

QUESTIONS FOR POOR LAW GUARDIANS.

REVISED OCTOBER 1894.

SIR or MADAM,

In connection with your candidature for the office of Guardian of the Poor, I should be obliged if you would be good enough to answer the following questions, and return the paper to me.

I am, yours faithfully,

(Name of Elector).....

(Address of Elector).....

(Information on the Poor Law and its administration will be found in Fabian Tract No. 17, "The Reform of the Poor Law," and No. 54, "The Humanizing of the Poor Law." See advertisement, page 4.)

QUESTIONS.

ANSWERS.

I.—REFORMS IN ORGANIZATION.

1. Will you advocate the Board and its Committees meeting in the evening, so as to enable working men and women to serve?
2. Are you in favor of the complete equalization of rates throughout the metropolis?
3. Will you advocate the transfer of the administration of all Poor Law schools, hospitals, asylums, etc., in London to an elected central Poor Law Council, having authority over the local Boards of Guardians?

II.—REFORMS IN ADMINISTRATION.

(a.) *The Worthy Poor.*

4. Are you in favor of substituting for Poor Law relief a system of adequate pensions to the aged and disabled poor?
5. Are you in favor of the complete separation of the Infirmary from the Workhouse, so that all stigma of pauperism may be removed from the public treatment of sickness or accident, and that the care of the sick may be placed in the hands of a sufficient staff of skilled nurses?

6. Are you in favor of housing the different classes of in-door poor in separate buildings?

7. Are you in favor of establishing Cottage Homes or Almshouses for the aged?

8. Will you insist that where aged married people, both over sixty, are in the workhouse, a separate apartment shall be provided for them, as directed by the law, and will you report to the Local Government Board any infraction of the same?

9. Will you see that the aged poor in the workhouse are (a) provided with books and newspapers, (b) allowed to smoke, (c) excused from all compulsory work, (d) allowed to interest themselves in some occupation, (e) not forced to wear a distinctive dress, and (f) allowed to go out on every fine day?

10. Will you see, by means of genuine surprise visits of inspection, that the regulations of the Local Government Board for the management of the workhouse are strictly carried out?

11. Will you insist upon the appointment of an outside Women's Visiting Committee for the inspection of the workhouse, in accordance with the Local Government Board's Circular Letter of 28th Jan., 1893?

12. Will you take care that all children whose charge devolves upon the community, in consequence of the death, desertion, or pauperism of their parents, (a) shall not in any way be made to feel that their dependence is either criminal or disgraceful; (b) shall not be marked out by dress or treatment from their fellows; (c) shall receive such general education in Board schools, and special teaching of a skilled trade, as shall counteract any hereditary tendency to lapse into pauperism; (d) shall be removed from the contact with pauperism which is inevitable in workhouses, by being boarded-out in the country and sent to public elementary schools?

13. Will you insist upon the Guardians finding temporary and honorable employment for those out of work in seasons of depression, by co-operation with the Vestry, or Town or County Council, or voluntary



QUESTIONS.

organisations, and the arrangement of the public works in such a way as to increase the employment at these periods?

(. . . *The Undeserving Poor.*

14. Are you in favor of the reform of the present Casual Ward system, providing for the weeding-out of the habitual loafer from the genuine unemployed, and allowing the latter early egress and assistance on the "way-ticket" system, to enable him to get work?

15. Are you in favor of the institution of compulsory and corrective treatment of the habitual casual, vagrant or mendicant in some kind of "labor colony"?

III.—PROPER TREATMENT OF WORKERS.

16. Will you insist, as regards all persons employed by the Guardians, upon (a) a normal Eight Hours Day, or maximum of 48 hours per week; (b) not less than Trade Union rate of wages for each occupation; (c) full liberty of combination; (d) one day's rest in seven and a week's holiday on full pay annually; (e) the prohibition of overtime except in unexpected emergencies?

17. Will you, in every practicable case, prefer the direct employment of labor by the Guardians to engaging a contractor?

18. Whenever it is found necessary to employ a contractor, will you insist upon the insertion, in all contracts for supplies, as well as for works, of clauses similar to those adopted by the London County Council (with penalties to be strictly enforced), stipulating (a) against sub-contracting or sweating; (b) for payment of the Trade Union rate of wages fixed for that trade, as defined in a schedule to the contract; (c) that, when possible, the working day shall be 8 hours, or 48 per week; (d) that in all contracts for clothing and boots the work be performed entirely in the contractor's factory, and not given out?

Signature of Candidate

ANSWERS.

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