladies.

Mr. Coroner Limerick, moreover, states in his evidence, that no evidence was given before him (and the sworn depositions bear out this statement) to show that the death of the deceased was produced “by want, privation, or destitution,” and that he dissented from the written verdict handed in by the jury, though he considered himself bound to accept it.

The evidence of the relieving officer, and of the master of the workhouse shows that they never received any application for relief from the deceased at any time.

I beg to state that the son and brother of the deceased, as also, so far as I can gather, the public generally, are indignant at the nature of the verdict found by the coroner’s jury; but I may mention at the same time that the constitution of the jury, of whom Jeremiah O’Donovan (Rossa), of Phoenix Society notoriety, was foreman, may in some measure account for its extraordinary character.

It is true that the deceased had lived in a wretched hovel, and had thus in bad weather been exposed to cold, but it must be borne in mind, as will be seen from the evidence of her son and brother, that this was a matter of choice and not of necessity on her part.

I return herewith the copy of Sub-inspector Potter’s report of the case, and beg to state I derived much assistance from him to-day, in procuring witnesses, and arriving at the true facts with respect to it.

I have, &c.

(signed) Samuel Horsley.

To the Poor Law Commissioners,
Poor Law Office, Dublin.
CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE taken by Mr. Horsley.

James Barry, being duly sworn, saith:—I am relieving officer for the Skibbereen Union. I have heard of the death of a woman, named Ellen Saunders, who lived in Chapel-lane, in the town of Skibbereen. She never applied to me for medical or other relief at any time. I received applications for relief in Skibbereen, though I have no office here; my office is at my own house, between three and four miles from the workhouse. I always enter in my application and report book the case of every person who may apply to me for relief, even in cases where I feel certain the parties have no legal claim for relief.

Sworn before me on the 23d April 1862,

James Barry.

Robert Evans, being duly sworn, saith:—I am master of the Skibbereen Workhouse. I have heard of the death of a woman, named Ellen Saunders, in the town of Skibbereen. She never applied to me for relief. I never refuse admission to the workhouse to persons who present themselves and state that they are in a destitute condition.

Sworn before me on the 23d April 1862,

Robert Evans.

John Saunders, being duly sworn, saith:—I am son of the late Ellen Saunders, who died suddenly on the 12th of this month, in an old house in which she resided in Chapel-lane, Skibbereen. About five or six months before her death, she had been ill for a month, and was attended by Dr. Donovan, medical officer of the Skibbereen Dispensary district. After she recovered from that illness, she was not as sound as she had been before, but had not complained up to the time of her death. She earned her living by her own industry and by mine. On butter-market days she used to assist butter buyers, and was paid by them for that assistance. I don't know how much she earned in that way in each week, but I am certain it was under 2s. 6d. It might be sometimes 2s., sometimes 1s. 6d., and sometimes only 1s. She had no other means of living except what I contributed to her support. I used to give her sometimes 6s. a week, at other times 5s., 2s., or 3s., according to my own earnings. She always had plenty of food, plenty of clothing, both body clothing and bedding. She had no money except 2½d. at the time of her death, but she had sufficient food. I never advised her to go to the workhouse; she had no occasion for workhouse relief before her death. I do not consider she died from privation or hardship, for she had no great hardship, but the house she lived in was exceedingly bad, and enough to kill any one. I often advised her to leave that house, and go to another, but she would not leave it. She said she would rather stop in it, than lodge with any one. I am a labouring man, but have not had very regular employment. About three years ago, a step-brother of mine died, and left me 14l. 6s. 10d., and I gave it to my mother.

Sworn before me on the 23d of April 1862,

John Saunders (his x mark).

Present, Charles Clerke, Clerk of Union.

Daniel Donovan, being duly sworn, saith:—I am medical officer of Skibbereen Dispensary district. I knew the late Ellen Saunders, who died suddenly on the 12th instant. About six months before her death I attended her at her own house, which was in a bad state, but not so bad as at the time of her death. When I was attending her she was subject to palpitation of the heart and violent pains in the bowels, resembling colic. I believed her to be suffering from derangement of the heart; and I think it likely she died of disease of the heart, and other diseases. I made no post-mortem examination of the body, as it was not considered necessary. I think the insufficiency of the house, and her exposure to cold in consequence may have accelerated her death, especially as she was subject to chronic disease previously. I consider exposure to severe cold almost as detrimental to life as want of food in the case of very delicate persons. I do not consider that her death is attributable altogether to exposure to cold, but to one or other of the diseases under which she had laboured for some time previously. There was no fuel in the house, and only a few ashes on the hearth.

Sworn before me on the 23d April 1862,

Daniel Donovan, M. D.

John Copithorne, being duly sworn, saith:—I am a grocer in the town of Skibbereen. I knew the late Ellen Saunders. At the time of her death, I had a sum of 8s. in keeping for
SKIBBEREEN AND CASTLETOWN UNIONS.

for her. It was the balance of a larger sum with which she had entrusted me, and upon which she drew from time to time as she required. I never knew her to be suffering from privation or destitution. I paid the balance in my hands to her brother and son after her death. The sum she originally lodged with me was about 5 l. I cannot recollect the date of such lodgment.

Sworn before me on the 23d April 1862,

Samuel Horsley.

Thomas Sullivan, being duly sworn, saith:—I am a shopkeeper in Skibbereen. I knew the late Ellen Saunders. I had no money in keeping for her. I had some at one time; 6 l., but she drew the last of it, 3 s. 6 d., on the 26th of last March. She always had plenty, and was not at any time in a destitute state. She used to have frequent dealings with me, and always paid me.

Sworn before me on the 23d April 1862,

Samuel Horsley.

Andrew Sullivan, being duly sworn, saith:—The late Ellen Saunders was my sister. She had plenty of food and means, and leavings at the time of her death. There was about half a stone of Indian meal in her house at the time of her death. I never knew her to suffer from want of food or clothing, or to endure much hardship. I was much displeased to hear that the jury returned a verdict that her death was produced by privation, because it was not the case. I never would have permitted her to suffer privation for two minutes. She had plenty of her own. Her house was a bad one, and I told her to come and live with me, but she said she would rather live by herself.

Sworn before me on the 23d April 1862,

Samuel Horsley.

Andrew Sullivan (his x mark).

Witnessee, Bernard Potter, Sub-Inspector.

Paul Limrick, being duly sworn, saith:—I am coroner for the county of Cork. I held an inquest on the body of Ellen Saunders on the 14th of the present month. No evidence was given before me to show that the deceased died of want, privation, or destitution. I only considered it necessary to hold an inquest because deceased was found dead in her bed, and one having been present at her demise. I considered myself bound to accept the written verdict handed in by the jury, though I dissented from it.

Sworn before me on the 23d April 1862,

Samuel Horsley.

Enclosure 2, in No. 7.

PROCEEDINGS before the Coroner.

County of Cork, to wit.

An inquisition intended and taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen, at Skibbereen, situate at Skibbereen, in the parish of Abbeystrowey, barony of E. D. of West Carberry, in the county of Cork, on the 14th day of April, in the 25th year of the reign of our said Sovereign Lady Victoria, before me, Paul Limrick, Esq., one of the coroners of our said Lady the Queen for the said county, on view of the body of Ellen Saunders, of Skibbereen, widow, then and there lying dead, upon the oaths of, 1. Jeremiah O'Donovan (Rossa), 2. Cornelius Driscoll, 3. John Neilgan, 4. John Shea, 5. Eugene Daly, 6. Edward Keefe, 7. Jeremiah Sullivan, 8. James White, 9. Patrick Barry, 10. Daniel Duggan, 11. Michael Duggan, 12. John McCarthy, good and lawful men of the said county, duly chosen, and who being then and there duly sworn and charged to inquire, for our said Lady the Queen, when, how, and by what means the said Ellen Saunders came to her death, do, upon their oaths, say, that the said deceased, at Skibbereen, in said county, was found dead in her bed on the 12th instant; that she died from disease of the heart and other complaints produced by privation and exposure to cold.

In witness whereof the said coroner and the jurors aforesaid have hereunto set and subscribed their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

1. Jeremiah O'Donovan (Rossa).
2. Cornelius Driscoll.
5. Eugene Daly.
10. Daniel Duggan.

(signed)

Paul Limrick, Coroner.

424.
I. Skibbereen Union.

DEPOSITIONS of witnesses taken, sworn, and examined before me, Paul Limrick, Esq., one of Her Majesty's coroners for the county of Cork, taken at Skibbereen, in the parish of Abbeystrowey, barony of E. D. of West Carbery, in the said county, on the 14th day of April 1862, on view of the body of Ellen Saunders, then and there lying dead; Daniel Donovan, of Skibbereen, Esq., M. D., deposes and saith:—I saw and examined the body of deceased on yesterday; there were no marks of violence on the body. I attended her about six months ago at her own house; she was subject to a pain in the stomach resembling colic, and had also an affection of the chest and palpitation. I am of opinion that she died from disease of the heart.

Daniel Donovan, M. D.,
Paul Limrick, Coroner.

County of Cork, to wit.

DEPOSITIONS of witnesses taken, sworn, and examined before me, Paul Limrick, Esq., one of Her Majesty's coroners for the county of Cork, taken at Skibbereen, in the parish of Abbeystrowey, barony of E. D. of West Carbery, in the said county, on the 14th day of April 1862, on view of the body of Ellen Saunders then and there lying dead. John Saunders, of Skibbereen, labourer, deposes and saith:—Ellen Saunders was my mother. On Friday night last about nine o'clock she complained of being unwell. She expressed no wish for a doctor or clergyman. She passed the night fairly. About nine o'clock the next morning I went out to get some vinegar for my mother. I returned with it; she drank it; I then left the house and returned shortly; she then told me to bring some water; I did so; she drank about half a tumbler full. I then went up the road a bit and returned about 11 o'clock. I then was talking to her, and went to the garden and about the place. I then went down street and remained there until about three o'clock. At that hour I returned home again. I found a change in her countenance and called her twice; she did not answer, and I found her dead.

John Saunders (his x mark).
Paul Limrick, Coroner.

(No. 108 M./62.)

No. 8.—LETTER from the Commissioners to Mr. Horsley.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,
17 May 1862.

Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland, desire to state, for your information, that a communication appeared in the "Cork Examiner" newspaper of the 2d instant, purporting to be from a special correspondent, referring generally to the alleged existence of distress amongst the great body of the people in the west of the county of Cork, and to the increase of that distress, and advertising more especially to the districts extending along the coast south of Skibbereen, from Castlehaven to Cape Clear.

In subsequent communications, contained in the "Cork Examiner" of the 8th, 9th, 10th, 13th, 14th, and 15th instant, the same correspondent gives the result of his visits to Cape Clear, Baltimore, Cape Clear Island, Sherkin Island, The Marshes, Clannaurence, Derreen, and Inchintaglin, in the Skibbereen and Castletown Unions, and describes in detail the condition of the population, naming several persons in each locality with whom he has conversed on the subject, or whose places of abode he has visited.

The Commissioners forward copies of the newspapers to you herewith, and they request that you will have the goodness to visit each of the localities in question, and to report to the Commissioners generally as to the state of employment, health of the population, and alleged destitution of the people.

The Commissioners have at the same time to state, that they do not expect you to go into each case of alleged neglect unless you find it convenient to do so.

The substance of these communications to the "Cork Examiner" will, the Commissioners believe, be brought under the notice of Parliament, on Friday, the 23d instant, and the Commissioners will be glad to receive your report at your earliest convenience.

By order, &c.

To S. Horsley, Esq.
Poor Law Inspector, Killarney.

(signed) B. Banks,
Chief Clerk.
Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland desire to call the attention of the Board of Guardians of Skibbereen Union to the statements contained in communications which have appeared in the "Cork Examiner" newspaper of the 21st, 8th, 9th, 10th, 13th, and 14th instant, regarding the alleged existence of distress and destitution among the great body of the people in the west of the county of Cork, and to the increase of that distress, and advertising especially to the district extending along the coast south of Skibbereen, from Castlehaven to Cape Clear.

The result of visits to Cape Clear, Baltimore, Cape Clear Island, Sherkin Island, and the Marshes, is separately described, and details given of the condition of the people, several persons in each locality being named with whom the correspondent has conversed, or whose places of abode he has visited.

In the Cape Clear District, families named Saurty; Whelan, Michael; Nolan; Shee, Mrs.; Fitzgerald, David; Whelan, Jerry; Nolan, Bohone, Mincham; Regan, Patrick; Sheehan, Daniel; Dawley, John; Donoghue, Mrs.; Driscoll, Hurley; Driscoll, Florence; and Cadogan, are specially mentioned.

In Sherkin Island, persons named Brien, Daniel; Saurty, Mrs.; McCarthy, Jeremiah; Coghlan, Peter; Driscoll, Curly; Scannell, Patrick; Scannell;Carthy, Owen; Sullivan, Wm.; Gosnell, James; Driscoll, Jerry; Codigan, Mrs.; Driscoll, Florence; Fehaly, Simon; O'Hara, Randall; Donoghue, Tim.;Carthy, Michael; Nolan, Wm.; Fitzgerald, Garrett; Hurley, John; Young, Minchane; Denis, William; Regan, Patrick; Hogan, Mrs.; Connell; and Regan, Denis; are mentioned.

In Baltimore and the neighbourhood, persons are mentioned named Coghlan, Patrick; Doughne; Cottrell, Mrs.; Sweeny, Denis; Kearney, Michael; Brien; Sullivan; Brown, Mrs.; Regan, Michael; Neill, Daniel; Driscoll, Mrs.; Driscoll, Timothy; Kearney, Mrs.; Driscoll, Timothy; Driscoll, Patrick; Kearney; Hegarty, Mrs.; Kearney, Daniel; Collins, Patrick; Driscoll, Mrs.; Hallahan; Neill, John; Leonard, Patrick; Connolly, John; and Harrington, Daniel.

In the place called "The Marshes," in the parish of Aughadown, persons are mentioned named Regan, Hegarty, and Driscoll.

The Commissioners will endeavour to obtain and forward copies of the newspapers to the Board of Guardians, and in the meantime the Commissioners suggest that the relieving officer should be directed to visit the localities referred to, and make personal inquiry at the homes of all applicants for relief, and report generally as to the state in which he finds the poor, giving provisional relief in cases of sudden and urgent necessity, or where sickness prevails, and offering relief in the workhouse where he finds it necessary.

The relieving officer should likewise report all the ordinary cases to the Board of Guardians for their decision.

The Commissioners request you to give the necessary directions to the relieving officer in anticipation of the meeting of the Board of Guardians, that he may act promptly should emergency arise, and that he may on that day give the guardians all the information he may be enabled to collect in the interval.

By order, &c.

(signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

To the Clerk, Skibbereen Union.
Gentlemen,

Skibbereen, 21 May 1863.

Advertising to the Commissioners' communication of the 17th instant, enclosing copies of the "Cork Examiner" newspaper of the 2d, 8th, 9th, 10th, 13th, 14th, and 15th instant, I beg to state that I visited Baltimore, Sherkin Island, and Cape Clear Island yesterday, and regret to report that at present severe distress and privation in many individual cases, verging upon utter destitution, prevail to a considerable extent among the inhabitants of those localities.

In the Islands of Sherkin and Cape Clear, I visited several of the cases pointed out by the special reporter of the "Cork Examiner," as well as many others not mentioned by him; and I feel bound to report that in my opinion the statements made by him with regard to the distressed and precarious condition of many of the inhabitants of those islands are not overcharged, and that had it not been for the extraordinary exertions of the parish priest and his curates, and the still more extraordinary charity of the poor towards those poorer than themselves, deaths from destitution would ere now have occurred. As it is, the countenances and persons of some of the women and children whom I saw yesterday presented unmistakable indications of their having been subjected to the want of a sufficiency of food, fire, and clothing.

In some of the houses I visited yesterday there was no food, in others a small quantity of Indian meal only, and in none of them was there any fuel, except a little dried cow-dung and furze procured by great labour.

The islanders, especially in Cape Clear, appear to be a hardy and self-reliant race, but the failure in the potato and other crops of last year, together with the unproductiveness of last season's fishing, has reduced them to great straits, especially as they are largely in debt to the meal dealers, and have been compelled to part with their stock, and to pawn or sell their fishing gear to purchase food.

In these islands and on some parts of the mainland adjoining, there are few or no employers of labour at money wages. Indeed, almost every man may be said to be his own employer, either in tilling his own small holding or in fishing.

I am told, and can readily believe it, that more or less distress has prevailed for many years past in the islands, for I think they are over-populated for their extent and capabilities, but when both tillage and fishing are comparatively unproductive, as was the case last year, the extent of such distress must be increased to a great and exceptional ratio.

Sir Henry Beehan, the proprietor of Sherkin and Cape Clear Islands, and who is also a large proprietor on the mainland, gave employment on drainage works in Cape Clear from December last to about the end of February last, but since then there has been no employment there, so far as I could learn, for the labouring classes and small landholders at money wages.

The land has been all seeded and tilled in the districts I visited yesterday, and in the islands the present potato crop will be generally available about the end of next month. The crop looks generally very well at present; but it cannot be relied upon, for in one or two of the more advanced patches I saw that the blight of former years has reappeared, and the owners who showed them to me shed tears when pointing out the disease.

It is matter for thankfulness that the sanitary condition of the population is, upon the whole, excellent, and that, notwithstanding the privations and hardships to which a considerable portion of it has lately been subjected, fever and sickness, the usual concomitants of a want of sufficient food and the other necessities of life, have not hitherto manifested themselves to any appreciable extent.

In the districts I visited yesterday there are many persons eligible for in-door or out-door relief, but there is a strong aversion on the part of the islanders to accept the former.

The relieving officer spent Monday last at Baltimore and Sherkin in inquiring into cases requiring relief, and I took him into Cape Clear Island yesterday for the same purpose, from whence he will return, weather permitting, in time to report fully to the Board of Guardians at their meeting to-morrow.

I think it quite impossible for one relieving officer only, were he ever so physically energetic and active, to overtake the duties of the entire union; and it is extremely...
extremely desirable, especially in such a year as this, that a second relieving officer should be appointed with the least possible delay.

I think his head-quarters should be Baltimore, and that his district should comprise the islands of Sherkin and Cape Clear, together with a considerable portion of the union on the mainland. I shall bring this view before the Board of Guardians at their meeting to-morrow.

I was accompanied to Sherkin and Cape Clear yesterday by two members of the Board of Guardians, viz. Mr. McCarthy Downing and Mr. Henry Marmion, who were eye-witnesses with myself of the condition of the population therein.

I do not apprehend that any deaths will occur from actual starvation; such a calamity will be averted by prompt and liberal action on the part of the Board of Guardians, and by the benevolent exertions now being made, or rather continued, by the parish priest, Mr. Leader, and others, on behalf of those who cannot or will not accept of in-door relief.

To the Poor Law Commissioners,
Poor Law Office, Dublin.

I have, &c.

(Signed) S. Horsley.

(No. 11,736/62.)

No. 11.—Report from Mr. Horsley, Poor Law Inspector.

Gentlemen,

Skibbereen, 22 May 1862.

Advertising to the Commissioners' communication of the 17th instant, and to my report of yesterday, relative to the condition of the population in the Islands of Sherkin and Cape Clear, and on the mainland, about Baltimore, I beg to state that I visited the Marshes of Anghadown yesterday, in order to ascertain whether the statements of the special reporter of the "Cork Examiner" newspaper, relating to the condition of the population in that district, and which appeared in the issue of that journal on the 14th instant, are substantially correct; and I am glad to be able to report that, so far from their being so, they give a grossly overcharged picture of the actual state of the district in question.

From information derived from reliable sources, and from my own observation yesterday, I am enabled to report that, although a few of the small landholders and some few persons among the labouring classes are largely in debt, and very poor, none of them are suffering from want of sufficient food or the other necessaries of life; and that there is remunerative employment of one kind or another for all the able-bodied labourers in the district, if they choose to look for and accept it.

I visited the particular cases pointed out by the special reporter, and ascertained the following facts from the lips of the parties themselves:—

Regan's wife (her husband being at work with a neighbouring farmer for the day, at 1s. wages) informed me that her husband did not get regular daily employment, but admitted that he did not always look for it, and that he had not applied for work on a new road that is being made within a mile of his house; she further stated, that had not they lost from disease two pigs, worth about 8l., they would have been comfortably off in every respect. As Regan holds no land, he and his family are eligible to workhouse relief, if they should unfortunately become destitute.

On visiting Driscoll's house, I found that he, like Regan, was at work with a neighbouring farmer, and received 1s. per day when so employed; and as he holds no land, he and his family also can, if necessary, be relieved in the workhouse, but I do not believe they will require to apply for admission thereto.

Hegarty's wife (her husband being regularly employed, at 6s. a week, by Mr. Jago) informed me that she and her family were able to live, and had enough to eat; that they had an acre of potatoes planted, and some land under other tillage. She and her children seemed healthy and cheerful; and there was nothing in their outward appearance or demeanour which would lead me to believe that they were either suffering, or had suffered, from distress or privation. Indeed, I saw no one in the district presenting such an appearance.

The special reporter's visit had evidently led many of the poorer inhabitants of the district in question to believe that out-door relief would be extended to them, and
1. Skibbereen Union.

and they were under the impression that my visit was with a view to its being afforded, for more than one of them said to me, "Is it the priest who will give it out?"

I return to office herewith the special reporter’s communication which was sent for my information and guidance.

I have, &c.

To the Poor Law Commissioners,
Poor Law Office, Dublin.

(No. 11,904 / 62.)

No. 12.—Extract from Guardians’ Minutes, dated 22 May 1862.

Relieving Officer’s Report.

Gentlemen,

I visited Sherkin and Cape Clear on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. I found the utmost destitution and a want of any sufficient quantity of provision of any kind, and no fuel except the droppings of the cows. I did not hear that any one died of starvation, nor do I believe any person did, but many, especially the children, who were emaciated to the greatest degree, and unless immediate relief is given from this, until the potatoes are fit for use, I fear some will perish. I would humbly suggest, that relief be given as far as it can in meal. All the inducements I could offer, nor the advice of the clergymen, could induce parties who were evidently suffering from hunger to go into the workhouse.

Your, &c.

(signed) James Barry.

Resolved,—That McCarthy Downing, H. R. Mannion, R. Coppinger, and Martin Jennings, Esqrs., be appointed a committee to purchase meal, and appoint an assistant relieving officer pro temp. to relieve the immediate distress in Cape Clear and Sherkin of those classes entitled under the first section of the Act.

Adopted.

Resolved,—That on this day fortnight we appoint a relieving officer for the electoral divisions of Cape Clear, Tullagh, and the two Anghadowns, for three months, at a salary of 4l. per month, and 10s. a week for a boat, the relieving officer being bound to go at least once a week into Cape Clear and Sherkin, and more frequently if required, and that an advertisement be accordingly inserted.

Adopted.

Resolved,—That the clerk be directed to procure the necessary books and forms for giving out-door relief when ordered by the guardians.

Adopted.

(No. 11,904 / 62.)

No. 13.—Letter from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland acknowledge the receipt of the minutes of proceedings of the Board of Guardians of Skibbereen Union on the 22d instant; and desire to express their approval of the appointment of an additional relieving officer for the district, comprising the electoral
electoral divisions of Cape Clear, Tullagh, Aghadow North and Aghadow South, as proposed by the Board of Guardians; such additional relieving officer, the Commissioners desire to add, will be invested with the powers and responsibilities of the office independent of the other relieving officer.

The usual form of queries respecting the person appointed to the office is enclosed, and, when duly filled up and signed, should be returned to this office.

By order, &c.

To the Clerk, Skibbereen Union.

B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

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No. 14.—Letter from the Commissioners to Mr. Horsley.

Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland forward for your information the accompanying extract from the "Cork Examiner," of 29th instant, relating to the death of a child named Regan, at Cape Clear, in the Skibbereen Union; and the Commissioners request that you will be so good as to make inquiry into the facts of the case, and report to them on the subject.

By order, &c.

To S. Horsley, Esq.,
Poor Law Inspector, Killarney.

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Enclosure in No. 14.

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No. 15.—Extract from Guardians' Minutes, dated 29 May 1862.

Gentlemen,

On last Friday, at 12 o'clock noon, I left Skibbereen with one ton of meal for distribution amongst the destitute poor of Cape and Sherkin Islands. I arrived at Sherkin at 3 o'clock P.M. and left seven and a half cwt. of meal at the house of Daniel Minaham, after making preparations to send an account to all the poor whose names were previously taken down by Mr. Barry, that they may attend next day. I proceeded to Cape with twelve and a half cwt. more. I did not land before 7 o'clock, as the weather was most unfavourable that evening, and next morning I gave eleven and a half cwt. of meal to 81 families, numbering 225 persons; amongst those are five or six small farmers, with families apparently in the most extreme state of destitution, and who would not go into the workhouse. In the house of one Thomas Regan, of Lisarona, a child was dead, and from the wretched appearance, and that of the family, I considered she died from want of the necessaries of life. I left about one cwt. of meal spared in this island, I came to Sherkin on Saturday, and then distributed a half cwt. of meal amongst 58 families, numbering 172 persons; about 40 were unsupplied, and I
I. Skibbereen Union.

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO

requested some of those supplied to assist these until I could come again. It is of course possible that in discharging so urgent a duty, and of necessity in so prompt a manner, that some deception may have been practised on me, but with my instructions I did my best. The people appeared more destitute in Cape than in Sherkin; in both places many of them said they might not want poor relief long, as they had hopes the Reverend Mr. Leader would return to them with money sufficient to provide fishing materials, which would be a means of affording them employment and permanent relief. The entire number relieved are 139 head of families, and single old people, all numbering 397 individuals.

I remain, &c. (signed) J. O'Donovan (Rossa).

(No. 12,383 / 62.)

No. 16.—LETTER from the Commissioners to Mr. Horsley.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin, 3 June 1862.

Sir, Referring to your observations on the minutes of proceedings of the Board of Guardians of Skibbereen Union on the 29th ultimo, respecting the report of Mr. O'Donovan, relieving officer, as to the relief afforded by him to the poor on the Islands of Cape Clear and Sherkin, the Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland request that you will have the goodness to take the opportunity of your inquiring into the death of the child, Mary Regan, as instructed by their letter of the 30th ultimo, to report again to them as to the state of Cape Clear, Sherkin, and Baltimore, more especially as to the sufficiency of the relief afforded therein either by the rates of the union or from private funds.

By order of the Commissioners, (signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

To S. Horsley, Esq., Poor Law Inspector, Skibbereen.

(No. 12,251 / 62.)

No. 17.—LETTER from the Commissioners to Mr. Horsley.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin, 23 June 1862.

Sir, Referring to the letter of 30th ultimo, the Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland, forward for your information the accompanying copy of a constabulary report referred to them from the Chief Secretary's office, relating to the death of Mary Regan, in the Skibbereen Union.

You will be good enough to return the document with your report.

By order, &c. (signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

To S. Horsley, Esq., Poor Law Inspector, Killarney.

Enclosure in No. 17.

COPY CONSTABULARY REPORT.

County of Cork, West Riding.—Death from Destitution of Mary Regan, aged 12 months.

Copy of VERDICT.

"That the said deceased, on the 23d instant (May), at Cape Clear, in this county, died from want and starvation."

Skibbereen, 28 May 1862.

Having attended the inquest in this case, and taken copies of the evidence, which I beg to attach for the Inspector General's information.

This
This is the child and family to whom so much public attention has been lately invited by the public press, &c.

On hearing of the child's death, I directed Constable Mahony to make particular and personal inquiry into the circumstances and cause of death, and report to me accordingly. The father and mother then, notwithstanding their evidence before the coroner, indignantly denied that want of food had contributed to her death; but by all accounts they were some time ago in a pitiable state.

(signed) Bernard Potter, S.I.

EVIDENCE:—Death of Mary Regan, Infant

Thomas Regan, of Cape Clear, farmer, deposeth and saith: The deceased was my daughter; she died on Friday last, she was sick for seven or eight days before her death: he does not know what was the matter with her: she was about 12 months old. The child had nothing else to live upon but her mother's breast, and if we had flour or sugar she might have taken it: there was whey, but she used to object to taking it. I think if the mother had nourished the child it would be better; we had plenty of meal during the child's sickness, and if we had it not of our own, we could get it from the neighbours; before the child's illness we had not sufficient; we had nothing. Indian meal, which (sometimes when we had it we used) sometimes three times a day, twice a day, and sometimes once a day.

(signed) Thomas Regan (his x mark).

Margaret Regan, of Cape Clear, married woman, deposeth and saith: The deceased was my daughter; she was ill seven or eight days before her death: I had not sufficient suck for the child, occasioned by not having sufficient food; she was never without having victuals once a day, consisting of Indian meal and nothing else, except that now or then we may get a drop of milk from one of the neighbours; I had often to break an egg in water to drink it in order to have suck for the child; if I had sufficient breast for the child I think she would be better.

(signed) Margaret Regan (her x mark).

Samuel William Robinson, of Baltimore, Esq., m.d., deposeth and saith: I made a post-mortem examination of the deceased this day; the external appearance of the body was emaciated; I found no food of any description either in the stomach or intestines. I heard the evidence of the father and mother of the child; I think the mother, trusting to one meal of Indian meal sometimes in the day, and not having other nourishment, would be sufficient to account for death; in fact, that the child died from want of nourishment.

Dated at Skibbereen, 28 May 1862.

Bernard Potter, S.I.

The Inspector General.

(No. 12,970 /62.)

No. 18.—REPORT FROM MR. HORSLY, POOR LAW INSPECTOR.

Gentlemen, 7 June 1862.

Addressing to the Commissioners' communications of the 30th ultimo, and of the 2d and 8d instant, I beg to state that on the 5th instant I inquired into the case of Mary Regan, a child of about 12 months old, who died at Cape Clear Island on the 23d ultimo, and on whose body an inquest was held on the Tuesday following, when a verdict of "Died of want and starvation" was found.

I have now the honour to transmit, for the information of the Commissioners, the minutes of evidence, on oath, given before me with reference to the case, and also copies of the depositions made at the inquest, and beg to report thereupon as follows:

The child in question was daughter of Thomas Regan, who holds a small farm on Cape Clear Island at an annual rent of about £7. He had, I believe, without the sanction or knowledge of his landlord, and against an express rule on the property, some time ago sub-let a portion of the farm to his brother, thereby barthemning it with the support of two families instead of one; he had, moreover, paid no rent since September 1860, and had in consequence of that circumstance, together with the violation of the rule against sub-letting, been served with notice to quit in September next. I ascertained these facts from the wife of Thomas Regan when I visited their house on the 20th ultimo, and on that occasion I saw the child, since deceased; it was in its mother's arms, and was greatly emaciated. The notice stated that at times she had been unable to afford the child nourishment from the breast, and attributed that inability to her not having always sufficient food for her own sustenance. Two of her other children were in the house
at the time, and they also appeared to be much emaciated, and not to have been either regularly or sufficiently fed.

The depositions of the child’s parents at the inquest, in regard to their having suffered from want of sufficient food, are very much in accordance with the statements thus made to myself by the mother on the 20th ultimo, but it would appear from the evidence of the warden, Edward Shipsey, given before me on the 5th instant, that Regan had one cow which was giving milk for a fortnight before the child’s death. It is possible, however, that, owing to the privations endured by the mother for a long time previously, the amelioration in her circumstances in regard to food may have occurred too late to preserve the life of the child. I searched the house of Regan on the 20th instant, and found no food in it, except three or four small cakes of griddled Indian meal bread, and two or three handfuls of uncooked Indian meal. I saw no cow, and the family told me they had nothing to exist upon except some Indian meal supplied to them from time to time by the charity of their neighbours, and by the Roman Catholic curate. I knew that Thomas Regan’s brother had a cow giving milk, but it was stated that the quantity she gave daily did not exceed three pints, and his own family consisted of his wife and two children.

Upon the whole, I see no just grounds for questioning the propriety of the verdict at the inquest.

The jury was composed of eight of the inhabitants of the Islands of Sherkin and Cape Clear (all of whom, with two exceptions, hold land), and of four of the inhabitants from the mainland about Baltimore. I have no doubt they arrived at their verdict solely on the evidence of the deceased child’s parents, and on that of the medical man who made a post-mortem examination of the body.

I beg to report, however, that the evidence of the warden and of the relieving officer proves that no blame in this case is attachable to the local authorities entrusted with the administration of relief to the poor, as no application was made to them on behalf of Regan’s family; and I feel certain, from all that I have heard, that had the parties most interested in the Islands of Cape Clear and Sherkin, namely, the proprietors and their agents, been made aware that any unusual distress existed within them, and had received from those from whom they had a right to expect it accurate information on the point, they would have at once taken steps to meet and alleviate it in all cases where they could be fairly expected to do so.

I am glad to report that the condition of the islanders, and of the inhabitants on the mainland about Baltimore, need no longer cause any apprehension in the minds of any parties interested in their welfare. The proprietors and others have subscribed money liberally to furnish them, where necessary, with food and with fishing gear and implements; and on the islands of Cape Clear and Sherkin there will in future, I believe, be always a store of food to meet any emergency that may arise from their inaccessibility in bad weather.

The Board of Guardians, at their meeting on Thursday last, appointed a second relieving officer, whose duty it will be to visit the islands in question weekly, for the purpose of receiving applications for relief, and dealing provisionally with urgent cases, until they can be considered by the guardians.

There is vacant accommodation for 500 persons at present in the workhouse, and the guardians are not disposed to have recourse to the administration of out-door relief to any class unless a necessity for their doing so should arise.

The crops of all kinds wear a very promising appearance at present; and in the islands and along the sea-coast, to which localities severe distress among the small landholders, labourers, and fishermen was chiefly confined, the potato crop will be generally available by the middle of next month; in some favoured spots it is already available.

The fishing season, I am told, has opened with fair prospects of being remunerative to those engaged in supplying the markets with fresh and dried fish, and the sanitary condition of the population generally continues to be excellent.

I return to office the papers sent to me for my guidance and information relative to the case of Mary Regan.

To the Poor Law Commissioners,
Poor Law Office, Dublin.

I have, &c.

(signed) S. Horsley.
SKIBBEREEN AND CASTLETOWN UNIONS.

Enclosure 1, in No. 18.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE taken by Mr. Horlsley.

JAMES BARRY, being duly sworn, saith—I am Relieving Officer for the Skibbereen Union. I have heard of the death of Mary Regan, aged 12 months, who died in Cape Clear Island, and on whose body an inquest was recently held. I did not attend the inquest; her parents did not apply to me for medical or other Poor Law relief, prior to her death. There was an appearance of great distress and destitution among some of the people on Cape Clear Island when I visited it on the 20th, 21st, and 22nd ultimo, but I think that if fine weather now sets in, remunerative employment in fishing, and preparing the produce for market, will be obtainable by the inhabitants of the island, and that all severe distress will cease to prevail among them.

Sworn before me, the 5th day of June 1862.

James Barry.

EDWARD SHIPSEY, being duly sworn, saith—I reside on Cape Clear Island, and am a Warden appointed by the Poor Law Guardians of the Skibbereen Union. I know the family of Thomas Regan, of Lismona, in the Island of Cape Clear. He holds land from Sir Henry Beehan at an annual rent of about 6l. I believe he sub-let a portion of the land to his brother. I did not attend the inquest which was held on the body of Mary Regan, aged 12 months, daughter to Thomas Regan. Neither Thomas Regan, nor his wife, nor any one on their behalf, applied to me for medical relief or other Poor Law relief, up to the death of their child Mary. Since the death of the child, her mother, Margaret, applied to me for some of the meal that Mr. Beehan had entrusted to me for distribution. I did not give her any of it, as her husband, Thomas Regan, signed with many others a memorial to the Board of Guardians, requesting them not to grant out-door relief in the island. I heard the family were in distress before the death of the child. I think that Regan owes a year's rent to the landlord. I believe he has one cow, and I heard she was giving milk for about a fortnight before the child's death. I am bailiff to the landlord. My brother Thomas was on the coroner's jury, and a few more of the residents on the Island of Cape Clear were on it also. My brother is a tenant farmer on the island. Before the child's death, I heard that the priest was giving tickets for meal to some of the distressed people in the island. I never visited the family of Thomas Regan this year except in my capacity as bailiff, and therefore cannot say whether they were in distress or not. I think all the early planted potatoes will be available for food about the 10th of July if blight does not attack them. Some of the crop will be fit for use by the end of this month; a few gardens are already fit for use.

Sworn before me, on the 5th day of June 1862.

Edward Shipsey, junior.

Enclosure 2, in No. 18.

PROCEEDINGS before the Coroner.

County of Cork to wit.

An inquisition indented and taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen at Cape Clear, situate at Cape Clear, in the parish of Clear Island, barony of West Carbery, in the county of Cork on the 27th day of May, in the 50th year of the reign of our said Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria, before me, Paul Linnick, Esq., one of the coroners of our said Lady the Queen for said county, on view of the body of Mary Regan, of Cape Clear, an infant, then and there lying dead, upon the oaths of—

1. Edward Young, 7. Cornelius Driscoll,
2. Thomas Shipsey, 8. Patrick Hurley,
3. William Brian, 9. Timothy Driscoll,
4. Michael Kearney, 10. Cornelius Connolly,
5. Cornelius Sheehan, 11. Thomas Leonard,
6. Daniel McCarthy, 12. Michael Driscoll,

good and lawful men of the said county duly chosen, and who being then and there duly sworn, and charged to inquire for our said Lady the Queen, when, how, and by what means the...
CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO

I.

Skibbereen Union. the said Mary Regan came to her death, do upon their oaths, say that the said deceased on the 21st instant at Cape Clear, in said county, died from want and starvation.

Signed by Edward Young. x Cornelius Driscoll.
 x Thomas Skipsey. x Patrick Horly.
 x William O'Brien. x Timothy Driscoll.
 x Michael Kearney. x Cornelius Connolly.
 x Cornelius Sheehan. x Thomas Leonard.
 Daniel M'Carty. Michael Driscoll.
 x All marksmen. Paul Limrick, Coroner.

County of Cork to wit.

DEPOSITIONS of Witnesses taken, sworn, and examined before me, Paul Limrick, Esq., one of Her Majesty's Coroners for the County of Cork, taken at Cape Clear, in the Parish of Clear Island, on the 27th day of May 1862, on view of the body of Mary Regan, an infant then and there lying dead.

THOMAS REGAN, of Cape Clear, farmer, deposeth and saith:—The deceased was my daughter, she died on Friday last, she was sick for seven or eight days before her death, I do not know what was the matter with her, she was about 12 months old, the child had nothing else to live upon but her mother's breast, and if we had flour or sugar she might have taken it; there was whey, but she used to object to taking it; I think if the mother had nourishment the child would be better; we had plenty of meal during the child's sickness, and if we had it not of our own, we could get it from the neighbours; before the child's illness we had not sufficient, we had nothing but Indian meal, which sometimes when we had it we used twice a day, sometimes three times a day, and sometimes once a day.

Thomas Regan (his x mark). Paul Limrick, Coroner.

Like depositions of Margaret Regan, of Cape Clear, married woman, who deposeth and saith:—The deceased was my daughter, she was ill for seven or eight days before her death, I had not sufficient suck for the child, occasioned by not having sufficient food. I was never without having victuals once a day consisting of Indian meal and nothing else, except that now or then we may get a drop of milk from one of the neighbours; I had often to break an egg in water to drink it in order to have suck for the child; if I had sufficient breast for the child I think she would be better.

Margaret Regan (her x mark). Paul Limrick, Coroner.

Like depositions of Samuel William Robinson, Esq., M.B., who deposeth and saith:—I made a post mortem examination of the deceased this day; the external appearance of the body was very emaciated; I found no food of any description either in the stomach or intestines; I heard the evidence of the father and mother of the child; I think the mother trusting to one meal of Indian meal sometimes in the day, and not having other nourishment, would be sufficient to account for death; in fact that the child died from want of food or nourishment.

Samuel William Robinson, M.B. Paul Limrick, Coroner.

(No. 13,529/62.)

No. 19.—EXTRACT from Mr. Horsey's Half-yearly Report, dated 18 June 1862.

The union is in no difficulty in regard to financial matters.

Although there has been considerable distress among the labouring and small farming classes, and also many mechanics and artizans in the towns and villages, during the past six months, there has been no great pressure for workhouse relief.
II.

CASTLETOWN UNION.

(NO. 24,611/61.)

No. 1.—EXTRACT from Guardians' Minutes, dated 14 November 1861.

ORDERED, That the clerk forward to the Secretary of the Admiralty, to be laid before the Lords' Commissioners, a copy of the following resolution unanimously passed by the guardians at their meeting of this day:

Resolved, That inasmuch as we have had laid before us (the guardians of the Castletown Union) a statement on apparently good authority, to the effect that certain "defence works" are contemplated to be carried on on Bere Island, in this union, by Government.—That we desire to express our strong and decided opinion on the propriety and extreme desirableness (in case the statement made to us should be correct) of commencing such works with as little delay as possible. That Bere Island having been most severely visited by the potato blight of this year, and its inhabitants being altogether devoid of other resources to rely on for support, they must be exposed to the worst consequences of extreme want if not assisted by the works in question or some similar mode of relief.

(NO. 24,611/61.)

No. 2.—LETTER from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,

26 November 1861.

Sir,

Adverting to their letter of the 10th October last on the subject of the loss of the potato crop in the present year and the probable increase of applicants for relief, the Commissioners for Administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland desire to inform the Board of Guardians of Castletown Union that they have under consideration the propriety of a temporary increase in the number of relieving officers in some of the unions in the west of Ireland which contain inhabited districts remote from the union workhouse, in order that in any case of sudden and urgent necessity arising in such districts, the provisional powers of the relieving officer may be available for the immediate relief of destitution, and especially for the conveyance of persons in extreme distress or sickness to the workhouse.

There are, at present, as the Commissioners are informed, two relieving officers, one resident at Leitrim Adrigole, and the other at Eyries, Castletown.

The Commissioners request the views of the Board on this subject in reference to the districts north of Kilkinnery Bay, and to Bere Island, in which the Commissioners observe, by the guardians' minutes of the 14th instant, the guardians anticipate much distress.

To the Clerk,

Castletown Union.

By order of the Commissioners,

B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

(sign)
in the west of Ireland which contain remote inhabited districts, in order to afford immediate relief to any cases of a sudden and urgent nature which may arise in those districts, and requesting the views of the guardians of this union on the subject with reference to district north of Killinerry, or rather Kilkimihan Bay and Bere Island in the latter, where the guardians apprehend there will be much distress, as appears by their minutes of the 14th instant.—Read.

The guardians are of opinion that the two relieving officers now in the union are more than sufficient to meet the present or any demands which may in future be made for relief.

(No. 1087/62.)

No. 4.—ExTRACT from Guardians' Minutes, dated 9 January 1862.

Mr. Horsley having brought before the Board two letters from the Poor Law Commissioners, of the 8th and 9th December, on the subject of the expediency of employing justice constables as additional relieving officers, and also as to the providing a covered spring van for the conveyance of paupers, the guardians beg to state that, in their opinion, the service of the police as relieving officers is not required, there being two relieving officers residing in the only locality in which there are not police stations, except at the mines, where there are two guardians. With regard to the spring van, the Board will be glad to have one, if the Commissioners will be kind enough to give it to them, Mr. Horsley having stated he will so recommend.

(No. 1087/62.)

No. 5.—LETTER from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,
18 January 1862.

Sir,
The Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland acknowledge the receipt of the Minutes of proceedings of the Board of Guardians of the Castletown Union on the 9th instant, and desire to inform the Board that they can have a spring vehicle for the removal of poor persons to the workhouse on paying the expenses of its conveyance to Castletown.

To the Clerk,
Castletown Union, Berehaven.

By order, &c.
(signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

(No. 2246/62.)

No. 6.—LETTER from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,
3 February 1862.

Sir,

Adverting to their letter of the 18th ultimo, the Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland desire to state, for the information of the Board of Guardians of Castletown Union, that the vehicle therein referred to will be forwarded to Bandon to-day by railway, directed to “The Guardians of the Poor, Castletown Union, Berehaven.”

To the Clerk,
Castletown Union, Berehaven.

By order, &c.
(signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.
Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland forward herewith a memorial, addressed to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant (referred to this department) by the gentry, clergy, and other inhabitants of the barony of Bere, representing the distressed condition of that district; and the Commissioners request that you will have the goodness to make inquiry, and to report to them on the subject with as little delay as possible.

A previous memorial from the Castletown Union, together with the papers connected therewith, are enclosed for your information.

By order, &c.

To S. Horsley, Esq.,
Poor Law Inspector, Caherciveen.

Po() Law Commission Office, Dublin,
4 February 1862.

Respectfully sheweth,

That memorialists view with great alarm the wide-spread misery and destitution occasioned in this part of Ireland by the almost total failure of the potato crop, and a considerable deficiency in all other agricultural produce of the past year, deem it a duty they owe to your Excellency, as Chief Governor of the country, and to a numerous and deserving class of their fellow beings, who are likely to fall victims to such destitution, if not seasonably checked, to lay the facts of the case plainly and briefly before your Excellency.

That memorialists, who from residence in the district, and personal acquaintance with its condition, are in possession of most reliable sources of information, hesitate not to state that the deficiency of the potato crop was not less than three-fourths of the average produce, and that the available one-fourth was of such an inferior quality as to render it a very unwholesome article of food.

That in consequence of this great deficiency of the potato crop a sixfold trade in Indian meal has, and is now being carried on, for the last four months in the district, whereby the resources of the agricultural population are exhausted.

That such a universal calamity cannot be more beneficently or effectually relieved than by affording remunerative employment to our willing labourers by the execution of public works in a district hitherto comparatively neglected, but which, from its important position, ought to receive peculiar and fostering attention from the Government.

That memorialists respectfully claim your Excellency's kind attention to a few of the numerous works which seem to them, if undertaken, at present well calculated to meet the pressing emergency, and confer vast benefits on the barony of Bere.

First, the completion of the lighthouse on Bere Island. This work, admitted to be of urgent necessity, was, after a large expenditure of public money, under the superintendence of the Ballast Board, left in an unfinished state, and remains so to the present date; the melancholy wrecks which have occurred on this coast may be attributed in a great degree to this lighthouse not having been completed, and by which the western entrance to our noble harbour would have been made known to the bewildered mariner. Independently of the present distress, memorialists conceive this work should have long since been completed, and ought now to be no longer deferred.

The extension of the existing quay at Castletown, which in its present state is totally inadequate to the increasing trade of the town.

The completion of the defence works at Bere Island, which memorialists have reason to believe have been approved of and recommended by the military authorities, and estimates framed for such.

The construction of the West Cork Railway extending from Bandon to Skibbereen. This work, if carried on, would employ a large portion of the labouring population of the district, and when completed, confer great and lasting benefits on the country.

In conclusion, memorialists regret exceedingly being obliged to state, that from the proprietors of the barony of Bere, with few exceptions, no assistance whatever is to be expected;
and in consequence your memorialists conscientiously believe, unless Government aid be immediately afforded in some shape or other, the sacrifice of human life on a large scale is likely to be the consequence: a consummation which your memorialists feel assured would not be more seriously deplored by anyone than by your Excellency, who so worthily represents Her Gracious Majesty in Ireland, and to whose well known and universally admitted sense of justice and humanity they confidently and earnestly appeal, whilst it is yet time, to avert the awful and fast approaching calamity with which this district is unmistakably threatened.

And your memorialists will ever pray.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

J. O'Kearney White, Chairman,
J. P. County Cork.

(No. 3 836 62.)

No. 8.—Report from Mr. Horsley, Poor Law Inspector.

Gentlemen,

14 February 1862.

Adverting to the Commissioners' communication of the 4th instant, forwarding to me a memorial addressed to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant by the gentry, clergy, and other inhabitants of the barony of Bere, representing the distressed condition of that district, I have the honour to report that I visited the district in question on Monday last, and that having on that and the three following days made particular inquiries respecting the present condition and future prospects for the next four months of the population within the barony, I see no reason to apprehend that the gloomy anticipations of the memorialists will be realised, or that extreme destitution, likely to involve the sacrifice of human life from want of food, will prevail to any appreciable extent between this time and next harvest.

Among the underrated occupiers of land, a rather numerous class in the barony, severe pecuniary distress is, and will be felt for some time to come; and it is possible that a few of them will be unable to meet their engagements to the landlords and to the provision merchants, and will have in consequence to abandon their small holdings, and become chargeable for a time upon the poor rates for support. But I believe these cases will be very rare, for the proprietors are not only exercising forbearance in the matter of rent towards parties so situated, but are assisting them with seed potatoes and seed oats for their land; and the meal and provision merchants, who (owing chiefly, I believe, to the general cry of distress and famine raised in some instances, with a view to obtaining, if possible, Government aid towards the furtherance of certain important works of local enterprise) had become alarmed, and stopped advancing provisions on credit, are regaining confidence as to the ultimate solvency of the farming classes, and are beginning again to supply them with meal and breadstuffs on time.

I have further to report, that although the farming classes are much pinched for money, they have very generally met their rents, and have plenty of dry cattle and other stock. In point of fact, the lands are overstocked with dry cattle, for which there is a good demand in the market, and for which their owners would obtain remunerative prices were it absolutely necessary for them to obtain money wherewith to purchase food for themselves and their families.

There are no able-bodied men in the workhouse, and the number of inmates on yesterday only exceeded by 42 that of the corresponding day in 1861.

Any able-bodied labourer can at the present moment obtain agricultural employment at 1s. per diem, and more than one employer informed me they could not find as many men as they required, and that for the next two months labour would be dear and scarce.

With regard to the memorial, I think it right to point out that it bears no date, and that although it was adopted at a public meeting early in the month of December last, it was not transmitted to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant till the 30th ultimo. I think it also right to mention that with the exception of Mr. O'Kearney White himself, and three or four Roman Catholic clergymen, some of the local gentry, and, with but one or two exceptions, none of the more respectable
respective inhabitants of Castletown or surrounding district attended the meeting in question.

Upon the whole, I consider the memorial not only very much exaggerated the losses sustained by the farming classes by the bad potato crop and general bad harvest of the past year, but quite misrepresents the character of the distress under which the district is suffering in consequence; and I believe the ordinary application of the laws for the relief of the poor, and fair exertion on the part of the proprietors of the soil, will be found quite sufficient to prevent the occurrence of any of the calamities predicted by the memorialists to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant.

I return herewith the papers which accompanied the Commissioners' letter of the 4th instant,

To the Poor Law Commissioners,
Poor Law Office, Dublin.

(No. 78M/62.)

No. 9.—LETTER from the Commissioners to Mr. Horsley.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,
9 April 1862.

Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland forward, for your information, the accompanying extract from the "Freeman's Journal" of this date, relating to the death of a little girl, named Mary Murphy, in the Castletown Union; and the Commissioners request that you will be so good as to make inquiry on oath into the facts alleged in this case, and to report to them on the subject at your earliest convenience, returning the extract with your report.

To S. Horsley, Esq.,
Poor Law Inspector, Croom.

By order, &c. (signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

Enclosure in No. 9.

(No. 78M/62.)

Extract from "Freeman's Journal," of 9 April 1862.

Death from Destitution.—(From our Correspondent.)

Skibbereen, April 7.—Paul Limrick, Esq., coroner, held an inquest on the body of a little girl, named Mary Murphy, of Kilcatherine, in the barony of Bere, who died on the 3d instant, from inflamed lungs, caused by want and destitution. The jury at the same time stated that great distress existed in the district.

(No. 8418/62.)

No. 10.—LETTER from the Commissioners to Mr. Horsley.

Poor Law Commission Office, Dublin,
11 April 1862.

Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland forward, for your information, the accompanying copy of a constabulary report, which they have this day received from the Chief Secretary's Department, relating to the death of a female (whose name is not stated) on the 3d instant, at Kilcatherine, in the Castletown Union.

The Commissioners presume that the report relates to the death of Mary Murphy, into the circumstances of which you have been already instructed to make inquiry.

You will be so good as to return the enclosed document with your report.

By order, &c. (signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

To S. Horsley, Esq.,
Poor Law Inspector, Killarney.
II. Castletown Union.

(No. 8418/62.)

Copy Constabulary Report.

Cork, W. R.—Union of Castletown.

VERDICT.

"That the said deceased, on the 3d instant, at Kilcatherine, in said county, died from disease, namely, disease of the lungs and scrofula, hastened by want and destitution."

"And we are of opinion that great distress exists in this locality."

Castletown, 5 April 1862.

Deceased had been for some time suffering from disease of the lungs and scrofula. Her father is a small farmer, paying 2l. 6s. 6d. a year for his holding, but depending principally on chance wages as a labourer, for his support.

The Reverend Messrs. O'Reilly, P.P., and Senly, rector, attended the inquest, the former acting as interpreter, at the request of the coroner and jury, as both Murphy and Shee were Irish witnesses. I annex copies of the entire proceedings, for the information of Government.

The workhouse here can accommodate 566 persons; there are only 221 in it at present. This time last year there were 171 inmates.

The Inspector General of Constabulary.

County of Cork to wit.

An inquisition indented and taken for our Sovereign Lady the Queen, at Kilcatherine, in the parish of Kilcatherine, barony of Bere, in the county of Cork, on 8th day of April, in the 26th year of the reign of our said Sovereign Lady Victoria, before me, Paul Limrick, Esq., one of the Coroners of our said Lady the Queen, for the said county, on view of the body of Mary Murphy, of Kilcatherine, then and there lying dead, upon the oaths of—

1. Timothy Dwyer,
2. Timothy R. Harrington,
3. Michael J. Sullivan,
4. Michael McCarthy,
5. Michael Hanly,
6. Timothy Hanley,
7. Patrick Neall, sen,
8. Patrick Kelly,
9. Timothy McCarthy,
10. John Murphy,
11. Pat Sullivan,
12. Cornelius Kelly,
13. Timothy Harrington,
14. Patrick Neall,
15. Kea Horihan,

...and the said coroner and the jurors aforesaid have hereunto set and subscribed their hands and seals the day and year first above mentioned.

(Signed) J. S. Graham, S. I. 2nd.

(Signed by 12 Jurors.)

Depositions of witnesses taken, sworn, and examined before me, Paul Limrick, Esq., one of Her Majesty's coroners for the county of Cork, taken at Kilcatherine, in the parish of Kilcatherine, barony of Bere, in said county, on the 8th day of April 1862, on view of the body of Mary Murphy, of Kilcatherine, then and there lying dead. Quinlan Murphy, of Kilcatherine, farmer, deposes and saith: The deceased was my daughter; she was subject to loads of sickness for some time, and when she used to get some strength of food it used to restore her, but latterly I was not able to give her food. I got medicine from Dr. Lefebure for her. I gave her small potatoes dug out of the tillage, Indian meal, gruel, and small drops of milk from time to time, when I could get it. I was at the work at the mines last week, and returned home on Sunday morning. My wife told me she sent the deceased child to a neighbour's house for some food on the previous day, that she got none, and that the family went to bed without any food, and only about a quart of milk. The child died on Thursday, about 2 o'clock. I brought two stone of meal home, and the child ate it, but threw it up again. It was very often that my family had only one meal of Indian meal stirabout, with a little fish in the day, and not sufficient even of that. My cow calved about three weeks ago, and since then we had a little milk. I have no food in the house, nor money to buy it, and I had last night to borrow a little meal for my family from a neighbour. Since Sunday last, my wife, myself, and two children, had only the two stone of Indian meal that I brought from the mines, until last night, when I borrowed some from a neighbour, as before stated; we had no turf, and only a little broast. My opinion is, that if she had a sufficient meal of food that she may recover. My mother-in-law and another child of mine died about a month ago, and were often without food before their deaths. I hold...
SKIBBEREEN AND CASTLETOWN UNIONS.

I hold only about 21. 5s. worth of land. I would have gone to the workhouse with the children, but heard that in consequence of having the land they would not be admitted except I went in myself, and that I would not do. My wife was begging about, to get something for the children. I had not constant work, but when employed I got 6 d. a day and my food. My wife planted about seven weights of scullanes, dug out of the tillage, the same that I got out of the tillage for the children. I hold the land from Lord Bantry, but was unable to pay the rent.

Quinlan Murphy (his + mark).
Paul Limrick, Coroner.

County of Cork to Wit.

DEPOSITIONS of Witnesses taken, sworn, and examined before me, Paul Limrick, Esq., one of Her Majesty's Coroners for the county of Cork, taken at Kilcatherine, barony of Bere, in the said county, on the 5th day of April 1862, on view of the body of Mary Murphy, of Kilcatherine, then and there lying dead.

Charles Haine, of Castletown, Berehaven, Esq., M.D., deposeth and saith: I saw and examined the body of deceased this day; there were no marks of violence or injury externally; the body was not very much emaciated. I made a post mortem examination; I opened the stomach, there was no food in it, there was a cavity in the upper portion of the right lung which would have caused her death in time; she was also afflicted with scrofula that would be caused by want of food, clothing, and fire. I heard the evidence of her father, and am of opinion her death was hastened by want of food and nourishment. Scrofula and consumption are predisposed by want of food.

Charles Haine, M.R.C.S.E.
Pau l Limrick.

County of Cork to Wit.

DEPOSITIONS of Witnesses taken, sworn, and examined before me, Paul Limrick, Esq., one of Her Majesty's Coroners for the county of Cork, taken at Kilcatherine, in the parish of Kilcatherine, barony of Bere, in the said county, on the 5th day of April 1862, on view of the body of Mary Murphy, then and there lying dead.

James Shea, of Kilcatherine, farmer, deposeth and saith: I am uncle to the deceased, and know the family; they were in want of food and drink often, and also of fire; there were certain times for the last three months that they had not sufficient, and, at certain times, nothing at all; the family were often days for the last three months without food.

James Shea (his x mark).
Pau l Limrick.

True copies of said inquest and depositions, the originals of which are in my custody in Crown Office, county of Cork, which I attest.

R. Donovan, Clerk of Crown,
County Cork.

14th April 1862.

(No. 84 M. /62.)

No. 11.—LETTER from the Commissioners to Mr. Horsley.

Sir,

With reference to their letters of the 9th and 11th instant, relating to the death of a female named Murphy in the Castletown Union, the Commissioners for Administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland forward for your information the accompanying extract from the "Cork Examiner" of the 10th instant, and request that you will at the same time be so good as to inquire into the facts here stated with regard to the case of the woman named Neil, and to report to them on the subject.

To S. Horsley, Esq.,
Poor Law Inspector, Killarney.

By order, &c. (signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

424.

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Enclosure
II.

Cashtown Union.

Enclosure in No 11.

(No. 84 M. /62.)

EXTRACT from the "Cork Examiner" of 10th April 1862.

Distress in Berehaven.

To the Editor of the "Cork Examiner."

Dear Sir,

It is now nearly five weeks since I found it necessary to give the most emphatic contradiction to certain statements contained in a letter addressed by Mr. Puxley, of Dunboy Castle, to Sir R. Peel, relative to the distress said to exist in this part of the world.

Feeling at the time that his letter was not only replete with gross inaccuracies, but likewise productive of a large amount of mischief, I was most anxious that the public should be made aware of the actual condition of this district, and I therefore threw down to Mr. Puxley a challenge which would, if accepted, bring to light whatever was involved in obscurity or doubt, and furnish such information as must have enabled all candid and honest minds to arrive at a sound and satisfactory conclusion.

I publicly declared, too, that want and destitution to an alarming extent prevailed through the entire barony, and in support of this assertion, supplied you with facts and figures, which could neither be gainsaid nor denied. It is to be hoped that Mr. Puxley has weighed well those facts and figures; for reflection on them could scarcely fail to make him a graceful convert to my opinion, and convince him of the absurdity of clinging any longer to his theory of "General Prosperity."

The poor of Berehaven have much to suffer and much to complain of. Day by day they are forced to drink of the bitter cup of want and misery. God alone knows the half of what they endure; and then, amid all this, to taunt and sting them with the assurance that they are prosperous, is Christian sympathy of a very unpleasing kind.

On Saturday, the 5th instant, an inquest was held within a few miles of this town, on the body of a girl named Ellen Murphy. Stephen Murphy, father of the deceased, deposed, that for the past three months his family (consisting of a wife, mother-in-law, and four children), were living on one meal per day, and that not a sufficient meal. For several weeks his family were subsisting on the bounty of their neighbours, and on many occasions had to go to bed without a meal of any kind. Deceased went out on Saturday evening, the 29th ult., in search of something to eat, and had to return home without it. His mother-in-law and another child died about a month ago; for several weeks previous to their death, they had not eaten sufficient food. He frequently used to go into his little garden to try if by chance he might find a few small potatoes there that may have escaped him when digging out last November. The deceased was sickly for a long time, but always rallied when she got enough of food. There were many families in the neighbourhood as badly off as his.

James Shea, uncle to the deceased, swore that he knew Murphy's family to be in the greatest distress for the last three months, going to bed many nights supperless, and scarcely ever having enough to preserve life.

Dr. Haines deposed that Ellen Murphy had disease of the lungs and scrofula; one of her lungs was entirely gone. This disease might be brought on by want of proper food and clothing. He believed this family were in great distress, having neither fire, nor clothing, nor food enough. Deceased would have died in course of time of decline.

This is the substance of the sworn evidence before the coroner, and on this evidence the jury returned the following verdict: "We find that Ellen Murphy died at Kilcatherine on the 3rd instant, of disease of the lungs and scrofula, hastened by want and destitution."

Now, I think that the fact of three unfortunate human beings perishing in this way, affords abundant proof of the extent to which famine prevails in Mr. Puxley's district, and what is worse, I feel confident that the case of the Murphy's is only the forerunner of many others equally sad, and not very far distant.

Surely Mr. Puxley must have been in total ignorance of the real circumstances of the district when he said to Sir R. Peel, "I would not accept aid from anyone (even from the Government) for any of my people or neighbourhood." It is true, indeed, that if the Government did its duty by the people, and gave useful and remunerative employment, he, more than anyone in this barony, would be put to serious inconvenience thereby. At his mines there prevails a deep and wide-spread spirit of discontent and disaffection. The miners are loud in their complaints of the smallness of the wages, contending that 2l. 9s. per month is a poor reward for men who earn their bread in poisoned pits a thousand feet below the service of the earth, turning day into night, and thus reversing the very order of nature, and exposed hourly to accidents, fatal as well as serious. Another grievance they complain of is, that while they receive but 2l. 9s., the few Cornish miners are paid 6l. 7s. 8d., 9l., and even 10l. a month. Paddy considers himself as active, intelligent, hard working, as good in every sense as the stranger from Wales, and, with this feeling, we cannot wonder if he objects to the present system, and would gladly hail an opportunity of bettering his condition. Owing, therefore, to scanty wages and wounded pride, there can be no doubt that the men now employed at the mines would, in the morning, flock to any quarter where they could obtain a "fair day's pay" for a "fair day's work," and see the consequences. If the engines at the mine were to be stopped for even the short space of three or four days, water
water would immediately rush into the shafts in such quantities, and with such velocity, as to render its removal a labour almost Herculean, the raising of copper ore would, in the meantime, be an impossibility, and months would pass by ere we again saw Mr. Puxley's fleet of schooners weighing anchor in Ballydooegan Bay. Viewing the matter in this light, it would appear that Government works would be to some detrimental, while for the masses we must regard them as not merely useful but indispensable as a means of procuring the necessaries of life.

At this moment, while I write, there are many persons throughout the union pining away in want and squalor, rapidly hastening to their dissolution, victims, not of disease, but of destitution; nor is it rash to predict that before the close of next June a coroner's jury will have to pronounce many a verdict still more startling than that found in the case of Ellen Murphy. And yet we are told that Berehaven rejoices in "general prosperity." Your readers may ask me why did not Stephen Murphy send his mother-in-law and two children into the workhouse. Because, in the first place, he, like most of our poor people, had a house and a small plot of ground for which he assumes under Lord Bantry a yearly rent of 2l. 5s.; secondly, because their horror of the poorhouse is nearly insuperable. On the 13th of March I visited a woman named Neil who lived at a place called Filane, within a short distance of the town. Her house was about 21.5 $.; she allowed us, but she would not, and indeed, sir, if it were not for the last few weeks, so much so, indeed, that on many occasions they have not had more than one meal a day, and even that frequently a scanty and insufficient one. Murphy's earnings, independently of the produce of his farm,

**Castletown Bere, 8th April 1862.**

Yours, &c.

(signed) John O'Leary, R.C.C.
II.

Castletown Union, farm, seem to have been, since last Christmas, very small and irregular, and as he owed to the meal merchants a sum equal to 18 months' rent of his holding, he has been unable to obtain on credit provisions for the support of himself and family, and has been dependent chiefly on the charity of his neighbours (many of whom are very poor themselves) for the means of existence.

Under these circumstances, I see no reason to question the general propriety of the verdict returned by the jury in the case of his deceased daughter, for there can be little doubt that, although she appears to have been a weak and sickly child from her infancy, and to have died at last of chronic diseases, her life might have been prolonged for a time had she received the food and medical care suited to her condition.

Whilst this is the case, however, it must be borne in mind that neither Murphy nor any of his family made application to the relieving officer, the wardens, the dispensary medical officer, Dr. Haines, or the Board of Guardians, for relief; and that Murphy himself could scarcely be considered destitute whilst he held so much land and possessed stock, namely, two cows, two sheep, and a lamb, which he might have disposed of for the support of his family.

From inquiries which I made of the relieving officers and some of the Roman Catholic clergy at the inquiry on Wednesday, I have reason to believe that very many of the small tenant farmers and their families are similarly circumstanced with Murphy, and are enduring great privation and hardship. One of the relieving officers, Mr. Murphy, showed me a list of 64 families, comprising 386 souls, who, in his opinion, are at this time existing on one meal a day; but he told me that with scarcely any exception, they all possess stock, too much stock, indeed, for the land on which it is placed, and which is therefore, from being badly fed, of comparatively small value.

This class of small farmers cling with the utmost tenacity to their holdings, and to the stock upon them; and although experience must have taught them that they and their families can even, in the best of years (especially since the fishing in the bay has, for the last three years, been almost unproductive), barely subsist by the land they hold, they will continue to struggle on and endure anything short of actual starvation rather than surrender it to the landlord.

The relieving officers are humane and active, and have been made acquainted with the tenor of the Commissioners' circulars relating to relief to families of persons occupying more than a quarter of an acre of land.

I beg further to report, that in compliance with the Commissioners' instructions contained in their letter of the 12th instant, I inquired into the circumstances of Margaret Neil's case, as depicted in the letter of the Rev. John O'Leary, R.C.C., to the editor of the "Cork Examiner," on the 8th instant.

I went on the afternoon of Tuesday last to see Neil, and found her sitting up by a wretched fire in her hovel of a cabin by the road side. She informed me she had enough to eat, and was in better health than when she was visited by Mr. O'Leary. She is a proper case for the workhouse, as she has no land or means, and is aged and infirm, without anyone to look after her. I recommended her to go to the workhouse, but she said she would not as she feared she would lose her sight if she did, as on a former occasion her eyes had become sore there.

Mr. O'Leary's statements, in so far as they bear upon the sanitary condition of the Castletown Workhouse, are scarcely fair, for although 28 deaths have occurred therein, from the 1st January last to the 16th instant, both days inclusive, the Commissioners will observe, from the accompanying extract from the record of deaths' book, that with three exceptions they were those of persons who had arrived at more than the ordinary limit of human life, and who might, therefore, be expected in the course of nature to pass away; 15 of these persons died between the ages of 70 and 80; six between the ages of 60 and 70, and four between the ages of 50 and 60. The dates of their last admission to the poor-house, also, will show that many of them arrived at the workhouse in a moribund condition, and some of them were probably sent there for the purpose of being buried at the expense of the union.

Mr. O'Leary admitted fairly to me on Wednesday last, that the dietaries in the workhouse are excellent in point of quantity and quality, and that in other respects the general treatment of the inmates is unexceptionable.

Most
Most of the land in the union is tilled and planted, and the potatoes are above ground, and in a very forward state for the time of year.

I return the documents sent to me for the purposes of the inquiry, and

To the Poor Law Commissioners,
Poor Law Office, Dublin.

Have, &c.

(signed) S. Horsley.

Enclosure 1, in No. 12.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Charles Haines, being duly sworn, saith,—I am Medical Officer of the Kilatherine Dispensary District, in the Castletown Union. On the 5th instant, I made post mortem examination of the body of Mary Murphy, at Kilatherine, and I have now read the depositions made by me on the same day at the coroner's inquest. When I stated in my depositions that scrofula and consumption are predisposed by want of food, I did so in answer to a question to that effect put to me by one of the jury; I was asked whether I could not use the word "caused," instead of "predisposed," in my answer, and I said I could not in the particular instance of Mary Murphy's case; there was slight emaciation only of her body, and that emaciation might have been caused entirely by the diseases under which she laboured before death, without any reference to the quantity or quality of the food she had been receiving for some time prior to that event. In her case, both the scrofulous and consumptive appearances seemed to me to be of long standing; but I think the girl's life might have been prolonged for a time if she had received generous diet and proper care; there was some deposit beneath the skin of Mary Murphy's body, as much as could be expected from the diseases under which she laboured.

Charles Haines, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S.I.

Sworn before me, Samuel Horsley, on the 18th day of April 1862.

S. Horsley, P.L.I.

Margaret Murphy, being duly sworn, saith,—I am wife to Quinlan Murphy, of Kilatherine. About a fortnight ago, our daughter Mary, aged seven years, died; she caught cold when quite a child, and used now and then to be affected with a cough, but she used to recover from it, and be tolerably well, so that the cough did not appear to affect her much; I got a syrup for her twice from Dr. Lefebure, when he attended as doctor at Ines; I cannot recollect whether I took her to Dr. Lefebure, or whether he saw her at all; I never saw any sores about her; about a week before her death, she and myself, and two other children of mine, had only half a stone of meal for an entire week; we had about a pint of milk besides for the four of us; before that, we were living upon one meal a day for five weeks, and that meal was not half a meal for each of us; out of the stone of meal, seven of us lived for five days; for one day and a half we were without any food at all, except a little salt fish; that happened only on one occasion; my husband has, and had at the time of my daughter's death, two cows; one of them was giving a little milk at the time of my daughter's death; the other has been dry since last Christmas; we had a third cow about four months before last Christmas; we gave it to Maurice Harrington for 12l., which he kept in part payment of an account we owed him for meal; a little after Christmas, two growing-up pigs which I had died; we have still two sheep and one lamb; we have three hens, and we killed two more; the hens have not laid any eggs this year; we never applied to the relieving officer for relief; we did not do so, because the neighbours told us we would not be admitted to the workhouse, as my husband held land; we got a little meal, by way of charity, from some of the neighbours; my husband, about two months before my daughter's death, worked for a week at the mines, and got five shillings' worth of flour, instead of wages; after he left the work at the mines, he earned at farm work four stones of meal and two shillings; he has had no work since my daughter's death; he could not go to work, because I was in my confinement; we owe, for meal, 3l. 9s. 9d., and 2l. 3s. 6d. for a year's rent; we got no seed potatoes from Lord Bantry's agent; the first day we went for them we could not pay the half price which was demanded for them, and when we went again, all that were to be given gratuitously had been given; we have about a rood of potato ground planted; we have no oats sown; we have no cabbages planted; the cow, which is in milk, does not give above half a pint daily; one of the cows is 12 years old, and the other five; the young one is dying; my husband was joined in a Seine boat, and used to earn from 9l. to 15l. each year, till the last three years; for the last three years 424.

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years we have not earned 27, by fish altogether; the potatoes this year were very bad food; we have our share of the boats and not yet; my mother died about two months before my daughter Mary, and another daughter of mine, four years old, died about two months before my mother; they had not sufficient food.

Margaret Murphy (her + mark.)

Sworn before me on the 16th day of April 1862.

Witness,

George Power, Workhouse Master.

Enclosure 2, in No. 12.

Extract from Record of Deaths in Castletown Union Workhouse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. in Register</th>
<th>Date of Death</th>
<th>Cause of Death</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>To what Electoral Division Charged</th>
<th>Date of last Admission to Workhouse</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1862:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,663</td>
<td>3 January</td>
<td>bronchitis</td>
<td>Donegan, Honors</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Killaosenagh</td>
<td>12 Oct. 1861</td>
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<td>1,773</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Curragh</td>
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<td>582</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>Sheehan (Tim) Ellen</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Killeterine</td>
<td>22 Dec. 1861</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Harrington, Mary</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>1,121</td>
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<td>Green, Jeremiah</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Castlodge</td>
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<td>Lynch, John</td>
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<td>ditto</td>
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<tr>
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<td>61</td>
<td>ditto</td>
<td>12 Feb. 1861</td>
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<tr>
<td>703</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>chronic bronchitis</td>
<td>Sullivan (Sr) Margaret</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Killeterine</td>
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<td>1,789</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>Union at large</td>
<td>9 Jan. 1862</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Sullivan, Mary</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Killaosenagh</td>
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<td>Murphy, Owen</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>ditto</td>
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<td>Bree</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>gangrene of lung</td>
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<td>69</td>
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<td>23 Feb. 1862</td>
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<td>3 April</td>
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<td>Sheehan, Margaret</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Killeterine</td>
<td>29 March 1862</td>
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<td>65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>diarrhoea and debility</td>
<td>Sullivan (Tim) Mary</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Killaosenagh</td>
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<td>70</td>
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<td>12 Feb. 1862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,921</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>general dropy</td>
<td>Neill, Catherine</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>28 March 1862</td>
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<tr>
<td>708</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>sedema</td>
<td>Harrington, Michael</td>
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<td>Killaosenagh</td>
<td>26 March 1860</td>
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<td>bronchitis</td>
<td>Harrington, Julia</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27 March 1862</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland, desire to state for the information of the Board of Guardians of Castletown Union, that their attention having been drawn to the case of a poor child named Mary Murphy, upon whose body an inquest was held at Kilcatherine on the 6th instant, the Commissioners instructed Mr. Horsley, poor law inspector, to make inquiry upon oath into the circumstances of the case, and they have now received Mr. Horsley's report with the evidence taken by him.

The verdict at the inquest held upon the body is to the following effect, namely:—

"That the deceased died on the 3d April, at Kilcatherine, from disease of the lungs and scrofula, hastened by want and destitution."

The Commissioners transmit herewith a copy of the evidence taken by Mr. Horsley, from which it appears that the father of the deceased, Mary Murphy, holds a small mountain farm, and that owing to the bad harvest of last year his family have been suffering severe privations for the last few weeks; the family having, it seems, been dependent chiefly on the charity of the neighbours for the means of subsistence.

There seems to be no reason to question the general propriety of the verdict in this case, for although the child, Mary Murphy, was weak and sickly from her infancy, and died at last of chronic disease, her life might have been prolonged for a time had she received the food and medical care suited to her condition.

Whilst this is the case, however, it must be borne in mind that neither the father of the child, nor any of his family made application to the relieving officer, the wardens, the dispensing medical officer, or the Board of Guardians for relief.

As regards the condition of the surviving members of the family, the Commissioners request the guardians' attention to the evidence of the mother, Margaret Murphy.

She states that about a week before the death of Mary Murphy, she and the deceased, and two other children, had only half a stone of meal for a week, and about a pint of milk besides. Before that, they were living on one meal a day for five weeks, and "that meal was not half a meal for either of them."

For one day and a half they were without any food at all, except a little salt fish, that sufficed only on one occasion.

Mrs. Murphy states, that they did not apply to the relieving officer for relief, because they were told by the neighbours that they would not be admitted to the workhouse, because her husband held land.

The Commissioners desire to bring this statement under the particular notice of the Board of Guardians, and they request that the attention of the relieving officer may be specially directed to the case of this family, with reference to the construction of the terms of the 10th section of the Act 10 Vict., c. 31, conveyed by the Commissioners' circular letters to the Board of Guardians, of the 23d May 1848.

The Guardians will perceive, on reference to this Circular (a copy of which will be found in their Annual Report for 1849, p. 117), that it is competent to Boards of Guardians to relieve the destitute members of families of persons holding more than a quarter of an acre of land, although such persons themselves are not relivable.

The Commissioners have further to state for the Guardians' information, that Mr. Horsley made inquiry into the case of a poor woman named Margaret Neil, to which their attention has been drawn.

It appears that she lives at a place called Filane, in a wretched cabin by the roadside.

Mr. Horsley states that she is a proper case for relief in the workhouse, as she has no land or means, and is aged and infirm, without any one to look after her.
The Commissioners would recommend that the relieving officer should at once visit Margaret Neil, and tender to her the means of conveyance to the workhouse, for which purpose the spring van, which has been in the possession of the Guardians, for some months past, would appear to be most suitable, if she should be in a state to be removed.

By order, &c.

To the Clerk, Castletown Union. (signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

(No. 10,225/62.)

No. 14.—Extract from Mr. Horsley’s Half-yearly Report, dated 3 May 1862.

Although I believe considerable distress prevails among the families of the small tenant farmers of the Union, there is no pressure for workhouse relief, there being at the time of my visit, an increase of only 30 inmates over the number of the corresponding period of last year.

Now that summer, accompanied by genial and seasonable weather has arrived, it is to be hoped that milk and other articles of food, such as fish and vegetables, will become more abundant amongst the occupiers of small portions of land, and thus mitigate the hardship which they have been enduring, in consequence of the badness of last harvest, and a great scarcity of fuel. The crops over ground at the date of my visit looked strong and forward, and at present there is reason to hope, that the potato crop of the present year will be matured and available for consumption on the seaboard district, at an unusually early period.

The Union funds are exhausted at present; but new rates, amounting in the aggregate, to a sum of nearly £2,200, has been agreed to, and will be put in collection at an early period. It is expected they will defray the existing liabilities, and meet the prospective expenditure of the several electoral divisions to the 26th March 1863.

(No. 10,780/62.)

No. 15.—Extract from Guardians’ Minutes, dated 8 May 1862.

Referring to the case of Mary Murphy, on whose body an inquest was held, this Board entirely disbelieve the statement of the mother of the deceased; the Board considers the fact of her not having applied for relief conclusive that she did not require it; and this Board is well aware that any labourer can get ready employment, in fact, there is a great scarcity of labourers. This Board further states, that it disbelieves the very exaggerated reports of destitution spread by a party, and which have had the effect of encouraging idleness and discontent at imaginary wrongs amongst the poor. They cannot too highly blame the promoters of these false reports; this being the only case of alleged destitution, it will hardly support the views of those who have raised this cry of distress, as Dr. Haines has stated that the child named Mary Murphy died in the last stage of consumption, not accelerated by want; the Doctor further states, that he was asked a foolish question by one of the jury, as to whether if more food were given, life might not have been prolonged a little further? he said of course it might: on the strength of this the jury returned a verdict of death by consumption.

Mr. Horsley’s investigation was quite of a private nature, no notice of it having been given to the Board of Guardians, the chairman, or the dispensary committee. This resolution was put, and carried, the guardians voting thus:

For the Resolution.
Henry L. Puxley, Esq.
William Gillman, Esq.
Mr. Timothy Harrington.
Mr. David Donovan.
Mr. Philip Murphy.
Mr. Robert Hanley.
Philip A. Armstrong, Esq.
Captain Hungerford, n. x.

Against the Resolution.
T. O’Kearney White, Esq.
P. O’Sullivan, Esq.
Mr. Cornelius J. Harrington.
Mr. Daniel Sheehan.
The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland have had under their consideration the resolution passed at the meeting of the Board of Guardians of Castletown Union on the 8th instant, in which the guardians observe, in regard to the case of the poor child named Mary Murphy, as set out in their letter of the 24th ultimo, that the fact of the mother of the deceased not having applied for relief is "conclusive that she did require it," and that Dr. Haines has stated that Mary Murphy died in the last stage of consumption, not accelerated by want.

In reference thereto the Commissioners have to point out, that the sworn evidence of the mother of the deceased, and of Dr. Haines, is totally at variance with these statements.

The mother swore that the reason why she did not apply for relief was, that her neighbours told her she could not obtain it, because her husband had land; and Dr. Haines' evidence before the coroner and before Mr. Horsley is to the effect, that the death of Mary Murphy, though caused by consumption and scrofula, might have been, and probably was, hastened by want of suitable food and care.

With respect to the guardians statement that Mr. Horsley's investigation was quite of a private nature, the Commissioners have to observe that they instructed Mr. Horsley to make inquiry into the case at his earliest convenience. Mr. Horsley accordingly wrote to the clerk of the union, specifying the day on which he would hold it, desiring him to have the relieving officer in attendance, that he might examine him, and summon the necessary witnesses; and it appears to have been a matter of public notoriety that Mr. Horsley would hold the inquiry, several persons, some from distant parts of the union, having been present on the occasion.

By order, &c.

To the Clerk, (signed) B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

Castletown Union, Berehaven.

Sir,
The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland, desire to call the attention of the Board of Guardians of Castletown Union, to the statements contained in a communication which has appeared in the "Cork Examiner," newspaper of the 15th instant, regarding the alleged existence of distress and destitution among the people in the west of the county of Cork, and to the increase of that distress.

The result of visits to Clanlaurence, Derreen, and Inchintaglin is separately described, and details given of the condition of the people, several persons in each locality being named with whom the correspondent has conversed, or whose places of abode he has visited.

In Clanlaurence and Derreen persons are mentioned, named Sullivan (Denis), Lynch, Blake (William), Sullivan (John), Carey (Ellen), and Harrington (Michael).

In Inchintaglin, Darby Harrington, Michael Sullivan, a family named Connolly, Jeremiah Sullivan, and Cornelius Sullivan are mentioned.

The Commissioners will endeavour to obtain and forward a copy of the newspaper to the Board of Guardians, and in the meantime the Commissioners suggest that the relieving officer should be directed to visit the localities referred to, and make personal inquiry at the homes of all applicants for relief, and report generally as to the state in which he finds the poor, giving provisional relief in 424-
cases of sudden and urgent necessity, or where sickness prevails, and offering relief in the workhouse where he finds it necessary.

The relieving officer should likewise report all the ordinary cases to the Board of Guardians for their decision.

The Commissioners request you to give the necessary directions to the relieving officer, in anticipation of the meeting of the Board of Guardians, that he may act promptly, should emergency arise, and that he may on that day give the guardians all the information he may be enabled to collect in the interval.

By order, &c.

To the Clerk,

Castletown Union, Berehaven.

By order, &c.

To the Clerk,

Castletown Union, Berehaven.

(No. 12,049/62.)

No. 18.—Extract from Guardians’ Minutes, dated 22 May 1862.

Read letter from the Poor Law Commissioners, No. 109, M. ·'62, dated 17th May, calling the attention of the guardians to statements made in a communication which appeared in the “Cork Examiner” newspaper, as to alleged distress the destitution and describing the result of his (correspondent’s) visit to Derreen and Inchintaglin, and giving details of the condition of the people, several persons in each locality being named with whom he conversed, and whose places of abode he visited; in Derreen are mentioned Sullivan (Denis), Blake (William), Lynch, Sullivan (John), Carey (Ellen); in Inchintaglin, Darby Harrington, Michael Sullivan, Cornelius Sullivan, and a family named Connolly are mentioned.

The Commissioners suggest that relieving officers should visit those localities, and make personal inquiry at the houses of all applicants for relief, and report generally as to the state in which he finds the poor, giving provisional relief in cases of sickness or sudden or urgent necessity; the relieving officer should likewise report all the ordinary cases to the Board of Guardians for their decision; and they request that the relieving officer may receive the necessary directions in anticipation of the guardians’ meeting that he may act promptly, should emergency arise.

Read. The relieving officer visited the localities and persons named in this letter. The following is the substance of a verbal report made by him: a fuller report is expected from him at the guardians’ next meeting; Daniel (instead of Denis) Sullivan has left the union with his family to beg about the country; did not see him.

John Sullivan holds land to the value of 1 l. 10 s.; offered him relief in the workhouse, which he refused, not wishing to forsake his homestead. Ellen Carey is sick in fever, and too unwell to be removed to the workhouse; holds no land. Michael Harrington (not Darby) holds land to the value of 3 l.; offered him relief in the workhouse, which he refused.

Cornelius Sullivan holds land to the value of 8 l.; offered him relief in the workhouse, which he refused.

The others mentioned in the newspaper are in possession of small farms, varying in value from 3 l. to 8 l.; offered them relief, in the workhouse, which they refused.

The guardians will give Ellen Carey provisional relief, until she is sufficiently recovered so as to be removed to the workhouse hospital.

(No. 12,049/62.)

No. 19.—Letter from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Sir,

The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland, have had before them the minutes and proceedings of the Board of guardians of the Castletown Union of the 22d ultimo, containing a minute in reply to the Commissioners’ letter regarding the alleged existence of distress and destitution.
destitution in certain parts of the union; and with reference to the measures taken by the relieving officer to afford relief in certain instances, as described in the minutes. The Commissioners desire to state, that it would appear that the relieving officer has offered relief to persons holding more than a quarter of an acre of land; and the Commissioners have to draw the guardians’ attention to their circular letter of 23d May 1848 (Compendium, pages 855-6), from which they will observe that, while it is not to be understood that a person occupying more than a quarter of an acre of land is himself relivable either in or out of the workhouse, such members of the family of a person holding more than a quarter of an acre as may be destitute, can legally be relieved in the workhouse, or, if the workhouse be full, they may be relieved out of the workhouse, if an order under the second section of the Act, 10 Vict., c. 31, be in operation in the union.

It is at the same time to be borne in mind, that the provisional power given to relieving officers under section 7 of the Relief Extension Act, applies to every class of destitute persons in all cases of sudden and urgent necessity.

By order of the Commissioners,

To the Clerk,  
Castletown Union, Berchaven.

(signed)  
B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

(No. 11, 913/62.)

No. 20.—Report from Mr. Horsley, Poor Law Inspector.

Gentlemen,  
24 May 1862.

Advancing to the Commissioners’ communication of the 17th instant,* and to the reports which I made on the 21st and 22d instant, with reference to the condition of the population in certain localities in the Skibbereen Union, I beg to state that I visited the parish of Clanlaurens, in the Castletown Union, yesterday, in order to ascertain the state of the people therein; and I am glad to be enabled to report that, though considerable distress exists at present among the small landholders there, it is not of such a nature as to justify any apprehension that loss of life will be occasioned by starvation or want of sufficient food. Most of the class in question have still stock in the shape of cows, sheep, and pigs, on their holdings; and the cows are now generally giving milk. The fishing season also is commencing, and with, I believe, a fair prospect of being remunerative to those engaged in that pursuit. In some rare instances, the cows and other stock of small landholders have either been marked, or decrees obtained by creditors, or put under distress by the landlord, but I could not hear of any case in which they had not been left on the land for the use and benefit of the occupiers. There is ample accommodation in the workhouse for all destitute persons not holding land; and the Board of Guardians have made it generally known throughout the union, that they will receive into the workhouse, whenever such a course may appear to be necessary for the preservation of life, the families of persons who may be precluded by the provisions of section 10 of 10 Vict., c. 31, from receiving relief for themselves.

I beg further to report, that although the large number of men, women, and children seen by me yesterday were wretchedly clad, neither their countenances or persons afforded any indication of their having suffered from a want of sufficient food. There was no famine-stricken appearance about them; and I have the authority of the Roman Catholic clergy, and of one of the medical officers of the union (the other I did not see), and also of the people themselves, for stating that there is scarcely any fever or other serious sickness within the union.

At present there is scarcely any employment at money wages within the reach of the small landholders or labouring classes in the Clanlaurens district; but it has never been otherwise at this season of the year. At least four-fifths of the population in the district have always been dependent solely upon the produce of their small holdings, and upon fishing for support.

I think it right to mention that Mr. Payne, the Earl of Bantry’s agent, accompanied me in my walk through Clanlaurens and some of the villages therein,
therein, visited by the special reporter of the "Cork Examiner," and that he agreed to advance upon credit for three months 50l. worth of Indian meal to those of the small landholders who are not hopelessly insolvent (though without credit at present), and this assistance, with other local exertions, and the determination of the Board of Guardians to relieve within the workhouse all such persons as are eligible to that mode of relief, and may require it in order to preserve life, will, in my opinion, be found sufficient to meet the amount of distress actually existing in the union, until the potato crop, which is very forward, shall become available, an event which is likely to be very general by the end of next month at the latest. With regard to the case of Crowley, mentioned to the special reporter of the "Cork Examiner," I beg to report that he is hopelessly insolvent, but not starving, as, though his five cows are under detain by the landlord, chiefly for the purpose of protecting them from other creditors, Crowley has the use of them for the support of himself and family.

To-day I drove through Iries and part of Kilcatherine on my way home, and have only to report that what I have written with regard to Clonlaurens applies generally to those places, with this exception, that there is employment at drainage works and on the making of a new road to the Coulagh Mines, within the reach of the able-bodied men there, the rate of wages being 1s. 1d. per day for each.

In conclusion, I beg to report that with the exception of the distress which I witnessed in the Islands of Sherkin and Cape Clear, I have seen nothing in my tour between Skibbereen and Ardgroom, to the extreme north-western boundary of the Castletown Union, to render me at all apprehensive that any loss of life will occur among the people by starvation, and in the case of the islands in question, the Board of Guardians, at their meeting on Thursday last, took all the necessary steps and precautions to prevent such a misfortune occurring there, even if some of the unfortunate people should be unable to conquer their repugnance to accepting relief within the workhouse.

I return to office the extracts from the "Cork Examiner" newspaper, which I retained till I could make this Report.

To the Poor Law Commissioners,
Poor Law Office, Dublin.

I have, &c.

Samuel Horsley.

(No. 12,546 62.)

No. 21.—Extract from Guardians' Minutes, dated 29 May 1862.

Ordered, That the relieving officer, Mr. Humphrey, visit the Island of Bere and the townland of Rosmacowan, and report to the guardians, at their next meeting, the condition of the poor generally, and also the circumstances of certain families in Bere Island, mentioned by Mr. Cornelius J. Harrington, Poor-law guardian, on this day.

(No. 12,546 62.)

No. 22.—Letter from the Commissioners to the Board of Guardians.

Sir,
The Commissioners for administering the laws for relief of the poor in Ireland acknowledge the receipt of the minutes of proceedings of the Board of Guardians of Castletown Union, on the 30th ultimo; and request that they may be furnished with a copy of the report which the relieving officer has been directed to make, regarding the condition of the inhabitants of the Island of Bere and of the townland of Rosmacowan.

By order, &c.

B. Banks, Chief Clerk.

To the Clerk,
Castletown Union, Berehaven.
SKIBBEREEN AND CASTLETOWN UNIONS.

(No. 12,589 /62.)

No. 23.—Extract from a Report from Dr. Purcell, Medical Inspector, dated 3 June 1862.

In reference to a letter of the Rev. Mr. O'Leary, of Castletown, county Cork, No. 10,669 /62, I visited that union last week, and from all the information I obtained, there has been no unusual sickness of any kind in it for a very considerable time; on the contrary, it is at present and has been healthy. I derived my information from a careful examination of the Dispensary medical officers' relief registers, the medical officers themselves, and an inspection of the union workhouse, and from some of the inhabitants in different parts of the union. I am, therefore, of opinion that the reverend gentleman must have derived his information from imperfect sources.

(No. 13,567 /62.)

No. 24.—Report from the Relieving Officer, forwarded with Guardians' Minutes of 12 June 1862.

To the Board of Guardians of the Castletown Union.

Gentlemen,

In accordance to an order made by the Board on the 29th ultimo, to the effect of requiring and ordering that I should visit destitute people on Bere Island, who were alleged to be suffering from want of food, I accordingly visited those parties the following day, and those applications for relief will appear before you this day in my application and report book, and whose state and condition there I have represented therein from the information I received from the parties themselves as well as from their immediate neighbours. I had prepared on the last Board day a similar report to the foregoing to be laid before you, but in consequence of having no Board on that day, I have to state to you that T. O. Kearney White, Esq., the land agent of Lord C. P. Clinton for Bere Island, has informed me that subsequent to my visit to Bere Island, he has sent a quantity of food to the house of Mrs. John Sullivan, of the village in Bere Island, with directions to those acting for him in that locality to relieve those people whose applications I took into my books, with an exception of those who were heretofore relieved by the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and that he also sent 5 l. to the same society; therefore, after giving the Board the foregoing information, I cannot say any more on the subject.

I respectfully further beg leave to inform the Board, that the destitute poor in the Adrigole Division have been for the last three weeks partly relieved (but not sufficiently) by a large quantity of meal purchased for them by John W. Pryne, Esq., the agent of the Earl of Bantry, as well by the charity for them by the parish priest, the Rev. J. O'Reilly, in the city of Cork and elsewhere, and by whose exertions five tons of meal were shipped the 9th instant on board the "Rose," of Castletown, for the relief of the destitute poor of the Adrigole electoral division, but the vessel has not yet arrived.

I have, &c.

The Board Room, 12 June 1862.

(signed) William Murphy,

Relieving Officer.
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(Sir Robert Peel)

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