unemployed, or with any able-bodied men in health (including vagrants). We hold . . . that unemployment can be dealt with effectually only by a national authority. . . . What is needed, however, in our judgement, is the establishment of a Government department charged not merely with organizing a complete system of labour exchanges, but also with making use of the information thereby obtained.

The plan recommended is practically the same as that laid down in the Minority Report for England and Wales.

The Care of Children.

The Minority recommend that the whole provision of school age should be entrusted to the Local Education Authority—

The Establishment of a Common Register for all Forms of Public Assistance and of a Public Registrar.

The Minority state

That this scheme of deliberately breaking up the Poor Law, and of transferring each of its services to a specialized and preventive authority, has the incidental advantage that it brings into prominence the pressing need for a Common Register of all forms of Public Assistance, and makes indispensable the appointment of some such officer as a Registrar of Public Assistance.

They go into detail with regard to the working of this proposed scheme.

The whole of the recommendations of the Minority for breaking up the Poor Law will be found at p. 1418 of the JOURNAL for November 13th.

EUGENICS AND THE POOR LAW.

A MEETING was held under the auspices of the Eugenics Education Society on December 15th, when Mr. SIDNEY WEBB, LL.B., delivered an address on eugenics and the Poor Law, with special reference to the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission.

Mr. WEBB said that the present Poor Law, which was costing the United Kingdom nearly twenty millions a year, was almost entirely anti-eugenic in its tendencies. In its provision for feeble-minded maternity, and in the opportunities which the general mixed workhouse afforded for acquaintanceship between the sexes, the Poor Law had undesirable results from the eugenic point of view. Moreover, the principle was involved in the very nature of the Poor Law that there must be destitution before it could operate, and those who were not destitute or would not apply for relief could not be reached. The doles given by boards of guardians in the shape of outdoor relief also served to extend the area, speaking eugenically, of a feeble-minded species. But none of these things were peculiar to the present Poor Law; they were counts in the indictment against any Poor Law, and for that reason he did not suppose that an eugenist would support the Majority Report, which set Humpty Dumpty on the wall again. A system for the relief of the destitute which could not intervene until there was destitution, and must cease its intervention as soon as destitution ceased, was contrary to sound eugenic principles. Some eugenists, continued Mr. Webb, drew the inference that it would be best to have no intervention at all. But *laissez faire*, from the eugenic point of view, was the worst of all policies, because it surrendered the idea of intelligent, purposeful selection. The first consequence of withdrawing public provision would be an outburst of private charity of the most sentimental order, which would be beyond the power of any Government to suppress. Supposing, however, that it could be suppressed, and that everything could be left to the extreme rigour of the "state of nature" and the struggle for existence, this, eugenically, would be the most unfortunate condition of all. He maintained that the blind struggle for existence did not even improve the average quality of the surviving community. Any improvement that might result from the elimination of the unfit was neutralized by the impairment of the survivors. For example, the effect of the Franco-Prussian war, although it might be true that the war eliminated some of the unfit, was to lower the physique of the French people, shorten the average height, reduce the average weight, impair the general efficiency. It must be remembered, when considering any policy of *laissez faire*, that Nature was not intelligent and purposeful, as the eugenist understood it.

It knew nothing of the standards of civilized men. If left alone, it neither bred from what were considered to be the best stocks nor eliminated from the struggle those the eugenist considered should be eliminated. Every biologist knew that the lowest parasite was as much a product of natural selection as the highest man. They were faced by the stern fact that the Caucasian race might go under in the struggle for existence, unless it could manipulate the environment so as to prevent this tendency to elimination, and to make the conditions such that the highest race and the highest types of that race should survive. This manipulation of the environment involved collective regulation, and a very highly-developed social machinery. The eugenist could not consistently be an individualist; he must interfere, and interfere perpetually. The first duty of eugenists in England, Mr. Webb maintained, was to bring about a drastic revolution in the existing Poor Law. It was a darkening of counsel to suggest, as some were doing, that the Minority Report had anything in common with the Majority on its constructive side. The Minority Report was drawn on strictly eugenic lines, and contained no recommendation contrary to the best eugenic principles. It was based on the policy of

(a) Deliberately altering the social environment so as to render impossible (or at least more difficult) the present prolific life below the national minimum, or the continuance at large of persons unable or unwilling to come up to that standard of life;

(b) The "searching" out of every person in default, irrespective of his destitution or his application for relief;

(c) The medical and other inspection of all infants, school children, sick persons, mentally-defective persons, and all who are "unemployed," or who otherwise need public help so as to discover the unfit, as well as to remedy their defects;

(d) Segregation, permanent or temporary, of many now at large;

(e) Enforcement of the responsibilities of parenthood at a high standard, and hence discouragement of marriage among those unable or unwilling to fulfil them; and

(f) Taking care that no one sincerely desirous of fulfilling his social responsibilities shall by lack of opportunity be prevented from doing so.

At the present time hundreds of thousands of infants were allowed to die through carelessness, apathy, ignorance, or worse, and with a little precaution on the parents' part these cases escaped the coroner. The Poor Law did nothing to search out that neglected childhood. No Poor Law could. He was making no complaint against existing boards of guardians. It was the essence of a Poor Law to do nothing until destitution had occurred. The old Poor Law, in Mr. Balfour's emphatic expression, should be "scrapped," and replaced, not by a new edition of the same thing, but by an intelligently purposeful eugenic policy, which would so alter the social environment as to make those who survived coincide increasingly with those whom we believed to be above the national minimum.

A number of questions were put to Mr. Webb at the close of his lecture, but most of them related to the economic aspect of the problem. Asked what the Minority proposed to do with people who could not support themselves, he replied that to classify such people immediately was out of the question. The Minority proposed that there should be a lengthy process of trial. If the labour exchange could not find a man work he would have to go into training, and if after repeated trials he was still economically unproductive, he would be taken from the labour market and committed to a detention colony. But regard would be had to the nature and cause of his failing, and every circumstance of his case would be patiently considered.

THE THERMAL BATHS OF THE ISLAND OF NEVIS, B.W.I.

By J. NUMA RAT, M.R.C.S.Eng.,

District Medical Officer and Health Officer.

I DESIRE to bring to the notice of the profession the existence of the thermal baths of Nevis, B.W.I. These baths were once well known and extensively patronized, while accommodation can be had at the hotel which was built in connexion with them; but, as one of the results of the commercial depression in these parts, the hotel was abandoned and the baths could be no longer utilized.

The hotel, which is a large and commodious building, at a stone's throw from the baths, is now being repaired, and it is expected that it will be ready to be occupied by the end of the year. The terms, I understand, will be 12s. 6d. a day for board and lodging, and one use of the baths daily, and two-thirds of the above for a valet or maid. The hotel contains a drawing-room, a dining-room, and five bedrooms. An excellent feature in connexion with it is the open-air space, which consists of two verandahs, one attached to the drawing-room and the other to the dining-room, and the two wide battlements, one at each end of the building. The hotel is on high ground, at five minutes' walk from the town. The coolest part of the island, which is about 800 ft. above the sea level, is only four miles away from it.

The rainfall in the immediate district shows an average of 52.32 in., distributed thus: January, 5.96; February, 4.72; March, 4.87; April, 3.39; May, 9.90; June, 7.90; July, 5.67; August, 7.84; September, 11.77; October, 10.90; November, 18.70; December, 8.30. The temperature ranges from 78° to 84° in the day, and from 75° to 80° at night. From December to April the climate is perfect, the temperature in one year averaging as follows: Maximum 81.12°, minimum 70.75° during those months.

The following is Dr. Thresh's report, dated November 26th, 1908, on a sample of water from the bath spring: "The water closely resembles that from the Wildbad thermal springs of Würtemberg, which are extensively used for chronic rheumatism and gout. There is no constituent which would render this water deleterious for drinking purposes. It is free from any signs of pollution. Used in steam boilers, a certain amount of fur would be produced; but this could be avoided by the use of a little crude caustic soda or soda ash. The soda would have to be introduced into the boiler from time to time with the water."

Physical Examination.

Turbidity: Clear and bright: slight sediment of sand.
Colour: Slight yellowish-green.
Odour: None.

Chemical Examination.

Determinations.	Results in Grains per Gallon.	Results in Parts per 100,000
Total solid matter dried at 180° C....	44.1	63.0
Chlorine ...	5.7	8.2
Equivalent to chlorides (60 per cent. Cl) ...	9.5	13.6
Nitric nitrogen ...	0.37	0.54
Equivalent to nitrates (17 per cent. N) ...	2.2	3.2
Nitrites ...	Absent	Absent
Hardness: Permanent 8.4, temporary 9.8 ...	18.2	26.0
Lead, copper, zinc, iron ...	Absent	Absent
Free ammonia ...	0.0004	0.0006
Organic ammonia ...	0.0014	0.0020
Oxygen absorbed at 98° F. in three hours ...	0.0189	0.0270

Saline Constituents, Expressed in Parts per 100,000.

Ca	Mg	K	Na	CO ₃	SO ₄	Cl	NO ₃	SiO ₂	Probable Combinations.
5.6	4.5	1.4	10.0	22.6	4.1	8.2	2.4	4.7	
5.6	—	—	—	8.4	—	—	—	—	Calcium carbonate ... 14.0
—	4.5	—	—	11.2	—	—	—	—	Magnesium carbonate ... 15.7
—	—	—	2.45	3.2	—	—	—	—	Sodium carbonate ... 5.65
—	—	1.4	—	—	1.7	—	—	—	Potassium sulphate ... 3.1
—	—	—	1.15	—	2.4	—	—	—	Sodium sulphate ... 3.55
—	—	—	5.35	—	—	8.2	—	—	Sodium chloride ... 13.55
—	—	—	0.9	—	—	—	2.4	—	Sodium nitrate ... 3.3
—	—	—	0.15	—	—	—	—	4.7	Silica with trace of sodium silicate ... 4.85
Total solid constituents dried at 180° C. = 63.0.									63.7

LUNACY IN VICTORIA IN 1908.

In his annual report for the year 1908, Dr. W. Ernest Jones, Inspector-General of the Insane for Victoria, refers to the fact that this State has a higher ratio of insanity to population than any other Australian State. At the end of 1908 the proportion was 1 to every 248.8 of the population at large. The principal reason for this, Dr. Jones says, is the fact that Victoria is the most settled of all the States. In consequence, the female and male populations are about equal, and the proportion of old persons is relatively high. In Western Australia, for example, where there is a small proportion of females to males, and the average age is relatively low, the insane ratio in 1907 was only 1 in 424. In Western Australia, however, the ratio of insanity is increasing as it becomes more settled. Thus in 1902 its ratio was only 1 in 598. Another and lesser reason for the high insanity ratio of Victoria mentioned by Dr. Jones is that recent legislation has brought a much larger number of patients within the ken of the lunacy department. As proving that the increase is more apparent than real, Dr. Jones supplies figures which show that the number of first admissions to asylums in Victoria has undergone an actual decrease—from 691 in 1902 to 652 in 1908—notwithstanding a considerable growth in the general population.

State Mental Hospitals.

On January 1st, 1908, there were 4,961 on the books of the hospitals, and at the end of the year there were 5,014. The total number treated during the year was 5,721, and the average number daily resident 4,645. During the year 739 were admitted, of whom 652 were first and 87 not-first admissions. Although greater than those of the previous year, the number of admissions was still considerably below the average of the last ten years. As to nationality, 435 were natives of Victoria, 80 of other Australian states, 80 were of English, 58 of Irish, and 22 of Scottish birth, the remainder being natives of many other countries.

In 299 the attacks were first attacks within three, and in 76 more within twelve months of admission; in 146 not-first attacks within twelve months; in 77 the attacks were of more than twelve months' duration; 68 were congenital cases, and in 73 the duration was unknown. They were classified according to the forms of mental disorder into: Mania of all kinds, 111; melancholia of all kinds, 96; delusional insanity, 120; senile and secondary dementia, 155; primary dementia, 64; general paralysis, 53; insanity with epilepsy, 27; acute delirium, 5; insanity with gross brain lesion, 2; stupor, 3; and congenital or infantile defect, 80. As will be seen from the above list a large proportion of the admissions were of unfavourable types of disease, a fact commented upon by Dr. Jones when he says that it would certainly appear only too clearly that the type and class of patients received are changing for the worse.

With regard to probable causation, alcohol was assigned in 65, or 8.7 per cent.; venereal disease in 5, and fevers in 5; critical period in 90; pregnancy and lactation in 14; privation and starvation in 17; sunstroke in 13; bodily diseases in 62; bodily trauma in 25, and mental stress in 134. Hereditary influences were ascertained in 74, and congenital defect in 78. During the year 197 were discharged as recovered, giving a recovery-rate on the admissions of 26.65 per cent., as compared with the average since 1891 of 36.18 per cent.; 92 as relieved, and 15 as not improved. During the year 379 died, giving a death-rate on the average numbers resident of 8.16 per cent. The deaths were due in 92 to cerebro-spinal diseases, including 46 deaths from general paralysis; 170 from chest diseases, with 30 from pulmonary consumption; 68 from abdominal diseases; 48 from general diseases, including 25 deaths from senile decay, and 1 death from accident. The small number of deaths from general paralysis and the small proportion to the total deaths of those due to tuberculosis—less than 8 per cent.—are noteworthy. Typhoid fever was responsible for 6 deaths, but at the time of writing his report Dr. Jones says that the epidemic appeared to be at an end.