arises from the fact that they believe that these children are somewhat different really from any other class of children," and can be dealt with only by severe discipline and corporal punishment (8136-7). The Brentwood school children are certainly to be pitied.

We have already commented on the standard of health which obtains at these schools, so that it will therefore surprise no one to learn that on a given day but 52 infants were present at their lessons out of a roll of 71. These figures must mean that 27 per cent. were absent through sickness.

GOOD FOOD ON THE FLOOR.

This ill-health, however, must not all be attributed to aggregation, want of exercise, overwork, or lack of interest. In Brentwood either the cooking, serving, or system of feeding must be seriously at fault, for we have it in evidence that two members of the Committee saw, after the dinner hour, large bits of meat not only left on the plates, but thrown on the floor (15778). It is and has been a practice required by the Local Government Board that every child should receive on his plate the regulation quantity of weighed food in accordance with his registered age; thus his appetite, tastes, and condition of health are left out of account. On the other hand, it would never do to allow children to get in the habit of leaving their food, so the difficulty is got over by dropping it surreptitiously on the floor, and presenting anyhow occasionally a cleared plate to the overlooker's eye. In the opinion of certain witnesses the food allotted to each child is too much. Mr. McNeill, the secretary of the Local Government Board for Scotland held this view (13093), and Miss Whitworth, the lady head of a charitable home for pauper girls, affirmed that "until you thin them down it is hopeless to attempt to do anything with them" (6817). Mr. Holgate (15778), Dr. Downes (9026), and Mr. Knollys (17178) all concur in deploring the fact of the hideous waste which avowedly goes on (3077), but the chief secretary states that he would like to say that "personally he has done everything he could to prevent a change in that system (17040)." We regret we cannot agree with him. To give children adequate food is one thing, but to load their plates so that disgust and not appetite ensues, and to injure them morally by a daily lesson in wastefulness, is, we contend, neither economical, right, nor productive of the health which is so essential for these children if they are ultimately to be self-dependent.

CHILDREN HALF-TIMERS AT ALL AGES.

The report of the Departmental Committee states: "Among all the matters incidental to the life and training of pauper children into which it has been our duty to examine, none has caused us more surprise and pain than to learn the conditions under which the children often labour as half-timers, and in this way lose much educational advantage, in order that the work of their hands may be utilised. In most schools all the children are made to work for a portion of the day, and in some they are employed as half-timers at the tender age of 8."

This statement has, as will be readily imagined, been received by the public with amazement and indignation. More than one question has been asked in the House of Commons concerning it; indeed, so pressed was the Local Government Board on the matter, and so impossible did it find it to defend the position, that an order was passed a few weeks ago to remedy the scandal. For nineteen years the guardians had broken the law which forbids a child to work under the age of 10. For six years Mr. Holgate, the Educational Inspector of the Local Government Board, had been endeavouring to get his department (15371 to 15376) "to issue a new general order defining what should be the limit of hours under any circumstances during which a child should be put for labour." Weary with waiting, Mr. Holgate issued a private circular, but the results were other than he intended. "No sooner," he says, "did my circular go out saying that 11 years of age was the legal age, than they (the guardians) gave up the old plan, and took all the children that were 11 to work, notwithstanding their being dull children in the lower standards." In other words, "the minimum at once became the maximum."

With these facts in view the following table will be interesting:

Number on school attendance roll	146
Number at school	56
" at work	50
" sick	40
	146
Standard IV and V	9
" III... ..	11
" II	13
" I	15
Primers	8

97 half timers; only 9 little ones in preparatory class attend school full time; they have only done so since September, 1894.* All girls in Standards I, II, III, and IV are half timers making attendances one week and 6 the next. Standard V, 3 half days in school (Appendix 12, cols. 1 and 7).

* That is, since after the inquiry began.

THE CHILDREN'S AFTER-CAREER UNSATISFACTORY.

If the school life of the children at Brentwood is unhappy, their after career cannot, according to the evidence before us, be considered successful. "I have known," testified a manager, "a large number of girls that have gone into domestic service, and I have had opportunities of talking with the mistresses about them. I think I may say that, with hardly a single exception, they have said that these girls are really utterly unfitted for service; they know nothing of domestic work, and it is terrible work on the part of the mistresses to try and teach them anything; they seem to have come without any training whatever" (8152). This is a bad opinion of the girls, but for the boys there is not much more to be said. "Mostly the boys are sent out to bakeries, and we have a great many complaints about them; but some have been sent out to the farmers for agricultural work, and complaints have been made of them. I may say there are general complaints; there is no general satisfaction given. I trace it all to the want of proper technical education there, the want of proper training;" (8163).

NO SUITABLE TECHNICAL TRAINING GIVEN.

Why these children do not receive "proper training" is a question which every ratepayer, as well as every public-spirited person, has a right to ask, and it is one concerning which there is abundance of evidence.

SPECIAL REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF THE ALDERSHOT CAMP SEWAGE FARM.

By E. BAILEY-DENTON, M.I.C.E.

In compliance with the request of the Editor that I should pay a second visit of inspection to the camp sewage farm at Aldershot—its condition being a matter of moment to the public, both on medical and general grounds—I again visited it on April 1st.

The military population tributary to the farm is practically the same as in 1895, when I made my first inspection, and the same local condition of things prevails with regard to the position of the barracks and the dwellings in its vicinity, except that a new hospital has been built on the adjacent high ground.

In my previous report I traced the history of the sewage farm, and showed how, owing to lengthy mismanagement, it had become such a nuisance as to call forth loud and unfavourable comments both in the House of Commons and in the press. I found the other day that since Lieutenant-Colonel Jones, V.C., A.M. Inst.C.E., whose knowledge of the utilisation of sewage by means of land is extensive, has taken over the management of the farm—which he did, at the wish of the War Office, in the summer of 1895—there has been a great and general improvement. Whereas the condition of the farm two years ago was repulsive, it to-day presents a tidy and businesslike appearance. The roads have been metalled, efficient fences made, gates erected, and the tanks at the mouth of the outfall sewers have been altered to the best advantage so far as their antiquated design will allow. There is no longer any accumulation of sludge on the surface of the land, whilst the whole is under cultivation instead of portions only, and the pools of stagnant and offensive sewage—then so common—are no longer there to offend the eye and nauseate the stomach. To a very limited extent the farm

buildings have been improved, for a cowhouse of a substantial character to accommodate 24 cows has been built, as well as a dairy with all modern sanitary appliances.

In a word, no one can deny that the appearance of the camp sewage farm in 1897 contrasts most favourably with that presented in 1895; and that the trivial sum of about £2,000 expended by Colonel Jones on behalf of the War Office on permanent improvements since that time has been utilised to the best advantage. In proof of this, it appears that the Urban District Council of Aldershot, who naturally look with a jealous eye upon the doings at the camp, owing to the rateable value involved, are of the same opinion; for their Inspector of Nuisances, in the *Aldershot Times* of June 6th, 1896, then reported that the whole of the farm was in a much better condition than in former times, whilst Mr. Rushford, their surveyor, stated in confirmation that its general appearance had much improved since his last visit.

At this point, however, all commendatory remarks must cease, because I am convinced that the effluent from the farm, which without much stretch of imagination might on the day of my inspection be termed "clarified sewage," must always at its point of discharge into the river Blackwater be chemically impure, even if it be sometimes clear to the eye; and that no effort on Colonel Jones's part can produce a good result unless the Government allow him an adequate sum of money in order properly to underdrain the land and thoroughly to prepare its surface. Small grants of money such as he now receives may do more harm than good. In proof of my statement that the effluent is chemically impure, I read the other day in the remarks appended to one of the periodical analyses, which I understand are made regularly by the military authorities, that in the opinion of the analyst the effluent was "a bad one." As the principal test of a successful sewage farm is the character of its effluent, it follows that a continuously bad one must cause the condemnation of the farm contributing it. In this instance such condemnation is quite preventable if only the War Office would take the necessary steps to ensure success by a reasonable expenditure of money.

It is obviously discreditable that the present state of things should continue; and steps should be taken forthwith to expend the money necessary to secure successful results on the present farm, or, if the authorities prefer, to select and prepare other land for the utilisation and the purification of the sewage, because not only does the result now obtained reflect on those in authority, but needless harm is done to sewage farming as a science.

It is not for me to hazard an opinion as to what are the reasons held by those in authority in favour of the removal of the farm elsewhere, but I am sure that no one could urge the unsuitability of the soil as one of them. Indeed I am of the same opinion now, as I was in 1895, that there is not a farm in England where the soil is more suitable for sewage purification provided only, as I have stated before, that it is properly laid out and underdrained; and that it would cleanse without the slightest difficulty the liquid refuse of at least 40,000 people instead of about 16,000.

Residential objections cannot certainly be brought forward, inasmuch as all the land, which is not liable to floods, is Government property, and therefore not likely to be built over, whilst it must not be forgotten that the farm has been in its present position for thirty years.

The consumption of its produce and the consequent effect on health is of course in this instance a matter of national importance, but your readers will probably agree that in no published instance has any harm to human beings been traced to the consumption of produce from a well-managed sewage farm, still less to animals. Moreover, it is obvious that the question of production in relation to consumption has not much bearing, for very few consumers know where purchased vegetables come from, especially when they are supplied by contract.

Colonel Jones at the beginning of last summer commenced the sale of milk in the Farnborough district, but was within a few weeks of starting peremptorily stopped by an order from headquarters. With regard to the milk question, Sir Evelyn Wood, Quartermaster-General, as President of the Army Sanitary Committee, stated in a report to the War Office, dated July 27th, 1896, that milk from a sewage farm

could not be said to be free from all dangers of contamination, unless it was the produce of a farm where it was impossible to use anything but clean water for washing or rinsing the dairy utensils; and it was, therefore, the opinion of the Army Sanitary Committee that a dairy should not be placed upon a sewage farm at all, but at a selected site at a distance of one-fourth of a mile from it. The sale of milk, therefore, although the public water supply of Aldershot is used throughout the dairy under a competent staff (which fact the Committee appear to have ignored altogether), was peremptorily stopped; but, oddly enough, the sale of butter was not so, with the result that the latter, which is uncommonly good, is still sought after by officers, etc., and duly appreciated by them. The public will hardly understand why the consumption of milk from a sewage farm is considered to be dangerous when that of butter is not.

Another probable reason against the continuation of the sewage farm on the present site is the erection of the new hospital, the nearest point of which is 180 yards from its boundary. It is not the general opinion amongst men experienced in sanitary science that the proximity of a sewage farm is detrimental to the wellbeing of a hospital. At any rate the idea is not favoured at Leicester, where the Corporation Hospital is only 470 yards from the sewage farm, whilst the small-pox hospital is only 50 yards. At Wimbledon the infectious hospital is on the farm itself, whilst at Berlin four metropolitan convalescent homes have been purposely built within the area of the sewage farm.

It has, I am told, been brought forward that such an amount of atmospheric impurity must result as would prove detrimental to patients after operations. Surely the truth of such an idea should be ascertained by an actual analysis of the air surrounding the hospital before it is published abroad and believed in by many without proof.

I understand that the retention or removal of the sewage farm from its present site rests with the Army Sanitary Committee above mentioned, which is composed of several well-known men in addition to Sir Evelyn Wood, Quartermaster-General, amongst whom should be mentioned Sir Douglas Galton. If this is so the importance of the question demands that instead of issuing reports and dictating telegrams from London they should pay a visit to the camp, and see and understand things for themselves upon the ground, taking, if necessary, the evidence of expert witnesses. By this means the truth would probably be arrived at, the present unsettled state of things done away with, and the question settled whether the present farm should be retained after an outlay of about £8,000 upon it, or whether it should be removed further away from the camp, where of course a far heavier expenditure would be unavoidable. Under any circumstances the time for immediate action has arrived.

THE HEALTH OF THE TROOPS IN MATABELELAND, 1896.

By R. T. MICHELL, M.B., C.M.Ed.,

Late Surgeon in B.S.A.Co.'s Forces, Johannesburg, South African Republic.

PROPERLY to understand the diseases from which the troops in Matabeleland suffered, we must review briefly the conditions under which they were placed in 1896.

CLIMATE.

The rebellion broke out just at the end of the rainy season, and the Bulawayo volunteers suffered a good deal from exposure at the commencement; but by May the winter had set in, and scarcely a drop of rain fell till September. The winter day in this part of Africa is usually quite as hot as an August day in England, but the peculiar dry crispness of the air renders it possible to travel and to work without remitting through hours that would otherwise be unbearable. As soon, however, as darkness falls radiation takes place rapidly; sometimes there is a heavy dew, depending greatly on the locality; in any case by midnight the temperature has fallen to 40° F., or lower, and in June and July there is frequently hard frost till dissipated by the morning sun. This means a difference of 40° F., or even more, between 2 P.M. in the shade and 2 A.M. outside the blankets. In August, September, and