The treatment of vagrancy and the relief of the poor and destitute in the Tudor period, based upon the local records of London to 1552 and Hull to 1576.

by

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Abstract of Thesis.

The treatment of vagrancy and the relief of the poor and destitute in the Tudor period, based upon the local records of London to 1552 and Hull to 1576.

The general aim is to examine in detail the initiation of poor law policy by municipal authorities, with London as the main theme but with consideration of Hull for comparative purposes. Both are treated in relation to parallel State policy.

Chapter I is introductory, calling attention to the general causes for increased vagrancy and distress in the sixteenth century, indicating the scope of the thesis and describing the manuscript sources.

Chapter II deals with the extent and nature of sixteenth-century vagrancy — the contemporary conception of a vagabond, the art of begging revealed by the London archives and contemporary literature, and the city haunts of the sturdy beggar.

Chapter III treats of London's vagrancy policy, sketching first State and City policy before 1485, and then proceeding
to detailed examination of the period of transition and experiment (1485 - 1531). City policy preceded State action. Its keynotes were

(a) settlement

(b) severe punishment.

Chapter IV continues the survey to 1552. The main features are

(a) until 1547, great administrative activity

(b) 1547 - 1552, the development of a more humane treatment of vagrancy, marked by the foundation of Bridewell.

Chapter V traces to 1576 Hull's vagrancy policy, which developed later than that of London. Hull's chief aim was to stabilise labour, but there were certain resemblances to London's policy and these are noted.

Chapter VI reviews development of municipal relief of the poor in London and Hull. In London,

(a) until 1536, policy was mainly concerned with the regulation of begging;

(b) 1536 - 1552 circumstances hastened municipal interference and finally a general scheme of poor
relief was formulated, involving the foundation of the Royal Hospitals.
In Hull the problem was less urgent, interference was more gradual and largely State-directed.
Chapter VII summarises the result of these detailed surveys. Documentary evidence to illustrate the various aspects of the subject is quoted in full in 25 Appendices.
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Abbreviations used throughout.

Antiq. ... ... Collection of Proclamations of the Society of Antiquaries, London.

Bench book ... ... Hull Corporation Record, Bench book.

Journal ... ... Corporation of London record, Journal of the Court of Common Council.

Letter Book ... ... Corporation of London record, Letter Book.

Repert. ... ... Corporation of London record, Repertory of the Court of Aldermen.

B.M. ... ... British Museum.

E.E.T.S. ... ... Early English Text Society.

E.H.R. ... ... English Historical Review.

L. and P. ... ... Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII.

N.E.D. ... ... New English Dictionary.

P.R.O. ... ... Public Record Office.

R. Steele... ... Tudor and Stuart Proclamations, 1485 - 1714, calendared by Robert Steele under the direction of the Earl of Crawford.

Statutes ... ... Statutes of the Realm.

Note on transcription from manuscript.

Throughout the thesis in quotation from manuscript and in the appendices, capitals and punctuation have been modernised. The spelling of the original has been observed and abbreviations have been extended.
CHAPTER I.

General Introduction to the Problem.

"For thys ys sure, that in no cuntrey of Chrystundome, for the nombr of pepul, you schal fynd so many beggarys as be here in Englond, and mo now then haue byn before tyme."


"The state of England was neuer so miserabele, as it is at this present."

Thomas Becon, Works (1564), II, f. xvii.

From the present age of economic depression when urgent problems of unemployment and poverty are engaging the attention of economists, politicians and all interested in the welfare of society, an age of commissions and reports, it is interesting to look back to the sixteenth century when a very similar situation stimulated general interest and resulted in the rapid development of
poor law policy by municipality and state. Problems of poverty and vagrancy were already of long standing by the Tudor period; there had always been wandering "bidderes and beggers", but in the sixteenth century their ranks were augmented by those displaced by the social and economic changes which had been developing from the fourteenth century; there had always been numbers of impotent dependent upon the care and help of others, but their condition had become more pitiable on account of the increase in number of beggars and the decrease in sources of relief. Circumstances had combined to produce a problem of sufficient magnitude in the Tudor period to necessitate official formulation of a poor law policy.

The lines along which policy developed will be more fully appreciated if viewed in the appropriate setting, and this demands a knowledge of the causes which produced the problem. By way of introduction therefore the main causes for the widespread vagrancy, poverty and genuine distress in the sixteenth century may be briefly recapitulated. First, the wide agrarian changes of the times were responsible for considerable distress. The main features of the agrarian revolution denounced by sixteenth century writers in this connection
were the increase of enclosures, the consolidation of farms, the transition from tillage to sheep farming and the rise in rents.

Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia* attributes the prevalent distress to increased sheep farming: "Your shepe that were wont to be so meke and tama, and so smal eaters, now, as I heare saye, be become so great deuowerers and so wylde that they eate vp, and swallow doune the very men themselfes. They consume, destroye and deuoure whole fieldes, howses and cities."^1 In like manner the writer of a ballad entitled *Vox Populi*, *Vox Dei* censures the sheepfarmer as the cause of poverty to others:

"And thus the woyse dothe mvlypyle amownges your grasis commynalte:
they are in suche grettte penvry
that they cane nether sell ner bye,
Such ys there extreme powerty.
experynes dothe it veryfye,
as trwthe yt selfe dothe testyfye,
this is a mervellvis mesirie
for grasiares, and Regraters,


"The townes go downe, the land decayes;
Off cornefeyldes, playne layes;
Gret men makithe now a dayes
A shepecott in the churche."

with soe many shepe-maisteres
that of erabell grounde make pasteres,
are they that be thes wasteres
that wyll vnnde this Lande,
yf they continiu and stande."

Thomas Becon concentrates rather on the evils of the transition from small culture to large and of enclosures: "Howe ioyne they Lordeahyp to Lordeshyppe, manner to manner, ferme to ferme, land to lande, pasture to pasture, house to house, and house for a vantage? Howe do the rych men, and specially suche as be shepe-mongers oppresse the kynges lyege people by deuourynge theyr communa pastures wyth theyr shepe, so that the poore people ar not able to kepe a cowe for the comforte of them and of theyr poore famylye, but are lyke to starue and peryshe for honger, yf there be not prouisyon made shortly." Similar criticisms may be found in the works of such writers as Henry Brinklow, Sir William Forrest, Robert Crowley, Thomas Lever and many others.

Another feature of the agrarian revolution which called forth a good deal of censure was the rise in rents. Bishop Latimer in one of his sermons discusses the effect of increased rents. He contrasts the situation

1. Ibid., p. 125.
in his day with that in his father's time; his father was a yeoman farmer renting "a farme by iii. or iiii. pound by yere at the uttermost...... He kept hospitalitie for his pore neighbours. And sum almes he gaue to the poore, and all thys did he of the sayd farme. Wher he that now hath it, paieth xvi. pounde by yere or more, and is not able to do any thing for his Prynce, for himselfe, nor for his children, or geue a cup of drinke to the pore. Thus al the enhansinge and rearing goth to your private commoditie and wealth."¹ It may here be noted that rent raising was not confined to the country side but extended to the towns where property was bought up by rich merchants and others to be let out at high rents; Robert Crowley describes this process:

"Some haue purchased, and some taken by leases, whole allyes, whole rentes, whole rowes, yea whole streats and lanes, so that the rentes be reysed, some double, some triple, and some four fould to that they were wythin these xii yeres last past."² The results were overcrowding of houses with two or more families and

deterioration of property.

A certain amount of exaggeration must of course be allowed for in judging these contemporary accounts; some writers, though in the minority, take the opposite view of affairs and approve the changes, whilst the investigations of Mr. Leadam and Professor Gay have shown that the enclosure movement was far more advanced in some districts than in others. The agrarian changes did however occasion a considerable amount of distress by causing unemployment, poverty and vagrancy; numbers of peasantry were divorced from the soil and were able only with the greatest difficulty to secure a living.


3. Professor Tawney describes the difficult position of a family evicted to make room for sheep, R.H. Tawney, The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century, pp. 270-272. Interesting statistics as to the number of people unemployed through the increase of sheep farming were worked out by the author of a contemporary tract entitled Certayne causes gathered together, wherin is shewed the decaye of England only by the great multitude of sheep. (Four Supplicacions, 1529-1553, (E.E.T.S.), pp. 93-102.)
The State realised the necessity for an active policy but all the proclamations, acts and commissions which ensued seem to have been of little effect; Bishop Latimer deplores the ineffectiveness of the activity: "But let the preacher preach till his tong be wore to the stompes, nothing is amended. We haue good statutes made for the commen welth as touching comeners, enclosers, many metinges and Sessions, but in the end of the matter their commeth nothing forth." Complaints concerning agrarian changes became more numerous during the first half of the sixteenth century and the dissatisfaction of the commons in these matters was one of the motives for rebellion in 1536 and 1549. The situation is summed up by Robert Crowley in 1550 in his pamphlet The Way to Wealth, wherein is plainly taught a most present Remedy for Sedicion; he shows that the poor attribute sedition to discontent with the practices of the rich: "They take our houses ouer our headdes, they bye our groundes out of our handes, they rayse our rentes, they leauie great (yea unreasonable) fines, they enclose oure commens!"

Another factor closely allied to the agrarian changes in causing distress was the rise in prices. Sir William Forrest in his poem *Pleasaunt Poesye of Princelie Practis* (1548) wrote:

"The worldes is chaunged from that it hathes beene, not to the bettre but to the warssse farre: more for a penye wee have before seene then nowe for fowre pence, whoe liste to compare."

This increase in prices has been attributed to the increased rents, debasements of the currency, great dearths through a series of bad harvests, the influx


2. This was the contemporary view stressed by Henry Brinklow in his *Complaynt of Roderyck Mors*: "This inordinate enhansing of rentys, which is strong vp within fewe yerys past, must nedys make all things deare, as well pertaynyng to the back, as to the belly, to the most gret dammage of all the kyngs subiectys, landyd men only except. (H. Brinklow, *Complaynt of Roderyck Mors*, (E.E.T.S.), p. 10.) This view however fails to recognise that "the increased rents were themselves the consequence of the increased prices." (R.H. Tawney, op. cit., p. 199.)


4. There were years of dearth and high prices in England 1519-21, 1527-31, 1535-6, 1545-6, 1549-1556, see T.H. Baker, *Records of the Seasons, Prices of Agricultural Produce and Phenomena observed in the British Isles*, pp. 112-113, 114-116, 117, 120, 121-123.
of precious metals from the New World and the transition from tillage to sheep farming. The poorer classes were especially affected as food, clothing and rents rose more quickly than wages; it has been estimated that the price of food rose about 60% between 1511 and 1550 whereas rates of wages had risen barely 15%.\(^1\)

The growing commerce and manufactures of the sixteenth century further complicated the problem, for although new spheres of work were created fluctuations in trade from either political or economic reasons meant distress and unemployment. Manufactures on a large scale were less stable than the old industries; there was always a danger of a glut in the market and cessation of trade. An example of distress caused through interference with trade occurred in 1528 when Wolsey for political reasons prohibited trade with the Netherlands and there ensued an unemployment crisis among the clothworkers.\(^2\)

Unemployment and distress also resulted from the

1. E.M. Leonard, op. cit., p.16, n.i. The percentages are based on the figures given by J.E. Thorold Rogers, History of Agriculture and Prices, IV, pp. 292, 355, 524, 545, etc.

decline in the power of the great households. Employment in war, public and private, and in service with the great nobles had absorbed great numbers in the Middle Ages. The power of the nobility had however gradually been weakening, and in the sixteenth century the central authority continued the process in its vigorous action against livery and maintenance and in its promotion of "new" men to high office. The unemployed dependants of the great household were often of the restless calibre of the vagabond, and went from choice to swell the ranks of the sturdy beggars. These were the type described by Sir Thomas More as "wont with a swords and a buckler by hys syde to iatte through the strate with a bragginge loke, and to thynke hym selfe to good to be anye mans mate."¹ Others were reduced to beggary and theft through sheer necessity when deprived of service to the great lord; this type is dealt with in the ballad Now-a-Dayes:

"Temporall lordes be almost gone,
Howsholdes kepe thai fawe or none,
Which causeth many a goodly mane
ffor to begg his bredd;

¹ Sir T. More, op. cit., p. 39. More shows that being untrained for work these men were bound when "destitute of service, either to starue for honger, or manfullye playe the theues," Ibid., p. 22.
Yff he stеле ffor necessite,
ther ys none other remedy
But the law will shortlye
Hang him all save the hedd."1

The magnitude of the problem may thus be accounted for by the unemployment and poverty caused by the agrarian changes, the rise in prices, fluctuations of trade, the instability of industry, the decay of feudalism and the decline of the great households of the nobility. The problem was of a three-fold character, involving unemployment, vagabondism and genuine distress; the first two features were however confused in the sixteenth century, idleness being regarded as a vice even though created by economic conditions. Increased vagabondism was a danger to society and as such called forth State activity, whilst the inadequacy of existing sources of poor relief to deal with the increased poverty necessitated intervention in that sphere also.

Existing agencies for relief included the church, hospitals, parish and trade gilds, great households and private benefactors. There seemed to be a very general decline in the amount of relief available from these voluntary sources by the sixteenth century, and

1. Ballads from Manuscripts, ed. F.J. Furnivall, I, i, p. 95.
contemporary writers complain frequently of the decline in charitable almsgiving. Great alms had been given in the past by the royal and other great households.¹ The royal household continued in Tudor times to contribute to the poor on such occasions as funerals² and at special times in the year such as Easter,³ and also to administer a certain amount of regular relief,⁴ although not on the


2. On the funeral of Henry VII large sums were given in alms (L. and P., I, (2nd ed.), 19 & 20); for example, "Dr. Bekenshawe distributed to poor people at the Clynke 28 and 29 April and 9, 10 and 11 May and to impotent people of the city and suburbs nominated by their curates, total 447 l. 9s. 3d." (ibid., 20, pp. 11-12).

3. The accounts of the treasurer of the household show the payment of £100 to the almoner at Easter; for example, on 17 April 1538 "Item, paid to the bishop of Hereford, the kingis almosyner, by the kingis warrant dated xvij Aprilis anno XXIX the somme of 100 li to be by hym distributed in almos on Good Fryday next ensuyng." B.M., Arundel MS. 97, f.14vo.

4. The ordinances for the household made at Eltham in 1526 made arrangements for the gathering of "relicts and fragments of meate and drinke" for daily distribution "to poore people at the utter court gate." (A collection of ordinances and regulations for the government of the Royal Household made in diverse reigns from King Edward III to King William and Queen Mary, (Soc. of Antiq. Pub.), p. 154), and further stated that the king's daily alms amounted to four shillings, that is £73 a year (ibid., p.197). I have found no evidence in the Tudor period of the extensive munificence of the thirteenth century royal household.
same scale as in the Middle Ages. The decline of the great households of the nobility very naturally reacted on the relief given by them. This is the lament of the author of the ballad *The Ruyn of a Ream*:

"Somtyme nobyll men levyd in ther Contre,
And kepte grete howsoldis, pore men to soowur;
But now in the Courte they desyre fo r to be;
With ladys to daly, thys ys ther pleasure;
So pore men dayly may famyshe for hunger
or they com home home on monyth to remayn.
Thys ys the trowthe, as I here Certeyne."  

There are of course still outstanding examples of the munificence of private persons; for example, Thomas Harman dedicates his *Caveat or Waringen for Commen Gvrsetors vulgarly called Vagabones* (1567) to Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury whom he extols as having "a vygelant and mercifull eye to ... poore, indygente, and feable parishnores" and "also abundantly powrings out dayely.... ardent and bountifull charytie vppon all such as commeth for reliefs" to her "luckly gates".  

1. Ballads from Manuscripts, I, 1, p. 159.  
general criticism of the century was however that
"The charitie of rich men
is now thorowe colde."¹

Another source of complaint was the lack of care for
the poor shown by the clergy; the author of the ballad
The Image of Ypocrcye exposes their negligence in this
matter:

"But, by the trynite,
It wonder is to me
To se your charite
And hospitalite
So littell to the poore!"²

Apart from the decline in almsgiving by great households,
private persons, and the clergy, the dissolution of the
monasteries affected the problem by removing one source
of relief, whilst many charitable foundations such as
hospitals and almshouses do not appear to have been
fulfilling their duties. Henry Brinklow attacks the
hospitals in this connection: "I heare that the masters
of your hospytals be so fatt that the poore be kept
leane and bare inough: the crye of the peple is heard
unto the Lord, though ye wyll not heare."³

Relief

1. R. Crowley, One and thyrtye Epigrammes, wherein are
bryefly touched so many Abuses, that may and ought
to be put away, (Select Works, E.E.T.S.), p. 11.

2. Ballads from Manuscripts, I, 1, p. 197.

3. Henry Brinklow, op. cit., p. 52. cf. Simon Fish,
A Supplicacyon for the Beggers, (Four Supplications,
through these existing agencies was at the best spasmodic and varied from place to place; it was inadequate to deal with such a problem as had arisen by the sixteenth century, and therefore some new policy was called for, not so much to remedy evils produced by the abolition or decline of the charitable institutions of the Middle Ages as to remedy the evils which had grown up in spite of them and with which they were unable to cope.

In the development of poor law policy which marks the sixteenth century the municipalities played a considerable part, often experimenting within their bounds with policies afterwards adopted by the State. Mr. Sidney Webb in his preface to Some early tracts on poor relief edited by Mr. F.R. Salter remarks:

"It has been one of the shortcomings of English Poor Law history that it has been too narrowly confined to the legislation of the national government."¹ This neglect of the part played by the corporations of the larger towns in the development of policy has been to some extent remedied by modern historians, especially by Miss Leonard in her Early history of English poor

¹ F.R. Salter, Some early tracts on poor relief, Pref. p. viii.
relief.¹ In this thesis some attempt is made to carry on this work in more detail and to give a full survey of the early experiment and development of poor law policy — including the treatment of vagrancy — in by far the most important of the municipalities, the City of London, from 1485 to 1552.² This period has been selected as covering the early experiments in London and as being of sufficient length to show development of policy and administration. The study confines itself to the activity of the City authorities; the relief given by the church, gilds, religious foundations and private benefactors has therefore not been investigated. The aim is to show the motives and extraneous circumstances influencing the City in its formulation of policy and the variations and different phases of that policy in its initial development.

1. Miss Leonard states in the preface to her book that her "account of the early history of English poor relief is chiefly derived from the municipal records of London and Norwich and from the reports of the justices of the peace which are included amongst the state papers." The book however deals with a long period, until the Civil War, and is quite brief for the early period in London. E.M. Leonard, op. cit., pp. 23-40.

2. The divisions within the period and the method of treatment will be discussed later, see infra, pp. 91-93, and 283-284.
The manuscript sources on which the study is based are the three great collections of the City administrative records preserved at the Guildhall Record Office - the Repertories, the Journals and the Letter Books. The series known as the Repertories contains the proceedings of the Court of Aldermen from 1496 onwards; before this date the proceedings of this court may be ascertained from the other two series. The Journals commence in 1416 and contain mainly the Acts and proceedings of the Court of Common Council, and in addition include until 1495 the proceedings of the Court of Aldermen. The third series, known as the Letter Books, commences in 1275; for the Tudor period it contains fair copies of entries found in both the Repertories and Journals together with other miscellaneous memoranda. The only extant book of

1. For some account of the archives of the Corporation see the handbook prepared for the Anglo-American Conference of Professors of History (1921) by the Records clerk Mr. A.H. Thomas M.A. and issued by the City of Corporation Records, Report to the Court of Common Council from the Library Committee, presented 16 December 1869. Throughout this thesis when two systems of foliation occur in Repertory, Journal or Letter Book the top folio reference has been given. Further, in the case of the duplicated entries from the Repertories and Journals in the Letter Books, the Letter Book entry has been used, but both references have been given in the footnote in the following form: Letter Book 0, f. 27\textsuperscript{vo}; Journal XII, f. 366\textsuperscript{vo}, 10 December 1526.
the records of the Chamber for the sixteenth century has also been consulted, but only a few folios are relevant to the period under review.  

The poor law policy of the State in the sixteenth century has already been traced in many standard economic histories, but it will be considered again in this thesis in conjunction with that of the City. At times the City experimented on its own initiative and actually forestalled the State in certain features of policy, whilst on other occasions its activity was the direct result of State intervention or was an attempt to carry out general poor law policy as formulated in statutes and proclamations.

In addition, some exploration has been made into the initiation of poor law policy in another municipality, that of Kingston-upon-Hull. The authorities in Hull did not commence any activities in this connection until a later date than in London, and therefore the survey has been carried down to 1576. Further, in Hull, policy was

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1. These accounts have only recently been discovered as the folios had been used as an index, slips having been pasted over the manuscript. The book is not a continuous chronological account and only certain folios are relevant to our period, viz., ff. 82-95vo.

2. Proclamations generally seem to have been omitted from consideration in the economic surveys of the period.
not on the whole in advance of the State as in London and some other municipalities, but even so a survey of the conditions and development of policy in Hull affords some interesting points of comparison and contrast with London. As little investigation has been made into the records of the Corporation of Hull and there is no available account of them, the sources for a study of the municipality in the sixteenth century will here be dealt with in more detail than in the case of London where the records are well known.

For this period there are three types of record in the possession of the Corporation — administrative, judicial and financial. The first type is comprised by the series known as the Bench books; there are five Bench books extant before 1609, four being in the possession of the Corporation, whilst the fifth was owned by the late Mr. Tindall Wildridge who bequeathed

1. Miss Leonard mentions several towns developing along similar lines to London during the period before 1569, E.M. Leonard, _op. cit._, pp. 40-46.

2. All the Corporation records are preserved at the Guildhall, Hull. These records are not accessible to the public but the Corporation kindly granted me permission to examine them for purposes of this work.

3. Thomas Tindall Wildridge was the author of several books including Old and New Hull (1884) and Holderness and Hullshire Historic Gleanings (1886).
it to the Hull Museum. These books are registers containing miscellaneous entries and had no settled form until the fourth which commences in 1555. The entries in the first two precede the sixteenth century; the third however has entries dating from the time of Edward III to that of Elizabeth but no strictly chronological order is observed. The entries relate to town ordinances, orders and decrees of the mayor, aldermen and burgesses, town charters, wills and other entries of a miscellaneous nature. Bench book III A is of a similar nature and covers roughly the period from Henry VI to Henry VIII; it contains also material relating to the sheriff's turn and the quarter sessions. Although the regular proceedings of the mayor and aldermen cannot be ascertained from these two books the entries do

1. I examined this book at the Guildhall, Hull, where it is at the moment deposited. It appears to be an authentic Bench book and contains 233 paper folios. In this thesis it will be designated Bench book III A as its date and the nature of its material place it between Bench book III and Bench book IV.

2. Bench book I contains 224 parchment folios; Bench book II known as the "Liber Rubeus" has 281 parchment folios.

indicate the situation in Hull and the policy of the authorities in dealing with matters of corporate interest. Bench book IV runs from 1555 to 1609 and is more like a London Repertory in form; its title is "The boke or reportary of all a[cts] and ordenaunces made and done in the tyme of John Thorneton maior from Migchelmas in the yere of oure Lorde God a thousands fyve hundreth fyfty and fyve, and so from thens of all other actes and ordenaunces of, done and made in all other maiors tymes succedyngue hym vntill the yere of oure Lorde God, 1609." From entries in this book the initial stages of poor law policy in Hull may be discovered.\(^1\)

Apart from the Bench books there is a Sheriff Turn and Quarter Sessions book which records the proceedings of these courts from the time of Henry VI to that of Henry VIII together with other memoranda of a legal and judicial nature.\(^2\) The book has been useful for this survey as illustrating the types of offence found in Hull in the early sixteenth century, some of which were connected with vagabondism.

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1. Bench book IV contains 377 paper folios, of which the first 200 are relevant to the period under review.

2. This large volume contains 171 paper folios.
There are in addition two series of financial records, the Chamberlains' rolls and the Rent rolls. The former commence in 1320 and continue with many gaps until the end of Henry VIII's reign. These rolls contain the receipts and expenditure of the chamberlains; full details are entered until 1516, but after that date all details are omitted and the totals only are given under the various headings of the account. There are fourteen Rent rolls extant for the period under review, the earliest being for 1527-28. These rolls contain firstly details of the rents belonging to the town and secondly the expenditure by the chamberlains on "Fees and Wages". The two series have been of little use for the present survey apart from the details they contain of payments to certain town charities.

The two sections of the problem - the treatment of

1. There are 16 rolls extant for the reign of Henry VII, 30 for the reign of Henry VIII and 3 undated Tudor ones.

2. These fourteen are for the years: - 1527-28; 1538-39; 1543-44; 1545-46; 1546-47; tempo Hen. VIII; 1547-48; c. 1550; 1555-56; 1557; 1566; 1569; 1575; 1576.

3. The details of expenditure under this heading were formerly on the Chamberlains' rolls and appear to have been transferred to the Rent rolls which were also drawn up by the chamberlains.
vagrancy and the relief of the poor and destitute will be considered separately although their interrelation and reaction on each other must be borne in mind. Vagrancy policy and administration developed more rapidly at the beginning of the period than schemes of poor relief. It was essential in the interests of law and order that the authorities should check the sturdy beggars, and so vagrancy policy developed primarily as a police measure. It was however gradually realised that a thorough reorganisation of the system of poor relief was as essential as a vagrancy policy. The natural order of development will be followed in this thesis, and after an examination of the extent and nature of vagrancy in the sixteenth century, vagrancy policy in London and Hull to 1552 and 1576 respectively will be surveyed chronologically and then the development of municipal relief of the poor and destitute during the same periods.
CHAPTER II.

The Extent and Nature of Sixteenth Century Vagrancy.

"But what is a loyterar, a sucker of honye, a spoyler of corne, a destroyer of fruite? Nay a waster of money, a spoyler of vytaile, a sucker of bloud, a breaker of orders, a seker of breakes, a queller of lyfe, a basiliske of the comune wealth, whiche by companie and syght doeth poyson the whole contreye, and staineth honeste myndes wyth the infection of his venime, and so draweth the commune wealthe to death and destruction."

Sir John Cheke, *The hurt of sedicion howe greueous it is to a Commune walth.* 1549.

The ubiquity of vagrancy in the sixteenth century, the presence of that "rowsey ragged rabblement of rakeshelles" wandering about the country, idle, playing wily pranks for a pittance, troubling both town and country by their numbers and deeds is borne witness to on the one hand by a voluminous contemporary literature of roguery, on the other by the record of action taken against it whether in town ordinances, Privy Council orders or statutes.
It may have been that these last were sometimes due to temporary panic, but even so they testify to the magnitude of the problem. The survey already made of the changes of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries which were productive of pauperism will have made it clear that the Tudor period offered fertile soil in which vagrancy and roguery could flourish.

Although there was a constant outcry in the sixteenth century against an increasingly large class of poor, few figures are available as to actual numbers of beggars and vagrant rogues, and in the case of the latter especially it is impossible to arrive at any accurate estimate, since available evidence of numbers refers only to those who were apprehended by the authorities, whereas many must have escaped notice. Whilst we can therefore gain little quantitative idea of the problem, such figures as we have, do emphasize its urgency; some of these relate to the situation in London. In 1518 badges were given to 772 deserving poor licensing them to beg and in this way distinguishing them from the idle vagabonds.¹ Not

¹. Although in the London orders of February 1517/18 for restraining vagabonds and beggars (Letter Book N, ff. 74-75; Journal XI, ff. 337-338; for the full text see Appendix IV (d)), it was stated that the number of deserving poor to be given badges "amounteth
only was there this attempt to aid the needy poor, but both the central and local authorities made greater effort to check the vagabond. In 1519 the Privy Council organised searches for vagrants in the City of London and suburbs, and at one of these searches held on the night of 17 July it is recorded that 55 "idle, vagrant and suspicious persons" were apprehended in the City alone. Again in 1550 the chamberlain was ordered to prepare 600 bills for purposes of authorising the impotent poor to beg, and 200 passports for vagabonds. The foundation of the Royal Hospitals occasioned another enquiry into the numbers of poor in the City. John Howes who gives an account of this enquiry and all other preliminaries of the foundation in his Familiar and friendly discourse dialogue wyse setting forthe the fyreste

(Note 1 continued from previous page)

to the nombre of a m^ and aboue", actually only 772 badges were delivered to the aldermen for distribution (Letter Book N, f. 76 Repert. III, f. 194; for the full text see Appendix IV (f.). Mr. Aydelotte who used but misdated these orders accepted the number of 1000 as final without noticing the entry of the distribution of 772 badges to the aldermen recorded in the Repertory. (Elizabethan rogues and vagabonds, p. 4. Mr. Aydelotte's figures are followed by Mr. A.V.Judges, The Elizabethan Underworld, Introd., p. xv, n. 2.)

1. L. and P. III, i, 365, (3). The number of persons apprehended, the ward and the respective alderman are given.

2. Repert. XII, i, f. 235.
order and manner of ye ereccions of the hospitalles
Christes, Bridewell and St. Thomas, ye apostle reports
that after "dilligent searche" by the aldermen and
wardens of the City companies the number of poor needing
relief was 2,160, of whom 200 were "ydell vagabondes". ¹
It is interesting that this corresponds with the number
of passports prepared for vagabonds at the same period.
After this it is startling to find that in 1594 many
years after the hospitals were founded and when it
would be expected that measures taken would have checked
the growth of the poor, the lord mayor estimated the
number of begging poor in the City at the huge total of
12,000. ²

As to the country in general William Harrison in
his famous Description of England spoke of 72,000 rogues

¹. John Howes MS. 1582, ed. W. Lempriere, p. 21. The
remaining groups were:
   Fatherless children 300.
   Sick persons 200.
   Poor men burdened with children 350.
   Aged persons 400.
   Decayed householders 650.
There is a discrepancy between the total quoted by
Howes of 2,160 and the actual total of the figures
given, namely 2,100.

². Remembrancia II, No. 74. Letter from the lord mayor
to the lords of the Council. (used by Mr. Aydelotte,
op cit., p. 4.)
hanged in Henry VIII's reign, and 10,000 still at large when he was writing in 1577. Mr. Aydelotte warns us against placing too much reliance on these figures, since in the former case Harrison was quoting from Cardan, the Italian physician and astrologer, who received his information from the bishop of Lisieux at Besançon, and who as a matter of fact stated that 72,000 rogues perished in the last two years of Henry's reign. Another indication of the extent of vagabondism is found in a letter of 1569 which states that in "the generall searche throwge out England --- --- were fowndes aboue xiiij thousand maisterles men." These few and scattered indications of numbers at any rate suggest that in the Tudor period the problem was steadily increasing in urgency and was of sufficient magnitude to attract the attention of the authorities.

The impression conveyed by the above figures is at


2. Ibid., p. 218.

3. F. Aydelotte, op. cit., p. 5.

4. Cotton MS. Titus B II, f. 492. (used by Mr. Aydelotte p. 4.)
once deepened when the archives of London from 1485 to 1552 are examined. At first there is evidence of only spasmodic attempts to deal with the problem and few cases of vagabond presentments are recorded. Later the experiments become more frequent, there is greater cooperation between the City and State, and numbers of vagabonds are brought before the mayor and aldermen to be tried, their names and punishments being entered in the Repertories and Journals. The records show that the general tendency of the period is for the City authorities to devote more and more time to dealing with the problem of vagrancy.

Finally, contemporary literature underlines the idea conveyed by these London records of a problem of urgency and magnitude. Writers and preachers continually bemoan the increasing number of poor and idle rogues, and some refer directly to the situation in London. Henry Brinklow, citizen, mercer and ardent reformer, describes in strong language in *The Lamentacyon of a Christen Agaynst the Cytye of London*, 1545, the crimes and wrongs which the City as well as the whole country then suffered. These include the wretched state of the poor forced through lack of relief to beg, a situation Brinklow seeks to remedy by urging the citizens to take
action: "Oh ye Cytezens, ye wolde turne but even
the profytes of your chauntries and your obbettes to
the findynge of the poore with a pollitique and godly
provisioun! where as now London, beyng one of the flowers
of the worlde as touchinge worldlye riches, hath so manye,
yea innumerable of poore people forced to go from dore
to dore, and to syt openly in the stretes a beggyngs,
and many not able to do for other, but lye in their
howses in most greuous paynes, and dye for lacke of
ayde of the riche, to the great shame of the, oh London!"¹
This testimony to the numbers of poor is borne out by
Thomas Lever, preacher, social reformer and champion
of the poor, who paints a melancholy picture of London
in a sermon preached on 16 March 1550: "O mercyfull
Lorde, what a numbre of Poore, Feble, Haulte, Blynde,
Lame, sycklye, yea, with idle vacaboundes, and dissemblyng
kaityffes mixt among them, lye and creepe, beggyng in the
myrie streates of London and Westminster?"² Another writer
of the same period, Robert Crowley, akin to Brinklow in
his fierce zeal for reform, in his One and thyrtye

¹ Henry Brinklow, Complaynt of Roderyck Mors and The
Lamentacyon of a Christen Agaynst the Cytye of London,
² Thomas Lever, Sermons, ed. E. Arber, pp. 77-78.
Epigrammes, wherein are bryefly touched so many Abuses, that maye and ought to be put away deals with the alleys of London, one type used for bowling and the other for shelter at night by hordes of miserable wretches who had flocked to London to beg.

"The other sorte of Allayes, that be agaynate kynde, Do make my harte wepe when they come to my mind. For there are pore people, welmoste innumerable, That are dryuen to begge, and yet to worcke they are able, If they might haue al thinges prouided aright."¹

Further information of a like nature is given by John Howes who describes the great poverty following the wars of Henry VIII: "After ye Wynning of Bullaigne & ending of the king's warres yt appeareth that there were greate nombers of poore lame ydell & maysterles men dispersed into dyvers parts of this Realme, but chiefly aboute this Cittie of London."² The situation did not improve, for he tells us that at the end of Edward VI's reign "the streates & lanes in London began to swarme with

beggers & roges. Such accounts as these substantiate the need for action on the part of the City authorities.

The experimental policy followed by the municipalities in this matter cannot be properly appreciated unless the nature of vagrancy at the time is understood; and this survey will begin by examining first the sixteenth century conception of a vagabond, then the whole range of the arts of begging and trickery revealed by the London archives and contemporary literature and lastly the city haunts of the sturdy beggar. Such an examination will point clearly to the main disadvantages which the growing municipality experienced from increasing numbers of idle, able-bodied poor, disadvantages which incited them to experiment in poor law policy.

The century opened with little distinction between the different classes of persons seeking relief, since charity of the older type dispensed by the great households, the monasteries, the gilds and fraternities, and the parish clergy had done little to discriminate between the merits of the recipients, so that beggars of every kind had been able to count upon assistance. It was only

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when the old sources of relief were failing and when at the same time the mendicant class was increasing rapidly that the need for classification became more urgent in order to direct the available relief into the most worthy hands. The first division of the poor evident both in the policy of the municipalities and in statutes was into two classes only, the impotent poor who perforce must live on the alms of the charitably minded, and the idle beggar and vagabond, a menace to any community and therefore to be suppressed if possible. This was first seen in the fourteenth century when economic troubles forced authorities to take action against vagrancy. In 1349 the Ordinance of Labourers forbade almsgiving to valiant beggars, but it was not prohibited to those unable to labour.¹ In this way some distinction was implied, though it was left to be worked out and applied by the public. A similar discrimination is evident in a proclamation issued in London in 1359 by which valiant beggars who "do waste divers alms, which would otherwise be given to many poor folks, such as lepers, blind, halt, and persons oppressed with

¹ Statutes, I, p. 308.
old age and divers other maladies" were to be punished and banished from the City. Then in 1388 a direct distinction was made by statute between beggars "able to serve or labour" and beggars "impotent to serve", and this principle was maintained and clarified in the development of policy in the early sixteenth century. Such a simplification of categories, however, neglected the fact that the economic upheaval of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had cast into unemployment men, women and children, the only reason for whose inclusion among the idle poor was their inability to find some place where their labour could obtain remuneration. They would work if they could find employment, and they thus formed a class of people very different from the wandering rogues found in every age. This new factor of genuine unemployment was overlooked in all the early attempts at dealing with the problem. It is however true that these unemployed people often degenerated into


2. 12 Richard II c. 7, Statutes, II, p. 58.

3. Sir Thomas More deplores the lot of these unemployed poor: "They be caste in prison as vagaboundes, because they go aboute and worke not; whom no man wyl set a worke, though thei never so willyngly profre them-selues therto." Sir T. More, Utopia, (English Reprints ed. E. Arber), p. 42.
vagabonds using all the trickery of the class to secure a livelihood because they had no other means of subsistence. A writer of a tract issued between the years 1550 and 1553 calls attention to this: "And now they haue nothynga, but goeth about in England from dore to dore, and axe theyr almose for Goddes sake. And because they will not begge, some of them doeth steale, and then they be hanged, and thus the Realme do eth decay, and by none other wayes els, as we do thynks." ¹

Town ordinances, statutes, tracts and sermons seem agreed in their too comprehensive conception of the vagabond, and in the case of the town and state this conception explains a large part of vagrancy policy. It is evident from the archives of London and Hull that when the problem first necessitated action in the towns, the vagabond class from the view-point of the municipal administrator included all able-bodied unemployed and the same punishments were accorded to all in this class if they were apprehended and brought before the mayor

¹ "Certayne Causes gathered together, wherin is shewed the decaye of England, only by the great multitude of shape, to the vterror decaye of houshold keping, mayntenaunce of men, dearth of corne, and other notable dyscommodities approued by syxe olde Prouerbes." A tract printed in Four Supplications, 1529-1553, (E.E.T.S.) p. 102.
and aldermen. This may be illustrated by a few examples from the many definitions found in the records of London. In 1510 a proclamation was issued commanding all vagabonds to leave the City and in that category were included "all maner of myghty beggers, vagaboundes and idill people, whiche haue no maisters to wayte vppon, nor no other reasonable cause of abidyng within this Citie." In 1517 thirteen persons were brought to Leadenhall to undergo punishment under the regulations for vagabonds on the grounds that they were "myghty in body & able to gete their levynges, and in nowise will exercise any labour or lauflull occupacion, but spend ther tyme in idlenes and lyve be beggyng & other mennys labour." In both these cases it will be noticed that the vagrant is an able-bodied unemployed person, though the second definition lays additional emphasis on the fact that the vagabond does not desire work. Women as well as men made up this class, as is indicated by a proclamation of 1523 issued just before a session of Parliament at

1. Journal XI, f. 112. For the full text of this proclamation which will be considered later, see Appendix II.

2. Letter Book N, f. 49; Journal XI, f. 305. These regulations will be dealt with in detail later and are given in full in Appendix III.
Blackfriars. This ordered out of the City "all suche idell and mighty beggers aswell men as women beyng of powre to gett their sustaunces and lyvynges by the werkyng of their handes or other laufull ocupacion."¹

Precepts issued by the mayor to the aldermen for the holding of watches also give some idea of the nature of the vagrant class. In 1539 the aldermen were commanded to see to the apprehension "of myghtie strong & valyant beggers, ruffelers, theves, vagaboundes with all other vnthryftie persone."² Although some differentiation is here suggested between the various types of vagrants it is probable that the genuinely unemployed would still

¹. Letter Book N, f. 233². The full text of the proclamation is given in Appendix V.

². Letter Book P, f. 176; Journal XIV, f. 123². For the ruffeler see John Awdeley, Fraternitye of Vacabondes, (E.E.T.S.), p. 3: "A Ruffler goeth wyth a weapon to seeke seruice, saying he hath bene a Servitor in the wars, and beggeth for his reliefe", or Thomas Harman, A Caueator Warening, for Commen Cyrsators vulgarely called Vagabones, (E.E.T.S.), p. 29: "These Rufflers, the out castes of servyng men." He is included also among the punishable vagrants in the vagabond act of 1536, 27 Hen. VIII c. 25, Statutes III, p. 559: "All and every idell personne, and personnes ruffelers calling themselvese servyngmen, as well within the Citie of London as within all other Cities Shires Townes Parissishes and Hamlettes of this Realme, havyng no Maisters."
be included among the 'vagaboundes'. In 1551 the definition was again vague, and the watch was warned to look out for "all suche idle, suspecte & maysterles men as they shall see to travayle or passe that way steyinge & discretely examyninge euerye one of theym howe they do lyve."¹ Throughout the period under survey in London therefore, the authorities apparently held a very comprehensive view of the vagabond class. Any person unemployed and not impotent was a vagabond.² Similarly in Hull when the problem of destitution first became acute, about 1559, the poor were divided into two classes only, the impotent poor and the idle able-bodied poor. In that year the sheriff's turn inquest presented to the mayor and aldermen that "manye pore people being able to worke is suffered to beg within this town, and woll not worke, but rather be ydle."³

1. Letter Book R, f. 127⁰ Repert. XII, ii, f. 401⁰
2. This is amply illustrated in the details of the trials of suspected vagabonds, where if a person presented as a vagabond could prove employment the charge against him was abandoned. For a good example see Repert. III, f. 97. On 16 July 1516 Thomas Ippeswyche was presented to the Court of Aldermen as a vagabond, but he justified himself by saying "that he ys servuant to Sir Richard Wyngfeld, knyght, & that he:ys logged with oon Johnson dwelling agenst the scaffold at Toure hulle."²
Such people were considered a menace to the town and each alderman was to search out in his ward "idell persons, vagabondes, beggers, bawdes."

In London there was little advance in conception until the threefold division of the poor with the foundation of Christ's Hospital, St. Thomas' Hospital and Bridewell. This division is well summed up by Harrison in his Description of England: "With vs, the poore is commonlie diuided into three sorts, so that some are poore by impotencie, as the fatherlesse child, the aged, blind and lame, and the diseased person that is judged to be incurable: the second are poore by casualtie, as the wounded scouldier, the decaied householder and the sicke person visited with grieuous and painefull diseases; the third consisteth of thriftlesse poore, as the riotour that hath consumed all, the vagabund that will abide no where, but runneth vp and downe from place to place (as it were seeking worke and finding none) and finallie the roge and strumpet, which are not possible to be diuided in sunder, but runne too and fro ouer all the realme, cheefelie keeping the champaine soiles in summer, to auid to scorching heat, and the woodland

1. Bench book IV, f. 27V.
grounds in winter, to eschew the blustering winds.\textsuperscript{1} Though this shows an advance on the previous lack of differentiation it is significant to notice that there is still no clear understanding of unemployment as a factor in producing poverty.

The comprehensive conception of the vagabond class held by the municipal administrator pervades early Tudor statutes. This is illustrated in the first statutory regulations of the period concerning vagabonds and beggars in 1495\textsuperscript{2} which provided for the punishment of "all suche vagaboundes, idell and suspecte persone lyvyng suspesiously", and then proceeded to order all "beggers not able to werke" to return to their several places of abode. In the category of beggars were included clerks from the university, soldiers, mariners and travelling men who were to depart unless fully authorised to the contrary. This very general definition persisted until 1531 when the impotent poor were licensed to beg.\textsuperscript{3} In this act the distinction was more clearly

\begin{itemize}
\item [1.] Harrison, I, p. 213.
\item [2.] 11 Hen. VII. c. 2. Statutes, II, p. 569.
\end{itemize}
drawn between the "aged, poore & impotent persones, whiche lyve or of necessyte be compelled to lyve by Almes of the charyte of the people" and "vacaboundes & ydell persons". The latter were defined as "any person or persones beyng hole & myghtie in body & able to laboure ... ... taken beggyng in any parte of this Realme" and "any Man or Woman beyng hole & myghty in body & able to laboure havyng no Lande [Master] nor usyng any lawful marchaundyse, crafte or mystery, wherby he myght gette his lyvyng ... ... vagarant & can gyve none rekenyng howe he dothe lefully gett his lyvyng."¹ Here two types are suggested, the common beggar and the idle vagrant, the latter of whom might easily be genuinely unemployed; both classes however were to be punished as undesirable. Special regulations were made for the punishment of university scholars, sailors, pardoners and proctors who went begging without licence, and "all other ydell persones goyng aboute in any contrey or abydyng in any Cytie, Boroughe or Towne, some of them usyng dyvers & subtyle crafte & unlawfull games & playes & some of them feynyng themselues to have knowledge in Physyke, Phynamyse, Palmestryse, or

other craftye scyences wherby they beare the people in hands, that they can tell theire destenyes, deceases & fortunes, & suche other lyke fantasticall ymagenacions to the greate deceypte of the Kynges Subjectes."¹ To these specially enumerated classes were added in 1536² "personnes, ruffelers calling themselffes servyngmen." This comprehensive description of the vagabond class persisted throughout the period under survey, but whilst it included some detailed labelling of different types, it never clearly succeeded in distinguishing the causes which produced so many idle persons. It was not until 1572 that a definition was made discriminating between the various classes designated as "Roges, Vacabundes and Sturdye Beggers".³

2. 27 Hen. VIII. c. 25. Ibid., pp. 558-562.
3. 14 Eliz. c. 5. Statutes, IV, i, pp. 591-592. The vagabond class was to include proctors without licence; persons "using subtyll, craftye and unlawfull Games or Playes"; fortune-tellers; masterless and unemployed men; fencers, bearwards, interlude players and minstrels not attached to a great household; jugglers, pedlars, tinkers and chapmen, without licence; common labourers "being persons able in Bodye, using loytering, and refusing to worke for suche reasonable Wages..."; makers and users of counterfeit licences and passports; scholars and shipmen, without licence; and prisoners begging gaol fees without licence also.
The vagrant class then must be taken as consisting not merely of the deliberately idle but also of all those displaced by the social, economic and religious changes of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It would include the unemployed peasant and artisan, soldier and sailor, monk and monastic labourer as well as the usual rogues and wandering beggars. It even included those mysterious people, the gipsies, whose relationship to the sixteenth century vagabond is difficult to determine.

Though the first record found referring to gipsies in the British Isles is as late as 1505,¹ that migratory race had a great antiquity behind it,² and was a source of trouble to other European nations from the late fourteenth century. In the sixteenth century however there is ample evidence that the central authorities in


England were constantly vexed by the problem of vagrant gipsy bands who were dangerous to society on account of their unruly behaviour.\(^1\) Although the gipsies swelled the ranks of the vagrants and presented a problem akin to that of the sturdy beggar from a police point of view, contemporaries realised their distinct and separate character. This is voiced by Thomas Harman when he expresses the hope that the evils of his vagabonds will be dealt with as surely as those of the gipsies. "I hope ... ... that as short and as speedy a redresse wylbe for these, as hath bene of late yeres for the wretched, wily, wandering vagabonds calling and naming them selues Egiptians".\(^2\) Further, Parliament recognised the distinction between the gipsy and the sturdy beggar by legislating for them separately. The act of 1531 "concernynge punysshement of Beggers & Vacabundes"\(^3\) was

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1. Many examples can be found of the way in which the country was disturbed by the gipsies. One instance is seen on 18 October 1537 when a commission was issued to all justices mayors, sheriffs etc. to apprehend certain "Egipcians" for having robbed one of the king's servants. L. and P.\(^*\), XII, ii, 1008 p. 23. The references to the gipsies in Britain at this period have been collected by H.T. Crofton, op. cit., and Eric Otto Winstedt, "Early British Gypsies" in Journal Gypsy Lore Soc., new ser., VII, p. 5 seq.


preceded by an act "concernyng Egypsysns". In any case the problem of the gipsies seems to have been one for the central rather than the municipal government. There is no evidence of their being apprehended in London or in Hull, and they will not therefore be included in this survey.

It has been shown that the regulations of both town and state dealing with vagabonds were designed on such comprehensive lines as to include all able-bodied unemployed, whether idle from choice or through untoward circumstances. Genuine unemployment as a factor in swelling the ranks of the vagabonds is to some extent attested in the form of the records of presentments of vagabonds for trial in London. There is no such evidence at the beginning of the period when the record of a presentment merely states the name of the culprit, the fact that he is a vagabond and his punishment. Thus on 10 July 1516 the Court of Aldermen banish from the City

1. 22 Hen. VIII. c. 10, Statutes, III, p. 327. This act states the frauds committed by the "outlandyshe People calling themselfes Egyptians" and provides in the first section for their punishment. The second deals with their departure from the realm; the third with the restoration to the owners of the goods stolen by the gipsies; and the fourth with the rewards to be given to those apprehending stolen goods.
Robert Samond of Essex as a vagabond, and there is no mention of his ever having been employed in any trade. 1 From about 1535 a trade is often specified after the name of the vagabond who is to be punished, as in an entry in the Repertory on 22 April 1539: "Item, Wylyam Wykes, broderer, John Botyller, cooke, valyant beggars shalbe whypped". 2 It is possible of course that one clerk may not have entered details which a more careful one would record, but as in the presentments of a single year trades are mentioned in some cases and not in others, it may be surmised that a routine was in vogue whereby a trade was entered if it was known. This is interesting since the traditional vagabond had no special trade and therefore the details of the trials of vagabond cloth-workers, tailors, broderers, haberdashers, cordoners, barbers, bakers, brewers, cooks, leathersellers, tinkers, blacksmiths, mariners, servingmen and others suggest fairly wide-spread unemployment.

The records sometimes illustrate the migratory tendencies of the period. Insistence on "settlement" had characterised policy dealing with beggars from the

1. Repert. III, f. 95°
fourteenth century, but the idea of society as stationary was difficult to maintain in the Tudor period with increased vagabondism. The mendicants were great wanderers, "runners or rangers aboute the countrey", and occasionally some detail of the place of origin of a vagabond is found in the London records which illuminates this point. Thus in 1536 the aldermen tried "John Smyth of Smalley in the county of Derby, carpenter, bycause he ys a suspect person & resortryth yn to mennes howses without lycens to aske hys almesse", and in 1543 "Robert Andrewys, Scottysheman" was tried as a vagabond. One record in particular illustrates the distances covered by the vagabonds. This is a list which was commenced in January 1528 of all vagabonds whipped in the City of London, but was discontinued after twenty-one names had been entered. Each name is followed by the place of residence or birth, and these range as far north as Lancashire, Cumberland, Northumberland, Durham and Yorkshire and as far west as South Wales.

1. Harman, p. 27.
2. Repert. IX, f. 190v
The imperfect realisation of the connection between vagabondage and unemployment led both town and state to pursue a policy only appropriate in reality to the older type of vagabond, the idle rogue and trickster. The harshness of policy was to this extent justifiable that the vagrants were said to "lyve by beggyng and oder mennys labour", and their thievish tricks provoked retaliation. In a study of the nature of vagrancy in the sixteenth century the art of begging, as practised in that period, must take its place, since it elucidates the action taken by the towns by showing more clearly the character of the people with whom the municipal governors had to deal. The beggar of course was no new problem. He had left his mark as early as the laws of Anglo-Saxon times, and poet and satirist of the middle ages, a Langland or a Chaucer, had said their say repeatedly concerning the trickery of such persons. Our business however is with the beggar contemporary with our problem, and to gain some idea of his works and ways we may examine some of the references in contemporary literature, seeking in the London records cases to illustrate and confirm the statements of these writers.

The many beggar books of the sixteenth century bear witness to an interest in social questions developing side
by side with the growth of city life, which thrust people of all classes into close proximity and thus provoked a curiosity into the features of the lower class character. Anatomies of roguery, that is to say essays describing the types of rogues composing the vagrant class, their manner of life and thievish pranks, were appearing on the continent.\(^1\) English writers became familiar with this form of literature through the most notable specimen, the famous German \textit{Liber Vagatorum},\(^2\) and produced similar works of their own. Of these works three are here selected as chronologically appropriate to the period under survey; those of Robert Copland, John Awdeley and Thomas Harman.

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1. For a discussion of the literature of roguery on the continent, see F.W. Chandler, \textit{The literature of roguery}, I, pp. 6-35. Of the anatomies he writes: "Germany may claim the earliest in the \"Liber Vagatorum\"; France the most artistic in \"La Vie Generouse\"; Spain the most extensive in the \"Desordenada Cordicia\"; and Italy the most succinct in \"Il Vagabondo\"; but the English precede any save the German, and surpass all others in graphic detail." \textit{Ibid.}, p. 87.

2. For a translation see J.C. Hotten, \textit{The Book of Vagabonds and Beggars}. The \textit{Liber Vagatorum} was first printed c. 1514 and is believed to be compiled from Johann Knebel's \textit{Chronicles}, which relate proceedings of trials at Basle in Switzerland, 1475, when a number of vagabonds, strollers, blind men and mendicants of all orders were arrested and examined. Martin Luther was so interested in this anatomy that he wrote a preface to it in 1528.
Robert Copland — bookseller, stationer and printer, as well as writer — was in a position to be familiar with the problem of vagrancy in London not merely as a resident but as having served on the watch in one of the wards and probably having taken his turn in the office of constable. In his perambulations and the performance of his duty he must have been brought into close and frequent contact with vagabond life, and he embodied his knowledge in a dialogue in verse entitled *The Hye Way to the Spyttel Hous* which was printed some time after 1531. The dialogue takes place in the porch of


2. The watch in London was constantly ordered to look out for and apprehend vagrants. An example of a precept to the watch instructing them to deal with vagabonds is found 18 February 1534/5. The constables were charged to "kepe a sufficient and couenable watche nightly, and also doo alle their diligens endeavoure and attendaunce to see all the valiant and sturdy vagaboundes and beggers beynge founde resortyng within their lymyttes to be ordered accordyng to the statute heresof last made and provided for their punyshement in that behalfe". Letter Book P, f. 31; Journal XIII, f. 396vo.

3. The poem is reprinted in W.C. Hazlitt's *Remains of the Early Popular poetry of England*, IV, pp. 17-72. All references, in future, will be made to this edition. According to Professor Chandler it is "the first attempt to chronicle picaresque manners and speech in England". F.W. Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
"a certayn spytell" and is between "the porter of the hous" and the writer, who was sheltering there during "the passyng of a stormy shour". The first part of the poem following the plan of an anatomy examines the types of applicant seeking relief at the hospital and the beggars seen during the watch. This gives scope for graphic sketches of vagrant life describing the tricks of the professional beggar who dissembles impotency or takes on the guise of soldier, sailor, scholar or wandering quack. The second part is very largely based on a curious contemporary French work, Le chemin de l'ospital, and

1. It has been assumed that the "certayn spytell" was St. Bartholomews (see W.C.Hazlitt, op. cit., p. 19; F.W.Chandler, op. cit., I, p. 88 and A.V.Judges, op. cit., p. 491); but the internal evidence of the poem points to the conclusion drawn by Miss M.B.HONEYBOURNE that the description refers to St.Mary's Spital, Bishopsgate, see M.B.Honeybourne, The extent and value of the property in London and Southwark occupied by the religious houses etc., (M.A. Thesis Lond.), I, p. 114.

2. Three editions of Le chemin de l'ospital by Robert de Balsac appeared in 1502, 1505 and 1525. Dr. W.G.More points out the similarity between the second part of Copland's Eye Way and Balsac's poem, but "the borrowings... do not constitute the sole distinction of Copland's work. He has done more than fill out the skeleton portraits and subjects which the French gave him. He has created a natural and ingenious setting for the whole, giving him opportunity for that sort of verse which he has shown to be his only literary accomplishment, and finally for pictures of beggar life in England which have for most judges constituted the chief if not the only attraction of the poem". W.G.More, "Robert Copland and His Eye Way", Review of English Studies, VII, No. 28, pp. 406-418.
shows also the influence of the German fool satires.\(^1\)
It is a less vivid commentary on the social life in
England at the period, and classifies the types who
through folly are brought to beggary:

"all folke in generall,
That come the hye way to the hospytall."\(^2\)

John Awdeley or Awdelay,\(^3\) known also as John Sampson
or Sampson Awdelay, was a London printer and writer; while
Thomas Harman\(^4\) was a country gentleman of Crayford in
Kent, but a frequent visitor to the City. Both wrote
under Elizabeth and were in a position to view the results

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1. The most notable of these was Sebastian Brandt's
Das Narrenschiff, 1494, which was translated and
adapted to fit English conditions in 1509 by
Alexander Barclay as The Ship of Fools. Dr. More
notes the influence of Barclay on Copland, ibid.,
p. 415-416.

2. R. Copland, p. 50. For an analysis of the poem
see C.H. Herford, The Literary Relations of England
and Germany in the Sixteenth Century, pp. 357-362,
and F.J. Furnivall, Captain Cox, his ballads and books,
Intro., pp. ci-ciii. Their analyses differ in that
Mr. Herford treats the poem as falling into two parts,
while Mr. Furnivall takes it as a whole.

3. For his life see article by Sidney L. Lee, Dict. Nat.
Biog., II.

4. For his life see article by Sidney L. Lee, Dict. Nat.
Biog., XXIV, and also Edward Viles' and F.J. Furnivall's
edition of Awdelay's Fraternitys and Harman's Caveat,
(E.B.T.S.), Pref., pp. vii-x. All references to the
works of Awdelay and Harman will be to this edition.
of the early attempts at poor law legislation, which by licensing the begging of the impotent poor tended to make pauperism a profession exercised by ingenious impostors. They were roughly contemporaneous, though Awdeley's treatise was published first probably in 1561, and Harman's not till 1566 or early in 1567.2

Awdeley's work, entitled *The Fraternity of Vagabondes*, follows up the German idea and is an anatomy of vagabond life and vagrancy. The pamphlet falls into three parts; the first deals with nineteen varieties of vagrant rogues from the Abraham man to the Patriarke Co., and indicates the ways in which they get their living. The second treats of "the company of Cousoners and Shifters" and describes three types of cheats in detail, while the third enumerates twenty five orders of knaves whose titles are self-explanatory.3

Harman follows Awdeley's plan in his *Causet or*

1. There was no attempt at compulsory contribution towards the poor until 1563, 5 Elizabeth c. 3, *Statutes*, IV, i, pp. 411-414.

2. The proofs that Awdeley preceded Harman have been worked out by E. Viles and F. J. Furnivall, op. cit., Pref., pp. i-iv.

3. Awdeley, pp. 12-16. Examples of these are 'eson dropper' meaning eavesdropper; 'commitour of tidings' meaning rumour bearer, and 'mounch present' meaning the knave who tastes his master's present by the way.
Warenng for common evrstors vulgaremly called vagabones, but gives a much fuller account of the vagabonds with all "their depe dissimulation and detestable dealynge". His work is coloured largely by the irritation provoked by his personal experience of those who besieged the doors of his Kentish manorhouse. Moreover, he came of a family accustomed to Crown service and had himself acted as a justice of the peace, so that an instinct for orderliness and social reform, combined with his first-hand knowledge of the sturdy beggar make his Caveat the standard work on the nature of vagrancy in the sixteenth century. Twenty-three vagabond types are described in great detail, and illustrated by stories based on hearsay

1. This is seen in his statement of the purpose of his book, "that therby the Iusticers and Shreuees may in their circutes be more vygelant to punishe these malefactores, and the Gountables, Bayliffes, and bosholders, settinge asyde all feare, slouth and pytie, may be more circomspect in executing the charg geuen them by the aforesayd Iusticers". Harman, p. 21.

2. The influence and use of the Caveat in sixteenth century writings is seen in the chapter in William Harrison's Description entitled "Of provision made for the poore"; in The groundesworke of Conny-catching, 1592 and also in Thomas Dekker's Belman of London, 1608 and Lanthorne and Candle-light, 1609. The question of this use of the Caveat by contemporaries is discussed by E. Viles and F. J. Furnivall in the introduction to their edition of Harman, op. cit., pp. xi-xxi.
and actual experience. This descriptive catalogue is followed by a list of the names of "upright men, rogues, and pallyards",¹ and a vocabulary of their language known as "Peddelars Frenche".² The whole essay teems with information of the tricks and devices that the wandering rogues used to obtain a livelihood without honest work.

The devices these writers describe are both numerous and varied and can sometimes be paralleled by direct evidence from the London records. There is to begin with the favourite trick of using false licences. At that time many types of licences were granted for the collection of alms, the motive in all cases being to ensure a proper use of available charity. One type granted to the impotent poor was introduced by the City authorities as early as 1517/18,³ although it was not adopted by the state until the act of 1531 which ordered punishment by whipping for all beggars without licence. The collection of charitable alms for the sick poor confined in some hospital had generally been made by a special officer, a proctor, appointed for that purpose.

¹. Ibid., p. 78.
². Ibid., pp. 82-84.
³. Supra, p. 25.
The London orders of 1517/18 recognised the legality of this begging by proxy in the case of the sick poor by the regulation that "their shalbe a proctor admytte\footnote{See Appendix IV, pp.417-418.} for every suche hospytalles hauyng aswell one of the seid tokens vpon hym as a token of the seid hospitall to gather & receive the almes of the people within the seid Citie & suburbes of the same.\footnote{For examples of these three types respectively see L. and P. III, ii, 2297 g. 12; \textit{ibid.}, II, ii, 4098; \textit{ibid.}, I, 1, 1083 g. 19.} Apart from the impotent, other poor and needy people were allowed to beg if bearing adequate licence; the 1531 act specially mentions in this category poor scholars, mariners who had sustained losses at sea, pardoners, proctors and prisoners. It was also customary for the king to grant licences for the collection of alms in a variety of cases. For example, some were to remedy loss through fire, others for the repair of some church or even for the ransom of some person captured by the Turks.\footnote{See Appendix IV, pp.417-418.} Lastly, after a vagabond was whipped he was given a letter stating his punishment and "the place wherunto he ys lymytte\footnote{See Appendix IV, pp.417-418.} to goo & by what tyme he is lymytte to come thither, wythin whiche tyme he may lawfully begge by
the waye, shewyng the same letter, & otherwise not.\(^1\)

All these licences were turned to fraudulent uses by the vagabond who by producing counterfeits was still able to deceive the public and defraud the needy poor of their alms. Both Awdeley and Harman include among their valiant beggars the "Tack man", who "vseth to make counterfaite licences which they call Gybes, and sets to Seals, in their language called Larkes".\(^2\) The many types of licence granted at the time enabled the vagabond to assume a number of guises in order to attract popular sympathy. So Copland describes those who aped the poor scholars:

"At evey doore there they fooht and frydge,
And say they come fro Oxford or Cambrydge,
And be poore scolers, and haue no maner thyng".\(^3\)

whilst others pretended to be mariners who had suffered losses at sea:

1. 22 Hen. VIII c. 12, Statutes, III, p. 329. For the form of the licences to the impotent and vagabond ordered by this act see ibid., p. 331, and for the licences used in London in 1550 see Appendix XV, p. 454.

2. Awdeley, p. 5. For Harman's description see Caveat, p. 60.

3. Copland, p. 44.
These be they that dayly walkes and jettes
In theyr hose trussed rounde to theyr dowblettes,
And say: good maysters, of your charyte,
Helpe vs poore men that come from the se;
From Bonauenture we were caste to lande,
God it knowes, as poorly as we stande!"1

These last are included in the catalogues of vagabond
types given by Awdeley and Harman as "whipiackes", "that
by coulor of a counterfaite Lisence ... ... doth use
to beg lyke a Maryner".2 They also describe the
"fraters" or impersonators of the proctors who "cary
blacke boxes at their gyrdel wher in they haue a briefe
of the Queens maiesties letters patentes, geuen to
suche poore spittlehouse for the reliefe of the poore
there, whiche briefe is a coppie of the letters patentes,
and utterly fained, if it be in paper or in parchment with-
out the greate seale".3 A case of a fraudulent beggar

1. Copland, p. 41.
2. Awdeley, p. 4. Harman says of them: "These kynde
of Caterpillers counterfet great losses on the sea", see Harman, p. 48.
3. Ibid., p. 45. For Awdeley's "frater" see Awdeley,
p. 4. An instance of the fraudulent imitation of a
proctor as early as 1412 is quoted by Sir W. Ashley,
An introduction to English Economic History and Theory,
I, ii, p. 370, n. 57. Mr. A.V. Judges points out that the
trade of the proctors and their impersonators did
not cease to be profitable until long after Henrician
legislation, A.V. Judges, op. cit., p. xxi seq. A
proctor's licence granted by Elizabeth is reproduced
by F. Aydelotte, op. cit., plate II, facing p. 25.
of this nature was reported to the Privy Council on 15 August 1546. They were informed that one, John Crede, with a counterfeit commission was begging supposedly for the "Lazars at Guildford". Harman includes two further users of false licences, the "roge" and the "demaunder for glymmar". The former faked the passport given to a vagabond after a whipping and sought relief whilst feigning to be passing to his own district. Harman says of his "roge" class: "They wyll cary a certificat or pasport about them from som lusticer of the peace, with his hand and seale vnto the same, howe hée hath bene whipped and punished for a vagabonde according to the lawes of this realme, and that he muste returnes to T., where he was borne or last dwelt, by a certayne dayes lymited in the same, whiche shalbe a good longe daye". The latter, generally a woman, pretended loss by fire and used "fayned lycences and counterfayted wrytings" in order to obtain alms.


3. Ibid., p. 61.
Instances of this use of the forged licence are found in the London archives. William Horton, tried by the mayor and aldermen on 11 April 1532 "for counterfeytynge of bylles & seales to beg with all"¹, was presumably a "Jack man". A similar case was that of "William Jakson, a comen begger,'who of late hathe practised moche vntrothe in counterfeytyngse of letters of lycense to begge by & suche other lyke maters"². Although the records do not indicate the different guises assumed by the sturdy beggar in this connection, they do show that a variety of licences were forged. Two vagabonds "John Clarke & John Clenche", were tried on 29 January 1548/49 for causing "false certyfycates to be counterfeyted in the name of Jamys Wylford, knyght"³, whilst another culprit John Myddleton "craftly & falsely hathe forged a testymonyall in the names of the Lorde Gobham, Sir John Wallop, knight, & other."⁴ Harman refers to the numerous Irishmen about with false

1. Repert. VIII, f. 224⁰
2. Repert. XII, i, f. 76. 30 April 1549.
3. Ibid., f. 36.
licences, a fact which may account for the trick of two "sturdy & mighti vacabundes & valyante beggers" in London "who of late have falsely forged a lycence in the name of the lorde deputee of Ireland to begge by". Nor did the royal licence escape fraudulent use. On 21 November 1549 the Court of Aldermen sent to Newgate "John Cornyshe & William Goldyng, who lately have falsely obtained a lycence in other menys names vnder the kynges majesties seale to begge here within the Citie."

It seems fitting to conclude this description of the counterfeit licence with the case of Thomas Yonge, a sturdy vagabond who was an adept at this deceit. He was tried by the Court of Aldermen because "that menys tymes he practyseth & vseth meny false & craftie meanes wherby he hath dysceaved meny of the kynges leage people, somtyme by forgynge of false tokyns & messages, and sometyme by counterfatyng hymself stondyng in the hygh ways aboute this Cytie to be a purveyour for the kynges maiestie allegyng hym self to do yt by commyssyon, shewyng forth to them that he perceyveth to be vnlerned a boxe

1. Harman, p. 44.
2. Repert. XII, i, f. 455vo 10 February 1551/52.
3. Repert. XII, i, f. 171.
closed affyrmyng his commyssyon to be therin".¹

The sturdy beggar also took advantage of charitable feeling by simulating illness and disease. The porter in The Hye way to the Spyttel Hous gives a vivid account of the numerous ways in which the vagabonds feign sickness:

"And they walke to eche market and fayre,
And to all places where folke do repayre,
By day on styltes, or stoupyng on crowches,
And so dyssymule as fals lewtryng flowches,
With bloody clowtes all about theyr legge,
And playsters on theyr skyn, whan they go beg;
Some countrefayt lepry, and other some
Put sope in theyr mouth to make it scome,
And fall downe as Saynt Cornelys euyll.
These dyseceyts they use worse than ony deuyll;
And when they be in theyr owne company,
They be as hole as eyther you or I".²

Awdeley and Harman both include amongst their vagabonds several types who tricked the public with feigned ailments. The "Counterfet Cranke" was he who pretended to have the "falling sickness";³ the "Abraham man ... ... walketh bare armed, and bare legged, and fayneth hym selfe mad";⁴ whilst the "Dommerar", as his name suggests, counterfeited

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1. Repert. XI, ff. 388-388⁵ 15 November 1547.
2. Copland, pp. 36-37.
dumbness, hoping in this way to arouse people's sympathy. Some even went so far as to inflict sores upon themselves; such a one was the "Pallyard". Harman describes the loathsome practices of these rogues who "will either lay to their legs an herb called Sperewort, eyther Arsnicke, which is called Ratesbane. The nature of this Sperewort wyll rayse a great blister in a night upon the soundest part of his body; and if the same be taken away, it wyl dry vp againe and no harme. But this Arsnicke will so poyson the same legge or sore, that it will ever after be incurable: this do they for gaine and to be pitied". These voluntary sufferers were often so realistic in their pretence that it was difficult to detect them. Sometimes, however, they were apprehended and presented for trial as vagabonds. In 1518 Miles Rose confessed to the London aldermen that he "diuerse and many tymes dissembled the sekenes of the fallyng evyll in diuerse parysshe chirches within this Cite", on which occasions


2. Ibid., p. 44. These were the vagabonds by "voluntarie meanes", who gave themselves "pitifull and odious sores" in order to "moove the harts of the goers by such places where they lie, to yerne at their misery, and thervpon bestow large almesse vpon them", see W. Harrison, op. cit., I, p. 217.
"jemewes" of silver, called cramp rings,\(^1\) were given to him by charitable passers by, as well as sums of money which he made off with as quickly as possible to escape detection.\(^2\) Other impostors of this nature apprehended in London were Robert Shakysbery, "who falsely counterfeyth the dysease of the palsey & here luytereth & contynueth begging\(^3\), and John Baillye "for false counterfaytyng of lameness & lyvynge idely by beggyng\(^4\). These vagabonds were loud in their lamentations and cries for help, and probably secured more of the available relief than the deserving cases. It was recorded of one, William Archer, that he "vseed & practysed as an idyll vagabunde moche falsehode & dyssymulacion in comen beggyyn lying vnder mens stalles crying out & gronyng right pytuouslye as thugh he had beyn sore syk, where

\(^1\) A cramp ring was "a ring held to be efficacious against cramp, falling sickness and the like; esp. one of those which in pre-reformation times the kings and queens of England used to hallow on Good Friday for this purpose". (N.E.D.)

\(^2\) Repert. III, f. 197.

\(^3\) Repert. XI, f. 418\(^v\). 9 February 1547/48. Shakysbery had been apprehended previously on 15 November 1547, but although it was noted that he had palsy there was no suggestion of his pretence. (ibid., f. 388).

\(^4\) Repert. XII, 1, f. 211.
in dede he was in good helth": Illustrations such as these show why the City authorities were forced to act, as it was impossible for the needy poor to secure sufficient alms whilst those alms were poached by the sturdy beggar.

The unemployment so common at the time provided the vagabond with another ruse to obtain alms. Certain genuinely unemployed persons, such as soldiers disbanded after wars and those previously attached to the monasteries, appealed to popular sympathy and received a certain amount of relief, so the idle vagrant feigned unemployment, although of course he had no desire for work. Copland includes among his dissemblers the vagabonds who posed as discharged soldiers:

"They do were souldeyers clotlyng,
And so beggyng deceyue folke ouer all,
For they be vacabondes moost in generall,
And wyll abyde no laborous subiexion
With honest persones vnder correction".


2. Copland, pp. 38-39. Apart from these impostors there were many genuine cases, since after the conclusion of foreign wars the disbanded soldiers often went to swell the vagabond ranks. So in August 1549 Anthonie Robertes, formerly "a soldyar of Bulleign", was apprehended in London "for a suspicio u s personne for that he is an ydle personne and comenly haunt ed tavernes and other suspect places." Journal XVI, ff. 28vo-29.
Any excuse for sympathy, any pose necessary was speedily adopted by the vagrant. So John Percyvall, barber and valiant beggar, was soliciting alms in London in 1540 alleging as the reason for his unemployment the dissolution of the monasteries; he "axyd almesse sayeng that they put my maister to deth, declaryng that the abbot of Glostombury was hys master". This ruse of feigned unemployment was a great disadvantage to those genuinely out of work, who had thus to share popular sympathy with these impostors.

Two other tricks for obtaining relief found in the London records are so ingenious that they deserve mention here. One is the case of two prisoners who had been fettered together and allowed to go abroad to beg their fees. When they were released they once more fettered themselves, and went about craving alms "to the great discfeit of the kynges liege people". The other was the trick of a woman, "Elyner Elyotson, alias Andrue, a single woman & a comen begger", which was reported to the Court of Aldermen in December 1552. She went about the streets and "moste falselye, slanderously &

1. Repert. X, f. 156.
2. Repert. IX, f. 253. 5 June 1537.
develyshelye cryed owte with a vehement scryking & lamentable noyce & with a very lowde & shrylle voyce sayinge, alas that euer she was borne for her two children were taken from her into the hospytall att the late Graye Fryers. And the one of theym was there alredye murdred & the other almoste dead, which caused her so to lamente, for her chyldren were as dere vtto her thoughshe she were but a pore woman as if she were the rycheste in the Cytie". Her story would seem quite feasible and attract popular sympathy, since there were a good many deaths at first among the inmatest of Christ's Hospital, which naturally caused some dissatisfaction.\(^1\)

The whole story in this instance however was a fabrication, as she confessed when apprehended; and it not only defrauded the public, but slandered the City authorities who with the help of the king had founded Christ's Hospital.\(^2\)

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1. John Howes tells of the mortality among the first inmatest of Christ's Hospital and accounts for it by the drastic change "from the dunghill \(\ldots\) to swete and cleane keping & to a pure dyett", John Howes, op. cit., p. 39. A case of dissatisfaction is reported in the minutes of the Court of Aldermen on 13 December 1552. It was agreed by the Court that Elyner Gloggs should have her child returned to her from Christ's Hospital, "bycause she is not contentyd with the kepynge of it there". Repert. XII, ii, f. 560.

2. Letter Book R, f. 227\(^\circ\) Repert. XII, ii, f. 560\(^\circ\).
The vagabond had other ways of securing a livelihood besides begging and purloining alms meant for others. Awdeley describes in detail the cheating at cards and dice which was practised by small groups of vagabonds working together, known as "Cheatours". Probably the two men convicted by the Court of Aldermen on 12 March 1548/49 to stand in the pillory for alluring honest men to play at dice and cards, and then tricking them, were in this category.

Another case of deliberate cheating described by Awdeley is the trick of the "Ring Faller", who deceived people with "fayre copper rings, some made like signets, & some after other fashions, very faire gylded". One vagabond, William Barnerd, was apprehended in London on 27 October 1551 for using this deceit. He was committed to ward because "he deluyeryd a counterfet rynge of golde to one Roger Baker to ley to gage for money in discayte of the people". On 1 December however Barnerd was released "vpon condicion that he shalbe whyppe

1. Awdeley, pp. 7-9.
2. Letter Book Q, f. 278²⁻⁰ Repert. XII, i, f. 54.
4. Repert. XII, ii, f. 409.
accordyng to the lawe if he herafter shall fortune
to be taken ageyn within this Cytie as a vagabunde

The most common practice of idle rogues, however,
in securing a livelihood has always been theft. Most
of the vagabonds in the 'anatomies' are thieves, and
the women are as adept as the men. Harman writes of
the harlots who consorted with the "upright men":
"They be as skilfull in picking, riffling and filching
as the vpright men, and nothing inferior to them in all
kind of wyckednes". Many of these thieves, especially
the women, went about as hawkers and under that disguise
arranged their thefts. There are no cases in the
London records from 1485 to 1552 of apprehension of
vagrant hawkers, although on 21 July 1552 the Court of
Aldermen ordered "the bedelhes of the howse of the pore"
to apprehend all foreigners and idle persons found hawking
in the City. Occasionally the thefts were particularly
daring, such as those of the "Hoker or Angglear" who
stole from houses by hooking things through the window

1. Repert. XII, ii, f. 427.
2. Harman, p. 32.
3. These women hawkers, "bawdy baskets", are described
4. Repert. XII, ii, f. 513\[0.5ex]
with the aid of a long pole. Some vagabonds made a practice of stealing some special article only, so there was the "Prigger of Prauncers" or horse thief. None of these make their appearance in the City records, although there is evidence of trouble from petty thefts committed by "petty bribers" and "privy pikers". These vagabond thieves when discovered were apprehended and punished by the Court of Aldermen. The wardmote also constantly presented this type of offender in its annual verdict. Not only were vagabonds themselves presented for theft, but anyone receiving such persons into his house was liable to apprehension. Such was the case of William Wolcote tried by the aldermen on 27 November 1548 as "a comen receyver of cut purses & other evyll dysoosed persones & vagabundes". All these devices for procuring


2. Ibid., p. 42.

3. For an example of this type of case see Repert. XII, ii, f. 547\textsuperscript{v6} The Court of Aldermen ordered that "Nicholas Hutton, bruuer, apprehendyd in Suthwerk as a vagabonde & petye bryber", should be whipped.

4. A typical charge made by the wardmote in this connection ran - "Item, we present and endite Thomas Wynters for a faytour beger, a privy pyker, a comen baratour, defectif". Portsoken Ward Presentments, 5-22 Edward IV and 23 Hen. VII, m. 8 (preserved at the Guildhall Record Office, London).

5. Repert. XII, i, f. 13.
a living fall into two main categories, relating either to begging or fraud. Most of the cases of vagabond trials recorded in the London archives contain no evidence of the mode of life of the culprit, and amongst those which do give details the begging tricks are more graphically described than those relating to various kinds of cheating.

Vagabonds tended to congregate in certain main city haunts and these were bound to attract the special attention of the authorities when developing their policy. The fore-going description of vagrant life indicates quite clearly the places where the low life of the City would be concentrated, the most obvious being the streets at night. In country places the vagabonds crowded into barns and outhouses, or slept beneath the hedgerows,¹ and in the towns they thronged the streets, seeking shelter in any available nook. Robert Copland had served as a watchman, and knew well the City streets at night. He describes what he saw whilst pursuing his duties:

"But yet I maruell greatly of one thyng,
That in the nyght so many lodge without:
For in the whatche whan that we go about,
Under the stalles, in porches, and in doores,
I wote not whither they be theues or hoores.
But surely, euery nyght ther is found
One or other lyeng by the pound,"

¹. Harman, pp. 76-78 describes "their vsage in the night".
In the shepe cotes or in the hey loft,
And at Saynt Barthylmaws chyrch doore full ofte,
And euen here alway by this brick wall
We do them fynd that do bothe chyde and brall".  

The frequent precepts to the watch ordering them to apprehend idle vagabonds found during their perambulations testify that the open streets were the nightly haunt of the sturdy beggar.

Vagabonds were also found in all places where the needy poor sought alms. The hospitals and almshouses were pestered with them, crowding at the gates and demanding relief. Copland has a graphic description of the people gathering at the hospital gates:

"And as we talked ther gathered at the gate
People, as me thought, of very poore estate,
With bat and staf, both croked, lame and blynde,
Scabby and scurvy, pocke eaten flesh and rynde,
Lowsy and scalde, and pylled lyke as apes,
With scantly a rag for to couer theyr shapes,
Brechles, bare foted, all stynkyng with dyrt,
With M. of tatters drabblyng to the skyrty
Boyes, gyrles and luskysh strong knaues,
Dydderyng and dadderyng, leaning on their staues,
Saying: good mayster, for your moders blessyng,
Gyue vs a halfpeny toward our lodgyng."

He is tempted to ask if all, both impotent and sturdy, receive shelter but the porter assures him that there is some discrimination:

2. Ibid., pp. 27-28.
"And in dede it is our custome and use
Sometyme to take in, and some to refuse". ¹

Although in some cases there was an attempt to distinguish between the types of applicant seeking relief it was not always possible, and so, as Mr. Ribton Turner says, the begging vagabond went "from spital to spital prowling and poaching for lumps of bread and meat". ² Again, the churches and their porches were haunted by the idle mendicants who with the needy poor gathered to seek the charity of those attending divine worship. The case of Miles Rose has already been quoted, who, it will be remembered, frequented churches and there feigned illness and solicited alms. ³ The policy of the City authorities bears witness to this tendency for common beggars to congregate in the churches. In 1532/33 the mayor and aldermen ordered collections of alms to be made and distributed to the needy poor "in avoydyng of these comen beggers oute of the parishe churches of this Citie". ⁴ Evidently the trouble continued for in 1543,

¹ Copland, p. 29.
³ Supra, pp.63-64.
in time of pestilence, the churchwardens were instructed "to kepe coute all common beggars vpon the holy dayes coute of the same churches, & to cause theym for to remayne for the deuocyon of the people, withoute the church dores, if they luste, tyll the dyvine servyce there be done".¹ Wherever relief was forthcoming, vagabonds were found in numbers and so the customary doles given to the poor at funerals attracted them. Harman describes vividly the burial of "a man of much worshyp in Kent".² Many sturdy beggars flocked thither as well as poor householders to partake of the dole, and as a result of their riotous behaviour "the buriall was turned to bousing and belly chere, mornyng to myrth, fasting to feasting, prayer to pastyme and pressing of papes and lamenting to Lechery".

The taverns, bowling alleys, dicing houses and houses of ill repute were all favourite haunts. The taverns were often the headquarters of the vagrant.³ The "prygman" carried his loot "to the Alehouse, whych

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1. Letter Book Q, f. 90; Journal XV, f. 49. 13 August 1543.
3. "Tavern" must here be taken to include all manner of eating and drinking houses - alehouses, tippling houses and others.
they call the Bowsyng In, & ther syt playing at cardes and dice".\(^1\) Harman's upright men resort to "their stawlinge kens, which is ther typplyng houses, as well knownen to them, according to the olde prouerbe, 'as the begger knowes his dishe'".\(^2\) All contemporary writers seem agreed that the taverns harboured vagabonds; as Crowley wrote in his epigram on alehouses:

"They are become places of waste and excess,
And herbour for such men as lyue in idlernes".\(^3\)

These drinking houses were fairly numerous,\(^4\) and there is continual evidence in the London archives of efforts to curtail them, for the City authorities realised that the "innumerable typelyng and ale houses aswell in sellers, darke lanes as in other places" were characterised by "moche evill rule ... ... as welle by nyghte as by daye, playing at dyse, cardes & vnlauffulle games with kepyng

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1. Awdeley, p. 3.
2. Harman, p. 32.
4. A survey of the tipplers of ale and beer in London, January 1544/45, revealed that there were 528 such persons. Repert. XI, f. 157²⁰
of bawdry & horedome and lodgyng of vacaboundes". 1
Sometimes the records of vagabond trials bear similar
witness. This may be illustrated by the case of Thomas
Otley who was tried by the Court of Aldermen on 23 July
1518 for writing a seditious bill. It appears that he
had previously been committed to the Counter as a vagabond,
"and vsyng ydelly to haunte even alehouses contynually". 2
Card and dice play was apparently common in these drinking
houses and this would attract those vagrant rascals who
had made a fine art of cheating.

The sixteenth century saw not only increased card
play, which gave rise to the tricks of the "cheatours",
but also the development of bowling alleys. There was
a general decline in the pursuit of archery and other
military exercises, which was especially witnessed in
London, and instead the citizens flocked to the bowling
alleys. Stow laments this tendency, but recognises that
it springs from natural causes, the growth of the City
and the enclosure of common land: "By the meane of

1. Letter Book 0, f. 48v. This is taken from a
recommemation concerning "typylars" included in a
set of articles presented to the mayor and aldermen
on 26 August 1527 for the reformation of "such
enormyties generally prejudiciall to the common weale
of this Citie".

2. Repert. III, f. 221.
closing in the common grounds, our Archers for want of room to shoote abroade, creese in to bowling Allies, and ordinarie dicing houses, nearer home, where they have room enough to hazard their money at unlawfull games. These alleys unfortunately attracted the idle vagrants and therefore became associated with unruly behaviour and low life. Authorities soon realised that bowling alleys were vagabond haunts and when anyone was licensed to keep such an alley he was generally forbidden to admit "almaner apprentices, vagaboundes and other barothous and mysruled personnes".

Finally, the houses of ill fame were well known as vagabond haunts. It is evident from the works of both Awdeley and Harman that immorality flourished among the vagrant class. They paint a sordid picture of the life of the vagabonds with their harlots, the autem morts,


2. L. and P., VIII, 149 g. 11. 14 January 1534/35. This restriction was in a licence granted by the king to Hugh Foster of London to keep a bowling alley and place for other games. There is a notice of the same licence in the City records also, Journal XIII, f. 431.
walking morts and others. Houses of incontinent living might be found within any ward in the City. The wardmote verdicts frequently contain presentments of people as bawds and strumpets and for receiving "suspickious and mysruled peopull" but one area was especially well known in this connection, namely the stews in Southwark.¹

Realisation of the close connection between loose living and vagrancy is seen in the periodic instructions to the watch or wardmote to report houses suspect of bawdry, to which vagabond men and women might resort. There seems to have been a more determined effort in the Tudor period on the part of the municipal authorities and the State to suppress these brothels; this is witnessed in the abolition of the Southwark stews in 1546,² and the repeated attempts in Hull to check incontinent living.³

Copland admirably sums up the whole question of vagabond haunts:

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1. For a full account of the stews so called "of certaine stew houses priuiledged there, for the repair of incontinent men to the like women" see Stow, op. cit., II, pp. 54-55.

2. L. and P., XXI, 1, 592. Mandate to the mayor and sheriffs of London to make proclamation for the suppression of the stews.

3. These attempts will be detailed in Chapter V.
And thus they lewter in every way and strete,
In townes and chyrches, where as people mete.

And whan they haue goten what they may,
Than to theyr lodgynge they do take theyr way,
Into some aley, lane or blynde hostry,
And to some corner, or hous of bawdry,
Where as ben folke of theyr affyntyse,
Brothelles and other suche as they be.¹

He has another interesting observation concerning certain regions about London where houses of vagabond resort might be found:

"They haue houses, and kepe full yll gestyng,
And to the resorte all the hole offspryng
In the Berbycan and in Turnmyll strete,
In Houndesdyche and behynd the Flete;
And in twenty places mo than there,
Where they make reuell and gaudy chere."²

These districts, it will be noticed, all lie outside the walls.³ It was natural for the suburban areas to be haunts of idle vagabonds since they afforded easy access to the City. Stow gives further point to this theory by his account of the poor character of many of the suburbs without the walls, pestered with small tenements and

1. Copland, p. 42.
2. Ibid., p. 35.
3. Of these districts two were definitely within the ward jurisdiction of the City, the Barbican being in Aldersgate and Cripplegate and Houndsditch in Bishopsgate and Portsoken. Also, part of the district "behyned the Flete" was in Farringdon Without.
filthy cottages. It is significant that when the Privy Council in 1519 was organising searches for vagabonds and other suspect persons it did not confine its activities to the City alone, but appointed commissioners for "the suburbs and other villages adjoinant" as well.

The evidence adduced above accounts for the increased municipal activity in the problem of vagabondism and poverty. It has been shown that town governments were very independent and had power to regulate their own affairs, and it is small wonder that they felt called upon to adopt some active policy to deal with the problem of vagrancy, with which they were in constant touch. Increased numbers of beggars made it difficult enough for each town to look after its own needy poor, but when the available relief was filched by idle rogues with their counterfeit licences and feigned illness the problem became more difficult. The cry of the poor to

1. Stow, op. cit., II, pp. 69-91. It seems especially applicable to the suburbs to the east and north, such as Wapping, Shadwell, Suburb without Aldgate, Shoreditch, Suburb without Bishopsgate, Golden lane and Barbican districts etc.

2. L. and P., III, 1, 365, (1). It is interesting to note that these poorer suburban areas were on the whole the districts most greatly affected in the great plague of 1665, see map of the geographical distribution of the great plague, W.G. Bell, The Great Plague in London in 1665 facing p. 158.
the king voiced by Simon Fish in *A Supplicacyon for the Beggers* written about 1529 is "howe that theyre nombre is daily so sore increased, that all the almesse of all the-weldisposed people of this youre realme is not halfe ynotough for to susteine them", because they have to share their alms with the many vagabonds. The two problems of the impotent and vagrant were so closely connected that it was impossible to tackle the one without also dealing with the other.

Apart from the needs of the impotent poor the towns felt the necessity for action because the influx of vagrants within their bounds was a real danger to the inhabitants. Thus in 1540 the inhabitants of the parish of St. Ewen within Newgate presented to the Court of Aldermen for punishment certain "idle yongmen, vagabundes & masterles men", who "haue their comen haunte & resorte into the seyd paryshe to the grett feare & ieopardye of all the inhabitauntes there." The City overcrowded with wandering beggers and idle rogues felt the need for strict policing, and this desire for orderliness


and good government led the authorities to deal with the sturdy beggar. The policy developed by the London authorities was largely actuated by the desire to enforce law and order; as one precept dealing with such matters says, "the kynges peas, good order and rule of this Citie is disturbed and perverted."¹

The thievish and cheating tricks of the idle rogue and the increase in games of chance and gambling also created a serious menace. The youth of the town was often influenced and enticed from work, whilst the effect on the servant class was undesirable. The complaint of the London authorities in 1526 concerning a certain unlawful game called "the sengle lottes and the double lottes" was that it caused "meny menny's servantes, apprentices and other laborers, and that to a greate nombre, to pyke, pylfre & stele their masters goodes and money to brynge to the saide lottes."² Bishop Latimer in one of his sermons before Edward VI notes with sorrow the tendency of the times: "There is suche dysynge howses also, they saye, as hath not bene wonte to be, where yong Gentlemenne

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¹. Journal XI, f. 109⁰ 5 June 1510. This precept directed the aldermen to make enquiries concerning misruled persons, unlawful games and suspect houses.

². Letter Book 0, f. 13; Journal XII, ff. 363-363⁰ 5 October 1526.
dyse away their thripte, and where dysynge is, there are other folyes also.\textsuperscript{1} The connection between the prevalent vagabondism and these gaming centres and its evil effect on city life is admirably illustrated by an entry in the minutes of the Court of Aldermen for 1532. It is noted on 18 July that Robert Olred a constable of St. Mary Aldermary parish and Thomas Peter of St. Alburgh parish\textsuperscript{2} in Bishopsgate Street had promised to report in writing "certeyn names of myghty & grete vagaboundes goyng mervelously & chargeably appereilde & provoke dayly mennes servantes & apprentices to the bowles, cayles & other vnlawfull games etc."\textsuperscript{3}

A further reason for the development of municipal policy lay in the evil effect of vagabondism on the morale

1. Master Hugh Latimer, Seven Sermons before Edward VI, ed. Edward Arber (English Reprints), p. 161. The evil effect of idleness and gaming on the young is described by Sir William Forrest in his Pleasaunt Poesye of Princelle Practise, 1548:

"Yowthe, brought vpp ydelye in games and pastyme, not taistinge the trade of honeste busynes: As vice detesteth unto vertue too clyme; so farethe withe all that looueth ydlenes; of all maner myschief shee is Patrones."

see Appendix to England in the reign of King Henry the Eighth, I, (E.E.T.S.), p. xci.

2. This was another name for St. Ethelburga parish, H.A.Harben A Dictionary of London, p. 219.

3. Repert. VIII, f. 238\textsuperscript{vo}
of the town. Immorality and loose living were common to the times in all ranks of life, and the increased vagrancy was closely associated with this depravity. The towns in the interests of their own welfare were most anxious to check the evil. The connection between the problems of vagrancy and vicious life is illustrated in the proclamation of the City of London in 1523, which ordered the expulsion of "strumpettes, bawdes & mysguyded & idelle women" in order to check "the fowle, stynkyng & detestable synne of lechery, the whiche dayly groweth and as used more then yt hath been in daies passed by meanes of strumpettes, bawdes, mysgyded & idell women, dayly vagraunt and walkyng aboute the stretes and lanes of the Citie and suburbes of the same."\(^1\)

Finally, the increase in the numbers of vagabonds and the general tendency to migrate to the growing municipalities led to serious overcrowding. In London small cottages were built on the estate of great houses, and tenements were made in the spacious buildings of

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1. Letter Book N, f. 233\(^y\) The full text of this proclamation which will be considered in detail later is given in Appendix V.
the City. Rents were high, and the numbers of poor crowded into the tenement property. This conversion of great houses into "small chambers, cottages and lodgynges of sturdy beggers, harlottes, ydle and vnthryftyse persones" and the evils resulting from the congestion, the spread of disease and scarcity of food in times of dearth, constituted further reasons for action on the part of the London authorities. The same overcrowding owing to increased numbers of poor was felt in Hull also, and is witnessed in the order of the town governors in 1575 that the poor whose lawful residence was not in the town should depart, because their presence caused landlords to "thrust in and yoine together two or three howsholdes in one howse".

1. Stow mentions many houses which were turned into tenements. Oxford Place in Lime street ward, Stow, op. cit., I, p. 163. The Garland in Billingsgate, I, p. 211; Jesus Commons and Coldharbour in Dowgate, I, pp. 231 & 237; Worcester House and Tower Royal in Vintry, I, pp. 242-244; Bishop of Hereford's Inn in Queenhithe, II, p. 4; Barklies Inn in Baynard Castle, II, p. 15.

2. Journal XV, f. 203. This is taken from a bill which was introduced into Parliament in 1545 and was designed to stop this deterioration of property in the City. It will be considered later in detail when the policy of London is traced.

Thus, growing numbers of sturdy beggars magnified the dangers and evils of vagabondism and forced the hand of the municipalities who developed a vagrancy policy to preserve order and good government within their bounds. The situation of the city, overrun with idle vagrants, is comparable to that of the country, full of idle and negligent people, described by Cardinal Pole in Thomas Starkey’s Dialogue: “For lyke as in a dropery the body ys vnwieldy, vnlusty, and slo, no thnyng quyke to moue, nother apte nor mete to any maner of exercyce, but, solne wyth yl humorys, lyth idul and vnprofytabul to al vtward labur; so ys a commynalty, replenyschyd wyth neclygent and idul pepul, vnlusty and vnweldy, nothyng quyke in the exercyse of artys and craf tyss, wherby hyr welth schold be mayntenyd and supportyd; but, solne wyth such yl humorys, boyllyth out wyth al vyce, myschefe, and mysery, the wych out of idulnes, as out of a fountayn, yssuth and spryngyth. Thys ys the mother of many other sykenes and greuus dyseasys in our polytyke body, and the gretyst destructyon of the commyn wele therin that may be deuysyd.”

CHAPTER III.

Experiment in Vagrancy policy in London, 1485 to 1531.

"In all places through out this Realme of Englande, Vacabundes & Beggers have of longe tyme increased & dayly do increase in great & excessyve nombres by the occasyon of ydelnes, mother and rote of all vyces, wherby hathe insurged & spponge, & dayly insurgethe & spryngeth contynuall theftes, murders & other haynous offences & great enormytes to the high displeasure of God, the inquyetacion & damage of the Kynges People & to the marvaylous disturbance of the Comon Weale of this Realme."


The pernicious effects of increasing and unrestricted vagrancy were fully realised by both central and local authorities in the sixteenth century, but in the initial formulation of policy the municipalities led the way because the every day routine of their administration forced the problem of vagrancy upon them in a very practical shape. Furthermore the restricted area of their jurisdiction enabled them to experiment and to
adapt existing local machinery to the needs of their policy. It was therefore from the municipalities that there came the beginnings of fairly continuous action in this connection.

For this survey of the initial stages of vagrancy policy in the sixteenth century, treated from a municipal point of view, London has been selected for detailed study. The period under review is from 1485 to 1552, a period in which the City authorities put in action fairly continuously a vagrancy policy which was at times most vigorous, and preceded in detail later government policy. The problem with which London was faced was, it must be remembered, in many ways peculiar to itself. The City was in close proximity to the central government and the sessions of Parliament and term time at Westminster meant a confluence of people to the City and its environs. These gatherings gave the professional vagrants an excellent opportunity of resorting to the City and escaping notice amongst the numbers of other strangers. The City authorities were aware of the danger to the welfare of the community on these occasions as is shown by the proclamations they issued at such times.\(^1\) The

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\(^1\) These proclamations will be examined in the detailed study of policy and administration in London. The full text of one proclamation of this type, 15 April 1523, is given in Appendix V.
king's court was often resident in or near London whilst many of the great nobles had town houses, and the indiscriminate almsgiving from these establishments tended to increase the numbers of sturdy beggars.¹

Again, the king often called on the citizens of London to raise large contingents to help him in his foreign wars, and after the campaigns were over the disbanded soldiers swelled the ranks of the idle beggars, crowding the streets, thus adding to the difficulties of the authorities. John Howes, writing as late as 1587, in his second Famyliar and Frendly Discourse Dialogue Wyse still regarded London as peculiarly beset by numbers of idle people flocking thither. He sums up the causes which for many years had created a special vagrancy problem in the City: "It draweth vnto it all soldiers wantinge warres to imploy them, all wounded soldiers comme to London to be cured of their diseases. All serving men whose Lords and Maisters are dead resort to London to prouide them Maisters. All maisterles men whose maisters have cast them offe for somme offence

¹ Stow in his Survey gives various examples of the almsgiving of great households in his day. For instance: "I my selfe, in that declining time of charity, haue oft seene at the Lord Cromwells gate in London, more then two hundered persons servued twice every day with bread, meate and drinke sufficient." Stow, op. cit. I, p. 89.
or other comm to London to seke service ... ...
There is also a number of other ydel people, as lustie rogues and common beggers, whose profession is nether to be a souldier nor a servingman, hearinge of the greate lyberallettie of London cometh hither to seke reliefe. These ar the caterpillers of the common wealthe, these and the rest, being forreine and not domesticall, ar the people which overcharge London, and these ar those that cause the cyttie to be so evill reported." These special factors account for the early action taken by London and for the great influence of its experiments on the development of State policy. Other towns at the same period were faced with similar difficulties and were trying to cope with the problem, but nowhere was action so continuous during the early years of the period as in London.

In a detailed study of vagrancy policy and administration in London it is essential to consider as well the activity of the central government, for there was a close connection and interplay between the

two policies. Sometimes the policy of the State was based upon and incorporated experiments previously tried by local authorities, whilst at other times the policy of the municipalities was in part at least dictated by the central government; further the State is sometimes found inciting the town authorities to greater activity especially in times of political crisis. In matters of policy therefore the action both of the State and of the City must be considered, but as regards the administration of policy this survey will be confined to the municipal standpoint.

The period selected for survey in London is of sufficient length to comprise several phases of policy and administration. It falls into three divisions, each concluding with a vagrancy act. The first, from 1485 to 1531, was a time of spasmodic and experimental action. The City authorities can be seen advancing tentatively, trying first one plan and then another, building upon and developing their earliest experiments. It was a difficult time for the London authorities. They were obviously aware of the importance of determining on some line of action, but it was a hard task to discover any adequate plan. Throughout this period the City was generally leading the way and the act of 1531 merely
gave statutory form to policy developed by the City. In the second period from 1531 to 1547 policy became more continuous and definite, many orders were issued by the Court of Aldermen and Court of Common Council, an increased number of vagabonds were tried and there was considerable interplay of policy between City and State. Severe punishment was still regarded as the only means of dealing with the vagabond and reached its harshest point in the 1547 act with which the period closed. The last period from 1547 to 1552 saw the development of a more humane conception of vagabond treatment and a growing consciousness that the care of its own poor is the proper duty of a township. The severe, even brutal, punishment administered to vagabonds had little effect on their numbers which still increased. The idea that a valiant beggar could be forced from his vagrancy and mendicancy merely by punishment was giving place to a desire to effect a cure for the disease. The first evidence of this later doctrine came with the foundation of Bridewell. The act closing the period is more concerned with the impotent poor and their relief than with the vagabonds, and thus illustrates that widening of outlook which was becoming evident as the first half of the sixteenth century drew to a close.
The problem of how to deal with vagrancy was by no means solved by 1552; policy was still in its infancy. This survey is designed to show only the early efforts of a municipal government to cope with its vagabond population and the interplay of policy between town and state. By this time however not only had the early stages of experiment yielded their lessons but the main years of crisis were passed, and the development of poor law policy from 1552 to 1601 was much more steady and along more clearly cut lines.

This chapter will be devoted to a detailed study of the first of the three periods in London, viz., 1485-1531, but the situation at the outset of the period cannot be understood without some knowledge of the methods tried before 1485.1

(1) Preliminary sketch of earlier measures and methods.

The problems of vagrancy and mendicancy only began to receive the serious attention of the legislature from the fourteenth century onwards. The increasing number

1. I know of no work of reference in which such a sketch has been made for the complete period with regard to London.
of wandering beggars was occasioned partly by the gradual decline of villeinage. When every man was bound to a lord his wants were supplied by that lord; service secured maintenance. The man freed from vassalage, with only his own efforts to rely on, almost inevitably in unfavourable circumstances became a wanderer seeking employment or else resorting to mendicancy and dishonesty as a means of subsistence. The growth in importance of the towns also added to the general vagrancy by attracting numbers of idle beggars seeking alms and country labourers desiring employment in the growing industries and trades. At the same time the somewhat indiscriminate charity practised by religious foundations and private households did much to increase both vagrancy and mendicancy.

The early ordinances and statutes have been chronologically detailed in various authoritative surveys; what is attempted here is an analysis of the chief features of this early vagrancy legislation. Firstly, the main

aim of all the labour statutes was to secure an adequate supply of agricultural labour wherever there was need, at the wages current before the great plagues of the fourteenth century, and the vagrancy clauses were merely incidental to this primary object. Vagrancy must be stopped in order to stabilise labour. The Ordinance of Labourers in 1349 not only ordered that all persons able to labour and without other means of support should work where needed at the accustomed wages and should not depart from their service, but prohibited almsgiving to valiant beggars who "as long as they may live of begging, do refuse to labour, giving themselves to Idleness and Vice, and sometime to Theft and other Abominations", so that they might be compelled "to labour for their necessary Living". The vagrants however who were chiefly attacked by the central government in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were those idle runaway labourers who wandered about the country, frequented the towns and cities, and left the countryside destitute of adequate supplies of labour.


2. This complaint against "Laborers & Servantz corores" was forcefully made by the Commons in 1376 in the "Bille des Laboriers". Rolls of Parliament, II, pp. 340-341.
Another feature of the legislation was the lack of distinction at first between the various classes of wandering beggars. Vagrancy and mendicancy were so closely allied that legislators tended to regard them as identical, so that the unemployed labourer, the idle rogue and the needy beggar were all regarded as members of the same class. In 1349 some differentiation was implied since the Ordinance of that year, which forbade almsgiving to valiant beggars who were able to labour, contained no such prohibition of charity to those who could not work. ¹ This law, however, aimed at discouraging vagrancy, and was not drawn up with the intention of making new provision for the impotent. All the early orders were negative rather than positive, aiming at restraint and not relief, and consequently the penalties and punishments applied to the vagrant class as a whole and there was no exemption for those who were genuinely destitute. Not till 1388 was there any special regulation for impotent beggars as such. By this statute they were forbidden to wander, but were to stay in the place where they chanced to be at the passing of the act. If the people of that district were unable to support them,

¹ Statutes, I, p. 308.
they were to go within forty days to other towns in the same hundred or else to the place of their birth and there to reside.¹ In consequence of its attempt to provide for the impotent, the act is often regarded as the first English poor law.

The keynote of all the ordinances and statutes was settlement, the sovereign remedy for all the ills attendant on vagrancy. This settlement was to apply to both able bodied and impotent. Servants must remain in their own districts, and according to the statute of 1360 "Labourers and Artificers that absent them out of their Services in another Town or another County" might be recovered by their masters, and at the discretion of the justices branded with an "F" on the forehead.² Again, the complaints of the Commons in 1376 were directed against those servants who "fuont & descurront sodeynement hors de lours services, & hors de lours pays". They recommended that these runaways should be apprehended and imprisoned until they promised to return home to work.³

¹ 12 Rich. II. c. 7. Statutes, II, p. 58.
² 34 Edw. III. c. 10. Statutes, I, p. 367.
³ Rolls of Parliament, II, p. 340, No. LVII.
In 1388 wandering tendencies were once more combated and the principle of settlement maintained by ordering travelling beggars to carry "letters testimonial", and under penalty of punishment to "hold their right Way towards their Country, except they have Letters Patents under the King's Great Seal to do otherwise." In the same year the principle of settlement was extended to the impotent poor by forcing them to reside in some district where their needs could be satisfied.  

Another interesting feature of this early legislation which concerns poverty rather than vagrancy, is the growing desire of Parliament and town governments to share in the administration of funds for the relief of the poor. Religious bodies had control of most charitable foundations. Early interference by the State was in the matter of appropriations. It was customary for part of the tithes of each living to be distributed to the poor, but when a living was appropriated by a monastery or other ecclesiastical foundation the practice was sometimes discontinued, to the great distress of the poor of the

2. 12 Rich. II, c. 7. ibid., p. 58.
district. A statute of 1391 however ordained that "the Diocesan of the Place, upon the Appropriation of such Churches, shall ordain, according to the Value of such Churches, a convenient Sum of Money to be paid and distributed yearly of the Fruits and Profits of the same Churches ... ... to the poor Parishioners of the said Churches."¹ Thus, the State was interfering with funds for the poor and showing a new interest in the problem of poverty.

Lastly, there is evidence in the statutes and parliamentary proceedings that the growing municipalities provided a great attraction for the vagabond and also for the agricultural labourer who hoped to find work in the town at better rates than in the country. The great fear ever present with the fourteenth century administrator, at a period when servants were scarce, was lest the demand for labour in the towns and the general attraction

¹. 15 Rich. II. c. 6. Statutes, II, p. 80. This statute was re-enacted by Henry IV in 1402, 4 Hen. IV. c. 12. (ibid., pp. 136-137), and was evidently observed as Miss Leonard notes, since Brinklow writes in 1542 in The Complaynt of Roderyck Mors that "if the personage were impropered, the monks were bound to deale almesse to the poore and to kepe hospitale ye as the writings of the gyftes of such personages and landes do playnly declare." E.M. Leonard, English Poor Relief, p. 7.
of town life should drain the country to the detriment of husbandry. Thus in 1376 the Commons complained that labourers were running away from their service in the country, "hors de leurs pays propre, de Countee en Counte, de Hundred en Hundred, de Ville en Ville, en estranges lieux desconuz a leurs dites Mestres", and that many of these escaped servants became idle beggars and resorted to the municipalities to seek alms from the charitably minded citizens.¹ The State tried to deal with the situation by ordering the municipal authorities to take action against vagabondism. The statute of 1360/61 provided that "if any Labourer, Servant or Artificer, absent himself in any City or Borough, and the Party Plaintiff come to the Mayor and Bailiffs, and require Delivery of his Servant, they shall make him Delivery without Delay."² Again, in 1376 the Commons advised that municipal authorities should be ready to apprehend "les corps des totes tiels Servantz

¹ "Plusours de les avaun ditz Laboreres corores devenont mendinantz beggeres, pur mesner ocious vie, & soi trient hors de hours pays coement as Citées, Burghwes & as autres bones Villes, pur begger." Rolls of Parliament, II, p. 340, No. LVII.

corores desconuz, & de les Beggers & Stafstrikeres auxint", and to imprison them. Stocks were also to be made ready "pur chastier les ditz rebsales". Then in 1383 the town governors were given power to examine vagabonds and compel them to find surety for their good behaviour. Thus at the very outset of serious attention to the matter the State authorities were urging municipalities to action by legislating for the apprehension, examination and punishment of vagabonds.

The general tendency for the wanderers to seek refuge in the towns affected the policy of municipal governors in two conflicting ways. In the first place, anxiety for the City's peace made them desirous of quelling vagabondism, since too many idle rogues were a danger to the welfare of the citizens. On the other hand ample supplies of labour were necessary for the growth of industry and commerce and to form the contingents for war which the king was constantly demanding; therefore a sub-stratum of mobile labour was always useful. It

1. This advice was put into statutory form in 1388. The king reminded mayors, bailiffs, stewards and constables of their duties, and asked them to see that the stocks were kept in repair for the punishment of wanderers. 12 Rich. II. c. 3. ibid., II, p.56.
2. 7 Rich. II. c. 5. ibid., pp. 32-33.
was, to begin with, the first of these two considerations which in the main influenced the London authorities, so that from the fourteenth century we find them initiating vagrancy policy apart from State direction.

In the first place, all regulations for order and good government in the City in themselves tended indirectly to check vagrancy since they provided for the apprehension of wanderers and disturbers of the City's peace. The Letter Books and the Plea and Memoranda rolls of the City contain many such proclamations and ordinances, which were frequently reissued and from time to time approved by the King's Council. A few examples may be selected to illustrate how such regulations affected vagrancy. In 1285 orders for the preservation of the peace in London directed that none were to go abroad armed after curfew, taverns were to close at that time, and offenders in the several wards were to be apprehended and punished. ¹ This restriction of night wandering within

1. For the orders of 1285 for the preservation of the peace in London see Liber Ordinacionum, ff. 197-202. Mr. Thomas points out that the "statuta civitatis Londoniarum", Statutes, I, pp. 102-104, dated 1285 are in fact a later confirmation of 1294, and correspond with the 1294 text found in Letter Book C, f. 15, see A.H. Thomas, Calendar of the Plea and Memoranda rolls of the City of London, 1323-1364, Introd., p. xx, n. 5 and p. xxi, n. 1.
the City would affect the vagabond who was often abroad at night either seeking refuge or working mischief.

Again, in 1321 during the mayoralty of Hamo de Chigwell, a detailed scheme for the safe keeping of the City was drawn up and gained the approval of the King's Council. The aldermen assisted by chosen citizens were to survey the hostels in their respective wards, "in which they understand any strangers or suspected persons to be lodged." Regulations were made at the same time for a close watch at the City gates "to overlook those entering and going forth, if perchance any one be suspected of coming to do mischief to the City." Such orders, though not designed primarily to that end, would in all probability lead to the apprehension of vagrants since the mischief makers of the City were generally vagabonds.

The attempts of the City authorities to check vicious life, especially amongst women, indirectly regulated vagabondism. Common harlots were restricted by a proclamation in 1393 limiting their places of abode to "the Stews on the other side of Thames, and Cokkeaslane".


In 1417 there were two further ordinances, one for the abolition of stews in the City¹ and the other against the harbouring of persons of evil and vicious life, since "when any men or women of bad and pernicious life are indicted in any Ward of the same city, at the time of the Wardmotes thereof, they do fly from the Ward where they are so indicted, and withdraw themselves to the neighbouring Wards."² Orders of this type were frequent and implicated the sturdy beggar, who might often be numbered among the City undesirables.

Such restrictions were of an indirect nature; but from the early fourteenth century onwards there is evidence in the City records that the authorities were making deliberate efforts to develop a definite and direct vagrancy policy. The earliest attempts of the City authorities to deal with the growing numbers of vagrants within their bounds were made in their capacity as custodians of the peace. Bands of vagrants were dangerous to the general welfare of the community, and as early as 14 January 1309/10 there is recorded in a Letter Book the

1. Ibid., p. 647, translated from Letter Book I, f. cxciii.
king's writ to the mayor and sheriffs enjoining them to make diligent search for armed vagrants, who were disturbing the peace of the City by day and night, and to punish them accordingly.¹ A similar writ was issued in December 1310,² and in 1316 a proclamation to the same effect was made in the City.³

Shortage of labour, caused mainly by the numerous outbreaks of pestilence preceding the Black Death, influenced the City authorities in their vagrancy policy in the same way that it affected State policy, and probably explains the proclamation of 10 August 1343. This proclamation was concerned with the keeping of the king's peace and contained similar regulations to other orders of that nature, but with two additional and interesting clauses. Sturdy vagrants were ordered to undertake work for citizens at a daily wage of threepence, whilst all craftsmen were to work as they used to do before the pestilence, under pain of imprisonment and fine.⁴

². Ibid., p. 242.
³. R.R. Sharpe, Calendar of Letter Book E, p. 70.
These orders illustrate the close connection between the two problems of labour and vagrancy; the vagabond was useful when labour was scarce.

The first City proclamation dealing with vagrancy in its relation to poverty and mendicancy was in 1359, just ten years after the first attempt of the central government to deal directly with valiant beggars. The complaint voiced in the proclamation corroborates the description of the state of labour given in the statutes; people capable of work had left their own districts and were flocking to London, where they went about begging for sustenance and took alms, "which would otherwise be given to many poor folks, such as lepers, blind, halt, and persons oppressed with old age and divers other maladies, to the destruction of the support of the same." The realisation that the impotent were a distinct class in need of public care thus found expression in City policy before it affected that of the State, whose first special regulation mentioning the impotent beggars as such, it will be remembered, did not come until 1388.¹ The proclamation went on to detail the policy to be pursued by the City officials against vagrants. All

¹. Supra, pp. 96-97.
able-bodied beggars were to leave the City within a given period, and if any such idle mendicant was found begging after the prescribed day, on his first offence he was to be placed in the stocks at Cornhill for half a day, on his second offence for a whole day, and on his third offence he was to be put in prison for forty days and then to avoid the City. Not only was this list of punishments drawn up, but certain City officers were definitely deputed to see to the fulfilment of the orders: "Every constable, and the bedel of every Ward of the said city, shall be empowered to arrest such manner of folks, and to put them in the stocks in manner aforesaid."¹

This shows a definite advance in City policy towards a fuller recognition of the effects of large numbers of vagrants by detailing punishments and by making certain officers responsible for carrying out the orders.

The policy of trying to rid the City of the sturdy beggar was continued in 1367 by a precept ordering mendicants, vagrants and pilgrims to leave the City. At the same time lepers were prohibited from begging in the streets for fear of spreading contagion.²

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in 1372 a proclamation was issued to the effect that no one capable of maintaining himself by his own labour should pretend to be poor and beg for his food on pain of imprisonment.\(^1\) Further proclamations issued in 1375\(^2\) and 1378\(^3\) included, amongst other matters, orders relating to common beggars which were merely a re-enforcement of the earlier regulations.

This vagrancy policy was continued along the same lines in the fifteenth century. In 1418 proclamation was made ordering vagrant beggars to leave the City and go to parts of "uplande",\(^4\) where labourers were urgently needed. If any were found wandering in the City after the proclamation they were to be arrested.\(^5\) Two features of the early policy dealing with vagrancy are clearly shown in this proclamation, the City's desire to be rid of great numbers of vagabonds and the close connection between the problems of labour and vagrancy. Similar

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1. ibid., p. 301.
4. "Uplande" refers to the country as opposed to the town. "The parts of a country outside the towns; the rural districts" (see N.E.D.).
regulations were made in 1440, and a still further proclamation was issued in 1475 commanding all vagabonds and masterless men to leave the City.

This survey shows that long before 1485 the City had embarked upon a policy for dealing with increased numbers of vagrant and valiant beggars. The main features of this policy may be summarised as follows. There is an increasing recognition of the dangers to the peace of the City resulting from vagabondism. There is an appreciation of the connection between the problems of labour and vagrancy and of the inter-relation of vagrancy and poverty. The plan of action invariably favoured is the removal of sturdy beggars from the City; what happens to them afterwards is not felt to be the concern of the authorities, although the later orders suggest that these superfluous units of the City population may be useful in the country where labour is scarce.

A consideration of the administrative means by which these regulations were to be made effective necessitates a brief enumeration of the various City officers and of their powers in the matter, both those

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which they already possessed by virtue of their office and those specifically bestowed upon them for this purpose. The mayor and corporation formulated City policy and were also responsible, together with other City officials, for its execution. Throughout the period before 1485 the powers of the mayor and aldermen to deal with offences in the City courts were developing. The growth in function of the City courts and the development of the City governance for maintaining the king's peace need not here be recapitulated; it has been lucidly traced by Mr. A.H. Thomas in the introduction to his Calendar of the Plea and Memoranda rolls of the city of London, 1323-1364. The points which concern the present theme particularly are in the first place, that although the City courts were more or less distinct in function the mayor and aldermen held themselves competent to deal with matters at any time as they arose, and consequently vagrancy cases might appear in any court. Also, from 1265 there was a gradual assumption by the City authorities of the powers not only of guardians but of justices of

the peace. Thus the aldermen in the dual capacity of governors of the City and justices of the peace not only issued ordinances and proclamations for the good government of the City and dealt with cases of offence against them, but were authorised to try cases of people breaking the king's peace.

Records of early cases found in the Letter Books and Plea and Memoranda rolls show that the mayor and aldermen tried all types of vagabonds, and inflicted customary punishments on the culprits. The same types of cases appear at this early date as those familiar in the sixteenth century, the only difference being in the numbers of presentments. They include nightwalkers, who

1. Although the first continuous proceeding of sessions of the peace by the aldermen was in 1281, their judicial authority was by no means established. Writs issued for some time showed a great diversity in instruction, some authorised the aldermen to act as justices, others merely required the holding of inquests and the imprisonment of culprits during the king's pleasure. For a discussion of these writs see A.H. Thomas, *op. cit.*, Introd., pp. xvi-xx.

2. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Ordinance and Statute of Labourers of 1349 & 1351 were enforced in London by the mayor and aldermen, who assumed the position of justices of labourers. *ibid.*, p. xxx.

3. Mr. Thomas in the introduction to his calendar describes the nature of these rolls, which he concludes were considered "a proper repository for actions pleaded, as it were, out of season". *ibid.*, pp. vii-xi.
were punished by imprisonment in the "Tun",\(^1\) and thieves, cheaters at cards and dice, and impostors selling counterfeit gold and silver rings, whose punishment was the pillory.\(^2\) Besides these disturbers of the City order, who might generally be taken as belonging to the company of vagabonds, there are cases of common beggars who by means of pretence sought alms from charitable citizens to the great detriment of the needy poor. Such a one was Alice de Salesbury, who was tried in March 1373 for stealing a young girl that "she might go begging with the same Alice, and gain might be made thereby". Her guilt was proved and she was punished with the "thewe".\(^3\)

1. For an example of a case of this nature see H.T. Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 140. Stow says of the "Tun": "To this prison the night watches of this Citie committed not onely night walkers, but also other persons, as well spirituall as temporall, whom they suspected of incontinence, and punished them according to the customs of this Citie", *Stow, Survey*, I, p. 188.

2. For examples of these offences respectively see H.T. Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 344; A.H. Thomas, *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda rolls*, 1364-1381, p. 89; H.T. Riley, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 368. The thew was "an instrument or apparatus of punishment ordained, instead of the pillory; for women; often identified with the Cucking-stool". *(N.E.D.)*.
The case of two valiant beggars who pretended to be dumb is recorded in 1380. These two impostors, although "they were stout enough to work for their food and raiment, and had tongues to talk with," feigned dumbness and obtained alms "to the defrauding of other poor and infirm persons, and in manifest deceit of the whole people." They were punished by being set in the pillory on three separate days, each time for an hour.

Other City officials apart from the mayor and aldermen were closely connected with the problem. As already noted the proclamation of 1359 contained a provision empowering the constable and beadle of each ward to apprehend vagabonds. These were the minor officers, "such other lowe Ministers of the Peace," who working under the direction of the alderman had commenced their duties in connection with vagrancy before the sixteenth century. In London the constable was a ward official appointed annually by the wardmote. He was under the direction of the alderman and was responsible for carrying out his orders for the keeping of the peace and

1. Ibid., p. 445.

in other general matters relating to the welfare of the City. His responsibilities were manifold. He must see that the peace was kept, that the watches were vigilant and alert. He must receive into custody any guilty or suspect person handed to him by the watch, and keep the same person until trial before the magistrates. He must enquire into and see to the prosecution of offences against statutes and City ordinances. He was in short the general factotum of the ward. 1 The nature of his numerous duties must have brought him into constant touch with vagabond life, and it was only natural that he should develop special responsibilities and powers for the administration of the City vagrancy policy. The other official whose duties in connection with the apprehension of vagabonds developed enormously, especially in the sixteenth century, was the beadle. He likewise

1. The oath of the constable, detailing all the duties incumbent to the office, is given in the City's Liber Albus, which was compiled by John Carpenter and Richard Whittington c. 1419. See H.T. Riley's translation, Liber Albus, the white book of the city of London (1861), p. 271. All references in future will be to this edition. For a discussion of the office and the duties attached thereto see W. Lambarde, op. cit., and Giles Jacob, The Compleat Parish Officer (1729). Modern works dealing with the subject are W.L. Melville Lee, A History of Police in England (1901) and H.B. Simpson, "The office of Constable", E.H.R., (1895), p. 625 seq.
was a ward officer appointed by the wardmote and often holding the office for the space of several years. His duties were similar to those of the constable. He attended to matters concerning his ward and dealt with all kinds of nuisances, and in this way he became associated with the restriction of vagrancy.

Local ward officers working under the chief City officials became responsible for carrying out regulations relating to vagrants and local courts also played a considerable part in restricting vagabondism. London from a very early date was divided into wards, and on this basis developed a system of local government within the City itself. Each ward had its wardmote presided over by the alderman acting upon precept from the

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1. An examination of the file of Portoken presentments (Guildhall Record Office, Portoken ward presentments, 5-22 Edw. IV), shows that the office of beadle was held for a space of years. The fourteen verdicts, from 1465 to 1482, record three beadles only, John Phylypp, John Merrsh and J. Tailor.

2. For the oath of the beadle see H.T. Riley, op. cit., p. 272. "You shall swear, that well and honestly you shall keep the Ward of which you are Bedel..." The duties are mainly concerned with the preservation of the peace and the apprehension of offenders against City ordinances.

3. According to W. Page, London, Its Origin and early development, p. 176, the first extant list of wards is in 1130, in a survey of the lands of St. Pauls and refers to twenty existing wards.
mayor. 1 This body was in many ways the basis of the whole administrative organisation of the City, and having a comparatively small area to survey was in the closest touch with the nuisance of increased numbers of valiant and idle beggars.

The nature of the wardmote is described in the City's Liber Albus: "The Wardmote is so called as being a meeting together by summons of all the inhabitants of a Ward, in presence of its head, the Alderman, or else his deputy, for the correction of defaults, the removal of nuisances, and the promotion of the well-being of such Ward." 2 Here were elected all the ward officers, such as the beadle, constables and the ward jury, who perambulated the ward and presented cases of brothels, vagrants and other nuisances. The precept of December 1410 included directions for the wardmote to see that representatives to the Common Council were elected and make return of their names at the Guildhall by 6 January. 3 Similar precepts were issued later, thus extending wardmote

1. Many precepts of this nature are found enrolled in the Letter Books.
2. H.T. Riley, op. cit., p. 32.
In the early articles of wardmote given in the Liber Horn, c. 1311, there are arrangements for four meetings a year, but these regulations were not strictly adhered to, and eventually one session only was held at a fixed date, others being called as need arose. The regular annual wardmote met on St. Thomas' day, 21 December, and on this occasion the verdict of the wardmote inquest was drawn up, elections took place and the general business of the ward was conducted. The verdict, which contained a full statement of all the nuisances of the ward attested by the jury, was indented; one part remained with the ward and the other was presented by the alderman to the Great Court of Wardmote held on

1. One precept of this nature was issued in 1411, ibid., p. 98, and then there was not another until 1423. R.R. Sharpe, Calendar of Letter Book K, p. 19.

2. Liber Horn, f. xlix. The Liber Horn was drawn up by a City chamberlain tempo. Edward II and is dated c. 1311. It is preserved at the Guildhall Record Office.

3. Reports of Common Council, Annual Wardmotes, (1924). This report states that the evidence of the Plea and Memoranda rolls leads to the assumption that the majority of the wardmotes were held on St. Thomas' day. This is further substantiated by the precepts entered in the Letter Books.
the Monday following the feast of Epiphany. It was originally the custom for the aldermen to be accompanied by the members of their ward inquests at this "Great Court", but from 1486 they were directed to leave them behind "in order to avoid the danger arising from the presence of large numbers attending the Hall in connexion with the inquests." In the early Tudor period the "Great Court" appears to have been held irregularly; sometimes there were no general proceedings on "Plow" Monday and the presentments or petitions were subsequently reported to the Court of Aldermen to adjudicate in the matters. The wardmote, through its inquest, was a body of accusation presenting cases to the central body for trial. It was entirely local and was a useful organ for

1. Precepts were issued to this effect, for example in 1385 the aldermen were directed to hold a wardmote before the feast of Epiphany and "to make presentment in writing of defects found in their Wards to the Court of the Mayor on Monday after the said Feast." R.R. Sharpe, Calendar of Letter Book H, p. 276. In a footnote Dr. Sharpe notices that it is not clear whether the "Court of the Mayor" refers to the Mayor's Court or the Court of Aldermen. In modern times the swearing in of the beadles and ward constables is before the deputy registrar of the Mayor's Court, whereas petitions against returns of the wards and presentments are referred to the Court of Aldermen. For an official account of this Great Court of Wardmote see Reports of the Common Council, The Great Court of Wardmote, (1850).

the administration of orders issued by the mayor and aldermen.

The extent and nature of its business apart from the election of officers is clearly seen in the articles of the inquest charge and in the numerous precepts from the mayor.¹ Assistance to the alderman in keeping the peace was one duty of the wardmote. This is illustrated as early as 1285 in the statutes of the City of London which contained an article commanding every alderman to secure offenders in his ward, using as his instrument of enquiry the wardmote.² Many of the precepts issued by the mayor for the summons of wardmotes repeat this charge, others contain instructions for keeping of vigilant watches especially at festive times such as Christmas, for keeping the streets clean and properly lighted or for enquiries into the sale of food and


2. Statutes, I, p. 103. "Moreover, It is Provided, that every Alderman in his Wardmote shall make diligent Enquiry concerning such Malefactors, resorting to and abiding in his Ward..."
regulations of prices. General matters concerning the welfare of the citizen being dealt with by co-operation between the mayor and aldermen acting as the central administrative body and the wardmotes acting locally, these bodies were naturally called upon to deal with vagabondism. Thus the "Inquisitiones Wardemotarum" of the Liber Albus placed within the authority of the ward inquests the presentation of cases of vagrants found about the City at unwarrantable hours and of all manner of misruled persons. A later set of articles of "the Quest of Warmot", given by Arnold, includes in the midst of various precautions against fire, an order to the inquest to enquire "yf ony leper, fayt' or myghty begger be within ye warde."

Evidence that some attempt was made to carry out these instructions may be found in the inquest verdicts. Some indictments from verdicts are entered in the Plea and Memoranda rolls and in the Letter Books and Journals,

1. Of the numerous examples of precepts in the Letter Books one only for 10 December 1437 will be selected as an example as Dr. Sharpe gives it in full. It also illustrates very well the nature of wardmote duties, see R.R. Sharpe, Calendar of Letter Book K, p. 215.


but the only extant verdicts existing in entirety for the period prior to 1485 are for Portsoken ward.\textsuperscript{1} The conclusion to be drawn from the available material is that active enquiry was proceeding within the wards. Cases are recorded of breakers of the king's peace, misruled and vicious people, night walkers, "privy pykers", "faytour" beggars, common "hasardours", receivers of suspicious people, strife makers and "validi mendices et vagabundi". All types comprising that motley crew known by the very general and comprehensive name of vagabonds appear frequently in the wardmote returns. The reappearance of some presentments, especially of nuisances relating to property, during a number of years suggests that the central courts were not remedying the faults reported by the inquest juries. The wardmote was however of the greatest value to the mayor and aldermen in promoting any social policy, and was already active in making enquiries and in presenting cases of vagabonds to the central authorities.

In both State and City attention had been given to

\textsuperscript{1} For the full text of a verdict of wardmote inquest for Portsoken, 1471, see Appendix I, pp. 395-404. This will serve as an example of the form of the verdict, few of which are extant prior to the seventeenth century.
the problem of vagrancy before the period immediately under survey, but neither had found effective remedy. Yet it may at least be said that a foundation had been laid and machinery fashioned for the increased efforts necessitated in the sixteenth century by the much augmented pressure of the problem.

(2) Policy and Administration in London, 1485-1531.

"Greate Deth & much idelnes,
lytle mony and much sicknes,
gret pryd & smale Riches
How can these agree?"

This is the melancholy picture of England about 1520 painted by the author of the ballad *Now-a-Dayes.* Other writers of the same period present the same gloomy outlook. Thus Sir Thomas More laments the ever-increasing class of idle rogues and thieves who continued to multiply despite harsh punishments inflicted upon them. These vagabonds swelled the ranks of the poor, taking advantage of available relief and depriving the genuinely needy and

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impotent whose distress became acute. Simon Fish in 1529 voiced the complaints of these, "the wretched hidous monstres (on whome scarcely for horror any yie dare loke,) the foule, vnhappy sorte of lepres, and other sore people, nedy, impotent, blinde, lame, and sike, that live onely by almesse," who unable to obtain adequate relief "for verey constreint....die for hunger." ¹ Such general distress provoked both State and City authorities to develop a more systematic policy for checking vagabondism which was recognised as partly responsible for the state of affairs.

The policy of London between 1485 and 1531 was transitional and experimental; its main motive was a desire to police the City. The regulations of the period can therefore be more easily understood if it is borne in mind that the London corporation in dealing with the "poor, mighty in body" aimed chiefly at establishing order, hence its policy was repressive rather than preventive. An example of this desire for order as a motive for vagrancy policy is to be found in 1510, when

¹. Simon Fish, A Supplicacyon for the Beggers, (Four Supplications, 1529-553, E.E.T.S.) p.1. Simon Fish lays the blame for the miserable condition of the poor on the clergy, "this idell, rauinous sort."
the City authorities were very active in enquiry into all types of disorder "wherby the kynges peas, good order and rule of this Citie is disturbed and perverted." That same year the Common Council urged the aldermen to charge the inhabitants of their respective wards to take anyone breaking the king's peace and bring him to trial. A proclamation was also issued dealing with murders and other offences, which suggested that for the peace, order and welfare of the citizens it was necessary to deal effectively with the vagabonds. On occasions when the City's peace and order were threatened - as during Perkin Warbeck's rebellion and at the time of the Evil May-day riots - the danger of the vagabond population was realised and the authorities strove to impose some check upon it. The harshness of the punishments was due to the underlying belief that order could be secured by severity.

Another motive for checking vagabondism which steadily increased in force throughout the period was concerned with the problem of the impotent poor. The great distress of the needy whose relief was filched

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1. These activities of 1510 are dealt with in greater detail later, see infra, pp. 137-139.
by idle and able-bodied beggars made it necessary for the City government to legislate in the matter. Thus the orders of 1517/18 aimed at preventing the resort of begging vagabonds to the City in order to protect the needy.\(^1\) Again, the proclamation of 15 April 1523 ordered all "idell and mighty beggers aswell men as women" to leave the City, for by reason of their begging practices" the sustenances and lyvynges of the poure people not beyng of power by the labour of their bodies to gett their lyvynges dayly is with drawen and taken aways to the greate infamysyng & hurt of the said pore people, soo not beyng able to gett their lyvynges, as is abouessaid."\(^2\) This desire to check the vagabonds for the benefit of the needy had been shewn as early as 1359,\(^3\) but in the sixteenth century the attempts to achieve this end were more determined and definite.

Besides the above there were other incentives to action, such as the desire to prevent vicious life and

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1. The articles, which are largely concerned with the impotent poor, are designated "for thavoydyng and puttyng out of myghty beggers and vacabundes"; they will be dealt with in detail later, see infra, pp. 148-152.

2. See Appendix V, pp. 123-125.

to deal with food shortage and disease. The City authorities realised that vagrancy and immorality were often found together and sometimes policy was directed towards a solution of both problems at once, as in the 1523 proclamation which ordered from the City vagrant women guilty of "the fowle, stynkyng & detestable synne of lechery."¹ The outbreaks of pestilence and food shortages provided motives for vagabond legislation because numbers of idle beggars crowding within the City led to the spread of contagion and complicated supplies in time of dearth, so that for the preservation of the citizen it was necessary to face the problem and take action.

Until 1510 the efforts of the City authorities to deal with the vagabond problem may be described as spasmodic; in that year a more decided and elaborate attempt was made both to frame and to carry out regulations. Nothing further was done for another four years, but from 1514 onwards there is evidence every year of some effort, the most active year being 1518. The measures of 1518 may be regarded as the most significant feature of this period; policy and administration

¹ See Appendix V, pp. 422-423.
from 1485 onwards to some extent foreshadow them, while from 1519 to 1531 the City authorities are attempting to make effective and develop the policy they embody. At the same time parallel State action generally in the form of proclamations and statutes deserves careful examination since it is often intimately connected with City policy.

Before 1510 the State was more active in the problem than the City. The reign of Henry VII was a period of internal consolidation, encouragement of commerce and maintenance of peace at home and abroad. Although social and economic policy was not so active as in the following reign, Henry VII realised the necessity, in the interests of order, of checking vagabonds who were unemployed and always ready to join in insurrections. In June 1487, just at the time of the trouble with Lambert Simnel, Henry issued a proclamation for the better regulation of his army, commanding that "no vagabounde nor other folowe the kinges hoste, but suche as bee reteyne in or haue maisters within the same, vpon payne of imprisonment, and to be punysshed by exemple of other. And that no comon woman folow the kinges hooste vpon payne of imprisonment, and
openly to be punysshede in example of al othre."

On 18 February 1492/3 another proclamation was issued because, so it is stated, the king had been informed that "ful heynes murdres, robries, thefte, decaye of husbondrye and othir enormyties and inconveniences daily increase within this his realme to the greate offense unto God, displeasour to his highnesse, hurt and impoverishinge, vexacion and troble of his subgjettis by the mean of idelnesse and specially of vagabundes, beggars able to werk and by faltours." Attention does not seem to have been drawn hitherto to the fact that this proclamation is the direct precursor of the vagabond act of 1495, and already contained all the regulations which were put into statutory form by the act. Before proceeding to regulations designed to improve the state of the country by checking vagrant tendencies, the proclamation summarises some of the ways in which the sturdy beggars by deceitful means escaped

1. B.M. Cotton MS., Julius B. XII, f. 27. (new pencil foliation). The volume Julius B. XII is entitled "Historical Tracts" and the proclamation occurs in the account of the rebellion in 1487. The account also indicates that the proclamation was carried into effect: "The kinges proclamacions were put in execusion, and in especiall voydyng comen women and vagaboundes, for these were imprisonede great nombre of both" (ibid., f. 27vo). The proclamation is calendared by Mr. Steele (R. Steele, I, p. 2, No 7a), and dated as c. 6 June 1487.
detection: "Summe excusyng them self by that thei were taken by the kynges enemyes upon the see, summe by that thei be scholers of the on universite or the othir within this realme; summe that thei be heremytes and so beggyng by colour of feyned devocion and many other suspicious and vicious levynges thus used in this realme."

Then come the proposed remedial measures. Provision is made for the enforcement of the act against murderers and for the strict punishment of vagabonds. Searches are to be held in every district within two days of the proclamation for "all such vagabundes, idell and suspecte persones levyng suspicioynsly," who are to be taken and set in the stocks for three whole days, with no other sustenance than bread and water. After this punishment they are to avoid the town, and if they return, are to be given similar punishment for six days. Exemptions are granted to certain classes of wanderers, such as scholars, soldiers and sailors, who are to bear with them letters of licence. There is also an attempt to check the tendency for apprentices and servants to waste their time playing games prohibited by statute.


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Lastly, the proclamation commands that the statute of Winchester shall be enforced, and all persons living suspiciously be compelled to avoid the town. These two proclamations of 1487 and 1492/3 show a realisation of the dangers from vagabonds and precede statutory legislation in the matter. From the king's point of view it was essential that no vagabond element should confuse the wider issues at stake, and in his effort to restrain the sturdy beggar he urged all local governments to action.

The third royal proclamation concerning vagabonds was issued probably in June 1497 and is of particular interest as it applied especially to the municipalities and there is evidence that it was published in London. This, it will be remembered, was the time of Perkin Warbeck's insurrection and in June 1497 the authorities were fearful for the safety of the City. The proclamation was directed against the bearing of weapons and the making of affrays, and for the avoiding of vagabonds. No vagabonds were to "abide withyn any town or citie,  

1. Cal. Pat. Rolls, Hen. VII, I, pp. 434-457. The proclamation, addressed to the sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, is given in full. It is also calendared by Mr. R. Steele, op. cit., I, p. 3, No. 22.
nor be resortyng to the same aftir this proclamacion made appon payn of imprisonement, and to be openly punysshid accordyng to the statutes in that behalf made."

The officials of every city and town were to search all suspect houses and places "for all such vacabundes and other suspect persones, and them to arreste, take, and put in warde in sure kepyng from tyme to tyme as ofte as the case shall require."1 All these proclamations were designed to promote order in the realm, and indeed were specifically called forth in two cases by the fear of rebellion; they fully recognise the danger of the vagabond population especially to the municipalities where concentration of idle rogues invariably led to mischief and occasioned the strict orders to the municipal

1. Letter Book M, facing f.l. (undated). Mr. Steele calendars this proclamation under the year 1487, using the manuscript copies of the proclamation found in B.M. Harleian MS. 442 f. 14 (new foliation) and Antiq I, 12, both of which are undated (R. Steele, I, p. 2, No. 8). Another possible date is c. June 1497. There is no internal evidence for either of these dates, but 1497 has been taken as the more probable; in the first place an entry in the Repertory c.s June 1497 suggests this proclamation: "Item quod crastino die fiat proclamatio pro vagabundis et alijs personis suspectis" (Repert. I, f. 20V0), and secondly the succeeding entry in Letter Book M is dated 7 September 1497. In addition the copy in Harleian MS. 442 is between proclamations of 1486 and 1514 and therefore the date might as readily be 1497 as 1487.
officials to search for, punish and expel vagabonds from their bounds.

There were, in addition to these proclamations, two statutes of this reign dealing with vagabonds in 1495 and 1503/4. The first, "an Acte agaynst vacabounds and beggers" embodied the regulations proclaimed two years earlier. Its weakness lay in the lack of any guarantee that it would be carried out, and the exemptions left many loopholes of escape. The orders were concerned to a greater extent with vagabonds than with the impotent poor, and were again designed with the idea of establishing order throughout the realm. The second act in 1503/4, "De validis mendicantibus repellendis," followed closely the provisions of the previous act, but lessened the punishment of vagabonds to one whole day in the stocks for the first offence and three days for the second. The real importance of this second act lies in its provision for an efficient administration of the orders. The lord chancellor and the judges were empowered to

1. 11 Hen. VII. c. 2, Statutes, II, p. 569. As well as repealing the vagabond regulations it again prohibited apprentices and servants from playing games and idling their time, and the justices of the peace were ordered to punish keepers of gaming houses and to regulate ale houses.
punish officers who were negligent in executing the statute. The services of the justices of the peace were requisitioned, and they were authorised to make "a dewe and a diligent & a secrete serche" for offenders against the act four times a year. Further, there was a special clause relating to London, giving the mayor and aldermen power to deal with offenders: "Also the Maire and Aldermen of the Cite of London, that is to say, every Alderman within his Ward and the Maire through- owte the hole Citee, shall have lyke power and auctoritie to examyn correcte and punyssh the seid offenders, within the same Cite and liberties of the same."

This gave statutory right to the judicial power of the mayor and aldermen in punishing vagabonds, a power which had already been exercised in preservation of peace within the City. The act was still largely concerned with the vagabond as a nuisance and made no provision to help the impotent poor.

Despite the example set by these proclamations and statutes there is little evidence of much activity in London in relation to the problem before 1510. The authorities were busy with other matters and the question

of the vagabond population was not as yet pressing enough in the City to warrant special attention except occasionally. One such occasion was during the disturbed condition of affairs at the outset of the new reign, when extraordinary precautions were taken to guard the City. On 19 August 1485 four aldermen and twenty-three commoners were assigned to superintend the City ordinances and provide for the defence of the City, if necessary.\(^1\)

A few days later, on 26 August,\(^2\) the mayor issued a proclamation on the king's behalf that "all maner vagabundes and idill people which haue no maisters to waits vpon, nor noon other reasonable cause for their abidyng within this citee, aswell souledeours as othere" should depart within three hours of the proclamation, while all inhabitants and visitors were to be indoors from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m.\(^3\) Another proclamation was made on the same day for the preservation of peace within the City.\(^4\) In this case the crisis and fear of disorder

1. Journal IX, f. 83\(^\text{f}^0\)
3. Journal IX, f. 84\(^\text{f}^0\)
4. Ibid., f. 84\(^\text{f}^0\) It was ordered that "all constables, officers and all other persones assistyng the same constables take and arrest all suche misdoers and brynge them to prison."
were clearly responsible for City action against vagabonds and misdoers.

In 1497 there was again great agitation in London caused by the fear of invasion by Perkin Warbeck and the Cornish rebels. The City was once more put in a state of defence, and in the midst of the regulations for watches in June 1497 there is a note in the minutes of the Court of Aldermen that a proclamation must be made concerning vagabonds and other suspect persons.¹ At the same period the proclamation of the king against the bearing of weapons, making of affrays and for the avoiding of vagabonds is entered in the Letter Book,² and although it seems probable that this is the proclamation referred to, there is no evidence of its execution.

The following year Prince Henry - later Henry VIII, then but a child of seven - was to visit the City and in preparation, "for the purgyng and clensyng of the infeccon of sekenes", the civic authorities agreed that a proclamation should be made "that all vagabundes and other infecon with the great pockes shall avoyde

1. Repart. I, f. 20Y⁰ The agitation of the times is seen in the heading of the folio "Vigilie temporis turbacionis."

the Cite vppon payne of enprisonement, and that no man, poore nor riche, take vppon hym to loigge any of the said vagabundes or seke folkes vppon payne of enprisonement and losyng of to thuse of the chamber."¹ A special occasion and a special need had brought the problem of the vagrant population before the authorities.

There is no further reference to the problem in the City records until 1501. In July of that year the Court of Aldermen agreed that every alderman should call before him the constables of his ward, and charge them "to make serch thoroughhoute the warde if any persone inhabited within the said ward herborough or logge any myghty beggers or idle persones." Offenders were to cease from receiving such beggars upon pain of imprisonment.²

With Henry VIII's reign there began a period of marked advance in policy and administration in the


2. Repert. I, f. 86, 6 July 1501. The authorities may have been especially anxious to establish good order at this time, because they were expecting a visit from Princess Catherine of Aragon, which occurred in October 1501.
City. A serious effort to establish good rule in the City was made in the summer of 1510, in the second mayoralty of Sir William Capel whom Stow credits with special interest in the vagabond problem.\(^1\) Precepts were issued to the aldermen on 5 June 1510 instructing them to make enquiry in their respective wards concerning "all murderers, felons and all other myrserued persones, and the comforters and receytters of the same." They were to find out about "all other persones kepyng common dicyng, cardyng, bowlyng, clossen, tenys and other vnlawfull games, and of all them that receyue into their houses comen women kepyng bawdery or recevyng or lodgyng".

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\(^1\) Stow writes of Sir William Capel, with reference to his first mayoralty of 1503–4, that he "caused a Cage in euerie Warde to be set for punishing of vagabondes" J. Stow, A Survey of London, (ed. C.L. Kingsford), II, p. 179. This statement finds no justification in the City records from 1503 to 1504. It may possibly refer to 1510 when Sir William Capel was mayor for a second time, for although there is no record of this establishment of cages there was considerable activity against vagabonds in the June and July of that year. The first reference to cages in our period of survey is in 1514 when the beadles were ordered to bring for trial the vagabonds from "the stokkes & cages" Repert. II, f. 202.
of suspicious persones." Reports on these matters were to be made at the Guildhall within two days.¹ In this searching enquiry members of the vagabond class were bound to be discovered and presented as disturbers of peace and order.

The problem was tackled more directly a month later, when the Court of Aldermen agreed that a proclamation should be made "for beryng of wepons,"² which was accordingly issued on 5 July 1510. This proclamation included regulations concerning vagabonds as well as dealing with weapons and affrays. "All maner of myghty beggers, vagaboundes, and idill people" were to leave the City on pain of imprisonment in the stocks, and go to other places where their labours would be of use. The proclamation attempted to enforce in the City previous vagabond statutes, and charged the constables and other officials with the duty of carrying out the regulations.³ At the same time the wardmote inquests

1. Journal XI, f. 109vo, 5 June 1510. The precepts were sent to the aldermen in order that steps might be taken to ensure "the kynges peas, good order and rule" of the city.

2. Repert. II, f. 93.

3. For the full text see Appendix II, pp. 105-106. The proclamation is appended as one of the first City proclamations of the Tudor period dealing with vagabonds, and illustrates admirably the close connection between the general problem of order and that of vagrancy.
were to be summoned by their respective aldermen "to sitte and enquer in his warde of the poyntz specified in the charge of the wardemote, and specially of vagaboundes, commen bawdes and commen women." The results of the enquiry were to be presented at the Guildhall on the following Thursday, but unfortunately there is no record of the presentation of these indentures. This was a more determined attempt to preserve the peace than had been made for some time and included within its scope the treatment of vagabonds. Existing machinery was put in action and effort was made to enforce vagabond laws, whilst at the same time local orders were issued by proclamation.

A few years of inactivity followed these measures of 1510. The explanation for this is the war with France which meant that the City was busy preparing contingents of soldiers and raising loans for the king. With the population thus diminished and the authorities engaged in military matters it is not surprising that

1. Repert. II, f. 92v. The precepts issued with these instructions included general directions for keeping the peace. Every alderman was to call together all the inhabitants of his ward and command them "to take all maner persones, which herafter shall commyte any murdrre, make any affray, or in any wise breke the kynges peace." Journal XI, f. 112v.

attempts to deal with vagrancy were crowded out of the business of the City. However in 1514 when foreign hostilities ceased and the soldiers returned, the problem came to the fore again. Not only was the situation aggravated through the numbers of disband ed soldiers, but about this time the City was suffering from plague\(^1\) and also from scarcity of wheat. The authorities now took measures to deal with the impotent as well as with the vagabonds, and an enquiry was instituted into the administration of a charity known as Philpot's Alms, which was under municipal control.\(^2\)

The renewed activity took the form of organised searches. This policy had been employed in the City as early as 1309/10\(^3\) and had often been used since that time. The act of 1503/4 made specific provision for four searches a year for vagabonds and misruled persons,\(^4\) but until 1514 there is no record in the City archives of much organisation of these searches. In November of

\(^{1}\). C. Creighton, *A History of Epidemics in Britain*, I, pp. 288-292. Plague was particularly severe in 1513.

\(^{2}\). See below, pp. 235-287.

\(^{3}\). Supra, p. 104-105.

\(^{4}\). Supra, p. 133.
that year regulations were made by the Court of Aldermen, "For serches for vacabundes and myghty beggars." The aldermen were divided into eight groups, and calling before them the common councillors and constable of each ward were to "serche all hostryes & all other suspicious places within the seid wardes. And what ydell suspects persones & vagabundes they there shall fynde to commytte vnto ward there to remayn tylle they be justified." In the search the justices of the peace were to ride and all others were to proceed on foot.

The search was duly made, and two days later steps were taken to arrange for the examination of the culprits apprehended. Eight aldermen were named for the purpose,

1. This is the marginal note given in the Repertory at the beginning of the arrangements, see Repert. II, f. 200vo seq.; Letter Book M, f. 229 seq., 13 November 1514.

2. According to the injunctions for the search all offenders who were apprehended were to be committed to ward "there to remayn tylle they be justified and deluyered accordingly to this last proclamacion and commandement therof made & geuen" (Letter Book M, f. 229; Repert. II, f. 201). This last proclamation was probably the one of 23 June 1514, which referred to the watches of 23 June and 28 June. Persons resorting to the City were to keep the peace "upon payne of imprisonament, and further to make fyn & rannsom at the kyng pleasur." (Letter Book M, f. 221vo; Journal XI, f. 191.)
and the beadles were ordered to bring before them for trial at Leadenhall...alle suche suspekte persones & vagabundes as were taken in this last serche & lye in the stokkes and cages.«1 Searches of a similar nature were made on 11 December 1514² and 21 March 1514/15.³ This is the first evidence of a really thorough administration of policy. Organised searches were a new experiment in the City. They were designed to enforce regulations hitherto disregarded and being conducted in a detailed manner, locality by locality, were more likely to reveal the full extent of the problem.

1. Repert. II, f. 202, 15 November 1514. Leadenhall was a large market, for its history see Stow, op. cit., I, pp. 153-160. It was probably used for the examination of vagabonds on this occasion, because for some reason the Guildhall was not available.

2. Ibid., f. 205vo, 7 December 1514.

The activity of 1514 also provides one isolated case of an attempt to employ the vagabond on useful work and to insist upon his doing it. Punishment had always been considered the best means of curing vagabonds of their wandering habits and wily tricks, the tendency being for the punishments to become harsher. Occasionally the records show that the authorities realised that the surplus idle population should work. They banished vagabonds with the suggestion that they should go to places where their labours were needed; but the orders were vague, and in the City itself there had been no attempt to employ the idlers in useful ways. On 16 March 1514, however, authority was given to certain aldermen to take carts and set vagabonds to work with them at levelling the old laystall in Finsbury. If the vagabonds refused to labour they were to be committed to prison. No other case of the provision of employment is mentioned in the City records until much later, although Stow in his Survey states that "for clensing and scouring the common ditch betweene Aldgate and the Posterne next the Tower ditch" in 1519 "the chief ditcher

1. A laystall is a place where refuse or dung is laid. (N.E.D.)
had by the day vi. d. the second ditcher vi. d. the other ditchers v. d. And every vagabonde (for so were they termed) one penie the day meate and drinke, at charges of the Citie. n¹

In 1516 the central government again exerted itself, this time not in general proclamations and statutes but in definite interference in the City through the Privy Council, which presented to the recorder and representatives of the aldermen "a bill of certeyn articles" needing reformation. Among the matters listed for report was "the vsuall resorte of vagabundes & masterles folkes to the same citie."² There followed great activity in

1. Stow, op. cit., I, p.20. This reference was very kindly given to me by Miss Jeffries Davis. In the glossary to his edition Mr. Kingsford defines the word "vagabonde" in this context as "a common labourer" (ibid., II, p.417). No authority is quoted for this definition nor is it confirmed by the N.E.D. The threat of punishment in the City entry in 1514 seems to suggest that on that occasion at any rate idle vagabonds were to be used.

2. Repert. III, ff. 86-86² 4 June 1516. The list of articles were:
"Fyrst, the sedicious brutes there dayly hadde.
Item, the dyobeysaunce of the communes there.
Item, thinordinate prices of vitaylles, clothe, fustyyn & other wares.
Item, the lak of execucion of the statute of apparaill.
Item, the vsuall resorte of vagabundes & masterles folkes to the same citie.
Item, houses where vnlauffull games been exercised."
These matters cover a wide field and illustrate the problems allied to that of vagabondism and poverty.
enquiry into the questions raised by the Council, and within a few days at a meeting of the Court of Aldermen held at the Grocers' Hall a bill was read answering the articles.\(^1\) Unfortunately there is no record of the contents of this bill, which must have contained interesting information concerning the vagabond population.\(^2\) There are, however, cases of persons presented as vagabonds to the Court of Aldermen, probably as a result of the enquiry, which show that the authorities were not idle and that the Council's admonitions were taking effect. In the case of Robert Samond, who was tried on 10 July 1516, a new punishment was introduced. He was banished from the City as a vagabond "with a letter of V of yelowe wollen clothe fastenyd vpon his brest accordyng to the last ordinance therof made."\(^3\) Others who were

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2. R.R. Sharpe, London and the Kingdom, I, p. 354 notes this omission.

3. Repert. III, f. 95\(^v\). There is no trace of the ordinance mentioned, but it may possibly have been made in June at the time of the Privy Council enquiries. It is interesting to note that similar punishment was sometimes given to misruled women. Two women were presented on 18 September 1516, one Elizabeth Chechyn as a common harlot and the other Elizabeth Knight as a bawd. They were brought through the City in the usual manner for culprits of this nature, "the seid Elizabeth Chechyn hauyng on her brest a letter of H of yelowe wollen clothe in sygne & tokyn of a harlot... and the seyd Elizabeth Knyght hauyng vpon her oon shulder a lette of B in sygn & tokyn of a bawde." Letter Book N, f. 21-21\(^v\); Journal XI, ff. 264\(^v\)-265.
apprehended were able to justify themselves by proving employment. In addition to this enquiry, continued orders were given for the keeping of watches and the making of searches "for vagabundes & other idle & suspicious persons," who were to be apprehended and imprisoned. These attempts to check vagrancy thus encouraged by the intervention of the central government were still closely connected with the establishment of order. The authorities were still trying to solve the problem by banishing vagabonds from the City and in this way shifting the responsibility from themselves whilst maintaining the idea of settlement. The matters in which the Privy Council suggested reform are in practice closely related, and show that it was realised that an effective policy in relation to vagrancy involved the tackling of other problems too.

The following year proved eventful from many points of view and paved the way for the developments in vagabond policy of 1518. For one thing there was a bad epidemic of

1. Thomas Ippeswyche justified himself by saying that "he ys servaut to Sir Richard Wyngfeld, knyght, & that he ys logged with oon Johnson duelling agetnst the scaffold at Toure hyll." Repert. III, f. 97.

2. Ibid., f. 95vo, 10 July 1516.
sweating sickness in the summer which played havoc in the City and the consequent absence of the court was disastrous to good order and prosperity.1 Throughout 1517 a wheat scarcity was threatening, while in that same year the Evil May day riots occurred which gravely threatened the peace of the City. This combination of circumstances suggests an explanation of the serious attempts of the authorities to establish a much more thorough going vagrancy and poor law policy in 1518.

For the moment however existing methods were continued. Early in 1517 the aldermen were called on to report as to what they had done in their wards for "thvoydyng of vagabundes......accordyng to the commandement of the kings Counsell to theym geuen in that behalf."2 About the same time the king issued a proclamation for the open declaration and due execution of several statutes, "that is to say amonge manie other, the statut of Winchester, the actes of apparell, vacabonbes and laborers,"3 and there seems to have been some attempt to see that these orders were carried out

1. C. Creighton, op. cit., I, pp. 245-250.
3. B.M. Harleian MS. 442, f. 16, 19 February 1516/17. There is also a copy of the proclamation in the City records, Letter Book N, f. 35; Journal XI, f. 281.
in the City.\textsuperscript{1} Further, vagabonds continued to be apprehended and the punishments were made even harsher. On 24 September the beadles were ordered to bring to Leadenhall "all such myghty beggers & vagabundes as nowe be in the prisonis & cages of this Citie... And there euery of theym to haue sette on his brest a letter of V of yelowe cloth in signe & token of a vagabund, and frome thens to be dreven thoroughoute all Chepe, with basons ryngyng afore theym." Thirteen persons were punished on this occasion and banished from the City with the warning that if any one of them returned he was to be imprisoned, and then punished by having "an hole stryken in one of his erys with a stamp made for the same, and thenne to be banyashed this Citie for euer."\textsuperscript{2}

The greatly increased activity in 1518 was clearly occasioned in large part by anxiety as to public order after the disturbances of the previous year, while a

\begin{enumerate}
\item On 12 March 1516/17 letters patent from the king were read in the Court of Common Council concerning the statute of Winchester and the acts of apparel, vagabonds and labourers with the intent that they should be observed and carried out in the City. (Letter Book N, f. 34\textsuperscript{v ol'; Journal XI, f. 282\textsuperscript{v ol'.})
\item For the full text of these orders see Appendix III, pp. 407-409.
\end{enumerate}
further cause for action was the spread of pestilence among the large numbers of poor. The measures taken are of special significance, for they begin to treat the vagabond problem from two aspects, the one its relation to the maintenance of orderly rule in the City and the other the question of possible provision for the needy poor. The articles of February 1517/18 were produced at the instigation of the Privy Council. On 28 January the mayor and several of the aldermen attended at Westminster and received notice from the Council of certain matters requiring attention in the City. The questions for enquiry included excessive prices, seditious words against the king's proclamation concerning the plague,¹ the aiders of thieves, "thavoydyng of the grete multitude of myghty beggers, vagabundes & other suspecte persones oute of this Cite," organisation of watches and searches in every ward and regulations concerning fish.

In order to carry out this enquiry every alderman was

¹ The proclamation had been made on 12 January 1517/18 (Repert. III, f. 184vo). Regulations of the same nature were issued on 1 February (Letter Book N, ff. 65vo-66; Journal XI, ff. 319-319vo), whilst on 4 February the Court of Aldermen agreed that the Court of Common Council should be warned of the danger of seditious words against the king's proclamation concerning the plague. (Repert. III, f. 191.)
to summon two or three of "the most discreet persones of every parisshe" to certify to him the names of all the impotent poor in their parish, and also "the names of alle myghty, valiant and strong beggers, vagabundes and suspect persones abidying or resortyng to or within their seid parisshes." This information was to be presented in the Council chamber so that "a farther direccio may be hade in that behalfe." As a result certain articles were prepared in the Court of Aldermen on 1 February for "thavoydyng of alle myghty beggers and other suspiscious persones oute of the Cite," and these were finally read and granted on 6 February.¹

These articles are the most extensive formulation of poor law policy produced in this initial period. They illustrate the close connection between the problem of the vagabonds and that of the impotent poor, indeed, the greater part of the regulations contained in them deal

¹ These articles and the other relevant entries have been transcribed in full (see Appendix IV, pp. 140-142). The articles have also been transcribed by Mr. F. Aydelotte, (Elizabethan rogues and vagabonds, Appen. A.1, pp. 140-142) as the London orders of 1517. A more probable date would seem to be February 1517/18; the wording of the title suggests that the articles are those mentioned in the Repertory on 1 February 1517/18 (see Appendix IV (c) p. 143) and the conditions are those carried out after 6 February 1517/18 (see Appendix IV (e) p. 148).
with the latter, who were to be badged for purposes of begging in order to distinguish them from the vagabonds who would thus be prohibited from taking alms.\(^1\) No vagabonds were to be allowed to beg within the City but were to be punished according to the law.\(^2\) The authorities were trying to prevent the flooding of the City with "mighty beggars" by withdrawing from them alms meant for the impotent which had been a source of attraction to them, and by threatening them with punishment. The articles introduce new features not only in policy but in administration. Previously regulations had been carried out by the alderman, the wardmote and the ward officials - the constables and beadles. But these officers had other duties to perform and that of apprehending vagabonds, being one of many, might not always be fulfilled. This difficulty was overcome by the appointment of special officers, Henry Barker, carpenter, and two others to survey the badged beggars and the "vagabundes and myghty beggers repayryng to the

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1. The regulations concerning the impotent will be considered later in the examination of the growth of City policy dealing with the needy poor, see infra, pp. 288–291.

2. This must refer back to the statute of Henry VII in 1503/4, supra, pp. 132–133.
They were to report cases of the latter to the aldermen, constable and beadle, so that they might be dealt with according to statute. If these regulations were observed it would be difficult for the vagabond to escape detection. Apart from these special officials and the local officers, all the badged poor were exhorted to help in expelling vagabonds by reporting cases they were not able to deal with themselves. In this way not only was a renewed effort made to check vagabondism but there was more chance of its being effective, since it deprived the sturdy beggar of his maintenance and provided a more vigilant watch against his entering the City.

Whether or not the City authorities were satisfied with these measures as effective treatment for increased vagabondage, from 1518 to 1531 they were more active in developing the policy already framed than in experimenting along new lines. It may have been that their attention was engrossed by other immediate problems; foreign hostilities, pestilence and famine occupy a large proportion of the business of the City courts during these years. From 1522 to 1525 we were actively at war with France which plunged the City into a series of arrangements for loans to the king, whilst from 1519 to 1522 pestilence

and famine followed one another in quick succession and caused acute anxiety again in 1528.\(^1\) At the very end of the period begin the sweeping religious changes which tended to increase distress by removing some available sources of charity from the poor.

During this period, as before, the policy of the central government is necessary to an understanding of City activity. This policy culminates in the act of 1531 which sums up all the experiments of the period. In 1519 the Privy Council interfered in the City and tried to check vagrancy by organising several searches "in London and the suburbs and other villages adjoinant" for idle, vagrant and suspicious persons.\(^2\) A further instance of the desire of the central authorities to check vagabondism is seen in the exclusion of vagrants from the court in 1526. Articles were drawn up in January of this year for the reformation of the king's household and these deputed the knight marshal and his officers to see to the exclusion of boys and vile persons and the punishment of vagabonds and beggars, whose presence about the court caused "great confusion,\n
\(^1\) The fourth epidemic of the sweating sickness was in 1528, see C. Creighton, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 250-255.

\(^2\) These searches will be discussed more fully when tracing policy in London, see *infra*, pp. 160-162.
annoyance, infection, trouble and dishonor."¹ If the
great households followed this example to any extent
then the sturdy beggar was deprived of one of the chief
sources of his maintenance which made the problem more
urgent for municipality and state.

The greatest activity of the central government
came in 1527 and 1528 and affected the whole country.
The harvest failed and the situation which resulted was
serious enough to necessitate government action. The
orders issued dealing with the food shortage included
regulations concerning vagabonds, a further example
of the realisation that the two problems were closely
connected. The proclamation issued to the sheriff of
Kent in November 1527 forbidding regrating, forestalling
and engrossing of wheat and other grain ordered him at
the same time to enforce the statute of Winchester and
other statutes concerning vagabonds, unlawful games and
alehouses.² Another proclamation arranged for commissioners
to search for concealed corn in every town and village
and to enforce the same statutes,"idle persons having of
late very much increased, which has led to continual

¹. L., and P., IV, 1, 1939.
². Ibid., II, 3572, 12 November 1527.
thefts, burglaries and murders. There are many records of these searches for corn and vagabonds in various parts of the country. One instance of the commissioners at work in Northamptonshire is seen in the record of a session held at Marham in the hundred of Nass Burgi. Report was made concerning supplies of corn and relating to dealings with vagabonds. The commissioners had made a night search of all inns and alehouses, and had commanded officers to continue these searches at least twice weekly and to bring suspect persons before them. They had punished and expelled all valiant beggars and idle persons, and had enquired about offenders against the statutes dealing with hand guns, crossbows and greyhounds. Similar reports came from other places.

The harvest of 1528 was fortunately fairly plentiful, the country was restored to normal conditions, and the activities of the central government ceased for the time being.

In 1530, however, the king issued a proclamation

1. L. and P., IV, ii, 3587, (3) 18 November 1527.
2. Ibid., 3712, 30 December 1527.
3. For other examples illustrative of these searches, referring to Stoke and the north riding of Yorkshire see ibid., 3664 and 3822.
dealing with the question. This opened with a recital of the evils resulting from idleness, "the mother and roote of all vices"; the vagrant laws had not been observed and so "the sayde nombres of vacabundes and beggers, be not seen in any parte, to be mynyshed but dayly to be augmented and encreased in to great rowtes and companyes." The king then proceeded to outline a policy and administration, which was in many features very similar to that already in force in London. He commanded "all justices of the peas, maires, sheryffes, constables, bursholders, tethynge men, and other his mynysters" to seize any vagabond of either sex, who two days after the proclamation was not making his way towards the hundred of his birth or of his last three years' residence, bearing with him a billet authorising his journey. The offenders were to be stripped and beaten, and then sent on their journey with a bill certifying the whipping and under pain of further punishment if they disobeyed. On the homeward journey they were not to tarry in any place longer than a dinner time or night. If a vagabond who was taken affirmed that he had already been whipped but had no billet, he was to be examined. Then if he bore the marks of the previous whipping he was to be given a certificate, otherwise he was to be
scourged. The conditions were severe and fairly comprehensive. It would be difficult for vagabonds to escape if the officers did their duty, as the proclamation urged "al vayne pitie and other excuses layde a parte." The punishment of whipping had already by 1531 been used in the City in cases of vagabond offenders, but after punishment and banishment the City assumed no further responsibility. This proclamation adopts the London policy, but goes further in making arrangements for the removal of vagabonds to their rightful districts.

Meanwhile in the City there was a definite attempt to put into force the articles of 1517/18. The impotent poor were badged; on 18 February 1517/18 the aldermen were given 772 badges to distribute to the needy poor

1. For the proclamation in full see F. Aydelotte, op. cit., pp. 142-145. It is also calendared by Mr. Steele, R. Steele, I, p. 13, No. 121. The form of the billet given after a whipping was: "A.B. taken at C. in the countie of D. as a vagabund, without a cedule or token of skourginge, and therefore whipped at C. aforesaid the day of the moneth of the yere of the reigne of our soueraigne lorde kynge Henry the eyght, in the presence of T.E. constable and other of the inhabitantes of the same towne."

2. See infra, p. 165°.
of their respective wards, and thus distinction was
drawn between the impotent and the rogue. This was
not all. It will be remembered that three special
officers were to be appointed to survey both the poor
of the City and the idle vagabonds resorting thither
and see that the regulations were carried out. These
officers, "the Surveyours of the Beggers" as they were
styled, were duly appointed, and special badges prepared
for them to wear as a sign of their office. The
articles themselves made no arrangement for the wages
of these new officers, but in May 1518 the mayor and
aldermen agreed that the chief surveyor should have
"yerely of the Chamber for his wages iiiij marcs &
twyes clothynge" and also his "mete & drynk in the mayres

1. For the full list of the number of badges distributed
by the respective aldermen see Appendix IV (f),
pp. 418-420. 

2. Repert. III, f. 197, 9 March 1517/18. The entry
reads: "Memorandum that the chamberleyyn hath payed
to my lorde mayre for William Alder for iiiij
scochens embrowdred for the iiiij Surveyours of the
Beggers iiiij. The word 'scochens', given in the
N.E.D. as standing for "scutcheon", a badge, has
been read as 'scochens' by the indexer of the
records of the Court of Aldermen and by Miss Leonard,
op. cit., p. 25, and interpreted as 'sock hosen'.
In this thesis the reading 'scochens' has been
adopted as more possible, since it bears a direct
relation to scutcheon or escutcheon. The badges
probably bore the arms of the City.
hous for the tyme beyng." The two servants were to be given two sets of clothes each as well, and twenty six shillings and eight pence as a yearly wage. They were provided with their meals, which they were to receive from the sheriffs.¹ Later in the year it was found that Henry Barker, the first appointed surveyor, was not fulfilling the post to the best of his abilities, consequently he was removed from office and John Abbot was appointed in his stead.² The office continued, and when Abbot died in 1523 Robert Pykeryng one of the sheriff's yeomen was appointed with the grandiloquent title of "Mayster & cheff avoyder & keper owte of this Citie & the liberties of the same of all the myghty vagabundes & baggers & all other suspect persones."³ By the appointment of surveyors and the hedging of the poor the main orders concerning vagabonds were completed, and there was less chance for the idle rogue to flourish when relief was withdrawn from him and at the same time a more vigilant watch kept over his movements.

Apart from these activities arising from the orders

2. Letter Book N, f. 100; Repert. III, f. 250v°, 20 December 1518.
3. Repert. IV, f. 154v°, 3 July 1523.
of 1517/18 the plan of organised searches which had been developing before 1518 was continued in the City, and often at the instigation of the central government. There was a considerable organisation of searches by the king's Council in July 1519. On 8 July commissioners were appointed to make a general search in London and the surrounding districts "on Sunday at night next coming, being the 10th day of July, and afterwards set over till the 17th of the same month." The arrangements were corroborated by the

1. This activity may possibly be accounted for by the fear of disturbance following the election of Charles of Spain as Emperor, 28 June 1519.

2. L. and P. III, i, 365 (1). Commissioners were appointed for (a) the city of London (b) St. Martin's (c) Southwark, Bermondsey, St. Olaves, Kentish Street, the Banke, Paris Garden (d) Lambeth and Lambeth Marsh (e) Kennington, Newington, Camberwall, Peckham and Clapham (f) Wandsworth, Battersea and Wimbledon (g) St. Katharine's, Tower Hill, East Smithfield and Whitechapel (h) Stepney, Mile End, Poplar, Ratcliffe, Limehouse (i) Hackney, Newington and Kingsland (j) Shoreditch and Hoxton (k) Islington, Holloway, St. John's Street, Cowcross, Trille Myle Street, Charterhouse Lane (l) Holborn, Kentish Town, St. Giles', Paddington (m) Temple Bar to Charing Cross (n) Toteshill Street, King Street, the Sanctuary, the Palace and St. Stephen's (i) Chaunceler Lane (p) Kensington, Hammer smith, Knightsbridge and Chelsea.
Court of Aldermen, the search was held at midnight and fifty-five idle, vagrant and suspicious persons were taken in the City alone. Privy searches on similar lines were held later in the year and the culprits

1. Repert. V, f. 136. 8 July 1519. "Item yt ys agreed that the wacche shal contynes as yt nowe doth tyl Sunday next be passyd. Item that euery aldreman in his propre persone shall cause suche persones as shall wacche with hym to cumme to hym in his house, & then to charge hym to be with hym on Sunday nyght at xij of the clok, but as then no thing to shewe theym of the mater. Item, that all gates shall be shytte in at the houte of X of the clok. Item, that euery aldreman may be advertised by their bedelles of all the houses suspecte in their wardes, but in no wyse to disclose the day etc."

2. A document is preserved among the State Papers giving "the names of suche idell, vagrant and suspesceous persons as were taken by the mayre and aldermen in the Citie of London in their seuell wardes at the prevy watche and serche vpon Sonday nyght last passed by the commandement of the kynges most honorable Counseill at xij of the clokke after mydnyght" (P.R.O. State Papers, Hen. VIII, 18, f. 225). For the calendared reference to the document see L. and P., III, i, 365 (3). The offenders were taken in the following wards, 7 in --- (mutilated); 3 in Cripplegate; 3 in Aldgate; 2 in Bassishaw; 2 in Cheap; 9 in Langbourn; 2 in Aldersgate; 1 in Vintry; 5 in Queenhithe; 3 in Bradstrete; 13 in Billingsgate; 3 in Farringdon Without and 2 in Castle Baynard. The City records also note the accomplishment of the search; certain aldermen went to Westminster to the Cardinal "cum personis captis ad median noctem die dominica ultima." (Repert. V, f. 136vo, 19 July 1519). For the record of apprehensions made in the surrounding districts, see L. and P., III, i, 365 (4), (5), (6), (7).

3. Ibid., 365 (8) and (9); 484.
apprehended on these occasions were examined in the usual way by the mayor and aldermen. Thus the Privy Council was interfering more directly in administration; before this it had simply ordered enquiries in the City, now it was actively initiating and supervising searches. Privy searches continued to be a favourite method of the City authorities for rounding up vagabonds and suspected persons; for example, in 1522 one was arranged for both London and the shire of Middlesex for the apprehension of "vagabundes & other brybours & theves, which nowe dayly lye in awayte by the kings high way to robbe the kings liege people."²

The only change in City vagrancy policy between 1518 and 1531 was in the direction of increased punishment. The orders of 1517/18 did not affect the punishment of vagabonds, which still followed the statutes of Henry VII. As these orders however did not produce the desired reform, the authorities went in for a more

1. L. and P., III, i, 365 (19).

2. Repert. VI, f. 9, 11 December 1522. For other references to these searches see Repert. V, f. 155; Repert. IV, f. 215; Repert. VIII, f. 10, f. 44⁰; Journal XIII, f. 206⁰. They were always held late at night and were "to be kept verye secrete." The Privy Council was again organising searches in February 1524/25 (L. and P., IV, i, 1082).
strictly repressive policy by increasing the severity of the punishment. The first sign of this change in policy was seen in June 1521, when special regulations were issued concerning certain vagabonds who were common thieves, known as "pryve brybours & pykers." They were to be apprehended and "sette vpon a newe engyne to be made & sette faste to the standard in Chepe...... and the oon eere of them shalbe faste nayled therto with papers on theyr heddes wroton with these wordes "For Pryve Pykers."  

The usual procedure after punishment was to banish the vagabonds from the City in the hope that they might depart to their own districts. But neither the punishment nor the expulsion could ensure that the sturdy beggar would go peacefully to his home. In all probability he would wait for some favourable opportunity to slip into the City again. This constantly happened and in March 1521/22 we hear of certain vagabonds being apprehended for a second time. They were imprisoned and then banished once more with the warning that further return would mean "imprisonement in Newgate by the space of oon yere and oon dayes, and after the yere and dayes

1. Repert IV, f. 76v.
to have further punysshement, whiche shalbe to theym paynfull and grevous.\textsuperscript{1} Thus the City authorities increased the penalties, but the real weakness of the system still remained for it relied for its effectiveness solely on punishment and disclaimed all responsibility as soon as the vagabond was banished.

In the following year, in view of the approaching meeting of Parliament, the mayor and aldermen issued a proclamation dealing with prices, the treatment of guests at the inns and the surplus population of idle women and valiant beggars who encouraged immorality in the City and deprived the poor of their "sustenances and lyvynges". This proclamation merely enforced existing rules and contained no new regulation for the treatment of vagabonds. It ordered them to depart from the City under penalty of "grevous payne & punyshement" if they returned, whilst citizens were warned against harbouring suspicious persons, and the constables and other City officials were urged to be vigilant in pursuance of their duties relating to vagrants.\textsuperscript{2}

At the end of 1524 the punishment of vagabond

\textsuperscript{1} Letter Book N, ff. 192\textsuperscript{vo}-193; Journal XII, f. 168.
\textsuperscript{2} For the full text see Appendix V, pp. 421-425.
offenders was made even more severe, in the persisting hope that it would be rendered more effective. Culprits were to be tied to the back of a cart and stripped naked from the waist upwards. They were then to be whipped by the sheriffs' officers at certain places in the City. The chamberlain was deputed to see to the making of "rownde colers of iron.... havyng the armes of this citie vppon theym," which the vagabonds were to wear as a sign of their wrong doing and as a warning to others.¹ Whipping continued to be the recognised punishment for vagabonds throughout the remaining years of the period, and in January 1527/28 a record was commenced in the Journal of all those who were whipped in the City, but unfortunately it did not survive long enough to give an adequate picture of the extent of vagabondism.²

In 1531 all the early experiments of the London and central authorities were summed up by "An Acte concernynge punysshement of Beggers and Vacabundes."³

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¹ For the full text of these orders see Appendix VI, p. 426.
² See Appendix VII, pp. 427-428.
³ Statutes, III, pp. 328-332. The act was passed by the Parliament beginning 16 January 1530/31. It is interesting to note that this same Parliament passed an act dealing with a specialised class of wanderers, those "dyverse and many outlandysse People callynge themselfes Egyptians," see supra, p. 45 n.1.
We will here note only the main provisions of this act, which coincide to a great extent with City policy. The act marks a distinct advance on previous acts by drawing a clearer distinction between the impotent poor and the mighty beggar, a distinction evident in the City regulations from 1518. All "Justyces of Peace, Mayres, Sheryffes, Baylyffes and other Offycers of all and every Cytie, Borough, Ryddygges or Franches" were to find out the "aged, poore & impotent persones" in their districts who were compelled to live on account of their infirmities on the alms of the people, and these were to be licensed to beg within certain limits, statutory form thus being given to the policy already in existence in London. The principle of settlement was still maintained and impotent beggars found asking alms outside their limits or unlicensed were to be punished.

The treatment of the vagabond in this act was also similar to that used by the City authorities and authorised by the king's proclamation of 1530. He was to "be tyed to the end of a Carte naked and be beten wyth Whyppes thoroughge cute the same Market Towne or other place tyll his Body be blody by reason of suche whyppyng." He was then to be given a certificate of his punishment and sent forthwith to the place of his birth or of his
last three years' residence. Poor scholars, shipwrecked
mariners and released prisoners might only be allowed to
beg if properly licensed, otherwise they were to be
treated as vagabonds. Unlicensed proctors and pardoners
and other idle persons using illegal games or fortune
telling for their living were to be punished with whipping
on two days; on the second offence they were to be
scourged two days and on the third day were to be placed
on the pillory and to have one ear cut off, whilst on
the third offence they were to be punished by whipping,
the pillory and having the other ear cut off. The act
serves to illustrate the importance of municipal policy
and administration since it embodies principles already
applied within the City; but as in the case of all
previous policy its effectiveness was bound to be
limited because it was mainly repressive.

On 18 June 1531 proclamation was made in the
City for this act to be put in "due and effectuall
execucion" by 24 June, "the feaste of Sainte John
Baptest;"¹ whilst another proclamation enforced it in

¹. Journal XIII, f. 272vo. "Proclamacio facta xvij°
die Junij pro lez beggers et vacabondes." For other
manuscript copies of the proclamation see Harl. MS.
442, f. 81 and Antiq. I (58). It is also calendared
by Mr. Steele, R. Steele, I, p. 14, No. 125.
the king's court, and commanded "that al vagaboundes, mighty begers and other ylde parsonnes, whiche do haunte and folowe the courte do departe fromme thens within xxiiiij howers after this proclamacionne."¹

During this period attempts were made by both the City and central authorities to deal with other related problems, in particular with tippling houses and illegal games, which affected the sturdy beggar by placing strict supervision over his likely haunts. There had been enquiries into the subject of unlawful games in the City in 1510 and also in 1516 following the Privy Council's demand for reformation of the "houses where unlawfull games be exercised." This policy of supervision of gaming centres continued, and promoters of illegal games were often presented to the Court of Aldermen for punishment. For example, complaint was made against one, William Dodde, in 1519 that he had

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¹ B.M. Addit. MS. 9635, f.l. seq. The proclamation is undated in the manuscript, but the date 16 June 1530 has been given to it in the Letters and Papers (L. and P., IV, iii, Appen. 258). This is impossible as the proclamation is to enforce the vagabond act passed "in his parlament assembled holdenne at Westminster the xvij of January in the xxij yere of his moste noble reigne" - i.e., 16 January 1530/31. Further, the proclamation would appear to have been made at some date after 24 June, 1531 as it refers to "the feeste of Saincte John Battiste laste past."
"diverse & many idle & suspecte persons" playing cards and illegal games in his tavern "the Goote in Chepe". Two royal proclamations were issued during the period, in 1526 and 1528, ordering the enforcement of the laws prohibiting illegal games.

Alehouses, tippling houses and inns also called for supervision. In 1518 there was an attempt to prevent idleness, especially among apprentices and servants, which tended to increase through the habit of people resorting "into cellers & yawtes, where ale and bere & other vitaylles ys solds," and there sitting "ettyng & drynkyng excessyuely."
The Court of Common Council therefore agreed that the aldermen should stop this practice in their respective wards, and in this way it was hoped to remove centres which harboured idlers and where vagabonds and sturdy beggars would probably congregate. Then in 1520 the mayor charged the aldermen

1. Repert. IV, f. 27vo, 27 October 1519.
3. Ibid., p. 12, No. 113; L. and P., IV, 11, 4998.
to summon before them the innkeepers of their wards who were to certify "the names of all such gestes & straungers as be loged with them & what behaouer they be of & of their besyynes & cause of their here tarynyng." If there was any person for whom the innkeeper would not answer he was to be examined by the alderman and was to avoid the City, if he had "no reasonable cause why he shuld so long tary here." The innkeepers were to report every Wednesday and Saturday and in this way a check was placed on the strangers in the City. Again, in 1527 in the articles devised for the "comen weale" of the City one recommendation aimed at restricting "tippling" and incidentally vagabondism. This advised that in future only those, who "shalbe thought gode and honest by the alderman of the warde or his deputie, and by hym to be admytted," should be allowed to keep tippling houses, and they were warned "to suffer noo mennys apprentices to be in secrete places drynkyng in their saide howses, commyn women, bawdes, nor vacaboundes." 

Apart from these restrictions, misruled men and

1. Journal XII, f. 78vo, 29 October 1520.
2. Letter Book 0, ff. 48vo-49. This article was ratified again by the Common Council on 30 August 1529, ibid., ff. 160vo-161; Journal XIII, ff. 156-156vo.
women were continually presented to the Courts and punished according to the ancient custom of the City, which would impose a further check on vagabondism, since evil life was common among idle beggars. The close connection between the problems of immorality, vagrancy and idleness is seen in a City proclamation of 1526, which was designed to keep the City peaceful at Christmas time. After making regulations concerning certain games and the selling of ale and beer it proceeds to deal with "the fowle, horryble and detestable synne of lechery, whiche dayly groweth and ys used more than it hath been in daies passed by the meanes of bawdes, strumpettes and other ydell women dayly vagraunt and

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1. The customary punishment for male offenders of this nature was the pillory followed by expulsion from the City. For an example of this type see Letter Book C, ff. 154vo-155; Journal XIII, f. 141vo. This deals with the case of a common bawd presented by the wardmote for punishment. It was ordered that he should be "conveyed from the prison that he came froo to the prison of Newgate, and from thens to be conveid with mynstralsy as bases & pannes ryngyng before hym through Chepe and to the pillary in Cornhill, and thervppon to be set duryng the tyme of this proclamacion. And from thens soo to be conveide in & aboute the saide warde of Bradstrete, and soo from thens to Algate and ther to be bannyshed this Citie." Cases of women harlots and bawds have already been noted, (supra, p.145-146). Women were very often punished with the cucking stool instead of the pillory. For an example of this punishment see Repert. VIII, f. 43vo.
walkynge abowte the streetes and lanes of this Citie and suburbs of the same; and also resorntyng to tavernes and other private places of the same provokynge many other persones to the saide synne. These offenders were ordered to depart from the City and if apprehended were to be imprisoned until they were punished.¹

The remaining feature of this first period of policy to be noted is wardmote activity. Apart from the special enquiries made through its medium, which have already been noted, the wardmote continued its customary presentment of vagabonds. Unfortunately few verdicts of the wardmote inquests are extant,² but some of the details of the ward presentments may often be found entered in the minutes of the Court of Aldermen

¹ Letter Book 0, ff. 27vo-28; Journal XII, ff. 366vo-367vo, 10 December 1526. "Proclamacio erga festum natalis Domini."²

² The only separate verdicts for the period which I have been able to discover are five in number, one for Portsoken, 1507; three for Aldersgate, 1510, 1528 and one undated; and one for Broad Street, 1523. The Portsoken verdict is preserved at the Guildhall Record Office in the file of Portsoken presentments (see Appendix I, pp. 376-377); the ones for Aldersgate are in the Guildhall Library (MSS. 1499, 1500, 1501), whilst the Broad Street verdict is at the P.R.O. (see L. and P. III, ii, 3657). There are no other verdicts in the Guildhall collections until the late seventeenth century from which time they run fairly continuously.
or Court of Common Council. These all show that the
business of this local court and the inquest jury was
substantially the same as at an earlier date. A study
of the three available verdicts for Aldersgate ward
presents a long procession of the people indicted as
harlots, bawds, strumpets, disturbers of the peace,
thieves, nightwalkers, vagabonds and harbourers of
suspect persons. In 1510 "John Lylley, the bakere,"
was presented "for a brekere of the kynges pece and for
an nese dropper, and a mysse behaved persson of his
towne." At another time a person was presented for
keeping a house of "moche ylle rewle besyde as resortyng
of thevys and vakabondes." There is one interesting
indictment of a beadle, who did not carry out his duties
in the apprehension of suspect persons but gave away secret
information concerning a privy watch: "Item we present
Thoms Borne, the bedylle, for sewyng the prevy counsellles
of the prevy watche, and also gyvyng suspessyous perssons
warnyng and knewlege than the cunstabilles and watche
culde not haue their intentes."

Transition and experiment were the keynotes of
this first period of vagabond policy in the City of
London transition from the previous spasmodic attempts
to deal with the sturdy beggar to a more regular and
organised policy, and experiment in various methods of tackling the problem. The authorities, both state and municipal, were actuated at the opening of the period mainly by the desire to deal with the vagabond in so far as he was a menace to law and order. Before its close another aspect was becoming increasingly apparent, namely the relationship of the vagabond problem to that of the impotent poor. This involved a wider outlook which is visible also in the attempts to tackle problems closely allied to vagrancy.

State and City, as has been shown, worked along the same lines and occasionally acted in conjunction. City policy was on the whole however a forerunner of State activity and experiments already tried by the London authorities were incorporated in statutory legislation. The main features of this policy can be briefly stated. It applied the principle of settlement, vagabonds being ordered back to their appropriate districts; there seems to have been no realisation of the advantage of a mobile labour supply. Searches and enquiries were developed and more thoroughly organised, while special officers were appointed and administrative methods worked out in more detail. Finally punishment was made increasingly severe as the only means of dealing
with the vagabond and coercing him into leaving the City.

Vagrancy policy in London was following natural lines, developing existing machinery, using fuller organisation to make it effective and relying on settlement and punishment as preventives of vagabondism; yet such a policy, even if conscientiously administered, had little chance of success since it effected no cure for that enforced idleness which was at the root of all vagabondism.
CHAPTER IV.

Administration and Development of Vagrancy Policy in London, 1531 to 1552.

"Ydlenes that hydeouse serpent
whoe, loighteringe like a peasaunt pestilent,
Lurkethe in corners vnoccupied."


"And woulde God the maiestrates
woulde se men set a worke,
And that within thys realms
none were suffered to lurke."


In contrast with the experiment and development in policy of the first period, great administrative activity was the chief characteristic of the years 1531 to 1552. The numbers of vagabonds apprehended and tried by the Court of Aldermen, the repeated attempts to enforce existing regulations and the further organisation of the new City officers assigned to deal with the vagrancy problem all bear witness to this.

There was however a fuller realisation of the inter-relation of the problems of vagrancy and poverty,
especially after the suppression of the hospitals and monastic foundations which made the relief of the poor by public authorities a more urgent matter. This was to lead directly to the foundation of the Royal Hospitals. Further, in the desire to check the encroachments of the vagabond upon the relief needed by the impotent, punishment, the acknowledged method of dealing with vagabondism, became ever more severe and reached its culminating point of brutality in the draconian law of 1547. A quite different method which had already made its appearance was to employ the idle vagrant in some useful work,¹ and although still in its infancy this policy was developing throughout the period until in 1552 it was advocated by the citizens in their suit to the Privy Council for the grant of Bridewell. "And first, may it please your honors to understand, that it was too evident to all men that beggary and thievery did abound. And we remembering how many statutes from time to time have been made for the redress of the same, and little amendment hath hitherto followed, thought to search the cause hereof, and after due examination had, we evidently perceived that the cause of all this misery

1. Supra, pp. 143-144.
and beggary was idleness; and the mean and remedy to cure the same must be by its contrary, which is labour.¹

Another feature of the period is the more frequent attention paid to the problem by the State, which declares its policy in various proclamations and statutes and interferes in administration through the Privy Council.

The period may be considered chronologically in two sections, taking the act of 1547 as the dividing line.

(1) Policy and Administration, 1531-1547.

Policy and administration directly concerned with vagrancy may first be considered and then policy in allied problems. For both City and State the vagrancy act of 1536, which supplemented the act of 1531 and was made necessary by the latter's deficiencies, marks the end of a period of relative inactivity and lack of experiment during which the authorities were mainly concerned with trying to enforce existing regulations. No great food shortage accentuated the problem, and though there were

¹ T. Bowen, Extracts from the records and court books of Bridewell hospital, Appendix II, p. 3.
two severe outbreaks of plague in the autumn of 1532 and the summer of 1535, the authorities were too busy with the great religious changes of the times to give more than a limited attention to the problem of vagrancy.

The king issued a proclamation, probably in 1533, dealing with the matter in relation to the court. This ordered "that all vagaboundes, maysterles folkes, rascals & other idell persons whiche hath vused to hange on, haunts & followe the courte do departe from thens within xxiiij hours after this proclymacion made apon suche paynes as in his laws therfore is appoynted." It also contained strict injunctions to all court officials to see to this exclusion and prohibited the distribution of food at the gates.1 Another royal proclamation ordering the punishment of offence against certain statutes, including those dealing with vagabonds may possibly have been issued first in 1533, but as it was not proclaimed in London until 1537/38 it will be

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1. B.M. Addit. MS, 9835, ff. 11v0-11v. The proclamation is calendared by Mr. Steele and dated as c. 1533 (R. Steele, I, p. 15, No. 135). The suggested date is supported by the fact that in certain "remembrances" of the royal household of 1533 one point listed for attention is "touching the exclusion of vagabonds from the court." L. and P. VI, 1609.
considered under that date.\footnote{1}

Meanwhile the City had done little to see that the act of 1531 was carried out, and early in 1532 was rebuked by the king for this negligence. On 5 March 1531/32 the recorder reported to the Court of Aldermen that the king had commanded him to show them "howe that all the beggers & vagabundes of this realme be cume en effecte oute of the cuntrye in to this Citie, & here they be socoured & not taken & arreste accordyng to the laste acte of Parliament."\footnote{2} There was certainly more activity in the autumn of this year when special circumstances made it necessary in the interests of public order. In October plague was ravaging the City\footnote{3} and at the same time the king departed on a state visit to France.\footnote{4} It was feared that there might be disturbance in the City during the king's absence and as usual on

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1. See \textit{infra} pp.188-89.
4. On this occasion the king was accompanied by Anne Boleyn (A.F. Pollard, \textit{Henry VIII}, pp. 294-295), which probably displeased the citizens with whom this approaching match of the king was unpopular. The citizens however did not openly demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the match until the following Easter. R.R. Sharpe, \textit{London and the kingdom}, I, p. 388.
such an occasion it was deemed expedient to put in force regulations concerning vagabonds. Thus, on 10 October precepts were issued to the aldermen for a good and substantial watch to be kept nightly, better equipped and of greater number than previous watches. All the constables were to be charged to "put in due execution with all speed & diligence that they can or maye the acts of Parliament lately made and provided for and concernynge the ponyshement and repressynge of mighty baggers and vagabondes."¹ These directions appear to have been carried out quite effectively² and by 25 October John Aleyn, a former lord mayor, was able to report to Cromwell that the City was quiet and watch duly kept from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m.³

There is no further evidence of the vagabond clauses of the act being enforced until 1534, although


2. The Privy Council reported to the king from London on 14 October that search had been made in the City and suburbs, but no great number had been taken (L. and P. 5, V, 1421). Again on 23 October we read of another search to be held the following Sunday "generally throughout the realm in secret manner" (ibid., 1466), and similar activity continued throughout the month (ibid., 1472, 1473).

3. Ibid., 1469. The arrangements were so efficient that "like watch was never seen."
in March 1533 the chamberlain was ordered to provide the licensing tokens for every alderman to deliver to the impotent of his ward. In 1534 the session of Parliament provided a particular reason for keeping order and on 18 February the mayor issued precepts to the aldermen of a very similar nature to those of 1532. They were again to summon their respective constables before them and charge them to keep "a sufficient and couenable watche nightly", and also to "doo alle their diligens endeouour and attendaunce to see all the valiaunt and sturdy vagaboundes and beggers, beynge founde resorityng within their lymyttes, to be ordered accordyng to the statute hereof last made and provided for their punyshement in that behalff." On the 19th the Court of Aldermen ordered that a proclamation should be made embodying these details. The following months were disturbed by the dissatisfaction caused by the Act of Succession, and

2. This was the Parliament which passed the Act of Succession. Commissioners were appointed to tender the oath to the citizens, and by 20 April the "most part of the city was sworn." R.R. Sharpe, op. cit., I, pp. 389-390.
consequently later in the year when not only the session of Parliament\(^1\) but the proposed visit of the ambassador of France\(^2\) necessitated good order, mayoral precepts were once more issued to the aldermen. They were ordered to see that the watch was kept, that the streets were clean and well lighted at night, that the inhabitants of each ward treated the strangers well on the ambassador's visit, and lastly that the vagabond act of 1531 was put in execution.\(^3\)

It is obvious from the spasmodic nature of these instructions that no consistent attempt was made by the City authorities to put in force the regulations of 1531, and meanwhile the numbers of vagabonds were not decreasing. There is evidence that in 1535 the authorities were reconsidering their policy in the matter. On 27 April the Court of Aldermen agreed "that to-morowe at afternoone Master Roche & Master Bowyer shalbe here to awayte vpon my lorde mayer for the

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1. This session of Parliament commenced on 3 November 1534.

2. The visit of the ambassador took place on 21 November and arrangements were made for his reception by the civic authorities. Letter Book P, ff. 52-52\(^{\text{vo}}\), Repert. IX, f. 84.

reformacion of valyant beggars; Thrower & Pykeryng to be here also. Unfortunately there is no record of the result of this enquiry. Then in July we find the mayor again issuing precepts for the watch and at the same time ordering the enforcement of the vagabond act.

Apart from these activities there was one interesting new experiment in poor law policy before 1536. In 1533 it was agreed that "in avoydyng of these comen beggers oute of the parishe churches of this Citie......every alderman or his deputie shall wekely depute some honest persones of every parishe churche within the liberties of this Citie to gather the devocions of the parishens; and the same to be delyuered at the churche dores to pore folke etc." The recorder was ordered to find out what the Bishop of London thought about the matter.

1. Repert. IX, f. 105. Pickering, it will be remembered, was appointed "surveyour of the beggars" in 1523 (supra, p. 159). Thrower may possibly have held an office of that nature, although a Thomas Thrower is mentioned in 1536 as "kapar of the recordes of London." (Repert. IX, f. 229, 7 December 1536).

2. Letter Book P, f. 63vo; Journal XIII, f. 446vo, 8 July 1535. It may be noted here that on 6 July Sir Thomas More was executed, and this may have caused unrest in the City.

3. Letter Bock P, f. 9vo, 1 April 1533; Repert. VIII, f. 274vo, 4 March 1532/3.
There is no further reference to this policy of church collections but the proposal is important as the first step towards a compulsory poor rate and would act as a check on the sturdy beggar by removing available alms from him.

Then in 1536 another act "for punysshement of sturdy vacabundes and beggers" was passed to remedy the deficiencies of the previous act, which had made no provision, so the preamble of the new act states, "hows and in what wise the said pore people and sturdie vacabundes shuld be ordered at ther repaire and at theyr commyng into thir cuntryes, nor howe thinhabitauntes of every hundred shuld be charged for the reliefe of the same pore people, nor yet for the setting and keping in works and labour of the aforesaid valiaunt vacabundes at theyr said repaire into every hundred of this Realme." Two principles are recognised here; firstly the duty of each district to maintain its poor and secondly the necessity of work as a cure for vagrancy.

In this act the plan of collections already instituted in the City was adopted for the relief of the

1. 27 Hen. VIII c. 25, Statutes, III, pp. 558-562.
poor,\(^1\) while the regulations concerning vagabonds were made even more severe. On the second offence, after a whipping the vagabond was to have "the upper parts of the gristell of his right ear cut out of,"\(^2\) and on a third offence he was to suffer death as a felon.\(^3\)

Further, the vagabond class was widened to include "all and every idell personne and personas ruffelers calling themselves servingmen as well within the Citie of London as within all other Cities."\(^4\) City officers were ordered to have a privy search at least once a month "to thentente that all ruffelers sturdie vacaboundes and valuaunte beggers and other suspecte persones may be by suche meanes apprehended, taken and ordered according to the purpore and meanyng of this present acte."\(^5\) Thus the act while directing that all sturdy vagabonds and valiant beggers should be set to work, makes no provision for carrying the direction into

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1. **Infra**, pp. 293

2. Treatment of a similar nature it will be remembered had already been advocated in 1531 for certain types of idle vagabonds, **supra**, p. 167.


effect, and reliance is still mainly placed on severe punishment.

There is an interesting section in the act dealing with the treatment of children found begging. They were to be placed in service, on pain of punishment if they refused to work.

After 1536 there was a definitely greater activity on the part both of State and of City though it took the form rather of enforcing existing regulations and developing administrative details than of enlarging policy. It is probably not merely a coincidence that this increase in activity comes at the period of the dissolution of the religious houses - though the 1536 act dealing with vagabonds precedes in point of time the act suppressing the lessor monasteries and there is no actual evidence of any connection between the two. The extent of the distress caused by the dissolution has long been a debatable point which it is impossible to deal with here. Nevertheless the disappearance of the religious foundations and the removal of their customary alms was bound to add to the misery of the poor, especially in a small and compact area like the City where so
many houses were dissolved. 1

At varying intervals from 1536 to 1547 attempts were made to enforce the acts of 1531 and 1536 by further statutes, 2 whilst in 1541/42 an act was passed to facilitate the execution of these and other statutes by enabling the justices to hold sessions in every quarter, for the trial of certain offences, at least six weeks before the general quarter sessions. 3 This arrangement however proved inconvenient and the trial of all offences reverted to the quarter sessions in 1545. 4 From time to time also the king issued proclamations for the observance of certain acts, including those against vagabonds and beggars. One such was published in London on 11 March 1537/38 to remedy the negligence of ministers.

1. The question of the effect of the dissolution in the City will be considered later in the survey of the development of municipal poor relief (Chapter VI).

2. The acts for the continuance of various statutes, amongst which were numbered the vagabond acts were:—
   1536, 28 Hen. VIII c. 6 (Statutes, III, p. 655);
   1539, 31 Hen. VIII c. 7 (ibid., p. 725);
   1541/42, 33 Hen. VIII c. 17 (ibid., p. 853);
   1545, 37 Hen. VIII c. 23, (ibid., p. 1014).


of justice, a negligence which resulted in the increase of offenders "to the high dyspleasure of Almyghtye God and to empeshement, hinderaunce, damage and the hole subuercion of the comon wealthis of thys realms"; the king therefore urged all officers to be more diligent in observing their duties and to execute the laws without partiality.¹ A very similar proclamation was issued c. 1541/1542 "concernynge apparayle, mayntenaunce of archerye, punysshemente of beggers and vnlawfull games,"² whilst a copy of another undated proclamation of the same nature addressed to the sheriff of Kent is extant.³

1. This proclamation appears to be identical with the one calendared by Mr. Steele under 1533 as "after 24 Henry VIII" (R. Steele, I, p.15, No.132). The matter is discussed in an appendix and the full text of the proclamation from the London Letter Book is given (see Appendix VIII, pp.429-435).

2. Mr. Steele dates this proclamation as February 1535/6 (R. Steele, I, p.17, No.156). There is no date on the original copy of the proclamation in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries (Antiq. II (113)), although a pencil note suggests January 1541/42, which seems more feasible as following after the "Acts for Contynuance and Confirmacion of certen Acts," January 1541/42 (Statutes, III, p. 855). See also R. Steele, I, p.23, No.216.

3. There are two manuscript copies of this proclamation (B.M. Harl. MS. 442, ff. 227-227vo (old foliation) ff. 181-181vo (new foliation) and Antiq. I (63)). The former is calendared in L. and P. XVIII, ii, 542 (3) and R. Steele, I, p.31, No.297. The latter is calendared in L. and P., V, 1497.
Apart from these general proclamations there are three others of interest. Two issued probably in 1542 enforce within the court "the act of the Parliament of 16 Jan. 33 Hen. VIII for the punishment of mighty beggars and other idle persons," and order all vagabonds to depart within twenty four hours. The third, of 26 May 1545, is the most interesting, and is recorded in the City archives as well as elsewhere, being addressed to the mayor and sheriffs of London. It commences by declaring that in spite of the many good laws made to preserve people from idleness, "the mother and roote of all myschefes," and to punish vagabonds there still remain "in this realme of England and specyallye aboute the Cittie of London a great nomber of ruffyans and vagabundes." These idlers though able to work secure a livelihood by theft and cheating, and thus influence others in these evil ways and in other vices and immorality. The king therefore has decided to make use of "all suche ruffyans, vagaboundes, maysterles men, common players and evyll disposed persones to serue his

1. This refers to 33 Hen. VIII c. 17, 1541/42.
2. L. and P., XVIII, ii, 542 (1), (2). See also R. Steele, I, p. 22, No. 196.
majestie and his realmes: in thes his warres in certen galeys\(^1\) and other lyke vessels, whiche his highnes entende the to arme for the againste his ennemyes before the first day of June next commynge." Moreover, no man is to shelter any vagabond by calling him his servant.\(^2\)

The State was thus adopting an idea which had already made a tentative appearance in the City policy, that of employing the idle members of the community in some useful way.

The interest of the central government is further evidenced by attempts made by great officers of the Crown and by the Privy Council to enforce the regulations. For example, in June 1537 the duke of Norfolk, president of the Council of the North, reported from Yorkshire that he had circularised the justices of the peace

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1. Mr. Oppenheim has pointed out the vagueness with which the name "galley\(^*\) was used in England under Henry VIII and Edward VI; it might apply to several types of ships, M. Oppenheim, A history of the administration of the Royal Navy, p. 59.

2. Letter Book Q, ff. 168-168\(^{\circ}\); Journal XV, ff. 240\(^{\circ}\)-241. The proclamation is calendared by Mr. Steele (R. Steele, I, p. 28, No. 273) and also very fully in the Letters and Papers (L. and P. XX, i, 812). It is interesting to note that a similar experiment had already been made abroad. In 1538/39 when ships were being prepared at "Lovayne" to be commanded by the Emperor we read that "all prisoners, sturdy beggars and men without masters in Flanders are to serve the galleys" (L. and P. XIV, i, 326).
ordering them to put in execution the statutes against vagabonds,\(^1\) whilst the duke of Suffolk made a similar report concerning Lincolnshire.\(^2\) Again, early in 1538 it is noted in Cromwell’s "Remembrances" that the lord chancellor was to have before him in the Star Chamber all the justices of the peace *"specially giving them charge for bruiting of new\(^{3}\)*, vagabonds and unlawful games.\(^3\) Cases of vagabonds tried by both the Privy Council\(^4\) and the Council of the North\(^5\) are also recorded, the former being especially vigilant during this period in expelling the gipsies.\(^6\)

1. Ibid., XII, ii, 14.
2. Ibid., 364, 29 July 1537.
4. For example, on 1 November 1541 a Scottish man, John Dowglas, was presented as a vagabond to the Privy Council at Hampton Court and was given a passport to avoid the realm in twenty days. L. and P., XVI, 1310.
5. For example, a certain John Patenson was brought before the Council of the North on 15 October 1537 as a suspicious vagabond, who was spreading seditious reports, L. and P., XII, ii, 916.
6. In the determined efforts from 1536 to 1547 to put in force regulations against the gipsies we find the Privy Council issuing letters for their apprehension (L. and P., XVIII, i, 190), stamping passports (ibid., 372), and arranging for their expulsion from the country (ibid., 515).
The City authorities also were active during these years from 1536 to 1547 in putting into force existing vagrancy regulations. They did not in this connection make many new experiments, for their energies at this time of the dissolution of monastic houses and hospitals were mainly devoted to securing relief for the impotent. The two problems however reacted on one another and their attempts to deal with the problem of the needy poor made the civic authorities realise more fully the necessity of an active vagrancy policy.

Other circumstances influenced policy during these years. There were several outbreaks of plague and the sick poor were no longer able to get shelter and medical attention from the religious foundations. The epidemic of 1543 was particularly severe and called forth special plague orders which limited the activities of the sturdy beggar class. Then from 1543 to 1546 the City was harassed

by wheat shortage,1 and in 1543 by a scarcity of wood and coal as well.2 Meanwhile the king was preparing for war with France;3 a joint expedition of Henry and Charles was to be undertaken in 1544 and the City was called upon to raise money and soldiers. From 1544 until peace was declared in June 1546 there were continual demands for men.4 During these troublous years the authorities had little time to pursue a very vigorous vagrancy policy, but the desire to maintain order in the City kept the problem continually before them.

1. The City records contain many entries dealing with the provision of wheat during these years of scarcity; for example in May 1543 the mayor advised the Court of Aldermen to make some provision of wheat "for asmoche as there begynmeth to be great scaraytye here therof & the price therof to aryse very hye" (Repert. X, f. 334vo), whilst loans were arranged from the City Companies for this purpose in 1544 (Repert. XI, f. 62), 1545 (ibid., f. 198vo, 199vo, 201, 201vo) and 1546 (Letter Book Q, f. 174vo; Repert. XI, f. 289 seq.)


3. For the writ to the mayor and sheriffs for proclamation of the war, see Letter Book Q, f. 88; Journal XV, f. 46vo seq., 2 August 1543.

In considering the activities of the City during these years it will be convenient to examine first the declarations of policy, then the types of cases tried and finally the development of the administrative machinery. In October 1536, at the time of the unrest caused by the Pilgrimage of Grace, the mayor and aldermen conferred "for good order & rule to be kept within this City with much diligence because no default should be laid to their charge in that byhalf." Arrangements were made for watches both within the City and by the river,"so that by that means malefactors may not in any wise escape by water." Besides this strict watch it was ordered that no "myghty & valyant beggers, seruyng men nor other goyng at large without seruyce be suffred to goo abrode, but that they be apprehended from tyme to tyme & commyttted to pryson, there to remayn tyll other commaundement & order be takyn for theym yn that byhalf." This order was followed in November by arrangements for a proclamation that all sturdy beggars should be apprehended and committed to prison, there to remain.

1. Repert. IX, f. 198vo, 8 October 1536. Two days later a letter from the king was read to the Court of Aldermen, desiring them to supply him at his manor of Ampthill with a contingent of armed men, ibid., f. 199.
until the king's pleasure was known, and at the same
time commissions were to be issued giving the aldermen
and their deputies power to apprehend and imprison
vagabonds. In December the central government interfered
and letters from the lord chancellor to the lord mayor
were read in the Court of Aldermen ordering a secret
watch and the imprisonment of "suche suspectes as shall
fortune to be takyn by yow" to await examination.
Accordingly every alderman was advertised of this matter.
Once again a special crisis had reacted on the treatment
of vagrancy.

The next few years were marked by no particular
emergency and there is only occasional evidence of
activity. Precepts issued to the aldermen on 22 May 1537
for the watch ordered also the execution of the vagabond
law of 1536; while early in 1538 the king's proclamation
already mentioned concerning the punishment of offenders
against certain statutes was made in the City.

1. Ibid., f. 226\textsuperscript{vo}. Unfortunately there is no record
of the actual proclamation.

2. Ibid., f. 232, 17 December 1536.

3. Journal XIV, f. 35\textsuperscript{vo}.

In 1539 there was much greater activity owing to the crowding of the streets with beggars following upon the dissolution of the religious foundations. This led to the petition of the mayor, aldermen and commonalty for the three hospitals of St. Mary's, St. Bartholomew's and St. Thomas's and New abbey at Tower hill "so that all impotent persones not hable to labour shalbe releved by reason of the sayd hospitalles and abbey, and all sturdy beggers not wylyng to labour shalbe punisshed, so that with Godd's grace fewe or no persones shalbe seene abrode to begge or aske almesse." The City continued to agitate for control of the hospitals, although no grant was made to them until 1546 and 1547. Meanwhile the authorities continued their customary policy with regard to vagabonds. In January 1538/39 there was a precept of special interest, once again bearing evidence to State interference. It recalls that the aldermen had previously been

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1. Memoranda, references and documents relating to the Royal Hospitals of the City of London, prepared and printed under the directions of the committee of the Court of Common Council appointed in relation to the said hospitals (1863) Appendix I, pp. 1-4.

2. All the details of the City's policy relating to the hospitals will be given in Chapter VI.
commanded on the king's behalf to keep watch "for the deprehencion & takyng of myghtie strong & valyant beggers, ruffelers, theves, vagaboundes with all other vnhorthyte persones." The king and his Council had heard of the negligence in carrying out these orders and therefore the aldermen were commanded to see that "a good & substantyall watche" was kept within their wards and that all vagabonds were apprehended. The fuller definition of the vagrant class given in this precept is worth notice as the first found in the London archives during the years covered by this survey. The reliance which was placed on the watches for the apprehension of vagabonds was again evident later in the year when certain suspicious writings disturbed the City. The Court of Aldermen agreed "that monycion be gyven vnto the comons that they may take better hede to theyre watches for asmoche as many theves be abrode yn London." Then, in November, the proclamation of 11 March 1537/38 "concernyng punysshement of transgressours and offenders ageynste the lawes and statuytes of thys realme" was

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1. For the full text see Appendix IX, pp. 436-437.
2. Repert. X, f. 139vo, 13 October 1539.
made once more in the City,¹ and four days later the precepts for the watch ordered the aldermen to charge "the constables, scavengers and other officers within your sayd warde" to put in execution the law concerning vagabonds and beggars.²

This activity of 1539 was continued in the early part of the following year when a new experiment was tried. On 20 January 1539/40 the recorder announced that a book had been provided to record the names of all vagabonds and the laws made concerning them. This book was to remain in the custody of one of the clerks of the Court, who was to be paid for his labour in compiling the same four shillings and eightpence.³ Unfortunately the fate of this book of record, which would have been a valuable source of information, is unknown. The same day a proclamation relating to vagabonds which had been corrected by Cromwell was

1. Repert. X, f. 146v°, 4 November 1539. The entry runs: "Item the proclamations for vagabondes & offenders of other estates made tempe Gressam Jornal 69° & for arrestes for officers shalbe made to morowe."

2. Journal XIV, f. 169, 8 November 1539.

3. Repert. X, f. 158. It will be remembered that a list of vagabonds whipped had been commenced in 1528, see supra, p. 165.
read in the Court of Aldermen. It was agreed that this should be proclaimed the following day, "the paper to remayn in the chest lokked as an orygynall vnder the custodye of John Gybbea," whilst four hundred printed copies of the same proclamation were to be made at the charges of the City.¹

After this there is little evidence of further activity until 1545. During the intervening years the City authorities were concerned with problems of foreign hostilities, food shortage and plague. Some entries dealing with vagabonds however deserve notice. In April 1541 it was agreed that the charges for the punishment of vagabonds and valiant beggars should be borne "of this Citye & leyd out by the handes of Master Chamberlein for the tyme being and not by the Shreves etc."² Again, in June 1542 the recorder desired the Court of Aldermen to see to the enforcement of the penalties of certain new statutes including those for the punishment of vagabonds.³ Entries such as these show that the problem

1. Letter Book P, f. 209; Repert. X, f. 158, 20 January 1539/40. Unfortunately we have not a copy of this proclamation. It probably contained orders for the execution of the vagabond statutes.


was not neglected although the authorities were mainly occupied with other matters. Another occasion for dealing with beggars of all types occurred in August 1543 when the plague was raging in the City. On the 13th, on the receipt of a letter from the Privy Council, the mayor directed precepts to the aldermen detailing precautions to be taken against the plague. One provision made to prevent the spread of contagion affected all beggars. The churchwardens of every church were to appoint some honest person to keep all common beggars outside the church doors until divine service was over. Lastly, in March 1543/44 arrangements were made for a pair of stocks and a cage to be erected in every ward "for the punishment of offendours & evyll doers."

In 1545 and 1546 there was greater activity. It will be remembered that at this time the king was at war with France and the City was troubled with food shortage. Generally in times of war both City and State

1. Letter Book Q, ff. 89-89vo; Journal XV, ff. 47vo-48, 9 August 1543. The letter advised the mayor and aldermen to put in execution certain orders for avoiding the spread of contagion.

2. Letter Book Q, ff. 89vo-90; Journal XV, ff. 48vo-49.

3. Letter Book Q, f. 103vo; Repert. XI, f. 43vo, 11 March 1543/44.
were too busy to deal with social problems, but in 1545 the king desiring fresh supplies of men for his foreign enterprise issued the proclamation already noticed for vagabonds from the City to serve in his galleys.¹ There was also the desire, as at other troublous times, to keep the City in order and this motive was at work during the king's absence, when the mayor issued a precept designed "for the good polytyque & sure gourernans & saufe custodye" of the City. It contained details relating to the watch and ordered the apprehension of "all & euerye suche night walkers & suspecyous persons" who were to be imprisoned until the king and his Council assigned persons for their examination.²

Later in the year there was a special enquiry into vagrancy and poor law policy. On 5 November the aldermen were exhorted to be diligent with regard to vagabonds in their wards, "takyng a precydent of the boke that my lorde mayer hath promysed to bryng in here the next

¹. Supra, pp. 190-191. It is interesting that later in the year when the king was in need of sailors he ordered a privy watch to be kept in the City for the apprehension of "almaner of maryners & other men skylful of the water." Repert. XI, f. 244, 10 November 1545.

Court day deyysed by hys lordyship for théxpulsyon of the gret nmbr of vagaboundes & valyant beggers within his warde."¹ Twelve days later the mayor, Sir Martin Bowes, moved that the Court of Aldermen should follow his plan for the expulsyon of vagabonds and "promysed to cause lyke tytle & praface to be put to the bokes that he hath prepared for that purpose for every of my masters thaldermen." It was agreed that this plan should be adopted; unfortunately we have no details of it, except that maimed soldiers were to be allowed to beg for a season, having badges given them for that purpose.² Presumably the orders contained limitations on begging. The directions "concernyng the orderyng of the pore people" were delivered to the aldermen two days later and they were given a week in which to make enquiries and carry out the orders.³ The following month a committee of eight commoners and four aldermen was appointed "for the mayneteyninge & devysing of some good, charytable & godly wayes & meanees, wherby the very pore indygente, syk & weke persons of this

2. Ibid., f. 247.
3. Ibid., f. 248.
Cyttie, not able to lyve of theymselfes mays charytably
be ayded, comforted and releyd by the deuocyon &
charytable almes of the good & well disposed cytezens
& inhabitauntes of the same Cittie," so that they should
not need to beg openly.¹

The connection between the problem of vagabonds and
that of the impotent poor was becoming increasingly
apparent and is illustrated in the arrangements made
in the organisation of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. In
June 1544 letters patent had reconstituted the hospital
for its original uses. The citizens were dissatisfied
with the terms and on 27 December 1546 entered into a
covenant with the king, which was followed on 13 January
1546/47 by a grant of further letters patent establishing
the new arrangements. These were of course largely
concerned with provision for the impotent. Among the
officers of the reconstructed hospital however were
eight beadles whose duties were two-fold, namely "to
bring to the said late hospital, hereafter to be called
the House of the Poore, such poor sick aged and impotent
people as shall be found going abroad in the City of

¹ Letter Book Q, f. 153; Journal XV, f. 213vo,
10 December 1545, give the election of the eight
commoners. For the election of the aldermen see
Repert. XI, f. 254vo, 3 December 1545.
London and the suburbs of the same not having wherewith to be sustained, and to expulse and avoid such valiant and sturdy vagabonds and beggars as they shall find daily within the said city and the suburbs of the same.\(^1\)

Another aspect of the problem making its appearance in this period was the connection between beggary and the decay of property in the City. There had been statutes previously dealing with the re- edification of property in various parts of the country, but these were neither especially applicable to London nor concerned with vagabondism.\(^2\) In March 1543/44 however a bill was considered by the central government "concerning Tenements and Houses in Cities and Towns not to be converted into Habitation for Beggars, or other unthrifty Persons"\(^3\), but did not go further than the first reading in the House of Lords.\(^4\) In the autumn of 1545 a bill of similar nature

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1. Memoranda relating to the Royal Hospitals, Appendix IV, p. 16.
2. For an example of an act of this type see Statutes, III, p. 531 seq., "An Acte for reedyfyeng of dyvers Townes in the Realm."
3. Journals of the House of Lords, I, p. 252, 1 March 1543/44.
4. Ibid., p. 254, 5 March 1543/44.
is given in the London records and included in the list of bills given by the Court of Aldermen on 5 October 1545. This bill laments the decay of noble buildings in towns throughout the realm and especially in the City of London by reason of their conversion into "small chambers, cottages and lodgynges for sturdy beggers, harlottes, ydle and vnthryftye persones, whereby beggerye, vagabuncy, vnthryftynes, theefte, pokkes, pestylence, infeccions, diseases & infirmytyes do ensue & daylly growe to the defacynge of the beaulltie of the said cities and towns, the dymynysshyng of crafte men and honest householders & thencrease of beggers & also of theyre chyldeynge in ydlenes & beggynges daylye brought vp as thexperyence sheweth." This decay in property involved a fall in

1. Journal XV, f.f. 203-203\(^v\)o. The bill is indexed, in the manuscript index to the Journals at the Guildhall Records Office, as "an act of Parliament against converting of great houses and mansions into small cottages, chambers and lodgings etc", but there is no evidence of a statute of this nature at this period. The bill is undated and therefore might possibly be the one already introduced into Parliament in 1543/44.

2. Repert. XI, f. 227\(^v\)o. Orders were given for the preparation of two bills "to pass at the next Parlyament," whilst "Master Hall shall wythall dylygence call for the bylles for the dyschargyng of the attaynt gevyn anno xxiiij domini regis nunc ageynst the cytezens of this Cytie, the bylles for the aleyes & the bylles for the conservaunce of the ryver of Thamys and also take copyes of theym." This reference was very kindly given to me by Miss W. Jay.
the City income and was a hindrance to the collection of moneys for the king. Proposals were therefore made for the re-edification of such buildings and for the prevention of future conversion. But there is no evidence of what happened to the bill in Parliament and no statute dealing with the problem was passed.

The orders and directions of this period thus show little new experiment. The same motives affect vagrancy policy as during the previous period, though special crises call forth special activities. The State, having given statutory form to the City's policy in 1531 now seems to be leading the way and the City follows with instructions, generally contained in the precepts for the watch, for the execution of the statutes. The period is rather one in which existing policy is tried out than in which fresh experiments are initiated.

The many cases of vagabond apprehension and punishment bear witness to the enforcement of regulations during the period. The severe punishments ordered in the statutes of 1531 and 1536 were enforced in London, sometimes with variations and even greater severity. On 29 May 1537 two vagabonds were tried by the Court of Aldermen and told to depart to their own districts, "upon condition that they shall lose both the yeares ears
yncase they obey not & fylful not thys deore.⁴ A slight variation of this punishment is seen in the case of John Leonard, "a vagrant & valyant vagabonde," who was to depart from the City "vpon payne of losyng of bothe hys heyres, & if he be takyn yn Middelsex than he ys content to lose one of hys eares."⁵ Another case illustrating two stages of punishment concerns William Archer, an idle vagabond who dissembled sickness in order to obtain relief. He was found guilty and was "whyppyd att a cartes taylle thurrugh the markett places of the Cytie" and then banished "vpon payne of losse of both his eares & syttyng vpon the pyllorye" if he returned.⁶ On occasions the Court of Aldermen showed compassion, as in the case of Antony Wrosley who was taken in the privy watch in Farringdon Without. He had been a serving man but was now unemployed. The Court discharged him, gave him three shillings and told him to depart from the City "and to gett hym a mayster & to be of good behauiour att his peryll etc."⁷

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1. Repert. IX, f. 252vo.
2. Repert. X, f. 51vo, 10 October 1538.
4. Repert. XI, f. 327, 16 December 1546.
Another interesting administrative feature of the period is the development of the office of the beadle of the beggars, who had first appeared in 1517/18. On the election of a new chief beadle in January 1538/39, "a good exhortacion" was "gyven vnto hym for thexercysynng of hyss offycy, & that he take no brybes & avoyde vagabondes out of thys Cytye asworne accordyngly." Then in December 1540 the Court of Aldermen agreed that each beadle of the beggars should have a car room in the

1. This election was caused by the resignation of William Donkyn (Repert. X, f. 73, 23 January 1538/39). We have no record of the election of William Donkyn, but there are entries of payments to him and his two assistants in the book of sixteenth century Chamber accounts preserved at the Guildhall Record Office (supra, p. 18). For example, on 28 September 1536 there are entries of the payments of 13s.4d. to William Donkyn and 6s.8d. to each of the assistants (ibid., f. 95v), whilst other undated entries record similar payments (ibid., ff. 83, 89v, 92v).

2. Repert. X, f. 73vo, 28 January 1538/39. Three men were named as possible successors to William Donkyn and Nycholas Humfrey was elected.

3. A Caroon, Carroon or Caroome is "a licence by the lord mayor of London to keep a cart." (N.E.D.) "The caroon appears to have formerly been the standing room or place where the car plied" (A. Pulling, A practical treatise on the Laws, Customs and Regulations of the City and Port of London, p. 510, n.(z)). When the right of ordering cars, caroons etc. was transferred to the governors of Christ's Hospital by act of Common Council in 1665 we glean further information relative to caroons. The sum of 17s.4d. was to be paid per annum for a caroon and 20s. upon admittance to or alienation of the same. Also, "such as have Caroons not to let them out (Continued on next page.)"
City instead of meat and drink which they were accustomed to have with the mayor and sheriffs.¹ Later the beadles petitioned the Court of Aldermen unsuccessfully for a remission of the quarterage which they paid for their car rooms to the Wardens of the Carters.² The office had evidently proved useful for in 1541 the mayor was given authority to appoint "two or thre tall men to be bedelles of the beggers"³ and Robert Forde⁴ and Richard Crompe⁵ were appointed. Arrangements had to be made concerning the expenses of the beadles in carrying out their duties. In July 1542 the chamberlain was ordered to pay Nicholas Humfrey 3s.4d. "by hym layed oute for the punysshement of vagabundes & other idle persones."⁶

(Note continued from previous page.)


1. Repert. X, f. 184, 2 December 1540.
2. Ibid., f. 344vo, 12 July 1543.
3. Letter Book Q, f. 21; Repert. X, f. 204vo, 7 April 1541.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., f. 205vo, 26 April 1541.
6. Ibid., f. 266vo, 18 July 1542.
In 1545 however it was agreed that the beadle should be given a car room on condition that he provided at his own cost whenever needed "a carre with whypps & suche other necessaries as apperteyneth in that behalf for the punishement of vagabundes, sturdy baggers & suche lyke malefactors." His duties also included the punish­ment of misruled women, an instance of which occurs on 23 July 1543 when the Court of Aldermen ordered that certain common women should be taken to the waterside at the Crane in Vintry ward and "there be sett vpon the Cokyng stole & doppyd in to the Theamys vp to the hedde. .... The due execucion herof was appoynted to Nycolhas Humfrey." The beadle evidently proved his worth since as we have seen the officers planned for the reconstructed St. Bartholomew's Hospital included eight beadles, each at a yearly wage of £3.6.8. In the first year's account of the hospital expenditure there are entries relating to the payment of wages to these beadles, and also "of

1. Letter Book Q, f. 152; Repert. XI, f. 249vo, 24 November 1545.


3. Memordenda relating to the Royal Hospitals, Appen. IV, p. 16. In 1547 the Court of Aldermen altered this payment to "iij nobles in redy money, one lyuerye gowne & one carre rome to be occupyed within the seid Cytie." Letter Book Q, f. 199vo; Repert. XI, f. 349vo, 6 May 1547.
money paide for viii blacke staves pomeled and varalled with Tynne, with the Armes of the Cytie on the toppe and pyked with Iron at thende, for the viii Bedles to walke with in their handes, at iii s  , apiece."¹

The wardmote and its inquest in the course of their usual business continued to deal with vagabondism among other types of ward nuisances. No wardmote verdicts are extant for these years, although entries in the records of the Court of Aldermen show that the customary duties were being performed. For example on 14 March 1531/32: "This day yt ys agreed that to-morowe shalbe a specyall courts for all theym that be presentyd as comen at the laste wardmote enquests."²

There were other ways also in which vagabondism was checked. The attempt to deal with immorality in the City led to the punishment of vagrant men and women. The evil influence of vagrant and common women on city life was fully realised and in January 1537/38 enquiries were instituted through the wardmote inquests into "the

¹ Norman Moore, The History of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, II, p. 196. In the account of the treasurer and governors of the hospital, 1546-47, five beadles only are mentioned, ibid., p. 196.
² Repert. VIII, f. 219vo.
hauntynges of common hoorees from the stewes and suche other places in excessyve and gorgyous apparell to the evyll example of mens wyves, maydens and chyldren, whilst it was agreed that the Common Council should provide some remedy. This was followed by a supplication of the wardmote inquests for reform in the matter. Again in 1542 the Court of Aldermen agreed that a further charge should be given to the wardmote on St. Thomas's day to see that "no taverner or other person keping any vytyalyng house within thys Cytys or the superbes therof suffre any comen women or harlottes from hensforth to resorte or come into theyr houses or there to eate or drynke upon payne of ymprisonment both of the householders & harlottes." The following year this effort continued and it was agreed that "all the good & laudable auncyent lawes, actes & ordenances theretofore made & devysed for the ponysshement of harlottes & bawdes of the stewys & other comen & incontynent women of theyr lyvyng" should

2. Ibid, f. 27, 28 March 1538.
3. Ibid., f. 300, 14 December 1542. The article was accordingly drawn up and added to the instructions issued to the wardmotes, Letter Book Q, f. 63^0^; Journal XIV, f. 357.
be enforced. Finally on 13 April 1546 the king intervened and issued a mandate to the mayor and sheriffs of London to make proclamation abolishing the "stews", because "the dissolute and miserable persons who have been suffered to dwell beside London and elsewhere in places called the Stewes have lately so increased and engender such corruption among the people as to be an intolerable annoyance to the common wealth, youth being there allured to fleshly lusts, and evil disposed persons conspiring robberies." All people who previously had resorted to the "stews" were to depart before Easter to "their natural countries"; houses of bawdry were to be closed and keepers of victualling houses were to make recognisances before the king's Council to suffer no disorder in their houses.

1. Repert. X, f. 309vos, 13 February 1542/43. This may possibly account for the statement relating to 1543 made by the chronicler Wriothesley that "this yeare the mayor punished many harlotes of the stawes by dobbinge in the Thames on a cockinge stoole at the Thre Cranes in the Vintre." Charles Wriothesley, op. cit., I, p. 145.

2. L. and P., XXI, 1, 592. The proclamation is also calendared by R. Steale, I, p. 30, No. 288. Wriothesley writes of 1546, "at Easter, the stawes was putt downe by the Kings proclamation made there with a trumpett and an harold at armes, as apereaeth by the same proclamation." Wriothesley, op. cit., I, p. 163.
Policy relating to gaming centres and drinking houses affected the sturdy vagabonds. The licences granting permission to keep a gaming house or alley generally contained the condition that "noon apprentice, vagabund nor myrulerd persone do play at the seyd games within the house or dwelling place." Apart from this restriction, the general proclamations for the execution of certain statutes including those against unlawful games would tend to check the congregation of vagrant persons. There was also a proclamation about 1546 to stop plays and interludes in the City "to whiche places a great part of the yowthe of the same Cytie & manye other light, idell & evyll dysposed persons daylie & contynuallye frequentynge, hauntynge & followynge the same playes have... been the rather moved & provoked therbye to all pronytie, procluyiute & redynes of dyuers & sundrye kyndes of vyces & synne." Further, attention

1. This is the restriction in a licence granted to Edward Blaknalle on 12 November 1552, Repert. VIII, f. 257f.

2. Letter Book Q, ff. 169-169v; Journal XV, ff. 241v-242. This proclamation is undated but is entered during the mayoralty of Sir Martin Bowes, 1545-46. An entry in the Repertory on 25 February 1545/46 seems to suggest this proclamation: "Item, yt is agreyd that the proclamacion heretofore made agaynst the common players of enterludes within the Cytie shall to morowe be proclaymed agayn. (Repert. XI, f. 267vo.) Four years earlier on 11 April 1542 the mayor in a precept to the aldermen had forbidden all common plays and interludes (Letter Book Q, f. 51V; Journal XIV, f. 319).
was paid to alehouses and other drinking houses which were often haunts of undesirable persons and tended to harbour vagabondism. In January 1532/33 tippling in cellars was forbidden as it encouraged people "not onely spends in wast somme of theym their owne money and dyuers and many servantes and apprentices waste and spende the money of their maisters, but also there lyve viciously to the greate displeasure of Almighty God and to the greate hurt and damage of the comen weals of this City." The aldermen periodically enquired into the numbers of tipplers in their wards and thus a strict supervision was exercised over likely vagabond haunts.

In spite of all these efforts to enforce the regulations and of the numbers of vagabonds punished the problem was felt to be as serious as ever. John Howes tells us that after Henry's war with France, 1543-46: "There were great numbers of poore lame ydell & maysterles men dispersed into dyvers parts of this


2. In January 1544/45 the number of tipplers of ale and beer in the City was estimated at 528 (Repert. XI, f. 157v); a figure based on the wardmote returns (ibid., f. 157).
Reaime, but chiefly about this Cittie of London.¹

The writer of the ballad Vox Populi, Vox Dei, (1547-48),
draws a similar picture of the numbers of poor:

"hitt ys not one alone
that thus dothe grownt and growne,
and makeith this pitious mone;
for it ys more then wonder
to here the infynytte mumber
of powre man, that doo shows
by rescoune hitt most be Sooe."²

It is not surprising therefore that, after these
prolonged but patently unsuccessful attempts to cope
with what was recognised as a most serious public problem,
the period closes with the harshest vagrancy act on
record.³ This act of 1547 lays down that any able bodied
person found wandering, loitering and not seeking work
was to be considered a vagabond. He was to be branded
with a "V" and to serve as a slave for two years any
person demanding him. The master was advised to be
severe, "onlye giving the saide Slave breade and water
or small dryncke and suche refuse of meate as he shall
thincke mete," and causing "the saide Slave to worke by

2. Ballads from Manuscripts, I, p. 141.
3. "An Acts for the Punishment of Vagabondes and for
   the Relief of the poore and impotent Parsons,"¹
   1 Edward VI, c. 3, Statutes, IV, 1, pp. 5-8.
beating, cheyninge or otherwise in suche worke and Labour how vyle so ever it be as he shall putt him unto."¹

If the slave ran away within the two years he was to be branded on the cheek with an "S" and become a slave for ever, whilst if he again ran away he was to suffer death as a felon.² Any loiterer who was not demanded by a master was to be branded with a "V" and sent to his own district, there to labour in chains on the highways or at some other common work. Reliance was thus placed almost entirely on savagely brutal punishment probably because other penalties had utterly failed.

The orders relating to vagrant children were of the same severe nature. They were to be bound as apprentices to some master, females to the age of 20 and males until 24. If such an apprentice ran away he was to become the slave of his master.

¹. Ibid., p. 5.
². Professor Pollard points out that slaves were fairly common in the sixteenth century and refers to the Stanley Papers which give details of the manumission in Elizabeth's reign of slaves on the earl of Derby's estates. (A.F. Pollard, England under Protector Somerset, p. 224, n. 1.) Miss Leonard also notes that Sir Thomas More in his Utopia suggests the punishment of servitude as milder and better for petty thieves and vagrants than death, E.M. Leonard, op. cit., p. 57.
So far as this act embodies new provisions it is mainly in connection with vagabonds; on the whole it repeats previous regulations in the case of the aged, infirm and impotent "which resorteth to the Citie of London and to other Cities Townes and Villages on begging, whose cominge to gither and making a number dothe fill the Stretes or high waies of divers Cities Towns markettes or fayres, who ye theiie were seperated might easelie be nourished in the Townes and Places wherein theiie were borne or where theiie were or hath been moste conversaunt and abyding by the Space of three years."¹ Emphasis is laid on the employment of such aged poor as are able to work and on the principle of settlement in general.

This slavery statute only remained in force for two years, and then the policy laid down in the 1531 act for the punishment of able bodied beggars was revived.

¹ Ibid., p. 7.
(2) Policy and Administration, 1547-1552.

The last period included in the present survey saw the beginnings of a more humane treatment of vagrancy, marked in London by the foundation of Bridewell. It was a time of great unrest owing to the minority of Edward VI, lack of strong government and the religious and economic upheaval, and despite every effort at efficient administration of existing methods the numbers of vagabonds increased. Reformers, preachers, writers, men such as Lever, Latimer, Ridley, Crowley and Cheke deplore the situation and urge both state and municipality to seek some solution. Thomas Lever, in one of his fiery sermons delivered at St. Paul's, lays bare the great social evil of his day: "Nowe speakeyng in the behalfe of these vile beggers, forasmoche as I know that ye vilest person vpon erth, is the liuely image of almightye God, I wyl tell the[e] that art a noble man, a worshipful man, an honest welthye man, especially if thou be Maire, Shirif, Alderman, baily, constable or any such officer, it is to thy great shame afore the worlde, and to thy vttter damnacion afore god, to se these begging as thei vse to do in the streates. For there is neuer one of these,
but he lacketh eyther thy charitable almes \[\text{alms}\] to relieve his neede, orels thy due correction to punysh his faute."¹ The early experiments in policy, which had had as their chief objective the maintenance of law and order and had relied mainly on the principle of severe punishment, had obviously failed to solve the problem, and so the idea gradually emerged of attacking the disease, for disease it was, from another angle, by seeking a cure for idleness and keeping the vagabond out of mischief by providing him with employment. Hence the period closes with the scheme for Bridewell and a saner method of tackling the problem.

As so often before ulterior circumstances gave an impetus to activity against vagrants which was often part of a general effort by the authorities to secure order in the City. The peace and order of the City were seriously threatened in 1549 at the time of the rebellions in the west and east, and again from the autumn of 1549 onwards during the struggle between Somerset and the Council which was concluded only by his execution in January 1551/52. Trouble with Scotland in 1548 involving hostile relations with France occupied the

authorities with preparation of contingents for war. Foreign hostilities ceased when peace was made with France in March 1550, and the vagrancy problem became especially urgent in the City, which was now thronged with disbanded soldiers. Throughout the period prices were high and there was a general scarcity of food, whilst plague in the summer of 1548 and a bad epidemic of the sweating sickness in 1551 made the authorities realise the necessity of arranging for the care of the sick poor. This led, therefore, to increased activity in relation to the impotent as well as to the disorderly, and the attention paid to this aspect, as will be seen later, resulted in the foundation of the Royal Hospitals. In the matter of vagrancy City and State were pursuing similar policies and their activities may be considered conjointly.

Some of the features of the problem are revealed by a study of the cases of vagabonds entered in the records. The tricks of the sturdy vagrant, of a kind of which instances have already been given, still continued. The usual punishment of whipping followed

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1. On 28 August 1548 the Court of Aldermen was adjourned for a fortnight because of the violence of the plague. Letter Book Q, f. 250; Repert. XI, f. 498.

by expulsion from the City is recorded in most cases, whilst sometimes also the culprits were to have "theyr passeportes accordyng to the lawe"¹ or they were threatened with the "losynge of their eares if they be taken here agaynse".² The vagabond was not necessarily cowed by his punishment, and thus John Cowper, who had previously been whipped about the City as a vagabond, was committed to Newgate on 31 March 1552 "for hys lewde demeanour sithe that tyne bothe towards the wardemote enqueste of Faryngdon withoute & the constables & other offycers there."³ Sometimes the City authorities were defied, as in March 1547/48 when Henry Wyghtman, minstrel, was committed to ward for rescuing a vagabond from the beadles of the beggars in Redcross street.⁴ The growth of the idea of work as a remedy for the evil

1. For examples see Repert. XII, ii, f.415, 10 November 1551; ibid., f.505, 7 July 1552.

2. Ibid., f. 558, 6 December 1552.

3. Ibid., f. 469⁰, 31 March 1552. On 7 April it was agreed that "my lorde mayor shall delyuer John Cowper, who lieth in Newgate as a vagabonde tyll he fynde good suerties for hys good abearynge to some captayne to goo with all beyonde the sea, if eny suche wyll take hym" ibid., f.475.

4. Repert. XI, f. 438. Redcross street was in the ward of Cripplegate near the Barbican, which was a favourite haunt of the vagabond population, supra, p. 79.
of vagabondism is also evident. On several occasions culprits were placed on the king's ships. Again, when vagrant persons were apprehended, who excused themselves by stating that they had come to London to seek work, they were ordered to secure employment within a limited time, as on 2 August 1549 when certain 'wandryng persons' were commanded "to provyde them of servyce within iiiij dayes orels to avoyed the Citie." Numbers of vagabonds of all types continued to be presented and although the laws were administered the problem seems to lose none of its urgency.

During the opening years of this last period the City authorities gave but little consideration to the problem of sturdy beggars. They were probably accommodating themselves to the sweeping religious changes, whilst hostilities between England and Scotland had commenced. In May the Lord Protector called upon the City for horse and horsemen, and on the same occasion the aldermen were ordered to keep

1. For examples see *ibid.*, f. 464, 5 June 1548 and *Repert.* XII, i, f. 78, 30 April 1549.
2. *Ibid.*, f. 120°.
watches in which householders should assist the constables "for the good safeguard of this Cytie", and preparations of this nature continued throughout the summer months. The treatment of vagrancy was not however entirely set on one side. In January the bridgemasters were ordered to "cause a good stronge cage to be newe made at the further ende of the seid brydge for the due punyshment of vagabundes therin." A few days later the alderman of Farringdon without was commanded to keep a "substancyall watche... in his warde for the apprehensyon of vagaboundes." Then in July the alderman of Queenhithe petitioned the Court of Aldermen for a new pair of stocks for the punishment of vagabonds. The Court acceded to this request, and ordered the chamberlain to prepare the same "att the Cyties costes." Later in the year the bridgemasters were again ordered to set up a cage in Southwark, and the chamberlain was to "cause an other cage to be made & sett vpp in the

3. Ibid., f. 414, 31 January 1547/48. Farringdon without was most probably a favourite resort of vagrants, as it lay outside the City walls and included the districts about the Fleet, supra, p.79.
market place within Newgate by the advyse of Master Chertesey, alderman of that warde.\textsuperscript{1}

In the following year events took a new turn and the necessity of keeping order in the City at a time of disturbance involved activity against all unruly persons.\textsuperscript{2} Vagabondism was encouraged by rebellious times. Sir John Cheke denounced the rebels of 1549 on this account: "What say yee to the number of vagabonds and loytring beggers, which after the overthrow of your camp and scattering of this seditious number, will swarme in every corner of the Realm, and not only by loitring under hedges, but also stand sturdily in Cities, and beg boldly at every dore, leaving labour which they like not, and following idlenesse which they should not."\textsuperscript{3} The central government issued

\begin{enumerate}
\item Letter Book Q. f. 258; Repert. XI, f. 513, 25 October 1548.
\item There had been sporadic risings in the spring of 1548 but the rebellions of 1549 were more serious and threatened the peace of London. The critical time was from April to September.
\item Sir John Cheke, The true subject to the rebellion, or the hurt of sedition how grievous it is to a commonwealth, 1549, (1641 edition), p. 41.
\end{enumerate}
several proclamations dealing with the situation, some of which affected vagabonds. On 29 April a proclamation ordered the apprehension of "all sowers & tellers abrode of vayne & forged tales & lyes of his highnes, the lorde protector, his maiesties Counseyll or affayres" and their punishment in the galleys, "ther to rowe in cheynes as a slave." In this connection it was realised

1. The statutes giving legislative validity to the king's proclamations had been repealed by I Edward VI c.12 (section 5). This has been criticised on the ground that proclamations continued to be issued as before and enforced by penalty of fine and imprisonment (Hallam, Constitutional History of England, I, pp. 37-38). Professor Pollard however shows that the statute was not intended to abolish the use of proclamations, "but merely to secure subjects from suffering pains and penalties for their infraction in the same way as if they were statutes" (A. F. Pollard, England under Protector Somerset, pp. 63-64).

2. Letter Book Q. f. 283v; Journal XV, f. 418. The proclamation is calendared in R. Steele, I, p. 36, No. 350. Professor Pollard thinks that this proclamation was probably never acted on, as Somerset in a communication to the French ambassador complained that he could not retaliate on the French king's treatment of English prisoners in sending them to the galleys, because the English had no galleys to use in this way (A. F. Pollard, op. cit., pp. 63-64 n.2). Mr. Adair writing on "English Galleys in the Sixteenth Century" states that there is no doubt that England possessed one galley in 1547-8 and that "the most plausible interpretation is that Somerset merely wished to say that he had not enough galleys to accommodate all the prisoners that might be taken; there was only one in the English fleet at this time, and that probably had her full complement already" (E. R. Adair, "English Galleys in the Sixteenth Century," E.H.R. XXXV, p. 509). Mr. Adair however shows that there is little evidence for the execution of this policy, ibid., pp. 511-512.
that in times of crisis seditious tales were often carried by the idle vagrants who saw an opportunity of securing pecuniary gain in stirring up discontent, therefore a severe proclamation was issued on 8 July against these "tale tellers and seducyous runneagates."

This declared that there were "sundrie light, lewde, ydle, seducyous, busye & dysordred persons" causing dissension and the king therefore ordered all his officers to see to the apprehension of tale bearers, "vagabundes, wayfeyring men, straglers or otherwyse", who were to be brought before his Council for trial and punishment. Informers causing the arrest of any such tale bearers were to have twenty crowns reward, "besydes lyke hartye thanckes from his maiestie". Other proclamations of interest related to "the inhibycion of players" and the punishment of persons making

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1. For the full text see Appendix XII, pp. 445-450. Proclamations concerning tale bearers and others of this nature had been issued previously; for example, on 29 October 1536, at the time of the Pilgrimage of Grace, there was one for the apprehension of the authors etc. of false tales and seditious rumours, (R. Steele, I, p. 18, No. 161) whilst a proclamation of 24 May 1547 ordered tale tellers to be punished as vagrants (ibid., p. 32, No. 306).

2. A proclamation of 6 August 1549 prohibited interludes and plays from 9 August to 20 November on the ground that they often contained "matter tending to sedycion & contempting of sundrye good orders & lawes wherupon are grown & daylie are lyke to growe and ensue muche dysquyett, dyuysion, tumultes and vprores in this realme" (Letter Book R, f. 27vo; Journal XVI, f.28). For the calendared reference see R. Steele, I, p. 38, No. 365.
riots.\(^1\) There is no evidence on which to base an estimate of the effect of these proclamations but all were entered in the London records and presumably were proclaimed in the City.

The London authorities, fearful for peace and safety during this juncture, had placed the City in a state of defence\(^2\) and made many regulations relating to the watch. The mayor and aldermen or their deputies were to ride nightly through the streets to survey the watch, "for theschuing of the daunger that haplye might the rather insue to this Cytie yf the gouernors therof shuld in this vnquyet tyme by remys or neglygent in the highe charge that they are burdened withall for

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1. A proclamation was issued on 14 June 1549 "concernyng certeyne ryottes and vnauffull assembles for the breakyng vp of enclosures (Letter Book R, f.9vo seq.; Journal XVI, f.16 seq.) See also R. Steele, I, p. 36, No. 356. Another proclamation on 16 July related to "the executyng of a lawe martiall for payne death/e agaynst rebellours and other vpstyrers" (Letter Book R, f. 26vo seq.; Journal XVI, f. 27 seq.). See also R. Steele, I, p. 37, No. 362.

2. The gates, chains and portcullises of the City were made strong and enquiries instituted as to the stock of guns, gunpowder, harness and weapons available. (Letter Book R, f.11vo; Repert. XII, 1, f.102. 5 July 1549.) Searches and enquiries concerning arms continued, and arrangements were also made for the use of the twelve pieces of ordnance at the Tower, if necessary (Letter Book R, f.12); Repert. XII, i, f.105vo, 11 July), whilst on 19 July a master gunner of the City was appointed. (Letter Book R, f.14; Repert. XII, 1, f.113.)
the safe custodye thereof." Then on 11 July the recorder was ordered to find out from the king’s Council their arrangements for a privy watch in the City and to ask them that at the same time there might be a similar watch in the suburbs. This privy watch was held on 18 July and the mayor and aldermen were to commit to ward all suspicious persons whom they apprehended, whilst the sheriffs of Middlesex were to conduct the watch in the suburbs. Watch was also arranged for the day time at the City gates, the duties to be undertaken by the Companies. Accordingly precepts were issued to the wardens instructing them to have "a vygylant eye to all & euerye suche person & persons as shall enter in, passe or repasse att & by the same gate; & that they dyligently steye & examyn

1. Letter Book R, f.11; Repert. XII, i, f.97\(^v\)o, 2 July 1549. The same Court instructed the wardens to inform the members of their Companies that all servants must be indoors from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., "duryng the tyme of this vnquyetnes within the realme." (Letter Book R, f.11; Repert. XII, i, f.98.)

2. Letter Book R, f.12; Repert. XII, i, f.105\(^v\)o.

3. Ibid., f.111.

4. Letter Book R, f.13\(^v\)o; Repert. XII, i, f.112 seg. 19 July 1549. The numbers of this day watch were abridged on 30 July (Letter Book R, f.24; Journal XVI, f.24\(^v\)o; Repert. XII, i, f.117\(^v\)o), and on 9 September the watch ceased (Repert. XII, i, f.138\(^v\)o).
all & every such person & persons as they for any reason have any vehement suspicion of to be parties and adherentes to any the congregations or unlawful assemblies of the people at this present congregation.\(^1\) The primary object of all these arrangements was of course the safety of the City and not the correction of vagrancy, but the connection between the watches and the apprehension of vagrant persons is seen in the appointment of the eight beadle of the beggars to assist the commoners at the gates, "at every gate one of them to convey such persons as they shall apprehend to warde & otherwise to do service there.\(^2\) They were to have extra remuneration for their services of a groat a day for as long as the work lasted.\(^3\) Similar stringent watch regulations were issued again in October 1549 at the time of the open break between Somerset and the Council, but none particularly affected the sturdy beggar except in so far as all watch orders checked disorder.

2. Letter Book R, f. 14; Repert. XII, i, f.114, 20 July 1549.
3. Ibid., f. 129, 13 August 1549.
The central government evidently felt the need for activity in the matter, for on 9 November, only five days after the opening of Parliament, a bill relating to vagabonds received its first reading in the House of Lords.¹ By 23 November it had successfully passed its readings in the Lords² and was sent to the Commons, where it was also favourably received and promptly dealt with.³ This act "towchyng the Punyshment of Vacabondes and other ydle Parsons" was a fitting conclusion to a year of disturbance which had accentuated the menace of vagabondism. The preamble states that the act had been made necessary on account of the increased numbers of vagabonds and because "the good and holsome lawes euid sta tu te s o f th is  Realme hath not byn putt in  dewe ex ecu tio n... (thextremitie of some wherof have byn occation that they have not ben putt in ure)". In consequence the severe act of 1547 was repealed and the 1531 act was revived. Whipping was recognised as the method of dealing with vagrancy and remained in force

2. Ibid, p. 362. The other readings had been on the 19th and 20th, ibid., p. 361.
3. The three readings in the Commons were on 23 November and 4 and 6 December, Journals of the House of Commons, I, pp. 12 and 13.
4. 3 and 4 Edward VI. c.16, Statutes, IV, i, pp. 115-117.
until 1572. Provision was also made for the execution of regulations concerning the impotent, whilst the apprenticeship orders were somewhat relaxed and justices were empowered to liberate children on proof of the misconduct of a master or mistress.

This renewed activity was continued in the following year. Peace was made with France on 29 March 1550 and the subsequent flooding of the City streets with disbanded soldiers, many of whom were not desirous to work even if employment could be found, aggravated the problem. On 6 May the chamberlain was ordered to have twenty-four new seals of tin made for the aldermen, "of like fashion as my lorde mayors seale is that he vsyth for the sealynge of pasportes for vacabundes."¹

The form of passport issued to the vagabond and of licence authorising the impotent to beg, for which these new seals were prepared, was entered in the Journal on 16 May,² whilst a few days later the chamberlain was ordered to have printed 600 such licences and 200 passports.³ Besides this preparation of equipment, precepts were issued to the aldermen reminding them

¹ Repert. XII, i, f. 227. This was evidently carried out for on 13 May "it is agreyd that the chamberleyne shall pay for the xxiiiij newe seales of tynne made for my masters thaldermen for the sealynge of passeportes for vagabundes, iiij li", (ibid., f. 231).
² For the full text see Appendix XV, p.454.
³ Repert. XII, i, f. 235, 22 May 1550.
to put in execution vagabond statutes.  

During the same month an important event took place for the City in the extension of its jurisdiction over Southwark, and this afforded an occasion for the re-affirmation of policy. The problem was so serious that on 7 May, "because the Citie of London was at that present pestred with a multitude of vagabondes" the Privy Council devised a proclamation "for the advoiding them out of London and Southwerke and the Liberties of the same." This proclamation was made publicly on 9 May when the lord mayor took formal possession of the borough. It ordered all who were not born in London or Southwark or had been householders or reputable residents for less than three years to depart and return to their last settlement. The mayor and other City officers were urged to see that the statute in this

1. For the order for the precept see ibid., f. 232, 20 May 1550, and for the actual precept, Letter Book R, f. 64vo; Journal XVI, f.52vo.


3. The chronicler Wriothesley describes the occasion. "The 9 of May my Lord Mayor tooke possession of all the borough of Southwarke, and rode all the precinckt, and after the common cryer made a proclamation with a trumpett under the Kings greate seale in v. places, for the avoydinge of vagaboundes out of the city of London and the borough of Southwarke, and the suburbs and liberties of the same." Wriothesley, op. cit., II, p. 38.
Strict regulations were also issued on 8 May relating to the watch and applying to both the City and Southwark. The aldermen were to superintend the arrangements and their execution "for the avoyding & eschuinge of all perylles & daungers that might happen to the Cytie, & for the suer tuyction, sauf custodye & quyet gouernance of the same."²

The seriousness of vagabondism was increased by numbers of disbanded soldiers about the City and suburbs, and efforts were now directed towards dealing with this aspect of the problem. In June a proclamation was "set furth prohibiting all scouldiers and serving men to weare harnesse, weapon or other armoure etc within the Cytie of London and the liberties of the same" in order to avoid the "dyuerse frayes, fightes & murders... dayly had, commyttted and done by sondrye evell disposed & busy persones."³ The usual arrangements for the watches at midsummer and St. Peter's eve were cancelled

1. For the full text see Appendix XIV, pp. 451-453.
2. Letter Book R, f. 70⁰vo; Repert. XII, 1, f. 229, 8 May 1550. Precepts issued to the aldermen on 13 May ordered them to report to the Mayor any fault noticed in the oversight of the watch, ibid., f. 230.
and "double watches" ordered instead.  

Then on 20 July a royal proclamation was issued for "thavoyding of captyaynes & souldiers oute of the Cytie of London". This ordered "all maner captyaynes, offycers of bandes & souldiers aswell Englyshe as straungers of what nacion so ever they be" who had been paid for their services "vntyll the daye of their cassyng & dysmyssyon" to depart from the City within three days of the proclamation on pain of imprisonment.  

The method of local enquiry was again used, and on 29 July the aldermen were ordered to certify to the mayor "the names & surnames of all the souldiers, vacabundes & maysteries men remaynyng within their seuerall wardes att this present & with whom they do lodge." Finally, in September the mayor and aldermen addressed a letter to the Privy Council on the subject showing clearly the grave danger to the citizens from the numbers of disbanded soldiers about the streets.  

The Privy Council replied within

1. Repert. XII, i, f. 240, 12 June; Letter Book R, f. 72V0; Journal XVI, f. 65, 20 June.

2. Letter Book R, f. 74; Journal XVI, f. 66V0.

3. Repert. XII, i, f. 254V0.

4. For the full text of this letter see Appendix XVI pp. 455-456. The same day precepts were issued for a well armed watch, Repert. XII, ii, f. 269V0; Journal XVI, f. 91V0, 25th September 1550.
two days\textsuperscript{1} but apparently with little satisfaction to the City authorities, for the common sergeant and recorder, fully instructed by the mayor in the circumstances of the matter, were deputed to go before the Council and seek their aid.\textsuperscript{2} Whether the Privy Council took any action is not known, but doubtless the situation became gradually more normal. The crisis of the spring and summer of 1550 had, however, served to show the inadequacy of the existing methods of dealing with vagabondism.

One interesting experiment in vagabond policy was made in this same year, 1550. It will be remembered that in 1514 the City authorities had attempted to provide employment for idle vagabonds.\textsuperscript{3} Another such attempt was now made, this time through the initiative of a private individual sanctioned by the City authorities. On 22 May the Court of Aldermen ordered that one Nicholas Davie, girdeler, should confer with William Clarke, skinner, Thomas Bacon, salter and Thomas

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} No copy of this reply is extant, it is however mentioned in the London records, Repert. XII, ii, f.271\textsuperscript{vo}.
\item \textsuperscript{2} Repert. XII, ii, f.271\textsuperscript{vo}, 27 September 1550.
\item \textsuperscript{3} Supra, p. 143.
\end{itemize}
Barthelet, stationer, concerning "the orderyng of idle people that he the seid Davie entendythe to set aworke in makyng of pynnes & suche other thynges & for the romes & charges that he desyreh to have of the Citie." This committee of three reported on 10 June, giving details of a certain house at the late Grey friars and other grants to be made to the said Davie in recompense of his "settyng of idle persons & vagabundes aworke in makyng of pynnes & other thynges." The Court ordered a draft to be made of the necessary arrangements; this was done by 17 June, but after this date there is no further entry of the matter in the Court books. It is therefore impossible to judge how far the experiment was successful, nevertheless it is interesting as a proof of willingness to try a new method of dealing with the idle vagabond.

1. These three commoners either were or had been governors and surveyors of the house of the poor, Bacon and Barthelet, 1547-1549; Clarke, 1548-1550. Repert. XI, f. 495.
2. Repert. XII, i, f. 235.
3. Ibid., f. 239.
4. Ibid., f. 240.
5. Ibid., f. 241.
During the last two years of this period the City authorities were concerned with arrangements leading to the foundation of the Royal Hospitals. Meanwhile vagrancy policy and administration continued along the same lines. Numbers of vagabonds were apprehended and punished in the usual way and enquiries, watches and searches were held. In December 1550 enquiry was made in each ward as to the number of common beggars and whether they were licensed or not.¹ Watches for the apprehension of suspected persons continued, especially at times of crisis; for instance, in October 1551 at the time of the duke of Somerset's second arrest² precepts were to be issued to the Companies ordering them to watch at the gates during the day, "diligentlye watchynge & espyinge for all suche idle suspecte & maysterles men as they shall see to travayle or passe that wey steyinge & dyscreetely examyninge euer y one of theythem howe they do lyve, and to commyt as menye of theythem to warde as they shall fynde worthe of suspycyon."

Strict night watches supervised by the aldermen were

1. Repert. XII, ii, f. 289; Letter Book R, f.97vo; Journal XVI, f.100, 2 December 1550.

2. 16 October 1551. The duke was executed in January 1551/52.
arranged at the same time.\textsuperscript{1} The day watch of the
Companies ceased on 24 November, although privy searches
ordered by the Privy Council\textsuperscript{2} were to be held twice
weekly until Christmas.\textsuperscript{3} Special instructions for
safe-guarding the City against disturbance were again
issued in December at the time of the arraignment of
Somerset.\textsuperscript{4} In June of the following year the aldermen
were ordered to search for "all maner of vacabondes,
loyterers, & masterlesmen & to apprehende & comytt theym
to warde", whilst the beadles were to certify to the mayor
"the names & surnames of almaner of straungers not beinge
denyzens kepyngs anye maner of howse or chamber within

\textsuperscript{1} Letter Book R, f. 127\textsuperscript{vo}-128; Repert. XII, ii,
f. 401\textsuperscript{vo}, 19 October 1551. These regulations
were due to a letter sent from the Privy Council
to the mayor on 18 October ordering him "to se
substauncially to the good and quiet governaunce
of the Citie, so as these idle, seditious persones
whereof that place is full be narrowly serched
for and punished for theyr vayne brutes (if they

\textsuperscript{2} A letter from the Council, 22 November, ordered
"that twyse in the weeke betweene this and
Christmas there be made thourough owt the Citie
privie serche", \textit{ibid.}, p. 425.

\textsuperscript{3} Repert. XII, ii, f. 424.

\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Acts of the Privy Council}, III, p. 432,
30 November 1551. Letter Book R, f. 157\textsuperscript{vo};
Repert. XII, ii, f. 426, 1 December 1551.
their seid wardes,\textsuperscript{1} and in July they were ordered
to use "good dylygence" in apprehending hawkers and other
idle persons of this nature.\textsuperscript{2}

Further evidence for the continuation of the same
policy may be found in the entries in the records of
the Court of Aldermen for the erection of new cages,\textsuperscript{3} stocks
and cucking stools,\textsuperscript{4} and concerning the officers charged
with the administration of vagrancy policy. The Court
of Aldermen on 2 December 1550 agreed that the eight
beadles of the beggars should have keys to all the cages
in the City so that they might more easily pursue their
duties in punishing vagabonds and sturdy beggars.\textsuperscript{5}

Arrangements were also made for the repayment of charges
incurred in the execution of these duties. In July 1550
the chamberlain was ordered to refund to the common beadles
the money laid out "for the hyre of carres & other
thynges for the punysshement of harlottes & bawdes &

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] \textit{Ibid.}, f. 501, 30 June 1552.
\item[2.] \textit{Ibid.}, f. 513\textsuperscript{vo}, 21 July 1552. These instructions
were carrying out the "Acts for Tynckers and Pedlers",
5 and 6 Edward VI, c. 21, which forbade tinkers,
pedlars, chapmen and other vagrant people to hawk
goods without licence from two justices, \textit{Statutes},
IV, i, p. 155.
\item[3.] For example a new cage was ordered for Billingsgate,
2 November 1551, Repert. XII, ii, f. 413.
\item[4.] Letter Book R, f. 176; Repert XIII, ii, f. 464.
\item[5.] Letter Book R, f. 96\textsuperscript{vo}; Repert. XII, ii, f. 289.
\end{itemize}
other comen offenders", \(^1\) and there are other similar entries referring to the payment of the expenses of the beadle of the beggars. \(^2\) Finally, on 15 March 1551/52 the Court of Aldermen agreed to allow the beadle of the beggars a fixed sum of 20s. a year for charges necessary in carrying out his duty in punishing vagabonds. \(^3\)

The central government shows little activity in the matter during these last years. In the spring of 1551 one attempt was made in the interests of law and order to stir up the local authorities to a sense of their duties. On 12 April the mayor of London and certain aldermen appeared before the Privy Council because "certain lewide personnes... had practised a conspiracie tendeng to rebellion, and speciallie within the Cittie of London". The City authorities were therefore exhorted among other things to see to "the correccion of vagabondes". \(^4\) Letters were despatched by the Council to the justices of the peace in every shire ordering them "to put in execucion the lawes against vacaboundes,

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1. Repert. XII, i, f. 249\(^\text{vo}\), 10 July 1550.

2. Repert. XII, ii, f. 408, 27 October 1551. The chamberlain was ordered to pay to Oram, beadle of the beggars, 13s. 4d. "in recompence of suche expences as he hath systeyned abovte the whipping of vacabundes."

3. Ibid., f. 462\(^\text{vo}\).

and for watches, unlauffull games, sedicions, rumors and suche like." Then, on 28 April a royal proclamation was issued "for the reformation of Vagabondes, tellers of newes, sowers of sedicious rumours, players and printers without licence, & divers other disordred persons."

This proclamation stated that "within the Citie of London ther is at this present a great number of idle persons & masteries men, which seke rather by idelnes & mischief to live by other mens labours & industries, then to travail by any paynes taynyng to live like good and obedient membres of the common wels". All vagabonds were ordered to depart from the City within four days after the proclamation. They were to proceed to their own districts, travelling at least eight miles a day and in parties not exceeding four in number. The same orders were to apply to vagabonds throughout the realm. There is no further activity, apart from the orders for watches in the City in the autumn of 1551, until the act "for the provisyon and relief of the poore"

1. Ibid., p. 260, 15 April 1551.
in April 1552. The title of this act suggests the change in the attitude of the authorities who by 1552 were more concerned with the provision for the impotent than the punishment of the vagabond. The act deals mainly with arrangements for the collection of relief and as far as vagrancy is concerned merely confirms the statutes of 1531 and 1536.

Not only was vagrancy checked by these direct measures from 1547 onwards, but there was the same vigilance in allied problems as previously. Immorality in both men and women was continually punished, whilst drinking houses, gaming centres and other places of vagabond resort were strictly supervised. In January 1547/48 an order was made in the Court of Aldermen "for the suppressyng of the excedyng number of typlyng howses & petie hostries & the evyll rule that ys dayly mayntayned & increased by reason of the same"; at other times games and interludes were censured. During

1. 5 and 6 Edward VI, c.2. Statutes, IV, 1, pp. 131-132. The bill "for the Provision and Relief of the Poor" had successfully passed its readings in both houses by 14 April, Journals of the House of Lords, I, p. 427.

2. Repert. XI, f. 408vo, 24 January 1547/48. This order resorted into a searching enquiry into the number of tippling houses in each ward (ibid., f. 408, f. 413vo, f. 415, f. 419vo).

3. For some instances of this prohibition see Letter Book R, f.8; Repert. XII, i, f. 90vo; ibid., f. 99; Repert. XII, ii, f. 330.
this period also another attempt was made to prevent the deterioration of property in the City through the "turnynge, convertynge & transportinge of capytall mesuages & houses into alleys, wherby greate number of beggers, vagabundes, idell & suspecte persons are increasyd," and the Common Council accordingly ordered that "euery seuerall inhabitauntes within euerye rowme & place within suche alley or alleys" should be compelled to make yearly payments to "the howse of the pore in Westesmythfeld". ¹

The one really new experiment during this last period is represented by the foundation of the Royal Hospitals. Before this time when for any reason the number of idle vagabonds had perceptibly increased the authorities had tried to cope with them by a more rigorous administration of the policy of harsh punishment. The results had been invariably disappointing, ² and the City now tried a new method of attack by the policy embodied in the foundation of St. Thomas’s, Christ’s and Bridewell. The first two of these institutions

¹ Letter Book R. f. 121°; Journal XVI, ff. 126°-127°, 1 August 1551.
² John Howes tells how the officers of St. Bartholomew’s, especially the beadle, were lazy "so that the streates & lanes in London began to swarme with beggars & roges", John Howes, op. cit., p. 6.
were devoted to the treatment of the needy poor and will be considered later in that connection; Bridewell was designed to deal with the sturdy and idle beggar.  

The story of how Bishop Ridley early in 1552 moved the young Edward on behalf of the poor in London has often been told. As a result of the awakened interest in the problem a committee was formed by the City to consider "wch waie these greate nombres of ydell rogishe wandring beggers mighte be removed oute of the streates & every sorte placed in sundrie houses, the younge, the aged the sore & the lustie roge & every of these to be made profittable members in the comon wealth." The investigations led to the division of the poor into three categories, "the poore by impotencie; poore by casualtie; thriftlesse poore", the last class consisting of "the rioter that consumeth all, the

1. J. P. Malcolm writes in 1803 of Bridewell that "idleness, the most pernicious, the most contemptible, and the most injurious vice to society and the individual, rendered the foundation of this Hospital unavoidably necessary." J. P. Malcolm, Londinium Redivivum, II, p. 554.

2. For a good contemporary account see R. Grafton's Chronicle (1809 edition) II, pp. 529-531.


4. These investigations will be examined later when dealing with St. Thomas's and Christ's Hospitals, infra, pp. 342 seq.
vagabond that will abide in no place, the ydle person as the Strumpet & other.\textsuperscript{1} The plan proposed for the reformation of the vagabond class was the foundation of "an house of occupations". Some large building was necessary for this scheme, and so a supplication was addressed to the king in the name of the poor for his royal palace of Bridewell\textsuperscript{2}, and this was followed by an appeal to the Privy Council to forward the suit in which the citizens set forth the purposes to which they proposed to put Bridewell.\textsuperscript{3} "Now resteth for the third sort\textsuperscript{4}, an house of occupations, to be erected; wherein as well the child, when he is brought up and grown to years, and found unapt to learning, neither any honest person desireth or would have his service, may there be exercised and occupied; as also the sore and

\textbf{1.} R. Grafton, \textit{op. cit.}, II, p. 530.

\textbf{2.} Supplement to the Memoranda relating to the Royal Hospitals, pp. 36-37. Miss E. Jeffries Davis in an essay entitled "The transformation of London" states that the palace had been used since 1531 as a residence for ambassadors but was fast deteriorating largely on account of its situation, for "there was no coming to it but through stinking lanes or over a filthy ditch." \textit{Tudor Studies}, p. 303.


\textbf{4.} The sturdy vagabond or idle person.
sick when they be cured; who shall not be suffered to wander as vagabonds in the commonwealth, as they have been accustomed, but shall there be exercised. And unto this shall be brought the sturdy and idle: and likewise such prisoners as are quit at the sessions, that there they may be set to labour. And for that the number will be great, the place where they shall be exercised must also be great. And this, being (as it were) the perfection of our whole former travail, is yet undone, and moveth us now to sue for the king's majesty's house of Bridewell; for that the situation and largeness thereof seemeth most meet and convenient for this purpose, if it shall please the king's most excellent majesty, of his great clemency and goodness, to grant that it may be employed to the said use."

The citizens stated that they were confident they could raise sufficient funds for Bridewell and detailed plans for the government of the house. Further they asked that if the grant of Bridewell was refused the house and lands of the Savoy might be given to them instead.

No direct answer was given until the following year, when on 10 April the king summoned the lord mayor to attend before the Privy Council, "and there the Kinges Majestie

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gaue to them for a workhouse for the poor and ydle persons of the City of London his place of Brydewell in Flete Street, and vii C marks landes of the Savoy rentes, with all the beddes and beddinge of the Savoy, towards the maintenaunce of the sayd workhouse; the formal agreement by letters patent followed on 26 June. The actual foundation, which was not fully accomplished until 1556, falls outside this survey, but the action of the City in 1552 shows that the necessity for work as an effective cure for vagabondism was already realised.

Certain conclusions can clearly be drawn from this survey of the years 1532 to 1552. The City was in the main carrying on a policy based on the experiments of a previous period. The State was alive to the urgency of the problem and City activity often directly followed upon a proclamation or statute. Times of particular crisis which imperilled law and order still

3. For a full account of the history of Bridewell see E. G. O'Donoghue, Bridewell Hospital: Palace, Prison, Schools, I and II.
provoked special administrative activity and sometimes led to a tightening up of administrative methods, but such occasions only demonstrated the ineffectiveness of existing policy. For a time recourse was had to harsher punishment but as this proved no more successful, the central government reverted to the policy of 1531, while at the very end of the period the City turned to a new remedy in the scheme for Bridewell. Thus it can be said that while the period from 1485 to 1531 saw the City experimenting and the State intervening but rarely, the succeeding period shows the City giving its policy a thorough trial and doing this often at the instigation of the State which was now much more active in the matter, and was developing a policy the principles of which had already made their appearance in the earlier experiments of the City. The failure of this method of attack finally led the City to initiate a new method based upon the theory that "the cause of all this misery and beggary was idleness: and the mean and remedy to cure the same, must be by its contrary, which is labour"; here again the State was to borrow from the City, but it was not until 1576 that this new policy was embodied in a statute.\footnote{18 Eliz. c. 3, Statutes, IV, i, pp. 610-613.}
CHAPTER V.

The Problem of Vagrancy in Kingston-upon-Hull.

"Forasmoche as by means of grete nombre of sturdie vacabondis and lustie beggars dailie wandryng in sundrie places of thies northe parties, no litle inconvenyences and robries be commyttid to the greate disturbaunce, vnquyetnes and ill ensample of all the king our souerain lordis good and lovyng subiectes within the same."

Circular from the duke of Norfolk to the justices, 1537. (State Papers, Hen. VIII, 121, f. 27).

The great vagrancy statute of 1531 was designed for general application throughout the country; it ordered "the Justices of the Peace of all and syngular the Shires of England wythin the lymyttes of their Commyssions, and all other Justyces of Peace, Mayres, Sheryffes, Baylyffes and other Offycers of all and every Cytie, Borough, Ryddynges or Franches wythin the Realme of England, wythin the lymytes of theyre aucthorytes" to see to its execution. Similar injunctions occurred in

all the vagabond acts and practically all the proclamations of this period. A consideration of the efforts made by the City of London to enforce these State regulations and also to experiment on its own initiative naturally raises the questions as to how far State policy was carried out in other municipalities and whether local experiment was peculiar to London. No attempt is here made to supply a general answer to these questions, but the case of one other municipality, that of Kingston-upon-Hull, has been investigated in order to supply some material for comparison and contrast with London.

The situation in Hull was in many respects very different from that in London. Here the problem was on a much smaller scale and was in itself more simple; for not only was London far greater in population than any other English town but it was peculiarly susceptible to political and other extraneous influences. The prosperous port of Hull, situated in the broad agricultural district

1. Hull had risen to importance as a port long before the sixteenth century. Mr. Frost traces the growth of the town's prosperity as a port in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (C. Frost, Notices relative to the early history of the town and port of Hull, pp. 89-119). John Leland in his famous Itinerary comments on the development of the town as a port: "The first great encreas of the Towne was by passing for fisch into Iseland from whens they had the hole trade of Stoke fisch into England, and partly other Fisch. In Richard the 2. Dayes the Town waxid very rich." (The Itinerary of John Leland the Antiquary, edit. T. Hearne, (2nd ed.), I, p. 49.)
of Holderness and away from the main routes leading from the north of England to the south did not feel the ravages of unemployment and vagrancy to the same extent, whilst its northerly and rather isolated position removed it from much direct governmental interference. The problem of vagrancy does not appear to have become acute until a later date than in London; the London authorities were active long before there is any evidence in the Bench books of Hull of serious action on similar lines. Later, however, the mayor and corporation awoke to the great disadvantages resulting from the ever-growing number of valiant beggars resorting within their walls and efforts were made to check the evil. In order to examine the first stages of consecutive policy in Hull the survey will, therefore, be carried down to 1576.

It is obvious that similar problems of vagrancy and poverty existed in the north as in the south. Thomas Ruthal, bishop of Durham, complained to Wolsey in 1513 that he had as many as from sixty to eighty beggars at his gate every day.\(^1\) Although the enclosure movement

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1. Land P., I, ii, 2394, 24 October 1513.
was not so advanced in the lands north of the Trent as further south, rack-renting and enclosure of commons were responsible for a good deal of unemployment and poverty there. The situation was further aggravated by the dissolution of the monasteries, for "the abbeys in the north parts gave great alms to poor men and laudably served God." Whilst it is true that the dissolution was

1. Professor Tawney shows that the geographical distribution of the enclosure movement has been fairly conclusively worked out by Mr. Leadam and Professor Gay. "It mainly affected the Midlands and eastern counties, from Berkshire and Oxfordshire in the south to Lincoln and Norfolk in the north-east." R. H. Tawney, Agrarian Problem in the sixteenth century, pp. 8-9.

2. For some account of this system of rack-renting in the north which led to wholesale eviction of tenants, see R. R. Reid, The King's Council in the North, pp. 99-100 and M. H. Dodds and R. Dodds, The Pilgrimage of Grace, 1536-1537, and the Exeter conspiracy, 1538, I, p. 369.

3. The enclosure movement in the north was not quite the same as that in the south, "it was not the characteristic enclosure of the period, that of the open fields, which is most prominent during the Pilgrimage of Grace," but the much older and long-continued enclosure of the commons," ibid., I, pp. 372-373.

4. This statement was made by Robert Aske, the leader of the Pilgrimage of Grace, in his answer to an interrogatory which he wrote in the Tower. He says also in support of the northern monasteries that "many their tenants were their fee'd servants to them, and serving-men, well succored by abbeys; and not only these tenants and servants want refreshing there, both of meat, cloth and wages and knoweth not now where to have any living, but also strangers and baggers of corn as betwixt Yorkshire, Lancashire, Kendal, Westmorland, and the Bishopric, for there was neither carriage of corn and merchandise but was greatly succored both horse and man by the said abbeys, for none was in these parts denied, neither horsemeat or mansmeat." ibid., I, pp. 348-349.
the cause of widespread distress, it must also be remembered that the indiscriminate almsgiving of the monastic houses had tended to increase the numbers of idle vagabonds. The duke of Norfolk takes this point of view when writing to Cromwell in 1537 concerning vagabonds in the north. He comments on the extent of the problem and tries to account for it: "Surely I never saw so many as be in these cuntries. And the almes that they haue in religious houses is the great occasion thereof, and also the slackenes of the Justice of pease, for not doyng ther dewties."¹

Although the problem of vagabondism was undoubtedly disturbing the northern counties the central government was not strong enough at the beginning of the sixteenth century to enforce its legislation, vagrancy or otherwise, in these parts. The history of the king's Council of the North from its initiation in 1484 has been very fully traced by Miss Rachel Reid² and will not be entered into here. It is sufficient to note that this instrument of the central government in the north had a rather uncertain career and that it was not until 1537 that "its organisation was completed and the extent of its jurisdiction finally

2. R. R. Reid, *op. cit*. 
It is significant that in that same year some attempt was made to enforce vagrancy policy in the north by the king's lieutenant, the duke of Norfolk.\(^2\) The duke reported to Cromwell that he had sent out letters of instruction concerning vagabonds to all justices of the peace and religious houses.\(^3\) These ordered the justices to "putt in playne execucion with all good effecte and diligence the statute heretofore made and ordeyned for ponyshmente of the said vacabondis in everie behalf,"\(^4\) whilst "thabbottes, priors and other relligious gouernours" were directed that they should "in nowise geve meate, drynke or othir releeff vnto any suche sturdie vacabondis or lustie beggers, but accordyng vnto the lymytacion of the statute in that cace providid, and vnto suche as by the justicis of peace, maires or bailiffes shalbe comytted and sente into ther cuntreys by force of the said statute."\(^5\) But during Edward VI's reign the Council

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1. R. R. Reid, p. 147.
2. It was arranged for the government of the north in December 1536 that the duke of Norfolk should act as "King's Lieutenant for the administration of justice, and should have a Council joined with him." The instructions were finally drawn up in January 1536/37, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 147-148.
4. State Papers, Hen. VIII, 121, f. 27.
5. \textit{Ibid.}, f. 28.
declined in power and prestige, and it was not till some years later that it was "re-established as the supreme administrative and judicial authority beyond the Trent." With no stable means for enforcing its policy and for seeing that the justices and other officers carried out their duties, it was not to be wondered that the government policy had little effect in the north until the second half of the sixteenth century.

The survey of the treatment of vagrancy in Hull may be divided into two periods, the first down to 1552, when Hull had no definite vagrancy policy and the second from 1552 to 1576, when the beginnings of such a policy as London had for some time been pursuing can be discerned in Hull. The primary interest of the first period is the policy pursued by the authorities in maintaining order and discipline which would tend to restrain any tendency to vagabondism. For this the main sources of information are the town ordinances and occasional entries of the proceedings of the mayor, aldermen and burgesses found in the early Bench books and the records of the courts of quarter sessions and the sheriff's turn.

1. R. R. Reid, op. cit., p. 179.

2. Miss Reid shows that the restoration of the Council's power was occasioned by the social unrest of the mid-sixteenth century and the need for supervision of the justices to ensure administration of State policy, ibid., pp. 182-183.
The chief officials responsible for good government in Hull at the opening of the sixteenth century were the mayor, sheriff and aldermen. The mayor, who was chosen from the bench of aldermen, undertook by oath on his election "trewly [to] kepe and gouerne this towne and the kynges peple als wele inhabitantes as straungers after the effect of the kynges lawes and ordynauncez of the saide towne doyng egall justice als wele to the poure as riche."¹ He was assisted in his duties by a sheriff, who had replaced the four bailiffs in 1440 when Hull became "the County of the Town of Kyngeston upon Hull",² and by twelve aldermen who were justices of the peace.³

1. Bench book I, f. 13. An earlier and very similar oath of the mayor at the time when he was assisted by four bailiffs is also given in this Bench book, ibid., f. 12.

2. The office of sheriff was instituted by a charter of Henry VI, 10 May 1440. For a translation of this charter see J. R. Boyle, Charters and Letters Patent granted to Kingston upon Hull, pp. 34-45.

3. The charter of 10 May 1440 constituted a bench of thirteen aldermen, from whom one was yearly chosen as mayor, and gave details of their magisterial duties: "And that the same Aldermen of the town aforesaid, or four, three, or two of them, together with the Mayor of the same town, shall have full correction, punition, power and authority to know, inquire, hear and determine all things and matters, as well concerning all manner of felonies, trespasses, misprisions and extortions, as concerning all manner of other causes, plaints and evil deeds whatsoever, howsoever happening or arising, within the same town and liberty and precinct thereof, as fully and entirely as the keepers of the peace and the justices assigned and to be assigned to hear and determine felonies, trespasses and other evil deeds, and the justices of servants, (Contd.)
From the early fifteenth century onwards ordinances for the internal government of the town and for the preservation of law and order, formulated and proclaimed by the town officials, are entered in the Bench books. These ordinances dealt with all aspects of town life and work and often contained orders for the strict supervision of strangers, in this way indirectly affecting idle vagabonds who might resort thither. For example, one set of fifteenth century ordinances, which, so it was stated, had existed "ab antiquo" and had been proclaimed annually, ordered that the king's peace should be kept by all "in comyng, conuersant & dwellyng" in the town under penalty of fine, whilst strangers were restricted not only in the length of their stay but in their general behaviour. This policy of directing the town government by ordinances continued in the sixteenth century.

3. (Contd.)

labourers and artificers, in the three trithings afore-said, or any parcel thereof, outside the town and liberty aforesaid, have or shall have in any wise in future", (ibid., pp. 42-43). It is interesting to note that accordingly the town was divided into six wards, each having two aldermen, Bench book III, f. 24, 10 December 1442.

1. These ordinances have been transcribed in full as a striking example of the vigilance and attention given by the mayor, sheriff and aldermen to the internal government of Hull, see Appendix XVIII, pp. 459-465.

2. In 1531 it was agreed that "the charter and all the ordynances that hertofore haue ben maid, new maid and herafter to be maid "should annually be read to the mayor aldermen and burgesses assembled in the Guildhall, Bench book III, f. 175."
A thorough going application of these regulations for good rule and order would have given little opportunity for vagabondism to flourish in Hull.

Vagrancy was also held in check by the jurisdiction of the sheriff's turn and quarter sessions. The records of these courts in Hull for the first half of the sixteenth century show that all types of offenders were duly punished. The cases relate amongst others to disturbers of the peace, nightwalkers, players of illegal games, immoral persons, keepers of houses of ill repute, thieves, vagrants and harbourers of vagrants. The punishments took the form of fine, imprisonment in the stocks or pillory, whipping and banishment and in some cases death.

There is one interesting entry in the sessions book which shows clearly that the application of State vagrancy policy was not entirely neglected in Hull before 1552. This is the copy of a writ of "venire facias" addressed to the sheriff of Hull in January 1544/45 directing him to summon a jury before the justices of the peace for the trial of offence against certain statutes "pro manutencione sagittarum, punicione et expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum, expulcione vagabundorum.

1. Several cases have been transcribed in full as illustrative of the types of offence committed in Hull, see Appendix XIX, pp. 466-468.
jocorum illicitorum et aliarum offensarum.\(^1\)

Only one other instance of direct State interference in Hull before 1552 is to be found. This occurred in October 1541 when the Privy Council held its meetings there during the king's visit to the town in his progress through the north.\(^2\) On 4 October the Privy Council directed "th' inhabitants of Hull and Hullshire" that among other things they should have "a regard to th' avoiding of Scots and vagabonds from time to time."\(^3\)

There is thus little evidence of vagrancy policy in Hull or of State influence in the matter before 1552. A beadle of the beggars had, however, made his appearance

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1. Hull Corp. Rec., Sheriff turn and quarter sessions book, ff. 125\(^v\)-126, 7 January 1544/45. It is interesting to note in connection with the observance of government policy in general in Hull that in 1534 was "bought by the advyse of the said maire and his brethren a great booke encludyng in it all the hole statutes of the realme of England for thuse of the burgeses of the towne," Bench book III, f. 179\(^v\), 18 June 1534.

2. The king was especially interested in Hull at this period since in 1539 he had acquired the lordship or manor of Kingston upon Hull from Sir William Sidney, L. and P., XIV, 1, 906 g.7, 24 April 1539.

3. Ibid., XVI, 1232, (2). Previously in times of trouble in the north the authorities had reviewed the numbers of Scottich strangers in the town, as in 1454 and 1455, Bench book III A, ff. 179 and 181.
in Hull before this date. He is first mentioned in the town's rent roll of 1545 to 1546 as having a tenement in the Flesh market.\(^1\) He was excused the rent of this tenement and received further eight shillings a year for keeping the "South end" for the town authorities.\(^2\) Unfortunately there is no entry in the bench books concerning the office or appointment and consequently none of his other duties are known, further he ceases to be mentioned in the rent rolls after 1548.\(^3\) The office may of course have been similar to that of the beadle of the beggars who was appointed in London for the first time in 1518.\(^4\) It is interesting to note that

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1. In the town rental of 1545-1546 he is called "bedyll of the beggers" (Hull Corp. Rec., Rent roll, 37 Hen. VIII, m. 1) and in that of the following year "bedell of the poore people" (Rent roll, 38 Hen. VIII, m. 1). The rent roll of 38 Henry VIII has been cut into four leaves which are stitched together like a book.

2. A payment included under "Feez and Wagiez" in the rent roll of 38 Henry VIII states: "Item to the bedell for kepyng of the Southe end dwellyng vpon the tounes rent payng no ferm, viii.s." (ibid., m. 4d.) This entry is taken as referring to the beadle of the beggars as in previous rent rolls the person holding the same tenement in the Flesh market also kept the South end and received like payment. The South end was in later years the quay side (Rev. J. Tickell, The history of the town and county of Kingston-upon-Hull, p. 648). Tindall Wildridge states that the ducking stool was at the South end (T. Wildridge, Holderness and Hullshire Historic Gleanings, 1886, p. 126), which probably accounts for the beadle's connection with it.

3. Rent roll 1 and 2 Edward VI.

4. Supra, pp. 151-152.
at this same period there was a keeper or master of the beggars in Beverley, whilst at York there were four head beggars.

Before examining the policy pursued by Hull from 1552 to 1576 the main lines of the development of State policy during the period and the attempts of the Council of the North to put it into operation must first be noted. This State policy was formulated in the proclamations and statutes of the period; the former dealt solely with the expulsion of vagabonds from the court or from London and Westminster, and do not show any alteration in policy. The same is true of the two earlier statutes of 1553 and 1563 which were mainly

1. Payments were made to this officer in Beverley from 1520, Hist. MSS. Com., Report on the manuscripts of the corporation of Beverley, 1900, pp. 173, 174, 176.

2. William Giles, Catalogue of the charters, house-books etc of the city of York, p. 50 note: "The corporation authorized four men to beg for themselves and others, and gave them a sort of uniform for their identity, no one else being allowed to beg for alms."

3. R. Steele, I, p. 46, No. 437, 17 December 1553; p. 48, No. 455, 15 September 1554; p. 58, No. 549, 2 September 1561.

4. Ibid., p. 51, No. 490; p. 76, No. 714, 14 December 1576.

5. 2 and 3 Philip and Mary c. 5, Statutes, IV, i, pp. 280-281.

6. 5 Eliz. c. 3, Ibid., pp. 411-414.
concerned with regulation of the impotent poor and of funds for their relief. No change was made in the treatment of vagrancy until the "Acte for the Punishment of Vocabondes and for Releif of the Poore & Impotent" in 1572.¹ This statute for the first time defined the vagabond class in a detailed manner. Increased severity of punishment was introduced; on the first offence the vagabond was to be whipped "and burnte through the gristle of the right Ear with a hot Yron of the compasse of an Ynche about" unless some honest person would take him into service for one year, on the second offence he was deemed to be a felon unless someone would take him into service for two years, and on the third offence he was adjudged a felon without clergy and might be punished with death.² This statute savoured of the spirit of the ruthless act of 1547, and although making new regulations "for the utter suppressing of the said outrageous Enemyes to the Comon Weale" it introduced no new principle in the treatment of vagrancy. There

¹ 14 Eliz. c. 5, ibid., pp. 590-598.
² Miss Leonard notes that this act was at times rigorously enforced, and instances several cases tried at the Middlesex sessions in which the penalty of death was inflicted. E. M. Leonard, The early history of English poor relief, p. 70, n. 2.
followed, however, in 1576 an act "for the setting of the Poore on Workes, and for the avoyding of Ydlenes,"¹ which recognised that harsh punishment alone was not effective as a remedy for the evil of vagrancy and adopted the policy of employment as a corrective for idleness, a policy upon which the London authorities had already embarked in their foundation of Bridewell. Provision was to be made for town "stocks" for the employment of both needy poor and vagabonds, ² and also for the erection in every county of houses of correction for punishing and employing rogues and unsettled poor. State treatment of vagrancy during this period was therefore still based on punishment of increasing severity, and it was not until 1576 that any definite expression was given to the policy of employment as an alternative method of dealing with the problem.

The part played by the Council of the North in the enforcement of social and economic policy lay in its supervision of local magistrates. The articles of April 1557, devised by the Lord President and Council and directed

1. 18 Elizabeth c.3, Statutes, IV, 1, pp. 610-613.

2. The "stock" was to consist of "Woole Hempe Flax Iron or other Stufe" and was committed to the charge of certain persons appointed as collectors and governors of the poor, who were to employ poor people in working up the materials, ibid., p. 611.
to the justices of the peace in the county of York, ordered the appointment of overseers in every parish who were to survey the inhabitants and strangers within their districts and to supervise their general behaviour. They were to summon before them all householders and others to discover "what every of them have to occupy for maintenance or supportation of themselves and their families, either in husbandry or craft, or by other labour or industry, and what provision they make for setting to work themselves, their wives, children and families." If any person had not sufficient work then extra employment was to be found for him, and if he refused to follow the orders of the overseers in this respect he was to be presented to the justices of the peace "to be used by imprisonment, whipping or otherwise by the laws and statutes appointed for idle and loddering persons, and also to be put under bonds of common mainprise."

Another instance of the Council's vigilance more directly relating to vagrancy may be found in 1560 in a letter addressed to the mayor and aldermen of Hull requesting them to enforce certain articles and statutes, including that against vagabonds. Again in 1569 when there were

2. Bench book IV, ff. 30vo-33, 10 August 1560.
disturbances throughout the country and rebellion in the north, the Privy Council ordered searches for idle vagabonds; the Council of the North was responsible for carrying out these orders in the northern districts and duly conferred with the justices of the peace. In 1572 there is evidence of a further attempt to see that the justices were carrying out their duties; articles for the establishment of good order were drawn up and sent to them. These articles included orders for the punishment of vagabonds, for the relief of the impotent, for the supervision of alehouses and for the prevention of unlawful assemblies. Thus the efforts of the Council of the North during the period from 1552 to 1576 consist of occasional instructions to the local justices. It was

1. The Earl of Sussex, President of the Council of the North, wrote to Sir William Cecil on 13 March 1568/69 that he had received a letter from the Privy Council "with writs and proclamations to search for vagabonds", Cal. S. P. Dom., Addenda 1566-1579, p. 73.

2. The President and Council of the North reported to the queen on 26 May 1569 that they had conferred with the justices for the execution of the statute for vagabonds and "have taken order that once in every month there shall be a secret search for that purpose throughout the shire," ibid., p. 77.

3. Ibid., pp. 435-436.

4. The order reads: "To stay the spreading of false and seditious rumours and the sending of messages from the late rebels to trouble the quiet of the realm, order is to be given in market towns and other places, that all suspected passengers, vagabonds, beggars, and rogues be punished with severity and celerity, according to the late statute", ibid., p. 435.
during this period also that the municipal authorities in Hull first began seriously to tackle the sturdy beggar problem within their area.

The activity in Hull from 1552 to 1576 was, as in the early period in London, spasmodic and although it dealt with a much smaller problem bears a certain resemblance to the policy and administration of the metropolis. For one thing the motives are similar in both cases - the desire for law and order, the care for the impotent and the anxiety to maintain the town's morale. It is also interesting to note that just as the London authorities were on several occasions urged to activity by the orders of the Privy Council, so the mayor and corporation in Hull were influenced by instructions from the Council of the North.

The first occasion on which the Hull authorities appear to be conscious of the real need for dealing with the town's poor was in 1559. In this year the sheriff's turn inquest presented that there were many idle able bodied poor about the town who were depriving the needy of available relief; it was therefore ordered that the aldermen assisted by the constables should make inquiries in their respective wards as to the numbers of impotent poor and able bodied beggars. The latter were to be
banished from the town if they refused to work. In order to keep some check on numbers in the future a similar search was to be made every year.¹

In August of the following year an interesting set of orders was issued by the mayor and aldermen detailing the duties and powers of the aldermen in their respective wards. These orders aimed at ensuring the town's good government and gave the alderman the entire supervision in his ward not only over matters of general welfare such as "the makyng, repayryng, mending, scouryng and kepyng clene of all the streatez, lanes, gutters and of all other noyfull or vnseemly placys", but over the conduct of the inhabitants. He was given full power to examine, punish and imprison, if necessary, all who as misruled persons and keepers of disorderly houses broke either a statute of the realm or a town ordinance. In this connection he was directed to search out and duly punish "all the idell persons, vacabondes, beggers, bawdes & ... other light or suspectyd persons". He was to be assisted in the execution of these duties by the constables who were bound to arrest and take to prison at his order. In the past the mayor alone had been charged with "the heryng,

¹ For the full text of this order see Appendix XX, p. 469.
orderyng & determynyng of all the seyed former causez & matters of all the seyed wardes within the same towne" and had not had sufficient time to deal thoroughly with them; it was hoped that by localising these duties in the various wards the town would be more efficaciously governed.\(^1\) It will be remembered that in London the alderman with the help of his wardmote and wardmote inquest was very active in dealing with vagabonds; the need for ward enquiry and supervision was also realised in Hull and consequently the ward officials were given powers for the preservation of the peace which included within their scope the correction of vagabondism.

In that same month the Council of the North issued instructions to the mayor and aldermen as justices of the peace "to putt in dewe execucion certain statutez & lawes expressyd & declaryd in certain articlez." This interference, so it was stated, was necessitated by the "disorder within... Kingeston vpon Hull by laborers, artificers & workemen."\(^2\) The articles were designed

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1. These orders have been transcribed in full as giving a clear picture of ward organisation and government in Hull, see Appendix XXI, pp. \(470-476\).

2. This is taken from the letter addressed by the Council of the North to the mayor and aldermen of Hull, 10 August 1560, Bench book IV, ff. 30\(^V\)co-31.
to secure stability of labour and would therefore tend
to discourage idleness and vagrancy. All persons under
sixty "nott levyng by merchaundyce nott vsyng any
manuall occupacion or craft nor havynge landes sufficient
for his levyng & exercise & nott beynge in service" were
to work if so required, whilst servants were not to leave
their masters until their term of service was concluded
nor without due notice. One article aimed especially at
restricting vagrancy: "No servant of husbondry or laborer
or other person reteyned shall departe & goe from one
towne to an other and from one wepentake to an other or
frome one shire to an other withoute a testymonye sealed
for that porpasse. And we woll that in euerey wepentake
there shalbe a seale deuyshed for that porposse and putt
into the handes of suche justices of the peasse or other
as the justices of peasse shall thynke mete, so that
testymoniall be made with the assent of one justice of
peasse whose name shalbe declaryd in the seyed testymoniall."¹
Then followed a table of wages to be paid to various classes
of servants² and a list of statutes, including the

¹. For "the copy of all the seyed articlez to be observeryd
by the justices of peasse concernyng the order of
servantes of husbondry, laborers & artificers and
others" see ibid., ff. 31-32.

². Ibid., f. 32.
statute concerning vagabonds, which the justices of the peace were to put into execution.¹ Thus the aldermen as ward officials were given power to punish idle vagabonds whilst as justices of the peace they were directed to supervise all labourers and servants, to prevent either idleness or vagrancy and to enforce the statute for vagabonds. Some attempt was made to carry out these instructions of 1560. The mayor and aldermen sent a precept to the sheriff ordering him to summon the constables and two of "the most honestyst & discretist persons of euery warde" and of all the towns and villages in the county to appear at the Guildhall on 24 August; these people were to take the oaths of all labourers and servants to observe the statutes and articles and were to present offenders at the next sessions after Michaelmas.²

1. The entry reads: "Memorandum the sta[t]utes followyng to be put in dewe execucion. Firs[t], the statute of hewe and crye; second, the sta[t]ute for examynynge of prisoners and their accusers, and the baylment of persons apprehendyd; the statute for vacaboundes; the statute for ale housez; the statute ayenst unlaufull gamez & mayntenance of archery; the statute ayenst regrators, forstallors & ingrosers; the statute for high weyes; the statu[t]e ayenst rebellion; the statute ayenst faulce newes rewmours & tales; the lawes & statutez for tanners & shomakers to be putt in execucion; the statute made ayenst the carryinge of hydes, tallowe and leather to be putt in due execucion". ibid., ff. 32vo-33.

2. Ibid., ff. 33-34.
Three years later, in 1563, town ordinances were drawn up for the "ponyshyng of vyce" and the correction of "dronkennes, excesse, ryot, howerdom, wantones, lightnes, idlenes and skoldinge." In order to preserve a "well ordered common welth" all idle and disorderly persons were to be punished and those harbouring such vagabonds were to be fined.¹ This customary practice of formulating municipal policy by ordinance persisted and in 1566 during the mayoralty of John Thornton a most comprehensive set of rules for town government were devised, which were "yerely to be proclaimed and publishshed shortly after Michelmas vpon the markitt day and in the markitt time."² These rules regulated every aspect of town life and behaviour and affected vagabonds indirectly in the strict injunctions for keeping the peace, for suppressing immorality, illegal games and false rumours and for restricting taverns and alehouses. Certain of these ordinances, however, concerned them directly; for example, one ordered "that no man doe committ whordome, fornicacion, advltry, neither vse dronkennes or live idelly runnings abowt the streates vagarantly."³

1. For the full text see Appendix XXII pp. 477-480.
3. Ibid., f. 67.
Another prohibited townspeople from lodging vagabonds:

"None inhabiting this towne shall take into their houses or icine with them to dwell any suspect persone or persons of ill life or vacabondes what soever they be, but shall present to Master Maior for the time being all suche idle persons as have no meanes to live to be ordered according to the tenor of the statute for them provided." At the same time that these ordinances were published the rules made in 1560 defining and enlarging the duties of the alderman in his ward - which included the apprehension, examination and punishment of vagabonds and other misruled persons - were confirmed and "fully agreed to stande in force and effect for ever and that every alderman within his wairde shall doe according to the tenor, purporte and trewe meaninge of the same ordinnances."  

Although the town ordinances were designed to be proclaimed annually there are only two entries in the Bench book recording such proclamations, in December 1571 and July 1575 respectively, on which occasions the ordinances were "with one full assent and consent confirmed and ratefied" by the mayor, aldermen

1. Ibid., f. 67vo.
2. Ibid., f. 71vo.
3. Ibid., ff. 85vo-86.
4. Ibid., f. 132vo.
and burgesses.

For some years after 1566 there is no evidence of any active vagrancy policy in Hull. This is rather surprising as in 1569, during the disturbances in the north, the town was threatened by the rebels and the establishment of law and order must have been essential.¹ This lack of evidence of policy suggests that either existing regulations concerning vagabondism were considered effective or that the town was not at this time seriously disturbed by the problem. Certain measures of 1574, however, affected vagrancy in its relation to immorality and vice. At this period the mayor and aldermen were perturbed by the increase in "the crimes of fornicacion and adultrie", which was partly caused by "the great repaire of marriniers and others whose contynuaunce ys vncertein and they not at all times to be founde by ordinary processe." They had communicated with the Archbishop of York in the matter and he replied giving them full authority as justices of the peace to try and punish offenders of this nature "accordinge as haithe been vsed

¹ Tickell gives a full account of the disturbed state of the north in 1569 and how Hull was placed in a state of defence at the command of the earl of Sussex, lord president and lieutenant general of all her majesty's forces in the north, J. Tickell, op. cit., pp. 222-225.
in the citie of London or other well governed cities or
townes corporate or by your predecessors lawfully
heretofore." 1  Shortly after there was an enquiry into
the disorders in the town resulting from the great number
of ale houses, and regulations were issued dealing with
the matter. 2  This strict vigilance of the town authorities
in all questions of the behaviour of the inhabitants
may well have restrained the idle vagabond who was
generally associated with the low life of the town.

In these first stages of vagrancy policy in Hull
the authorities do not appear to have been influenced to
any very great extent by State policy or to have made much
effort to carry out the vagrancy statutes. The influence
of State policy seems to be more marked from 1575 onwards
when there is some endeavour to enforce first the 1572
statute and then that of 1576. The first evidence of
this endeavour was in December 1575, when the mayor and
aldermen ordered all the poor people not rightfully
belonging to the town to depart to their own districts
according to the statute of 1572. 3 The second step
followed the statute of 1576 and was concerned with the

2. Ibid., f. 117 25 July 1574.
3. For the full text see Appendix XXIII.
formation of a "town stock" for the employment of the poor. These two cases will be dealt with more fully later when considering the problem of relief for the poor. It is, however, interesting to notice them here, as they constitute the first efforts on the part of the Hull authorities to carry out the vagrancy statutes on their own initiative.

The beginnings of vagrancy policy in Hull were thus in some ways very similar to the early activities in the matter in London, although in the metropolis the problem was of far greater proportions and urgency. The similarity is seen in the motives actuating the authorities, in certain features of policy - the search for idle vagabonds, their punishment and expulsion carried out by the aldermen and constables in their respective wards - and in the occasional interference of the central government, in London by proclamations and orders from the Privy Council and in Hull by instructions from the Council of the North. Hull was, however, little troubled by the crowds of professional beggars who added to the difficulties of the London authorities, and its policy against vagrancy was formulated mainly for the purpose

1. For the full text see Appendix XXV.
of stabilising labour. It is true that in all their regulations directed against immorality and disorderliness the mayor and aldermen dealt with vagabondism, but the characteristic attitude to the problem in Hull is seen in the order of 1559 which stated that the idle poor "be constrained to worke or elles to be banyshed outh of the toun". Again, vagrancy policy developed in Hull after the State had been experimenting for many years and had defined a policy for the whole country by statute law, whilst the early experiments of the London authorities often preceded and directed State policy. Further, in Hull there was no serious endeavour to carry out State policy until the statutes of 1572 and 1576 and even then it was the realisation of the town's duty to its poor rather than the need to quell vagabondism which caused the activity. The period under survey closed in London with the foundation of Bridewell which was designed to cure vagabondism by employment rather than by harsh punishment. Even by 1576 this stage of development had not yet reached Hull; the State had just adopted the policy of houses of correction but this was not applied to Hull until later. John Taylor, the water poet, describing a visit to the town in 1622, wrote:
"They have a Bridewell, and an ex'ient skill
To make some people work against their will:
And there they have their lodging and their meat,
Clean whips, and everything exceeding neat:
And then with fair or foul means alway, they
Give idle persons little time to play."  

CHAPTER VI.

Municipal policy for the relief of the poor and destitute in London and Hull.

So many pore
In every bordoure,
And so small soccoure
Saw I never.


Pituously complaineth the pore commons of this your Maesties realme, greatly lamenteing their owne miserable pouertie; and yet muche more the most lamentable and more then wretched estate of their chyldren and posterite.

A Supplication of the Poore Commons, 1546, (Four Supplications, E.E.T.S.), p. 61.

Complaints of the miserable condition of the great multitude of poor and of the insufficiency of available relief to supply their needs echo throughout the contemporary literature of the Tudor period. The archives of both municipality and state show that the authorities were not insensible to the gravity of the situation and spent both time and energy in endeavouring to achieve a satisfactory solution. Their policy in
relation to the idle able bodied poor and sturdy beggars has already been traced, but there remain for consideration their attempts to regulate and systematise the relief of the needy and impotent. The two problems, however, are so intimately associated and inter-related that it is difficult to separate them; the attack on vagabondism between the years 1485 and 1552, by endeavouring to cut down the numbers of idle vagabonds either by deterrent punishment or by finding them employment was calculated to preserve available alms for the deserving.

Down to 1536 activity was mainly directed against vagrancy. There were two principal reasons for this; first, large numbers of valiant beggars were an imminent danger to the community. Robert Crowley in his famous Epigrammes refers to one of the grave perils arising from too many idlers:

"What conspiracies haue ben wroght,
Wythin this lyttle whyle,
By idle men that dyd
the commons begyle."

It was therefore in the interests of law and order, without which it was impossible to promote any social reform, that the problem of vagrancy should be tackled.

A second reason was the fact that the problem of
the relief of the poor was not so pressing at the opening
of the period. The question of the poor and destitute
had confronted society throughout the ages, and had
for centuries been dealt with through voluntary agencies.
The mediaeval church had taught the duty of man to
relieve the sufferings of "God's poor" in order to
attain everlasting salvation, and this idea still
persisted in the sixteenth century. Henry Brinklow
in his Lamentacyon of a Christen agaynst the Cytye of
London tells of "the rewards of everlastinge life to
them which, to their power, haue provyded to do for the
wydowe & fatherlesse,"¹ and the porter in Robert Copland's
Hye Way emphasises the same theory:

"Where ony gyueth almesse with good entent,
The rewarde can not be no wyse mysspent. ²

Voluntary agencies such as private almsgivers, craft
and parish gilds, monasteries, hospitals and almshouses

2. Robert Copland, op. cit., p. 32. The indiscriminate
nature of this almsgiving is indicated by the advice
given by Robert Crowley in his epigram on beggars:
"Yet cesse not to gyue to all,
wythoute anye regarde;
Though the beggers be wicked,
thou shalte haue thy rewarde."
R. Crowley, op. cit., p. 16.
were still offering their charity in Tudor times, and only when they were found to be inadequate in the extent of their charity was the system of poor relief reorganised by municipality and state.

The policy of the London authorities, which will be examined first, falls into two periods. The first - from 1485 to 1536 - was mainly experimental. The City authorities began to regulate promiscuous almsgiving and to direct relief to the most deserving persons. It was realised that voluntary charity was at the best intermittent and unevenly distributed and so experiment was made in the organisation of funds, although these were still of a voluntary nature. Further, in years of high prices and food scarcity some attempt was made to prevent destitution by civic provision. The City was in this respect, as in others already noted, preparing the way for State action and the period closes with the act of 1536 "for the punysshement of sturdy vacabundes and beggers," which incorporated in statutory form the regulation of almsgiving and organisation of funds already tried in the City. New development came in the second period, from 1536 to 1552, when the increase of poverty and the decrease of available relief following the dissolution of the religious foundations forced the
authorities into further experiment. The City not only continued to regulate almsgiving but embarked upon the reorganisation of certain hospitals and of relief in general, and this involved a series of financial experiments in raising money for charitable purposes. Thus by 1552 a general scheme of relief had been formulated, depending for its maintenance on civic obligation as well as voluntary philanthropy. The State continued to rely on voluntary contributions for the relief of the poor - the pressure exercised on contributors being steadily increased - until 1572, when the justices of the peace and municipal governors were empowered to make direct assessments and to appoint overseers of the poor to take charge of the whole business.¹

The problem of the relief of the poor in Hull was on a much smaller scale and thus the inadequacy of voluntary charity was not so apparent. The interference

¹ 14 Eliz. c. 5, Statutes, IV, i, pp. 590-598. Already by the act of 1563 (5 Eliz. c. 3, ibid., pp. 411-414) justices were allowed to assess obstinate persons, who refused to contribute to the poor, but force was only permitted when persuasion failed. Even in 1572 there is some hesitancy on the question of compulsion; if a person failed to pay he was to be brought before two justices of the peace "to shewe the cause of his obstinate Refusall or wilfull discouragement, and to abyde suche Order therein as the said Justices shall appointe." Then if he continued to be disobedient he was to be imprisoned (ibid., p. 594).
of the mayor and aldermen in the regulation of relief was hastened by the dissolution of the religious foundations, but even so it came more gradually and later than in London and followed, on the whole, the policy directed by the State.

(1) Early experiments in poor relief in London, 1485-1536.

During this earlier period both State and City policy took the form of restriction and regulation of available charity. The aim was mainly to ensure that relief reached "the impotent, poure, seke or sore persons lyvyng onluy vppon thalmes of the people" instead of being seized by idle vagabonds.

The first sign of interest was in 1514 when an enquiry was instituted into the administration of Philpot's Alms, which dated from the fourteenth century. Sir John Philpot, mayor of London 1378-1379, left by will bequests to thirteen poor people in honour of the five wounds of Jesus Christ, of the five joys of the

blessed Mother Mary and of the Holy Trinity. The recipients were to be selected by his wife during her life time and afterwards by the mayor and recorder of the City.\footnote{For the calendared notice of Sir John Philpot's will, 25 July 1389, see R.R. Sharpe, Calendar of Wills proved and enrolled in the Court of Husting, II, p. 275. A modern account of the charity and its administration is given in the Report of Endowed Charities (County of London), 1904, VII, pp. 100-101.} Several entries in the minutes of the Court of Aldermen at the beginning of the Tudor period show that the charity was being administered,\footnote{Four cases of new nominations to the charity are recorded, Repert. I, ff. 5, 12, 92 and Repert. II, f. 3.} but often, apparently, with little enquiry as to the nature of the recipients, for on 13 November 1514 a bill was presented to the mayor declaring that "diverse of theym that yerely receyue Philpottes Almes be resident & dwellyng in the cuntrey & summe of theym be decessyd unknowen to the officers, and their deputies yerely receyue their almesse after their deceases." The chamberlain was therefore ordered to bring before the Court the names of all persons receiving the relief,\footnote{Ibid., ff. 200-200\footnote{201}.} who were then summoned to appear.\footnote{Ibid., f. 201\footnote{201}.} Finally, on the
20th he was commanded to make no payments of the charity until the claims of all the recipients had been justified.¹ No further complaint was recorded, and the entries of preferments from time to time and of payments made by the chamberlain² suggest that the administration continued satisfactorily and that the alms went to deserving cases.

In this last connection there is an interesting entry in the Repertory in March 1515; a certain Sir Richard Mower, priest, was deprived of the relief because "he ys seen to this Court to be yong & able to lyve withoute yt," but provision was made for its restoration if he "hereafter.....falle in pouerte or dekay."³

Private benefactors had often in the past left the control of their endowments to civic governors, gilds and religious foundations, and although there was a general decline in private charity in the sixteenth century the practice continued. The City authorities were in various instances made responsible for the

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1. Ibid., f. 203.

2. In the few folios of chamberlain's accounts that refer to our period (supra, p. 18) there are entries of the payment of Philpot's Alms to eight men and five women, (ff. 83vo, 87vo, 90vo).

administration of private charity. For example, Alderman George Monoux gave a brewhouse situated near the Bridge House in Southwark to the mayor and commonalty of London on condition that "the chamberleyn of the saide Citie and his successors for the tyme beyng shall yerely for evermore bitwene the feastes of Alle Seyntes and the Natuyyte of Oure Lorde dispose & distribute yn coles amonge the pore people and inhabitauntes of the warde of Bassyngeshawe of London, where the said George ys nowe aldreman, to the value of tenne shilynges to thentent that the said pore people and inhabitauntes havyng the saide coles shall pray to God for the good astate of the said George & the lady, Dame Anne, now his wyffe, and after their decesses for their sowllses, their speyALLE benefactours sowlls and alle Cristen sowlls.\textsuperscript{1}

There was no general formulation of policy until early in 1518. It will be remembered that before the Tudor period the City authorities had tried to protect the needy by prohibiting idle vagabonds from taking

\textsuperscript{1} Letter Book 0, f. 183\textsuperscript{VO}. This is taken from the indenture between George Monoux and the City, 12 October 1524, Letter Book 0, ff. 182\textsuperscript{VO}-183\textsuperscript{VO}; Journal XIII, f. 188\textsuperscript{VO seq.}
This policy was maintained in the sixteenth century, and orders were issued in 1518 to ensure its effectiveness. A census of sturdy beggars and impotent poor was taken by the aldermen in their respective wards, and then a set of articles was drawn up detailing the policy to be pursued in relation to both classes. These showed that the aldermen had reported over a thousand poor "so impotent, aged, feble or blynde that they be not able to gette their livynges by labour and worke, and also be in suche extreme povertie that they may not lyve but oonly by almes and charite of the people."

The new feature of policy was the badging of the needy for purposes of begging. They were to be given tokens, "that is to say a payre of beedes rounde with tharmes of London in the myddys, to be streken with a stampe in metall of pure white tynne" which they were to "$sette vpon their right shulders of their gownes

1. The first regulation of this nature in the City was in 1359, supra, pp. 106-107.
2. The circumstances leading to these orders have already been discussed, supra, pp. 146-150.
3. For the full text of the London orders of 1517/18 see Appendix IV (d), pp. 413-418. The regulations relating to vagabonds have been noted supra, pp. 150-152.
openly to be seen. Only persons wearing these badges were authorised to beg. They were also given instructions as to the manner of begging; they were not to annoy by continual pestering when once they had been "denied of almes of any persone owther by his worde or countynance of his hande." The sick poor, those "visited with the great pokkes outwardly apperyng or with other great sores or maladyes tedious, lothesome or abhorible to be loked vppon & seen to the great anoyaunce of the people," were not to beg openly but were to be placed in the hospitals, and then a proctor from every hospital was to be given a token authorising him to collect alms on their behalf. Further, arrangements were made in the same orders for the appointment of special officers to superintend the administration of this policy.

Most of these instructions were carried out within the month. The tokens of "pure whyte tynne" were made by Stephyn Hawkyns, who was paid six shillings and

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1. On the death of any such badged person the constable or beadle was instructed to return the token to the alderman of the ward, who would deliver it to another as need arose.

2. The appointment of these officers has already been dealt with, supra, pp. 151–152, 159.
eight pence for every hundred.¹ They were then delivered to the aldermen to distribute in their respective wards. Report was to be made of the names of all receiving badges whilst any left over were to be returned to the chamberlain. In all, 772 tokens were given to the aldermen.² There is no further entry relating to this badging until March 1533 when the Court of Aldermen again ordered the chamberlain to provide tokens or brooches "to be delivered by every alderman in his ward to the poor & impotent persons in every ward according to the bills of certificates of the said aldermen etc."³

Relief of the poor remained entirely voluntary, though steps had been taken to ensure that it should reach those who needed it most. But there were so many poor and bounteous almsgiving was declining. Contemporary writers are continually reminding us that:

"The charitie of rich men is nowe thorowe colds."⁴

¹ Repert. III, f. 192, 6 February 1517/18.
² For the complete list of the number of tokens given to each alderman see Appendix IV, (f), pp. 418-420.
³ Repert. VIII, f. 282, 27 March 1533.
⁴ R. Crowley, op. cit., p. 11.
Moreover, voluntary almsgiving which was intermittent, unevenly distributed and often insufficient was bound in the end to be superseded by compulsory assessment for the relief of the poor. This was foreshadowed by an order of the Court of Aldermen in 1532/33 instructing every alderman or his deputy to appoint honest persons "of every parishes church" to collect alms which were to be distributed to the poor at the church doors.¹

Where the City had led the way, the State followed in the acts of 1531 and 1536. The former ordered a search to be made by officials throughout the country for "all aged poore & impotent persones whiche lyve or of necessyte be compelled to lyve by Almes of the charyte of the people." These persons were to be registered as officially licensed to beg within certain limits. Any impotent person discovered begging outside his district or without a licence was to be punished.²

Again, just as the London orders of 1517/18 were supplemented in 1533 by arrangements for a collection of alms, so the deficiencies of the 1531 act were

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¹. Letter Book P, f. 9vo; Repart. VIII, f. 274vo, 4 March 1532/33. See supra, p. 184.
². 22 Hen. VIII c. 12, Statutes, III, pp. 328-329.
remedied in an act of 1536 in a similar way. 1 Town officers and churchwardens or two persons from every parish were ordered to gather "suche charitable and voluntarie almes of the good christen people within the same with boxes every sunday, holy day and other festivall day or otherwise amongst them selfes." Arrangements were made for the distribution of the relief, for accounts to be kept and for the assistance of poor parishes, whilst private and public doles were forbidden. Certain poor people "of every parisshe within Cities and Townes corporate" were to be appointed to collect broken meat two or three times a week "which shalbe..... distributed evenly amongst the poore people founde of the said common almes" at the direction of the mayor, aldermen and other officials. Thus relief although still voluntary 2 was no longer to be indiscriminate but was to be directed into the most deserving channels by municipal and parish officials. In this way it was hoped to cope with the dual problem of the vagabond and impotent, the former being deprived of alms and the

1. 27 Hen. VIII c. 25, ibid., pp. 558-562.
2. The act states that no one must "be constrayned to any suche certayne contribucion but as ther free wille and charities shall extend," ibid., p. 562.
latter assured of relief.

There is one other aspect of City governance from 1485 to 1536 which deserves notice here, namely the regulation of supplies of food and fuel. High prices and scarcity were the cause of much poverty and distress, and any regulation of the conditions of sale while only indirectly a measure of poor relief might prevent the spread of destitution. The medieval town had exercised rights for "the surveying of victuals" which included "the enforcement of the Assizes of Bread, Ale, Wine and the like, as well as the regulation of prices, places of sale, and quality in the case of all other victuals, especially flesh and fish."\(^1\) The authorities extended this control to other articles of importance to the poorer classes, such as wood and coal, tallow and candles. Although the sixteenth century saw the gradual diminution and cessation of these powers,\(^2\) during the early years of the century there is ample evidence of the anxiety of the City governors to promote the interests of the citizens in this way and occasionally orders were issued

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2. Ibid., pp. 47-50.
which were designed primarily to aid the poor. Prices of victuals, principally grain, fish, poultry and meat, and of fuel and tallow were continually regulated and persons breaking the instructions were punished; in November 1512, for example, certain people were apprehended for failing to observe the prices set for poultry.\(^1\) The quality of marketable goods was supervised also; a man who tried to sell four "flicches of mesell and stynkyng bacon" was made to ride on his mare from Newgate to Leadenhall, two of the flitches were fastened on him, two were borne before and a placard was placed on his head bearing the inscription: "For puttyng to sale of mesell & stynkyng bacon."\(^2\)

This policy of supervision and regulation was in the interests of all citizens both rich and poor; sometimes however the orders had special regard to the poor. On 11 December 1514, on the supplication of the Fishmongers, the Court of Aldermen agreed that five

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2. Letter Book N, ff. 31\(^{vo}\)-32; Repert. III, f. 129\(^{vo}\), 18 February 1516/17. All kinds of deceits were practised. Thus a certain John Muse was punished because he "dayly useth to blowe such flessh as he selleth by reasone wherof he causeth the kyndynes to swell & to some moche more grettes then they be." ibid., f. 189, 28 January 1517/18.
herrings should be sold for a penny instead of six, provided that poor people should have three for a halfpenny.\(^1\) Again, in January 1518/19 the mayor visited the wood wharf to set the price of billets "to see the poure people served accordyngly."\(^2\) In 1535 came another example of consideration for the poor in the regulation of fuel. The City authorities interfered in the wood trade on this occasion because "dyuerse woodmongers and wharffe keepers, havyng vsyng and occupynge wood wharffes and byinge and sellyng of wood within this Citie and the liberties and suburbes of the same, haue of longe tyme heretofore caused græte scarcytie of woode dyuerse tymes as also græte and high and excessyve pryces of all maner woodes to be within this saide Citie and the liberties and suburbes of the same to the græte hurte, hynderance and impouerysshynge of the poore citzens of the saide Citie."\(^3\) These and similar instances show that the care


2. On this occasion there was an altercation between the mayor and a certain woodmonger called Scotte whom the mayor had ordered to sell sixteen billets for a penny to poor people. Scotte was annoyed and told the mayor to set a price to his own furs! Repert. III, ff. 259\(^v\)o-261.

3. Letter Book P, ff. 71\(^v\)o-73; Journal XIII, ff. 453\(^v\)o-456\(^v\)o.
of the poor was a factor in the regulation of prices and conditions of sale within the City.

The greatest boon to the poor in this sphere was however the municipal provision of corn in times of economic distress. This policy may not have been mainly dictated by humanitarian motives, but it was likely to be a preventive of further destitution. The development and nature of the City store have often been described, and here only the main features of the years 1485 to 1536 will be noted. At all times of dearth arrangements were made by the City governors for supplies of corn, the funds for this provision at first being raised by means of voluntary contributions from the mayor, aldermen and other wealthy citizens. In 1520 a new plan was introduced. Not only were charitable citizens called upon to make loans "to the tent only that the same

1. Mr. N.S.B. Gras in The evolution of the English corn market has a chapter on "Municipal corn regulation", one section of which particularly concerns our period (pp. 77-82). W. Herbert in his History of the twelve great livery companies of London, I, gives a long account of gild activity in connection with the City store (pp. 132-150), but Mr. Gras points out that the account is not very reliable (N.S.B. Gras, op. cit., p. 82). For other accounts of the City provision of corn see Sir W. Ashley, op. cit., pp. 33-38 and E.M. Leonard, op. cit., pp. 23-25.
money may be bestowed in whete & to be layed in the

and there to be keppe for the store of this

Cittie, but the Common Council levied "a prest & loone" for a £1,000 on the City Companies for the same purpose. This system of municipal provision continued at irregular intervals until 1543, after which there was an almost yearly provision. Mr. Gras in his work on The evolution of the English corn market contrasts the fifteenth century policy of keeping corn prices down with that pursued in the sixteenth century when the authorities offered a good and sufficient price to attract supplies to the City and the bakers were forced to pay that price. If the prices were too high the poor would derive no benefit


2. Letter Book N, f. 142; Journal XII, f. 74, 25 September 1520. Arrangements were finally made on 6 October and the amounts for the provision of wheat assessed on the various Companies (Letter Book N, ff. 142\(^\text{vo}\)-143; Journal XII, ff. 75-76).

3. Mr. Gras gives an interesting table showing the years of recorded provision from 1520 to 1565 (N.S.B. Gras, op. cit., p. 82). It is interesting to note that the Companies were approached in 1527 (Repert. VII, f. 225\(^\text{vo}\), 26 October 1527) and in 1536 when the wardens and masters of every Company were asked to certify the names of those willing to provide money for corn (Letter Book P, f. 94\(^\text{vo}\); Repert. IX, f. 172, 9 May 1536).

from the City's store, but on occasions wheat was sold to the bakers at a loss to the City in order to keep prices down. In this first period the benefit of a City store of corn to the poorer classes is hard to estimate on account of its irregularity, but since they were the chief sufferers in times of dearth it is permissible to assume that they profited from any arrangement for the provision of adequate supplies.

(2) Development of a scheme of poor relief, 1536-1552.

Despite all early experiments beggars continued to increase in number. The economic conditions which were largely responsible for the problem had not improved, whilst the wholesale destruction of religious foundations after 1536 had removed one large source of relief. Too much emphasis has often been laid on the effect of the

1. In May 1527 the mayor made a bargain with the merchants of the Steelyard for 600 quarters of wheat at 9 shillings the quarter. This was to be sold to the bakers at 8 shillings, "and notwith-standing that xxx li shalbe loste therin yet for certeyn consideracions this Courte movyng shalbe borne by the Chamber" (Repert. VII, f. 198). Another instance of this kind of arrangement occurs in the September of the same year (ibid., f. 216).
dissolution on the development of poor law policy. The general tendency even before 1536 was for both State and City to interfere in this matter, and this interference was bound to develop into effective control; at the same time the process was hastened by the situation produced by the dissolution. The writer of a tract entitled A Supplication of the Poore Commons (1546) vividly contrasts the state of the poor before and after the fall of the religious houses: "For, although the sturdy beggers [the monks] gat all the devotion of the good charitable people from them, yet had the pore impotent creatures some relefe of their scrappes, where as nowe they haue nothyng. Then had they hospitalls, and almshouses to be lodged in, but nowe they lye and storue in the stretes. Then was their number great, but nowe much greater."

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1. Four Supplications, (E.E.T.S.), p. 79. The editors suggest that the writer may have been Henry Brinklow (ibid., pp. xiv-xv). Brinklow was certainly very vehement in his condemnation of the results of the dissolution; "But now that all the abbeys, with their londes, goodes, and improerd personages, be in temporal mennys handes, I do not heare tell that one halpeny worth of almes or any other profight cometh vnto the peple of those parishes where such personagys and vicarages be." (Henry Brinklow, The Complaynt of Roderyck Mors, (E.E.T.S.), p. 35.) Wriothesley the chronicler writes: "Againe it was pitie the great lamentation that the poore people made for theim, for there was great hospitalitie kept amonge theim, and, as it was reported, tenne thousand persons had lost their living by the putting downs of theim, which was great pitie." (C. Wriothesley, A Chronicle of England during the reigns of the Tudors, (Camden Soc., Publication), I, p. 43.)
The result was that both State and City, before 1536 mainly concerned with checking the idle and "valiant" beggar, were during the later period from 1536 to 1552 forced to realise that vagrancy policy was inadequate in itself to deal with the situation, and came to pay increasing attention to the formulation of schemes for the relief of the needy poor.

As far as the State was concerned there was little change in policy until 1552. The first act of 1547 was devoted chiefly to the treatment of vagabonds and idle beggars,¹ and there was no appreciable alteration of the regulations relating to the impotent. Provision was to be made for them in their appropriate districts and all able bodied aged poor were to be employed. In addition the local authorities were ordered to provide "tenantries cottages and other convenient houses" to house the impotent. This order would be difficult to observe until arrangements had been made for adequate resources for the relief of the poor. The collections instituted in 1536 were continued and the clergy were enjoined to exhort their parishioners to give liberally.²

2. 1 Edw. VI c. 3, Statutes, IV, i, pp. 5-8.
This act was repealed in 1549 and the act of 1531 was renewed, but the orders for the removal of the impotent to their own districts and for the employment of those aged poor who were able to work were reenacted.\(^1\)

The whole system of poor relief was revised in the act of 1552 which by its very title, "For the Provisyon and Relief of the Poore," suggests a changed outlook.\(^2\)

This act was exclusively devoted to regulation of poor relief funds. The officials made responsible for the execution of the statute were the mayor and head officials in the towns and the parson and churchwardens in the country. They were to summon together all the inhabitants yearly in Whitsun week to appoint two or more persons to act as collectors of alms, who "when the people is at the Churche and hath hardde Goddes hollie words, shall gentellie aske and demaunde of everie man and woman what they of their charitie wilbe contented to give wekelie towards the relief of the Poore." A record was to be kept of these promises and the relief collected and distributed weekly to the poor according to their needs.

1. 3 & 4 Edw. VI c. 16, ibid., pp. 115-117.
2. 5 & 6 Edw. VI c. 2, ibid., pp. 131-132.
so that "none ... goo or sitt openlie a begging."¹ The system was to be supervised by the mayors and others, who were to receive quarterly accounts from the collectors. Reliance was still placed on voluntary contributions, but it was recognised that all persons are not charitably minded and in these cases persuasion was to be used, first by the parson and churchwardens who "shall gentillie exhorte him or them towards the relief of the Poore." If this failed "then vpon the Certificate of the Parsone Vicar or Curate of the parishes to the Busshop of the Diocesse, the same Bisshopp shall sends for him or them to induce and perswade him or them by charitable wayes and meanes, and so according to his discretion to take order for the reformacion therof."² Thus by the close of the period under review the organisation for collecting alms and distributing relief was greatly improved by statute. This had been made necessary owing to the absence of any established plan of relief. Two of the most interesting features of the scheme formulated in

¹. Miss Leonard notes that there is a register book at Lambeth made in accordance with the provisions of this act. It is entitled "A Register Books of the Benivolence of the Parishioners for the Reliefs of the Poore made in A° vi Regis Edwardi vii ets." E.M. Leonard, op. cit., pp. 57-58, n.4.

². Statutes, IV, i, p. 132.
1552 are the assumption that all should contribute to the relief of the poor and the introduction of persuasion in the case of those unwilling to give; after this the next step would be compulsion.

During this period the City was more active than the State partly because its difficulties were concentrated and demanded immediate attention. Available sources of relief were proving more and more inadequate especially after the dissolution of the religious foundations and the authorities were forced to undertake provision for the poor, but the vital problem in the development of any scheme of relief was the difficulty of raising resources from voluntary subscription. Henry Brinklow in his Lamentacyon of a Christen agaynst the Cytye of London in 1545 censures the citizens for not helping the poor. "Their heades are so geuen to seke their owne particular welthes onely, that they passe not of no honest prouysyon for the poore, which thinges aboue all other infidelityss shall be our damnacion." There is still some evidence in the City archives of private philanthropy, for example on 17 October 1538 it is noted in the minutes of the Court of Aldermen that Lady Gylford

had given £60 "to be disposed amongst the poore people of London, whiche money shalbe distributed by the seueral aldermen of London."¹ Private charity alone however was insufficient, and by 1552 the City had put forward a fairly comprehensive scheme of relief based on the foundation of the Royal Hospitals and numerous financial experiments.

In the development of policy it will be seen that extraneous circumstances played an important part in hastening or retarding the accomplishment of the City scheme.

Most of the religious houses in the City surrendered between 1538 and 1540,² but it was not until four years

1. Repert. X, f. 53. Again in April 1546 the executor of a certain John Carter delivered £10 to the mayor for the use of poor people (Repert. XI, f. 277vo, 13 April 1546) whilst after the foundation of the Royal Hospitals bequests were often left in support of the poor housed by them. Dr. N. Moore, The History of St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, II, p. 199, n.1.

2. For a full account of the religious houses of London, treated separately see Miss M. Reddan’s articles in V.C.H., London, I, pp. 407-588. The following list of the dissolutions from 1532 to 1542 has been drawn up from the details given by Miss Reddan and by Miss Jeffries Davis, "The transformation of London" in Tudor Studies.

Feb. 1532, Priory of Holy Trinity or Christchurch, Aldgate.
1536, Hospital of St. Mary within Cripplegate or Elsaing Spital.
Nov. 1538, New Abbey or St. Mary Graces [see M. Reddan, p. 463, n. 497].
20 Oct. 1538, St. Thomas of Acon, north of Cheapside.
Nov. 1538, Black, Grey, White, Austin and Crossed Friaries.
23 Nov. 1538, Minories [see Cal. S.P. Dom. 1601-1603, Addenda, p. 541].

(Continued on next page)
later that any definite provision was made in their stead. As early as 1537 interest in the fate of these foundations is seen in the City. It was proposed in the Court of Aldermen that the citizens "should make labour to the kynges highnesse" to prevent the suppression of the Charterhouse, but the Court decided against the plan. Later in the same year it was agreed that the mayor should enquire about the restoration of the patronage of "Bedlam" to the

(Note 2 continued from previous page)

25 Nov. 1538, Nunnery of St. Helen, Bishopsgate.
1538, Charterhouse, few remaining monks dispossessed [See L. and P., XIII, ii, 1024 and note].
1538, Hospital of St. Mary without Bishopsgate.
Sept. 1539, Nunnery of St. Mary, Clerkenwell.
27 Oct. 1539, Priory of St. Mary Over, Southwark.
Oct. 1539, Priory and probably hospital of St. Bartholomew.
14 Jan. 1540, St. Thomas's Hospital, Southwark.
1540, Order of St. John of Jerusalem.
1542, St. Martin le Grand.

The policy of regulating almsgiving was evidently continued. Wriothesley tells how in the Lent of 1538 "the Maire" caused divers worshipfull men to gather money for the poore people everie Soundaie at the sermon at Poules Crosse, tow parsons standing at everie dore to gather the devotions of the people, which said money was distributed weeklie to them that had most neede thereof in the cittie of London, and a registre kapt of the same, and so to contynewe." 

1. Letter Book P, f. 136; Repert. X, f. 5, 15 November 1537. The entry states that "the patronage of Bedlem...of ryght belongith to this Citie." The house and order had been taken under the protection of the mayor, aldermen etc. as early as 15 October 1346 (see E.G. O'Donoghue, The story of Bethlehem Hospital pp. 37-40). Stow states that "Stephen Geningles Merchant Taylor gaeve 40 li toward purchase of the patronage by his Testament 1523." (Stow, Survey, I, p. 164). This was not secured however until the covenant between the king and City in 1546, which will be examined later. It may here be noted that enquiries about the patronage of Bethlehem had been made earlier. An example occurs in 1503/4 (Repert. I, ff. 150 and 152) and also in 1514 (Repert. II, f. 180), whilst in September 1518 certain aldermen and commoners were chosen to petition the king and his Council for the hospital (Letter Book N, f. 93v; Journal XI, f. 362).

2. Sir Richard Gresham.

In the spring of that same year, 1538, the first step was made towards the City's acquisition of certain hospitals and it was this policy which eventually led to the development of a scheme of general relief. Sir Richard Gresham, foreseeing the difficulties which would arise from the approaching suppression, addressed a letter to the king reminding him that there were "here, and within the Cytie of London... iiij Hospytalls, or Spytells, commonly called seynt Maryes spytell, seynt Barthilmewes spytell, and seynt Thomas spytell; and the new abbey of Tower-hyll," which were not fulfilling the purpose of their foundation. They had been erected "only for the reliefe, comforte, and helping of the pore and impotent people, not beyng able to helpe theymselfes; and not to the mayntenaunce of Chanons, Preests, and Monks, to lyve in pleasure, nothyng regardyng the miserable people liyng in every strete, offendyng every clene person passyng by the way, with theyre

1. The most important documents relating to the City's refoundation of certain hospitals have been printed by the corporation in Memoranda, references and documents relating to the Royal Hospitals of the City and Supplement to the Memoranda relating to the Royal Hospitals. Extracts from various records concerning the same hospitals are given in the appendices to Vicary's Anatomie (E.E.T.S.) and to J.A. Kingdon, Richard Grafton, Citizen and Grocer of London.
fylthy and nasty savours. He therefore asked that these foundations with their revenues should be entrusted to the mayor and aldermen so that "a great nombre of pore, nedy, sykke, and indigent persones shalbe refreshshed, maynteyned, and comforted, and also healed and cured of theyr infirmyties, frankly and freely, by Physicians, Surgeons, and Potycaries, which shall have stipende and salarie onely for that purpose: so that all impotent persons not hable to labour, shalbe relieved; and all sturdy beggars not wylling to labour shalbe punyshed." Nothing came of this petition although in the following August Sir Richard Gresham twice reminded Cromwell of the matter.3

In the autumn of the same year many religious houses

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1. Contemporary writers also complained that the hospitals were not fulfilling their purpose. Simon Fish wrote in his Supplicacyon of the Beggers, (E.E.T.S.), p. 13: "But whate remedy to releue vs your poore, sike, lame, and sore, bedemen? To make many hospitals for the relief of the poore people? Nay truely. The moo the worse; for euuer the fatte of the hole foundacion hangeth on the prestes berdes."


3. The first reminder was in a letter of 2 August 1538 (L. and P., XIII, ii, 13. It is given in full by J.A. Kingdon, op. cit., Appen. p. xlix) and the second on 11 August (L. and P., XIII, ii, 72).
surrendered so that the problem of the impotent poor became even more urgent. At the beginning of March 1539 the king was once more approached concerning the transfer of certain hospitals to the management of the City. On this occasion the petition was made by the mayor, aldermen and commonalty of the City; the first part followed closely the arguments of Gresham's letter whilst the second was a demand for the four great churches of the Grey, Black, White and Augustinian friars on the plea of the overcrowding of parish churches and the consequent spread of disease.

Nothing was achieved concerning the hospitals until 1544, but meanwhile petitions were made from time to time for the places of the friars and in 1541 the king

1. The matter was first mooted in the Court of Aldermen on 11 February 1538/39 (Repert. X, f. 79v); on the 23rd the petition was read in the Court (ibid., f. 81v) and on the 25th Alderman Waren, Gresham, Roche, Aley, Sir John Gresham and Paul Wythypoll were appointed "to awayt the kynges highnesse to exhybytte the peticon" (ibid., f. 82).

2. The petition is given in full in the Memoranda relating to the Royal Hospitals, Appen. I, pp. 1-4.

3. Many of the entries from the Repertories concerning these appeals are included in the appendices in J.A. Kingdon, op. cit., pp. xlix-1.
yielded to the demand. The delay in the accomplishment of any of the proposals may in part be accounted for by the large amount of valuable land and property involved.

Further, the times were not propitious for the launching of such a scheme. At first the king and Cromwell were busied at home and abroad and then in the turmoil following Cromwell's fall there was a temporary ascendency of the enemies of the New Learning. The advisers of the king, men such as Gardiner and Bonner, held to the Church of Rome in all but temporal supremacy and it was therefore not part of their programme that religious foundations

1. On 21 June 1541 Thomas Vykars (Vicary) one of the king's surgeons conveyed to the Court of Aldermen "the kynges pleasure concernyng the order & disposition of the howses of the late fryers within this Citye and advysed thys Court that my lordemayrs & somme other of hys brethern shulde resorte to hys grace & to rendre to hys grace right hertye thankes for hys benygne goodnes towardses them & hys chamber in that behalfe." (Repert. X, f. 211). The City thus acquired the three churches of the friars; the church and convent of the Austin friars had already been sold. "Contributions were actually collected from the Companies for the maintenance of the services there; but nothing more came of that part of the scheme" see Miss E. J. Davis, op. cit., p. 301.

2. Miss Davis dealing with this point writes that "without endorsing the obvious cynical comment that it revealed the real motives underlying the City's action, one may surmise that it destroyed whatever chance of success the rest may have had" ibid., p. 301.
should fall into the hands of the laity. Moreover, in 1541 and 1542 the City was at variance both with king and Parliament over several matters,¹ so that it was an altogether unsuitable time for asking favours of the king.

Although the main scheme was temporarily abandoned during the years from 1539 to 1544 the City archives show occasional care, on the part of the authorities, for the needy and impotent. Car rooms were sometimes given to persons in need through impotency and poverty, the recipients often having served the City in some capacity; such was the case of the grant to John Boner, beadle, who was "a veray aged, impotent & sycke man."² A similar case was that of John Haddylsey who in August 1539 presented a petition for a car room to the Court of Aldermen "bycause he ys dryven to extreme povertye";³ no grant was made until the following year when it was stated in the notice of the award that he had served the City in his youth.⁴ This practice of presenting car

3. Ibid., f. 117, 26 August 1539.
4. Ibid., f. 172v, 2 September 1540.
rooms to the impotent was acknowledged in certain articles concerning cars and carts of September 1542, which included the request that "suche carre romes as hath beyn gyven by common assent as before is sayd to any man that hathe done servyce to any late mayer or alderman or is gyven to any aged or ympotent man being a freman or other the same to contynewe during their lyves."¹ Sometimes also begging licences were granted to persons reduced to poverty through loss of goods by fire. For example, in January 1541/42 the Court of Aldermen "louyngly graunted" such a licence to Rychard Webbe "to gather, levy & receyve bytwene thys & the feast of Seynt Myghell tharchaungell next comyng the charytye & devocion of good devoute Christen people" for the rebuilding of his house and the maintenance of his wife and children.²

Apart from such scattered indications of care for the poor there is no evidence of any general scheme of relief from 1539 to 1544, though in 1541 an interesting proposal was made. In a letter addressed to the mayor and aldermen the Company of Barber-Surgeons offered to

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2. Ibid., f. 239, 24 January 1541/42.
treat sick poor not exceeding the number of twenty at any one time and "frely att theyr owne proper costes & charges & to mynystre vnto theym alle suche salves, plasters & other thynges necessary & belonging to the science or crafte of Surgerye," if the City authorities would provide "a place & rome convenyent." Unfortunately there is no evidence as to whether the proposal was accepted by the civic authorities or not.

In 1544 there was a change in the attitude of the king and the petition of 1539 was in part conceded. Throughout 1543 plague had been very severe and the presence of large numbers of poor was always responsible for contagion. These circumstances may partly account for the change but it was probably also due in part to

1. This letter is transcribed in full in Appendix X, pp. 438-439. The master of the Barber Surgeons this year, who signed the letter, was Thomas Vicary who had previously communicated to the City authorities the king's concessions concerning the friars' churches (supra, p. 311 n. 1), and later became the first surgeon-governor to the refounded St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

2. In August the Privy Council had addressed a letter to the mayor and aldermen advising them to put in execution certain orders to prevent the spread of the disease (supra, p. 290). The plague continued throughout the winter months. (L. and P., XVIII, 11, 497).
the fact that it was politic for the king to have the goodwill of the City in 1544. The hostility with both France and Scotland made it necessary for him to conciliate London.

On 23 June, not long before the king set sail for Boulogne, he issued letters patent refounding St. Bartholomew's Hospital. This grant was made so that "there be comfort to the prisoners, shelter to the poor, visitation to the sick, food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, and sepulture to the dead administered there, and that other works of piety be performed there to the glory of Almighty God and the common utility and happiness of our subjects." The control was not however confided to the citizens but to "one master a priest, and four chaplains priests," and the king's own chaplain was appointed as the first master.¹

In the following year the City authorities themselves recommenced activities. Early in the year the mayor informed the Court of Aldermen that certain commoners

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¹ The letters patent containing this grant and establishment are given in full in the Memoranda, Appen. II, pp. 4-7. The first master, William Turges, was superseded in May 1545 by Thomas Byrkhed, again appointed by the king (L. and F., XX, i, 846 g. 73).
had moved him "to further theym in their sute vnto the kynges highnes for the Charterhowse to be gyven to this Cytie to make therof an almeshowse," but it was decided "to cease that sute for a whyle & for dyuarse causes to be better advysed therof."¹

In the autumn came the great effort and the whole question of poor relief was reconsidered. The prime mover in the matter was the mayor, Sir Martin Bowes, and the plan, which has already been considered, was very largely concerned with the expulsion of vagabonds and limitation of begging,² so that relief might be assured to the genuinely needy. But it was evidently found that limitation of begging alone was insufficient, for in the following month a committee of four aldermen and eight commoners was appointed to assist the mayor "for summe good meanes to be devysed for the releyf of the pore" so that they would no longer need to beg openly in the

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2. Supra, pp. 202-204.
There was no immediate report of the work of the committee although it is evident that quite early in 1546 the mayor had been in consultation with the king. On 9 February 1545/46 he reported to the Court of Aldermen the king's answer to his request "in favour of the pore for the syte, churche & howse of the late Graye fryers & for Seynt Bartholomewes Hospytall in Smythfelde." It was thereupon agreed that the committee "already assigned... to provyde some remedye for the releif of the pore shall also take paynes in the further surveying & examynacion of the revenues & charges of the seid churche & hospytall & for the dyvising of the moste necessarye & polytyque wayes & meanes to be taken

1. Report. XI, f. 254\textsuperscript{vo} gives the election of the aldermen; Letter Book Q, f. 153; Journal XV, f. 213\textsuperscript{vo} gives the election of the commoners. This last entry is given in full in an appendix to Vicary, op. cit., p. 127. The editors suggest in a note that although the opening words are general the provision was meant mainly for St. Bartholomew's. I can see nothing in the wording to warrant this assumption. It may here be recalled that it had previously been part of the general policy of the City to prevent open begging by collecting alms. Events of the following year, 1546, show that the policy adopted by the mayor was to petition again for the hospitals and other grants but the entry of December 1545 gives no indication of this.
& made to the kynges highnes & his Counsayll for the same, & also for the dyssoluyng of the parisse churches of St. Nicholas in the Shambles & St. Ewyn & for the conuersyon of theym bothe into one parisse churche to be made of the seid late Greys fryers churche, & for the appoyntment of the number of prestes, pore folkes, necessarye offycers, seruytors & guyders of the seid places & after their travayle therein to make reporte here of all their procedynges in the same. There is no record of any report, but matters progressed satisfactorily for by 13 April the king had granted to the City "certeyn convenyent plac's for the receyte comforthe and lodgyng of the pore people of the said cittie", and had endowed these places "with lands and ten'ts to the clere yerely value of D m'ks uppon condicn that the cittyzens of the said cittie wylbe bounden yerely for ever to gyve other D m'ks to the said use and intent." The Court of Common Council therefore agreed that the citizens should be bound for this payment, but no provision was made as yet for raising the amount.


2. For a transcript of the entry see Memoranda, Appen. III, p. 8.
Although the City was granted the hospital, complete possession was not obtained for many months.\(^1\)

Meanwhile in July the mayor had purchased for the City the whole interest, title and right in the hospital of Bethlem and all the lands and tenements belonging thereto.\(^2\)

All these negotiations were concluded by the covenant of 27 December 1546 between the king and the City, which was followed by a grant of letters patent on 13 January 1546/47. These agreements mainly summed up arrangements made during the year.\(^3\) The main points relevant to this present survey are that the mayor, commonalty and citizens were vested with the church,

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1. In October the lord privy seal wrote to the Court of Aldermen in favour of the appointment of one Rychard Paladye to the office of steward to St. Bartholomew's, but the Court replied "that when the Cytie shalbe perftyly in possessyon of the sayd howse they wyll make hym a further aunswer therin." Repert. XI, f. 311, 5 October 1546.


3. The covenant of 1546 and the letters patent of 1546/47 are given in full in the Memoranda, Appen. IV & V respectively, pp. 3-45. The re-opening of the Grey friars church (Christ Church) and the king's other grants to the City are noted by Wriothesley, op. cit., I, p. 177. See also Chronicle of the Grey Friars of London, (Camden Soc.), p. 53.
lands and buildings within the precincts of the late Grey friars and with the hospital of St. Bartholomew and some of its property, and were also made governors of Bethlem and all its possessions. St. Bartholomew's was to be made ready for lodging a hundred poor men and women and the details for its organisation and administration were given. The officers of the hospital were to include eight beadles, whose duties were to bring the poor to the hospital and to expel vagabonds, and one person sufficiently learned in the science of physic, and one other person having sufficient knowledge in surgery, to be continually attendant upon the sick and sore people."

Shortly after the City's acquisition of St. Bartholomew's Henry VIII died and during the first troublous year of Edward VI's reign there was little

1. The covenant states that the hospital "shall be called the House of the Poore in West Smithfield in the suburbs of the City of London, of King Henry the Eighth's foundation." Although in the City archives of the period the hospital is generally referred to as the House of the Poor, the name St. Bartholomew's has survived and will be used for the hospital in this thesis.

2. Supra, pp.204-205

opportunity to extend City control over the hospitals. In matters of poor relief the years 1547 to 1550 were mainly concerned with a series of experiments in raising money for the new venture and show a real effort on the part of the citizens to fulfil their part of the bargains of 1546 and 1547. In the survey of these four years the financial experiments will be first considered, then the arrangements for the organisation of the hospital and finally any other evidence of general poor law policy.

Financial problems connected with the refounded St. Bartholomew's began at once as the City was responsible for the annual sum of 500 marks towards its expenses. In May 1547 the first enquiry was made into the financial position of the hospital and the Court of Aldermen instructed Sir Martin Bowes and the committee appointed to deal with questions of poor relief to make a list of "the yerely revenues & profyttes of the seyd howse & hospytall & also the yereyle charges apoynted to be borne out of the same."  

1. This committee it will be remembered was appointed in December, 1545, supra, p. 314.
2. Repert. XI, f. 349vo, 6 May 1547.
This was followed by the further organisation of the plan already tried of raising funds by collections at the churches. In June the Court of Aldermen ordered that instructions drawn up for this purpose by the committee should be put in print and delivered to the aldermen to carry out in their respective wards. Then on 14 July three aldermen and three commoners were chosen as "surveyours for the pore," their duties being "to receyve all the money comyng towards the pore of the devocion of the people thurrugh the Cytie monethly, and also to surveye the workes of Cryste Churche & of the hospytall of the pore." Twelve days later this committee reported to the Court of Aldermen concerning "the appoyntyng of the persons to whome the deuocion of the people collected thurrugh the Cytie vpon the Sundayes for the pore shalbe delyuered; and also the nolacion of suche persons as they shall delyuer yt ouer vnto and of certeyn necessarye thinges herafter to be done," and the Court decided that Alderman Barne

1. Ibid., f. 353, 7 June 1547.

2. Ibid., f. 358vo, 14 July 1547. The three aldermen elected were Sir Martin Bowes and Masters Barne and Hynde and the three commoners "Wylliam Rawlyns & Thomas Lodge, grocers, & George Tadlowe, haberdasher."
and the committee should proceed along the reported lines, "as they had well begone."^1

This means of raising money, which although organised, relied on voluntary contributions, apparently proved unsatisfactory and in the autumn of 1547 a new plan was proposed. The suggestion first occurred on 15 September when the Court of Aldermen agreed that the Common Council should be approached "for di xvn^2 to be grauntyd for the releuyf of the pore in dyscharge of the collection of the devocion of the people wekely gathered in the churchys of one hole yere."^2 On 29 September the Common Council made this grant, at the same time giving power to the collectors "to distrayne all and every persone and personas that shall refuse or denye to content and paye all such sume and sumes of money as he or they shalbe assessed at towards the said payment."^3 Precepts were then issued by the

1. Ibid., f. 362, 26 July 1547.
2. Ibid., f. 371, 15 September 1547.
3. For the full text of this Common Council grant see Memoranda, Appen. VI, pp. 45-46. The reason for the grant is clearly stated, namely that "the order lately devysed and taken by the Lorde Maire and Aldermen for the releiff mayntenaunce and fyndyng of the poore sick and indigent persons appointed to be founde and kepte wth in the house and hospytall lately erected and founded by the moste noble prynce of famous memorye Kynge Henry the Eigth, as well at (Continued on next page)
mayor directing the aldermen to call together the inhabitants of their respective wards to choose "certeyne honest, dyscrete & sadder persones within the seuerall parisshes" to assess the inhabitants and nominate collectors who were to deliver the sums of money to Aldermen Barne and Hynde, the "highe collectors".

Early in the following year, 1548, the City authorities were still anxious about the financial support to which they were pledged. On 13 March the mayor, Sir John Gresham, warned the Court of Aldermen that "yt shuld be verye necessaarye shortly to forsee & devyse somme good waye & means for the contynuall mayntenance of the poore" in St. Bartholomew's. In the interval before the next Court the aldermen were to consider this matter, but nothing further was done until 10 April when Alderman Bowes proposed that "there

(Note 3 continued from previous page.)

the coste and charges of the citezens and inhabitants of this citty as of the proffits and revenues of such lands and ten'rs as his highnesse indowyd the same house wt all, by the devocyon and charitable almes of the people wekely to be getheryd wt in the parisse churches of the said citty, dothe not take eny good success or semblans of good contynuance."

1. For the full text see Appendix XI, pp. 440-442.
might be a brotherhood newly erected of the poor thoroughly out the hole City. The idea of this brotherhood was that the members should promise to give certain sums yearly for the relief of the poor, reliance once more being placed on voluntary subscription. Most of the aldermen present at the Court promised thirteen shillings and fourpence a year, but there is no evidence that the scheme was put in execution.

In the autumn, when the period covered by the grant of the half fifteenth was ended, financial problems became very pressing. Yet another plan was tried. On 19 October the Court of Aldermen agreed that "the wardeins of all the seuerall Companyes of this City shalbe warned to be here vpon Monday next for the proceeding to the devyse of somme good ordenaunce for the releif & maintenaunce of the poore." On the Monday the Court requested the wardens "to move, sturre & earnestly provoke" their Companies to give towards the poor in St. Bartholomew's "vntyl suche tyme (as by Godes holf) other provycion shalbe hadd & made for the same." The wardens were asked to report in writing

1. For the full text see Appendix XII, pp. 443-444.
2. Repert. XI, f. 508.
on this matter on 25 October and they "lovingly agreeyd so to doo." These reports came in gradually, and finally on 20 December the Common Council made official grants in aid of the hospital including the assignment of certain profits belonging to the City (provided that they never amounted to more than 500 marks a year) and the assessment of the City Companies for the payment of the 500 marks lately raised by compulsory taxation.

To this last grant was appended a list of the Companies and the sums that they had promised to pay quarterly to the hospital. Precepts were then issued on 22 December bidding the Companies to comply with the act of Common Council.

1. Ibid., ff. 509vo-510, 22 October 1548.

2. Wardens not having certified on 15 November were given until the 22nd (Repert. XII, i, f.8); the certificates of the goldsmiths, stationers and painter-stainers were presented on the 20th (ibid., f. 10vo), of the plumbers and turners on the 22nd (ibid., f. 12), of the leathellers, farriers and loriners on 11 December (ibid., f. 18vo).

3. The grant included the profits of the great beam, the beam of the steel-yard, the iron beam, package, gauging of wine and fish and sundry other offices.

4. For the full text of this act of Common Council see Memoranda, Appen. VII, pp. 46-51. It is interesting to note that the amounts assessed on the companies total £313.6s.8d., that is 470 marks.
Council. 1

During the next two years vagabondism mainly occupied the attention of the City for reasons given earlier. 2 Yet the problem of the relief of the poor was not neglected and arrangements for St. Bartholomew's progressed. The financial difficulties already encountered in 1547 and 1548 continued. It will be remembered that when the hospital was granted to the City the king had endowed it with 500 marks a year on condition that the citizens raised an equivalent sum. Every effort had been made by the City to fulfil its part of the bargain, but it appears that the king's endowment did not raise the required amount. The Ordre of the Hospital of S. Bartholomewes in 1552 which describes the organisation and administration of the hospital stresses this point. In the preface it is stated that the king's endowment was to be raised from houses "some in great decaye, and some rotten ruynous; And some other to whom better tesauntes had happened, alreadie leased out at terme and rent, skant reasonable for the behofe of ye poore."  


2. Supra, p. 246.
Not only was it difficult to raise the required sum from the property of the endowment but so many pensions had to be paid from it that little was left for the hospital. Dissatisfaction with these arrangements was first voiced on 6 December 1548 when the Court of Aldermen agreed that "the learned counsellor of the Cytie" should peruse "the petycion devise by the governours of the howse of the poore in the name of the mayre & cominaitie of this Cytie to be exhybyted to the lorde protectors grace for the kinges lycence to be graunted for the alteration of certein clawses conteyned within the foundacion of the seid howse." The petition was finally ready by 19 March 1548/49 and to Alderman Hynde was assigned the task of presenting it to Protector Somerset. Nothing further was done in the matter until August when permission was granted to the City to obtain a licence from the king "to transpose, alter, and chaunge the said number of preestes, and all other offices &

1. "The Orde of the Hospital of S. Bartholomewes in Westsmythfelde, 1552" is appended in full to Vicary, op. cit., pp. 289-336. All references will be to this edition. The Orde itself will be dealt with more fully later, infra, pp 348-351.

2. Repert. XII, i, f. 17vo.

3. Ibid., f. 59vo.
things which be thought by them not necessary for the ministration of the said hospitall, unto some other kynde of munysters or uses, as to them shall be thought more mete and convenient for the better sustentation and comfort of the diseased and impotent persons within the said hospitall.\textsuperscript{1} The king's Council granted this licence in the following year.\textsuperscript{2}

Meanwhile the City's policy of assessing the Companies for their 500 marks continued, but not without protests from a number of Companies. The first complaint came from the Cooperers on 31 January 1548/49 when they petitioned the Court of Aldermen to be excused part of their assessment; nothing however was settled in the matter.\textsuperscript{3} In the following month the wardens of four other Companies - the poulterers, carpenters,

1. Journal XVI, f. 26\textsuperscript{vo}. See also Vicary, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 136-137.

2. On 28 April 1551 "the kynges majesties Counsellor lettre directyd to the chunceler & counsell of the Augmentation Courte willyng them to drawe a lycence from the kynges majestie to the mayor, cominaltie & citzens of London for thalteracion of certein thynges conteyned in the fundacion of the house of the poore" was read in the Court of Aldermen, Repert. XII, ii, f. 330\textsuperscript{vo}.

3. Repert. XII, i, f. 39\textsuperscript{vo}.
cooks and tilers - refusing to pay their assessments, were ordered by the Court to comply with the regulations and make payment within five days, "Upon payne of imprisonement or elles then to declare here some reasonable cause while thei ought not so to doo."¹

There was trouble with many other Companies during the early months of 1549, ² but the disagreements seem to have been settled as there are few petitions after March of that year. There were no new developments during 1550 and the payments of the Companies continued to form the nucleus of the City funds for the poor.

Some details of the organisation of the governing body of the hospital may be drawn from the City archives. The general committee elected in December 1545 "to be ayders & of counseyll for the pore within the seid hospitall, & surveyours of the revenues of the same"

¹. Ibid., f. 50, 21 February 1548/49.

². Other Companies either complaining or being lax in payment of their assessments were the blacksmiths, spurriers, weavers, masons, plasterers, vintners, dyers, brewers, bakers, leathersellers, painters, pewterers, curriers, innholders, bowyers, broderers, fruiterers, cordeners, butchers, fletchers. (Ibid., ff. 51, 52yo and 57yo).
remained in office until 1548.¹ In that year arrangements were made by act of Common Council, probably in September,² for the constitution of the governing body which was to consist of four aldermen and eight commoners. All the governors were to hold office for two years; half the committee, namely two aldermen and four commoners, was to retire each year at Michaelmas when new elections were to be made by the mayor and aldermen.³

In October 1549 an additional duty was assigned to this body. On the 15th the Court of Aldermen agreed that two aldermen and two commoners who were governors of St. Bartholomew's should "vyse, survey, order & govern from time to time vntyll Mychaelmas nowe next commyng all the lazare howses nere adjoyning to this Cytie," wherof


2. The entry is undated but was probably made in September, as elections were held in that month. The entry in the Letter Book follows an entry of 1 August, and although in the Journal it is preceded by a bond dated 3 November it is followed by a proclamation of 3 August.

3. For the full text of this act see Supplement to the Memoranda, pp. 1-3 and Vicary, op. cit., pp. 133-135. Elections are recorded on 12 September 1549 (Letter Book R, f. 33; Repert. XII, i, f. 141) and on 23 September 1550 (Repert. XII, ii, f. 268vo).
the Cytie of right hathe the order. A similar election from the body of governors was to be made every year and thus the responsibility of the committee representing the City in matters of poor relief was more fully recognised.

The measure of success attendant on all these arrangements may be gauged from the archives of the hospital itself. The Ledgers containing the receipts

1. Stow mentions altogether seven leper hospitals; four were especially built "for the receit of leprous people sent out of the citty" (Stow, op. cit., II, p. 146), the other three foundations were St. Giles in the fields (ibid., pp. 143 & 146), St. James in the field (ibid., pp. 101 & 143) and a lazaret house at Holloway (ibid., pp. 146-147). For an account of leper hospitals in general and the Loke Hospital in Kent Street in particular see W. Rendle, Old Southwark and its People, pp. 312-317. cf. R.M. Clay, The Mediaeval Hospitals of England for accounts of the lazaret house and leper in England (pp. 35-69). From time to time the Court of Aldermen had appointed visitors to superintend the City's leper hospitals; for examples of such appointments see Repert. I, f. 145Vo, 17 November 1503 and Repert. X, f. 282, 12 October 1542.

2. Letter Book R, f. 35; Repert. XII, 1, f. 154. Accordingly the governors of St. Bartholomew's were informed of the new regulation that "ii aldermen and ii comoners of this howse shall always be exercers of the vi lazaret howses abowtt this cety for one yere and they to make report to the hole company what thynges they do fynde ther owt of order." N. Moore, op. cit., II, p. 267.
and expenditure from 1547 and the Journals recording the meetings of the governors from 4 October 1549 have been examined in detail by Dr. N. Moore in his history of St. Bartholomew's. It appears from the details he gives that already on Easter eve 1547 there were ten patients in the hospital. The account of the following year, 1547 to 1548, contains full information concerning the receipts of the hospital, which include money from lands, bequests, gifts, benevolence from the wards, amounts from the alms boxes at the hospital and the levy of the fifteenth, 1

1. N. Moore, _op. cit._, II, p. 197.
2. _Ibid._, p. 201 n.i. The following is his list of wards and amounts raised by the fifteenth:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aldersgate Ward</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman Street</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsoken</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cryppelgate</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byllyngsgate</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallbroke</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornhill</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lym Street</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farington without</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brode Strete</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnard Castill</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishopsgate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowgate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chepe (half fifteenth)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyntre</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queenhythe (part of half)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge (half fifteenth)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordwainer Strete (part of half)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faringdon within</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassinghall</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candalweake Strete (not half)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breads Strete</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the total receipts being £1028.0s.4d.\(^1\) In the year 1549 to 1550 there was actually a balance of £138.2s.\(^2\), so that the hospital appears to have been sound financially. The expenditure during the first years also includes several very interesting items; for example, money laid out for clothes for the poor, for surgical apparatus such as wooden legs, for the boarding out of certain cases and for assistance to those discharged persons who had to make a journey to their homes.

Apart from the special organisation of St. Bartholomew's there was some attempt, in 1549 and 1550, to see to the administration of policy relating to the impotent in general. The first instance was in January 1548/49 when the mayor addressed precepts to the wardmote inquests requesting them to make "dylygent inquisicion & serche.... for all & euyrye suche aged, impotent & lame persons inhabityng within the precynote of your seid warde as comenlye do lyve by beggyng & were not borne there nor have beyn there comersante & abydyng by the space of thre hole yeres." The results of this enquiry were to be reported to the "General Courte" on

1. Ibid., p. 201.
2. Ibid., p. 207.
7 January. In May of the following year in the general activity against vagrancy, which has already been noticed, the chamberlain was ordered to have prepared "vij byles for impotent persons to begge by accordyng to the acte of Parlyament made anno xxij Henry viij." A second enquiry was ordered in December 1550; this time the aldermen were directed to search out all the common beggars and persons dependent upon alms in their respective wards. Report was to be made of the names and surnames of all such beggars and as to whether any begged without licence. Thus besides the definite and consistent efforts to establish St. Bartholomew's there is some indication of an attempt to carry out the general poor law policy defined by statute; but whether either of these enquiries of 1549 and 1550 were held it is impossible to tell.

During the last two years of the period under survey the City was developing a much more comprehensive

1. Letter Book Q, f. 265vo; Journal XV, f. 401, 2 January 1548/49.
2. Supra, pp.233-235.
3. Repert. XII, 1, f. 235, 22 May 1550.
scheme for relief of the poor. The increased activity of 1551 and 1552 which resulted in the foundation of Christ's and St. Thomas's Hospitals under City control is paralleled in the sphere of vagrancy by the foundation of Bridewell, which has already been noted. The interest of the City and Crown in schemes of poor relief was kindled by the ardent reforming spirit of certain preachers, writers and City officials. Especially zealous in this connection was Nicholas Ridley who was appointed bishop of London on 12 April 1550.¹ Thomas Lever preaching before the king draws a vivid picture of the vast numbers of poor in London and Westminster and places his trust in Ridley to remedy the situation: "But now I trust that a good overseer, a godly Byshop I meane, wyl see that they in these two cyties, shall haue their needs releeued, and their faultes corrected, to the good ensample of al other tounes and cities."² The mayors during these years were men who had served as governors of St. Bartholomew's

¹ For accounts of the career of Bishop Ridley see the article by Sir Sidney Lee in the D.N.B. and G. Ridley, The life of Dr Nicholas Ridley, 1763.
² T. Lever, op. cit., p. 78.
and who were anxious to forward projects for relief.\(^1\)

There were other reasons for increased activity. In 1550 Southwark came within the City's jurisdiction and with this extension of the city bounds the inadequacy of the existing sources of relief became more evident.

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(b) Sir R. Dobbys, mayor 1551-1552, was elected as a governor of St. Bartholomew's 25 September 1548 (Repert. XI, f. 495). Bishop Ridley in his farewell speech remarks on the work of Dobbys in connection with the Royal Hospitals: "Thou in thy year didst win my heart for evermore, for that honourable act, that most blessed work of God of the erection and setting up of Christ's holy Hospitals and truly religious Houses, which by thee and through thee were begun" (G. Ridley, op. cit., pp. 640-641). See also A.B. Beaven, op. cit., p. 31.

(c) Sir G. Barne, mayor 1552-1553, was intimately connected with all the early schemes for the reorganisation of the hospitals; he was elected to the first committee of 1545 (Repert. XI, f. 254VO), was entrusted with the organisation of church collections in 1547 (Ibid., ff. 358VO & 362), was a "high collector" of the half fifteenth (Letter Book Q, f. 214VO; Journal XV, ff. 326-326VO), was selected with three other aldermen to petition for St. Thomas' hospital (Repert. XII, ii, f. 312VO) etc. Ridley eulogises his work: "And thou Sir George Barnes, (the truth is to be confessed to God's glory, and to the good example of other) thou wast in thine year not only a furtherer and continuer of that which before thee by thy Predecessor was well begun: but also didst labor so to have perfected the work, that it should have been an absolute thing and a perfect spectacle of true charity and godliness unto all Christendom." G. Ridley, op. cit., pp. 641-642. See also A.B. Beaven, op. cit., p. 31.
Foreign war was over and the City was thronged with disbanded and unemployed soldiers whilst the epidemic of the sweating sickness in 1551, food scarcity and high prices added to the misery of the poor and hastened the formulation of a wider scheme of relief.

Early in 1551 enquiries opened concerning St. Thomas's Hospital; in February four aldermen were chosen to communicate with the lord chancellor for the purchase of the Hospital in Suthwarke, and the landes thereunto belonging, to the Cities use.

1. The Grey Friars Chronicle has the following statement relating to 1551: "Item the ix day of the same monyth [June] beganne the gret sykennes calydyd the sweth, that there dyde a grett multitude of pepull sodenly thorrow alle London and thorrow the most partes of alle Ynglond. And that same day was the proclamacion for testornes at ix d. And the vitelles as dere after as it was before and worser, that the pepull cryde owte of it in every place thorrow alle the realme."

2. For accounts of St. Thomas's Hospital see F.G. Parsons, The History of St. Thomas's Hospital, I, (from the earliest times until A.D. 1600); V.C.H., London, I, pp. 538-541; W. Rendle, Old Southwark and its people, pp. 125-157; and Manning and Bray, History of Surrey, III, pp. 614-626.

3. Repert. XII, ii, f. 311. See also Supplement to the Memoranda, p. 5.
then in March the Privy Council was approached in the matter. As a result of these enquiries the Council ordered a survey to be made of "the lands belonging to the Hospital in Southwark, with the defalcations and allowances due to the poor folk." It appears from the figures given in this survey that the purchase price for the hospital and its possessions was £2,461.2.6; this sum was accordingly paid by the City.

These arrangements were officially recognised by letters patent of 12 and 13 August. By the first the king "considering the exhausted and miserable state and condition of the poor sick and infirm persons lying about and begging in the public streets and places of our City of London and Suburbs thereof, to their great grievance and sorrow and to the great infection and trouble of our subjects passing and walking through the same streets and places" gave the site of the hospital and church and part of the endowment to the

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1. Repert. XII, ii, f. 312vo. For a full transcription see Supplement to the Memoranda, p. 3.
2. Ibid., p. 4.
3. Ibid., p. 7.
4. The purchase is entered in the record of receipts of the Court of Augmentations on 5 July 1551, ibid., p. 14.
City, one condition being that there should be "a place and house for poor persons, there to be relieved and supported... called The House of the Poor in Southwark in the County of Surry, near London, of our foundation." Then the next day by the second letters patent he granted the rest of the endowments as a purchase. There is no indication in the City records of the reorganisation of the hospital until April 1552, when the Court of Aldermen appointed five surveyors to "survey order & gourne the hospytall in Suthwerk & all the londes, rentes, reuenewes & repereaciones belonging to the same" until 29 September 1553. At the same time very similar arrangements to those for St. Bartholomew's were made for future retirements from and elections to this governing body.

1. Ibid., pp. 15-23.
2. Ibid., pp. 24-32.
3. Letter Book R, f. 179; Repert. XII, ii, f. 476vo. It was ordered that at the Court immediately preceding 29 September 1553 "there shall two of the seid aldermen & one of the seid cominers be amoved from the seid rome and one other alderman & one other cominer newlye be nominated & elected by the seid Courte to remayne with the other ij old surveyours & to make lyke survey order & gouerraunce of the seid hospytall & other the premysses by the space of one hole yere then nexte ensuinge, and so from thenseforth lyke surveyours to be yerelye newlye nominated & chosen in forme & tyme aforesaid."
The formation of this governing body for St. Thomas's was however only part of the general increased activity in questions of poor relief in 1552. There are two good contemporary accounts of the events of this year; the more general account is given by Richard Grafton in his *Chronicle*¹ and the more detailed by John Howes in his *Brief note of the order and manner of the proceedings in the first erection of the three Royal Hospitals of Christ, Bridewell & St. Thomas the Apostle.*²

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1. Richard Grafton, *Chronicle*, (1809 edition), II, pp. 529-531. Grafton was intimately connected with the Royal Hospitals, first as a governor of St. Bartholomew's and then as treasurer of Christ's Hospital and must have been well acquainted with the details of the foundation. Thomas Norton in his prologue to the *Chronicle* mentions Grafton's work in connection with the Hospitals: "Who knoweth not his diligence in laboring for and attending on the noble worke of that most blessed Prince, King, yea saint, Edwarde the sixt, in erecting the Hospitall? his labors and expences in overseing the same beyng erected, preferring it before all his awne businesse to his great hinderaunce?" (ibid., I, p. XV.) For accounts of Grafton's career see the article by Sir Sidney Lee in the *D.N.B.* and J.A. Kingdon, *Incidents in the lives of Thomas Poyntz and Richard Grafton, 1895*, and Richard Grafton, *Citizen and Grocer of London, 1901*. The former deals with Grafton's work in connection with printing the bible in English and the latter with the part he played in the establishment of the Royal Hospitals.

The main outline of the story must be taken from these sources as only certain of the incidents are recorded in the City archives. In brief, in the spring of 1552 Bishop Ridley moved the young king on behalf of the needy poor in a sermon and afterwards persuaded him to write to the City authorities in the matter. According to Grafton the bishop pursued this plan because he thought that "it were good to practise with the Citie of London, because a nuber of the poore there are very great, and the Citizens are many and also wise."¹ The result of the king's letter was a careful investigation by a chosen committee of aldermen and commoners into the whole question of poor relief in the City.² Two aspects of the committee's work are especially interesting for our present purpose and both are described in full by John Howes. The first is the classification of the poor and the accompanying proposals concerning relief. They divided the poor into five categories; first, the fatherless and poor children whom they proposed to place in a hospital founded for that purpose in "the late dissolved house of the

¹ R. Grafton, op. cit., II, p. 530.
Greie ffryers"; first, the lame and aged poor who were to be lodged in St. Thomas's Hospital; second, the sturdy beggars for whom some house of labour should be erected; fourth, the lepers who were to be removed from the streets and given monthly pensions; and lastly "decayed poore Cyttezens" who were to have weekly pensions according to their needs.

The other interesting feature of the committee's work was its financial policy. According to Howes' account the proposals outlined above were approved by the mayor and aldermen and the committee was increased in numbers in order to proceed with the arrangements.

1. The committee also proposed that sick children should be kept apart and planned to purchase "Fynsburye Courte" for this purpose, whilst very young children were to "be kepte in the Countraye & allwaies at Easter broughte home," ibid., pp. 11-13.

2. Those of the sick poor who were cured were also to be brought to the house of labour until further provision was made for them, ibid., pp. 16-17.

3. Ibid., p. 18.

4. Ibid., p. 19. An entry in the Repertory partly substantiates Howes. On 21 June 1552 it was agreed that the mayor "by the advyse of those persons that are alredye apoynted to travayle for the pore shall nominate & apoynte xij dyscrete cominers moo to ioyne with theym in their seid travayle." (Repert. XII, ii, f. 498). Then on 19 July five aldermen were chosen to "attends with the cominers that travayle for the pore in the surveyinges of their booke & procedynge therin & of the howses mete for the same." ibid., f. 510vo.
for carrying them out. Funds were immediately needed and so the committee embarked on a series of financial experiments which although based mainly on the principle of voluntary contributions included certain new features. The committee first assessed themselves for contributions, "some 20£, some 10£, some more, some less."¹

About this time there is an interesting entry in the Repertory of the Court of Aldermen giving a list of the amounts promised by the mayor and aldermen "towards the releyf & maynteinance of the pore" and of the sums promised by them weekly for the same cause, "as longe as they shall be hable."² There is nothing definitely to show that the money was being raised in support of the general scheme, although this is the most probable explanation of the entry.

Further sums of money came from the fines levied on persons refusing to take up the office of sheriff. An act of Common Council of 6 August 1552 re-enforced the regulation that a fine of £200 should be paid for refusing the shrievalty, the money being divided between the chamber of London and the person chosen in


2. For the full text of the entry see Appendix XVII, pp. 457-458.
place of the defaulter, and added that if there was more than one refusal the extra fines should be divided between the chamber and the "howse of the pore in Westesmythefalde in the subburbes of London." Then on 6 September the Court of Aldermen agreed that of the £300 given "to the use of the pore" from the fines of John Crymes, Thomas Clayton and John Browne £200 should go to St. Bartholomew's "and thother C li resydu of the said CCC li to be to thuse of the pore in the hospytall newly erectyd callyd Chrystys hospytall." 

Apart from such sources as these the committee proposed to raise money from the City as a whole. Through the help of "prechors mynisters churchewardaines & sydemen & wth three or fours of the better sorts of every paryshe" it was hoped that all parishioners might be persuaded to give weekly donations. Further, forms of promise were drawn up which the churchwardens were to deliver to "the honest householders of the paryshe" who were to fill in the amounts they would guarantee.

1. Repert. XII, ii, f. 526vo.

2. Ibid., f. 526vo. According to Howes' account £200 was granted to the committee from these fines: "There was also graunted them the fynes of twoe wch were chosen Shiriffs wch was 200li" (John Howes, p. 23).
firstly "towards the erection of the houses for the poor" and secondly to pay weekly "towards the maintenance and continuance of ye same poor." Collecting boxes were also given to innholders and wardens of City Companies.\(^1\) In all these arrangements it will be noticed that contributions were of a voluntary nature, although there was an attempt to secure promises of financial help from all citizens.

Meanwhile the two hospitals of Christ's and St. Thomas's were prepared for occupation.\(^2\) By the autumn both Hospitals were ready, and according to contemporary accounts were opened in November. Wriothesley, for example, writes that on 23 November "the poore children of the City of London were taken into Christes Hospitall, late the house of the Grey Fryers in London: And allso that daye they tooke other sicke and poore people into the hospitall in Southwarke; In which two places the children and poore people should haue meats, drinke, lodginge, and cloths, of the almes of the citye."\(^3\)

\(^1\) Ibid., pp. 23-27.
\(^2\) Ibid., pp. 28-33.
\(^3\) Wriothesley, op. cit., II, p. 79. For other references see Grey Friars Chronicle, p. 76; Howes, op. cit., p. 39; and Stow, op. cit., I, p. 319.
Entries in the City records show that the new hospitals were ready in the autumn. On 22 September a certain William Lovell, baker, petitioned the Court of Aldermen to be elected "baker for the pore in the seuerall houses & hospytalles for theym lately newly erectyd aswell in Suthwerk as in London."\(^1\) Again, in October the Court agreed that John Brumbrugh "shall have the good wyll & favour of this Courte to be preferryd to some clerkeship or other rome in one of the newly erectyd hospitalles."\(^2\)

A document of the following year, 1553, giving details of the expenses incurred by the City in the erection and maintenance of St. Thomas's and Christ's Hospitals contains some interesting information.\(^3\) First, the amount raised by the citizens towards the foundations is given as £2,476.10.0. and the actual cost as £2,479.10.10. Secondly, it states that 280 children have been received into Christ's and 260 sick poor into

1. Repert. XII, ii, f. 530\(^{40}\).
2. Ibid., f. 538\(^{40}\), 11 October 1552. It so happened that John Brumbrugh was not appointed to any office and on 27 October the Court granted him a yearly pension of £4 instead, ibid., f. 546.
3. Harl. MS, 604, p. 176 (147). For the full text see Supplement to the Memoranda, pp. 32-35.
St. Thomas, whilst 500 poor householders are relieved in their own homes. Amongst the charges for maintaining these cases and the hospitals is included the sum of £60 a year "to the Lazarhouses adjoining to the City, to the intent they shall not beg within the same, nor within three miles' compass thereof, except it be at their own doors."¹

With the grant of Bridewell in 1553 and the indenture of covenants of 12 June² followed by the grant of letters patent on 26 June granting and confirming to the mayor, commonalty and citizens of London "the Hospitals of Edward the Sixth King of England, of Christ, Bridewell, and Saint Thomas the Apostle"³ the scheme formulated in the spring of 1552 was completed.

During these two years there is little information of particular interest concerning St. Bartholomew's apart from firstly the publication of The Ordre of the Hospital of S. Bartholomewes in Westsmythfielde in London and secondly the erection of certain tenements

¹. Ibid., p. 34. There is an entry in the Christ's Hospital General Account for April 1553 relating to payments made to the leper hospitals, (John Howes, p. 14 n.).

². See Memoranda, pp. 52-59.

³. Ibid., pp. 59-71.
in St. Nicholas Shambles. On 11 February 1551/52 the Court of Aldermen "agreid that the boke that Thomas Vycars, barbour surgeon, hathe devysed for the releif of the pore shalbe putt in prynte & that my lorde mayer shall speake to Richard Grafton for the doinge therof." There seems every reason to connect this entry with the Ordre which was printed in 1552 by Grafton. There is no indication in the book itself as to its author, although the preface states that "it is thought good to the Lord Mayour of thys Citie of London, as chief patrone and gouernour of this Hospitall, in the name of the Citie to publishe at this present the officiers and ordres by hym appointed, and from tyme to tyme practysed and used by twelue of the Citizeins mooste auncient." It seems most probable that Vicary was associated with the publication as he was one of the early governors of the hospital and also from 1548 held

1. Repert. XII, ii, f. 454.

the appointment of Chief Surgeon.1

The book was issued, so the preface states, to give the general public information about the hospital in order to correct derogatory reports circulated concerning it. In vindication, some details of the extent of the hospital's work are given. During the five years of its administration by the City, from 1547 to 1552, "there haue bene healed of the pocques, fistulas, filthie blaynes and sores, to the nombre of viij hundred, and thence saufe deliuered, that other hauyng nede myghte entre in their roume; Beside eyght skore and xii that haue there forsaken this life, in their intollerable miseries and griefes, whiche elles might haue die, & stoncke in the iyes & noses of the Citie, for all these charitie-tenderers, if thys place had not vouchedsaufe to be come a poompe alone, to ease a commune abhorryng."

1. Neither the Furnivalls nor D'Arcy Power directly attribute the Ordre to Vicary although the former suggest that "to him is due part of the Hospital organization, and some of the beautiful unselfish spirit shown in the City 'Ordre' for Barts in 1552," (op. cit., foretalk, p. vi). Mr. J.A. Kingdon however associates the book mainly with Richard Grafton and suggests that "he probably wrote the preface" (J.A. Kingdon, op. cit., p. 45), but it seems to the present writer that it might as readily be attributed to Thomas Vicary.
After the preface there follows a detailed account of the administration of the hospital, dealing first with the composition of the governing body and its duties and then with the "Officers of Householde with their particular charge." Next come an estimate of the yearly expenses and a daily religious service for the patients, and finally the form of passport to be given to any patient who was cured and who had a journey to make to his home. From this information a clear picture may be constructed of the hospital at the end of the period under review, and the details given in the preface, substantiated by information collected from the hospital records by Dr. Moore, indicate that a considerable amount of relief was being administered.

The second point of interest relates to the erection of certain tenements in St. Nicholas Shambles. In January 1550/51 the Court of Aldermen agreed that the governors of St. Bartholomew's should "conclude with the person that hathe offered to gyve them D poundes towards the buylдыng of certeyn tenementes to the vs of the powre where the late churche of St. Nicholas in the Shambles & the sheddes thervnto adi Reynge do yett
There is no further entry concerning the building of these tenements until July 1552. On the 14th arrangements were made in the Court of Aldermen for a loan of £300 from certain orphanages to the governors of the "House of the Poor", "towards the fynyshinge of their new frame in St. Nicholas' shambles." The account of Philip Bold, clothworker, in connection with this work is given in one of the ledgers of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

Another interesting instance of the City's care for the poor at this time is seen in the attitude to poor scholars who went about begging for their fees. These scholars were naturally affected by the general

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1. Letter Book R, f. 100½; Repert. XII, ii, f. 302½, 27 January 1550/51. It was further agreed that the donor "his heyres & his assignes shalbe assured agayne of the xvij li. xiiij s. iiiij d. by the yere out of the chamber of London for euer accordyng to his desyre."

2. Letter Book R, f. 191; Repert. XII, ii, f. 508½. Rev. E.H. Pearce in his Annals of Christ's Hospital suggests that this entry may refer to Christ's Hospital (op. cit., p. 15). Taken with the other entry however it seems more probable that it refers to the tenements in St. Nicholas shambles. Part of the loan was arranged for on 26 July (Repert. XII, ii, f. 514½).

3. N. Moore, op. cit., II, pp. 212-213. Miss Honeybourne very kindly called my attention to this reference.
decline in charitable almsgiving. Thomas Lever laments the state of affairs at Cambridge where scholars were forced to leave on account of poverty: "Loke whether that there was not a greate number of both lerned and pore that myght haue ben kepte, mayntayned, and relyeued in the vniuersities: whych lackyng all healpe or conforte, were compelled to forsake the vniuersitye, leue their bokes, and seke theyr lyuynge abrode in the country?" On 17 April 1551 the mayor showed a book in the Court of Aldermen "concernyng certein poore scollers in the vniuersities which have nede of charitie & sustentacion towards their lyvynges," but nothing was done in the matter at the moment. However on the 23rd the Court agreed that the twelve chief City Companies should be approached with a view to gaining their consent to support one scholar each at the university. Most of these Companies agreed to give £5 on condition that they should have the right to


2. Repert. XII, ii, f. 326.

3. Ibid., f. 329vo.
nominate the recipients, but there is no further entry in the matter so that it is impossible to estimate the success of the scheme.

Throughout the period 1536 to 1552 supervision and regulation of supplies was exercised by the City on lines similar to those already noted from 1485 to 1536. City provision of corn in times of scarcity continued, the funds for this store generally being raised from the City Companies. The poorer citizens benefited from the attempts of the mayor and aldermen to secure an adequate corn supply and they also derived a direct advantage from the fines and forfeitures levied by the City in its regulation of goods. Frequently forfeited goods were sold to the poor, as for example in January 1548/49 when the Court of Aldermen ordered the chamberlain to sell "to the pore people all suche forfett byllettes as he hath & may conveniently aspare

1. Ibid., ff. 332, 332\(^{\circ}\), 406.

2. Supra, pp. 244-249.

3. Instances of loans from the Companies may be found for 1544 (Repert. XI, ff. 60, 62, 62\(^{\circ}\)), 1545 (Ibid., ff. 198\(^{\circ}\), 199\(^{\circ}\), 201, 201\(^{\circ}\)), 1546 (Letter Book Q, f. 174\(^{\circ}\); Repert. XI, f. 289 seq.), 1550 (Repert. XII, i, f. 232; Letter Book R, f. 65; Journal XVI, f. 52\(^{\circ}\)), 1551 (Repert. XII, ii, f. 315\(^{\circ}\)).
Sometimes too St. Bartholomew's after its refoundation benefited in this way; on 6 February 1549/50 the Court divided a fine of three flitches of bacon, "one flytche... to be to thuse of the poore within the House of the Poore, and thother ij flytches to be to thuse of the presenter."²

The general conclusion which can be drawn from the history of the poor relief policy of the City during the period 1485 to 1552 is that the consciousness of its duty towards its own poor had gradually widened and deepened. Circumstances either increasing the numbers of beggars or removing available sources of relief compelled the City to develop a poor law policy which in many of its features anticipated State action. The main interest of this City policy lay in the differentiation between various classes of poor, the refoundation of certain hospitals, thus showing a continuity with the past, the methods of raising money which implied universal though still voluntary contribution, and the cooperation of the City and parish officials in organisation. The scheme was only in its initial stages

1. Repert. XII, i, f. 36, 29 January 1548/49.
2. Ibid., f. 197.
by 1552 but nevertheless the main lines of future development were anticipated. The weakness of the system lay in its entirely local character. As long as the City was in advance of the country as a whole in its organisation and administration of relief it attracted numbers of beggars from other parts. Further, it relied financially on voluntary gifts which would probably decline after the first enthusiasm for the new foundations had waned. Lastly, the scheme, though more comprehensive, overlooked those whom adverse economic circumstances had reduced to poverty. The experiments were however forerunners of national action and the City's difficulties and endeavours both aided and influenced the development of State policy.

(3) Relief of the poor in Kingston-upon-Hull, 1485 to 1576.

The problem of the relief of the poor in Kingston-upon-Hull was very different from that in London. There was no urgent need for the mayor and aldermen to interfere or assume responsibility as voluntary almsgiving was apparently adequate to satisfy all needs, especially as
the situation was not aggravated by large numbers of sturdy beggars. Vagrancy policy, as has already been seen, did not develop in Hull to any great extent until the second half of the sixteenth century and even then was formulated rather with a view to stabilising labour than to safeguarding the impotent. Apart from this, Hull did not attract numbers of poor from other places as was the case with London, because its situation isolated it from the main highways from north to south, whilst the surrounding agricultural districts of Holderness were not likely to foster begging or poverty. Just as in London, so in Hull, experiment in policy for relief of the impotent began later than the attempt to deal with vagrancy; but whereas the experiment of the London authorities preceded government action, in Hull policy followed State direction. It was not therefore until the end of the period under review that any real attempt was made in Hull to interfere in matters of poor relief. The material relating to the subject in Hull is slight compared with that in London, and although no detailed comparison can be drawn between the two the situation in Hull furnishes different aspects of the problem which serve to emphasise the very gradual development of poor law policy in general and the lead
taken by London in these matters. Conditions in Hull before 1539 will be considered first and then the features of municipal policy from 1539 to 1576.

John Cook in his history of the Hull Charterhouse (1882) stated that "few towns in this country can boast of more or older charitable institutions than can Hull." It was indeed largely owing to the generosity of Hull citizens, which had been marked from earliest times, that the development of an organised system of poor relief administered by the municipal authorities was delayed so long. Abraham de la Pryme, whose manuscript histories of Hull have been the chief sources from which


2. The two manuscript histories of Hull are "The History, Antiquities and description of the town and county of Kingston upon Hull. Volume the 1st being the Annals of the said Town containing a successive Historical Account of all the most observable things that have happened therein or related thereto from its first Building until this time" and "A short description and account of ye two Churches of The Holy Trinity & St. Marys in Kingston upon Hull with many other things relating thereto." I have examined both these histories in the Wilson-Barkworth collection at the Hull Reference Library. The former is a copy from Lansdowne MS. 890 in the British Museum whilst the latter is an original. A copy of the greater part of this last may also be found in the British Museum, Lansd. MSS. 890, f. 194 seq. All references will be given to the copies in the Lansdowne collection, which have been carefully compared with those in Hull. For De la Pryme's diary prefaced by an account of his life see Surtees Soc. Pub., LIV.
all later historians of the town have drawn, tells of six small hospitals or almshouses founded in Hull before the Tudor period - Ravenser's, Grimsby's, Bedford's, Aldwick's, Jeffrey's and Gregg's - besides the Charterhouse and Trinity house hospitals. Direct mention of care for the poor is made only in connection with Ravenser's, Grimsby's and Gregg's hospitals. An early Bench book proves the existence in the fifteenth century of Ravenser's hospital which was built in the churchyard of Holy Trinity for the maintenance of twelve poor persons, and endowed with "£9.2.6. a Year Stirling which comes to a halfpenny a day a peace unto them." In 1452/53 and 1463 enquiries were made concerning the number of poor "in le maisondieu in simitarie ecclesie Sancte Trinitate" and by whom they had been nominated.

1. Lansd. MS. 890, f. 17.
2. This reference is not included in the B.M. copy, therefore see Hull Ref. Lib., "A short description and account etc", pp. 259-260.
3. Lansd. MS. 890, f. 312.
4. Ibid., f. 311.
5. Ibid., f. 314.
7. Ibid., f. 17.
The same Bench book has entries concerning Aldwick's hospital and the presentation of people to it. Further investigation of the early town records would probably contribute additional details as to these foundations before 1485.

One of these small hospitals especially concerns the present survey as it was transferred to the control of the mayor and burgesses; this was Gregg's hospital or "maisondieu", founded in 1416 for the care of thirteen poor alms people. In 1445 the chaplain, William Sanderson, conveyed to the Corporation all the houses, lands and tenements of the hospital on condition that the mayor and burgesses undertook to maintain it and to pay yearly £3.0.8. to the thirteen poor persons, that is one shilling and twopence every Sunday, for food and fuel. They were further enjoined to present to the hospital primarily persons who had fallen into poverty.

1. Ibid., ff. 47vo and 95. See also f. 41.

2. It is interesting to note that the extant town rent rolls for Henry VIII and Edward VI include rents from property left by Grimsby, Aldwick, Gregg, Bedford and Jeffray and the charges for priests and obits for the same foundations; there is however no mention of the hospitals except in the case of Gregg's.
from some good position.\(^1\) The chamberlains' rolls of the early Tudor period show that the town was fulfilling its part of the bargain and paying £3.0.8. yearly to the inmates of the hospital.\(^2\) There is evidence of this payment on the rolls from the time of the transference until 1516, after which the accounts become mere totals of receipt and expenditure. After 1516 however details of the fees and wages paid by the chamberlains are entered on the rent rolls and these include the payments to Gregg's charity.

Similar benefactions by Hull citizens continued in the Tudor period. Before 1539 two more small almshouses were established by Brand Adrianson\(^3\) and

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1. Bench book III, ff. 70-71\(^{vo}\).

2. The entry on the roll of 1 Hen. VIII will serve as an example of the annual payment: "Pro pauperibus domus Christi per predictum Johannem Gregge fundatas pro qualibet septimana xiiiij d., per annum iiij li viij d." (Hull Corp. Rec., Chamberlains' roll 1 Hen. VIII, m.1, Feoda et Salaria).

3. Lansd. MS. 890, f. 310. De la Pryme states that in his will in 1503 Adrianson instructed his executors to give to the four "very old Honest Men" of his hospital "2 Chalder of Coals & that they have every Friday ye Mass of Jesu sayd unto them in their chappel." cf. Testamenta Eboracensia, IV, (Surtees Soc. pub., LIII), p. 16 note.
Dr. Ripplingham. The desire to contribute to the needy is also evident in the wills of the period. For example, John Dalton, a Hull merchant, left in 1496 "to all the masendewes of this towne, amonche thayme all, xl s." and "to poore people be penydale iij l. iij s. iij d; for to pray for souls."^3

Besides such sources of relief as these, there were various religious foundations in Hull and the surrounding district. The Carthusian priory of St. Michael situated just outside the walls of Hull was, according to the visitors of 1536, a place of good hospitality. The plea made for the house at that time was that "the said priour and bretherne are right well favored and commended by the honest men of Hulles and

1. De la Pryme mentions this foundation twice in his histories. In one case he writes that the hospital seems to have been very rich "but whereaboutes this stood, how much its Revenues were, how many Poor it mentaind and such like is altogether unknown" (Landsd. MS. 890, p. 313), whilst in the other he states that it was "a great Hospitall in Viccar Lane for the perpetuall maintenance of 20 poor people" (ibid., p. 360).


3. Ibid., p. 26. For other instances see ibid., pp. 61 note, 126-128; also ibid., V, (Surtees Soc. pub., LXXIX), pp. 170-172 etc.
other neighbours there abowtes for their good lyvynge and great hospitalitie by theym dayly kepte, whiche men of Hulle and other neighbours made great request unto us to desyer your maistership to be good maister unto the said priour and bretherne."¹ Although the monastery was included amongst those to be dissolved in 1536 it was specially continued by letters patent of the king together with fifteen other abbeys and sixteen nunneries,² but eventually in November 1539 had to surrender.³ Two other foundations are worthy of special notice; the one is the hospital adjoining to the CARTHUSIAN priory, described on the Chantry certificate as "Thospitall of Saint Mychaell, commonlie called Goddes House without the Gates of Hulle"⁴ but later known as the Charterhouse Hospital, and the other is Trinity house almshouse. The former was for the relief of twenty six weak, aged and poor men and woman,⁵ whilst the latter was to support

2. L. and P., XI, 385 g. 34.
5. For a full account of the Charterhouse Hospital see J. Cook, op. cit. See also Documents relating to the Charterhouse at Kingston upon Hull, (published by the trustees), 1906, and V.C.H., Yorkshire, III, pp. 310-312.
poor and impotent seamen. There were also several trade and religious gilds which offered relief to their poor members. An instance of this may be found in the ordinances of the gild of St. John the Baptist which stated that "if it should happen that any man or woman of the said Gild shall be infirm, bowed, blind, deaf, dumb, maimed, languishing with perpetual or temporary infirmity, either in youth or age, so that they have not wherewith to live: it is ordained and granted to each of them for charity, and for the souls of those in the Gild, of our own goods and chattels as long as they continue, each brother and sister by the officer...

1. This mariners' hospital or almshouse was established by the Trinity Guild in 1457 and was to be supported by sums due to the mariners as lowage and stowage. The king's letter confirming the arrangements states that the almshouse was founded for "the sustentation & relieving of thirteen persons who by misfortune of the sea shall happen to fall in poverty by loss of goods." Rev. J. Tickell, The history of the Town and county of Kingston upon Hull, p. 704. See also Bench book III A, f. 97vo. In the possession of the Hull reference library there is an interesting manuscript which gives a history of Trinity House, drawn up for legal purposes in 1861-2 by E.S. Wilson, Secretary to the Wardens of the Hull Trinity House Corporation; the details given here of sums of money paid to inmates and others during our period (pp. 6-9) show that a considerable amount of relief was being administered.
for the time being, weakly one halfpenny of silver.¹

Before 1539, therefore, there is little evidence of the participation of the mayor and aldermen in schemes of relief apart from their control of Gregg's hospital, but the town was well served by private charitable foundations and any official interference was unnecessary. By 1539 most of the religious foundations had surrendered² whilst after the acts of 37 Henry VIII and I Edward VI chantries and many small hospitals were dissolved.³ It is interesting to note that certain almshouses escaped the general dissolution; an entry in the town rent roll of January 1555/56 states that among

1. Each poor member was also granted 5s. at the festival of St. Martin for a garment, Rev. J.M. Lambert, Two thousand years of Gild life, pp. 113-114. This book is written with special reference to the gilds and trading companies of Kingston upon Hull.

2. The following list of dissolutions in and about Hull has been taken from J. Tickell, op. cit., pp. 161-162 & 172:-

1536. Ferraby Priory
      Haltemprice Priory
      St. Austin's Friary, Hull
      White Friary, Hull

3 Sept. 1539 Nunnery at Swine
9 Nov. 1539 St. Michael's monastery
11 Dec. 1539 Monastery of Melsa or Meaux.

3. For the chantry survey of Kingston upon Hull see Yorkshire Chantry Surveys, II, (Surtees Soc. pub., XCII), pp. 338-347.
"the landes and tenementes belonginges to the Maior and burgassee" there were "Corpus Christi massindue, Saynt Jaymes massindue, the Greg massindewa, one massindue in Lowe gate, one massindue in Chapellane and the Chanon Roo beinge xij seueral tenementes whiche be allwayez at the disposicion & order of Master Maior for the tyme beinge and his brethern thaldermen for the reliefe of the poore people."

The only early foundations, however, for whose continued existence there is ample evidence are Trinity house almshouse and charities.

1. Hull Corp. Rec., 2 & 3 Philip & Mary rent roll, m.2. The following year the entry is a little different: "Memorandum, that ceretn chambres vpon the prestes rowe as apperithe aboue in this rentall this yere not charged with any rentes and also there is Grege massindue, Saynt Jamys massindue, Corpus Christi massindue, one massindue in the Lowe gate, one massindue in Chapellane and the Chanon Rowe being xij seuerall tenementes with all the poore peoplez houses at Beuerley gatez and the Mallye towre whiche be alwaisz at the disposicion and order of Master Maior for the tyme being and his brethern the aldermen for the relieffe and conforther the poore people (sic)." Similar entries to this occur in the four rent rolls of Elizabeth extant for our period, except that St. James Maisonclieu is omitted.

2. See Reports from Charity Commissioners, 1823, IX, pp. 786-790 & Appen. 853-856.
the Charterhouse,¹ Gregg's² and Ripplingham's³ Hospitals.

The "Massindue in Chapellane" was founded after the period of wholesale destruction by a certain John Harrison who, as De la Pryme writes, "must Needs have been of Exceeding great Charity & Virtue in that he durst venture to Build & Endow a Hospitall in those times when all Charitable foundations & hospitalls were Ruind & destroy'd.⁴ He left by will in 1550 to the mayor and burgesses, after his wife's decease, certain property including his "masendewe almeshouse

1. Infra, pp. 369-372.

2. See Reports from Charity Commissioners, 1823, IX, p. 803, and F. Lowe and W.T. Huffman, Report on the Municipal Charities, Hull, 1878, pp. 46-52. For some cases of presentation to the hospital in the early seventeenth century see Bench book V, ff. 247^o, 258^o, 272, 284, 287, 308 etc.

3. Some cases of presentation to Ripplingham's hospital are recorded in the seventeenth century (ibid., ff. 375^o, 386^o), and on 15 July 1647 repairs to the hospital were ordered (ibid., f. 379). It had however disappeared by 1823 and there is no mention of it in the Report from Charity Commissioners; according to De la Pryme it was standing in 1647, but was converted to other uses during the Civil War (Lansd. MS. 890, f. 37). It may here be noted that De la Pryme records the survival of the four foundations mentioned above, (ibid., f. 48).

4. Lansd. MS. 890, f. 50.
ande garden with thappertenhances set lyinge and beinge in Kingston vppon Hulle aforesaid in a certayne lane there called the Chappell Lane, on condition that the mayor and burgesses "doo every weake, weeklye for ever, pay or cause to be payde vppon the Saturday the summe of sextene pence of lawfull Ynglyshe money to suche pore people as shalbe resident or dwellinge within the said masendewe or almess howse in Chapell lane."\(^1\)

Private benefactors thus continued to leave money to the poor and to endow charitable foundations during the second period, 1539 to 1576; it is interesting that in these cases the mayor and aldermen were generally recognised as the proper authorities to control such bequests. Examples of the citizens' liberality may be found in the wills of Christopher Scailes in 1556 and of Robert Ratclif in 1572, both of which are entered

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1. Bench book III, f. 158\(^\circ\)-159. This hospital continued and is reported on in 1823, Report from Charity Commissioners, IX, pp. 804-805. The Commissioners were rather vague about the foundation and a better report is given by F. Lowe and W.T. Huffam, op. cit., pp. 67-69. Payments in the sixteenth century from the town's chamber to the poor of this almshouse are recorded in the rent rolls; for example, "Item to the poore people of the townes massindeuwe in the Chappell laine laite Mr Herrisons, weakely xv j d. Summa in totale iiij li. ix s. iiiij d." (Hull Corp. Rec., Rent roll 8 Eliz., m.3).
in the Bench books. By the former a house was left to the town and the rent was to be distributed yearly on Christmas eve "to the poore people of the said towne, which then shall haue the most neid,\(^1\) whilst by the latter two tenements, gardens and other appurtenances were bequeathed for the foundation of "a masendewe or howse for the poore," and also the rents of a "cowgaite or common of pasture for one cowe in the Kirkefeilde" for "woodde & turffes or coales towards the releife of the poore which from tyme to tyme shalbe placed in the said massendewe." To the mayor was assigned the duty of "ordering and rulinge of the said massendewe, and of all the landes therevnto belonging and the plaicyngs and the displasinge of the poore for euer which from time to tyme shalbe plased in the same."\(^2\)

The corporation was also intimately concerned with the organisation of the Charterhouse from 1552; by an indenture between the king and the mayor and burgesses on 20 February it received "the advouson, gifte, presentacion, free disposicion and right of

\(^1\) Bench book III, f. 202\(^v\)-203.

\(^2\) Ibid., f. 199-200. This hospital was also reported on in 1823, Report from Charity Commissioners, IX, pp. 806-807.
patronage, of the Hospytall of the Holy Trynitis, nere unto the said town of Kingston upon Hull" upon condition "that immedyatly after the deathe of the present incumbent therof, the said Maior and Burgeses and their successors, shall, from tyme to tyme, as often as the same hospital shall become voide by death or otherwise, present one able and honest parson, to be master and incumbent of the said hospital, and from tyme to tyme for ever shall provyde and forsee that the issues, proffettes and revenues of the same hospital shalbe employed and bestowed to and uppon the mayntenaunce and relief of the poor people there according to the fundacion therof, or otherwise as the Kinge's highnes, his heyres or successours, hereafter shall ordayne and appoynt."¹ Supervision of the hospital was exercised²

¹ J.R. Boyle, Charters and Letters Patent granted to Kingston-upon-Hull, pp. 79-80. The arrangements were confirmed by letters patent on 29 March 1552, ibid., p. 70. Mr. J. Cook concludes that the Charterhouse was never actually dissolved and that Edward's grant to the town was "a gift of the patronage of an endowed, working institution, impoverished and well-nigh empty it may be in consequence of the unsettled nature of those troublous times, but capable of resuscitation into vigorous and healthy life." J. Cook, op. cit., p. 67.

² For example, in June 1565 the mayor, two aldermen and two merchants were nominated to receive the financial account of the hospital. Bench book IV, f. 55vo.
and in 1571 when the administration of the hospital was questioned, the town's authority was definitely recognised. A certain Robert Armyn had complained to the archbishop of York concerning the misconduct of the master of the hospital, Thomas Turner, and so the archbishop sent a questionnaire to be answered by Turner, who thereupon appealed to the mayor and aldermen desiring them as patrons of the hospital to use their authority for "the hearinge, orderinge and determyninge of all matters whiche may in any wise concerne the said hospitall or the master, brethren or sisters thereof." The final result was that the archbishop placed "the heringe and fynall determynacion of the hole matter" in the hands of the mayor and aldermen and ordered them "beinge patrons and donors of the said hospitall" to draw up rules for the organisation and administration of the

1. Ibid., ff. 88vo-89.

2. Ibid., ff. 89-90. The questionnaire included twenty two points of enquiry, many of which concerned the character of the inmates of the hospital - whether they were "halt, layme or blynde or none of theise," whether they were poor, how they had been presented etc.

3. Ibid., f. 90.
same. The town authorities were thus acquiring control of charitable foundations either by agreement with the king or by bequest of the founders.

The real participation in general matters of poor relief came at the very end of the period under review, from 1575 onwards. It has already been shown that vagrancy policy had been developing before this date, and a beadle of the beggars had been appointed. In 1559 too there was a definite attempt to help the "poore ympotent people... not hable to worke" by ordering a survey to be made by the aldermen in their respective words of the two classes of poor, the idle able-bodied and the impotent, the purpose in the case of the latter being to assure them of available relief. Sometimes also, as in London, the authorities assigned a portion of legal fines to the relief of the poor; for example, in June 1565 £3.4s. gained illicitly was forfeited and 26s.6d. was given to the poor, whilst in

1. Ibid., f. 94vo. The ordinances were duly drawn up by the mayor and aldermen and the number of inmates reduced from 26 to 12, as the hospital was not rich enough to support the number ordered at its foundation. Ibid., f. 97-102.

2. For the full text of this order see Appendix XX, P. 459.

February 1565/66 a third of a fine of £3 imposed for buying calf skins contrary to the law was "to be distributed amongst the poore people of this towne."¹

The tardy development in Hull may be accounted for partly by the considerable provision made for local needs by private benefactors, and partly by the fact that the policy of the Hull authorities followed upon instead of preceding State action and the development of State policy in poor relief was very gradual. The first statute to concentrate on relieving impotency rather than suppressing vagrancy was that of 1552. It will be remembered that this act made arrangements for the better organisation of collections of alms and their distribution to the poor.² Then, in 1563, attention was paid to securing universal contribution and the justices were empowered to assess defaulters in quarter sessions.³ Neither of these acts however appears to have had any effect in Hull where there is no record of the appointment of collectors or of official administration of relief. In 1572 the whole system

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¹. Ibid., f. 61vo.
². Supra, p⑴ 392-394.
³. 5 Eliz. c. 3, Statutes, IV, i, pp. 411-414.
was revised, previous acts were repealed and the acts of 1572 and 1576 formulated a more comprehensive scheme. The former ordered the justices in the country and the mayors in the towns to survey the poor in their areas, to assess the inhabitants for the relief of the poor and to appoint collectors and overseers to superintend the scheme,\(^1\) whilst town stocks of wool, hemp, flax, iron and other stuff to be used in employing the poor of all types and Houses of Correction for punishing all refusing to do the work provided, idle rogues and others were ordered by the latter.\(^2\) The importance of this legislation has been summed up by Miss Leonard: "These two Acts of 1572 and 1576 were three times continued and remained the basis of the English Poor Law until the whole question was reopened and thoroughly discussed in 1597."\(^3\)

In 1575 an outbreak of plague awakened the Hull authorities to "the inordinately goinge abrode of the poore people in the stretes" which led to the spread of infection. It was therefore decided on 27 November

\(^1\) \(14\) Eliz. c. 5, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 590-598.
\(^2\) \(18\) Eliz. c. 3, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 610-613.
\(^3\) E.M. Leonard, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 72.
that "the saime poore people shoulde be releived at home in their dwellinge howeses" instead of "going abrode in the streetes or from doore to doore beggynge." It appears from the arrangements made to ensure this that previously collectors had been appointed to gather in weekly sums of money for the relief of the poor, but it was now thought that the amount so raised would be inadequate to maintain the poor in their homes and the justices were ordered to assess everyone "thought able to pay any thinge towards the releife of the said poore people," any refusing to pay were to "be punished accordinge in the statute maide and ordeined for the releife of the poore." Then in December the mayor and aldermen drew up an order for all those poor "that have not dwelt here by three yeares or that were not borne heare" to leave the town, but in consideration of the time of year they were given until 25 March 1576 to carry out the instructions. This order is particularly interesting as the reason given for the great number of poor was that two or three families had been allowed to live in one house; similar over-crowding it will be remembered was a source of complaint.

2. For the full text see Appendix XXIII, pp. 1481-1483.
in London.

The next activity came in 1577 and will be examined here as it follows directly the act of 1576 and concerns the provision of work for the poor. The Hull authorities decided to follow the policy of Doncaster in this connection, that is to adopt the method of teaching the poor to knit. In June they agreed to try "to procure some one, two or three of those their that be skilfull to come hither to inhabite and to instruct and treyne vppe the poore of this towne in that faculte,"¹ and by 17 July the arrangements were made.² At the same time a town stock was to be provided "with suche money as shalbe received & had by grauntinge licence to buy and transporte corne by vertewe of the Quenes Majesties licence graunted to the maior and burgesses of this towne."³ Later in the year seven "collectors or

1. For the full text of this order see Appendix XXIV, p. 484.

2. Bench book IV, f. 168. Two women were "bespoke to come from Doncaster to this towne" and they were to have in payment for their services "for one hole yeare next commings viij li in monney, two chaldas of coles, one howse rent free and a paire of bedstookes."

3. For the full text see Appendix XXV, p. 485. A similar order was made again on 28 November 1577, Bench book IV, f. 177.
governors of the poor people in Kingston upon Hull were appointed to receive the stock, set the poor to work and generally to be responsible for carrying out the act of 1576, and the aldermen were ordered to make a survey of the poor in their respective wards.

In this way the mayor and aldermen of Hull commenced active organisation and administration of poor relief and in the details of their policy followed closely State direction. The town records show that the authorities continued to interfere and developed a thorough-going policy, so that in 1622 John Taylor was able to write of the town:

"I think it merits praise for Government,
More than all towns in Britains continent,
As first their Charity doth much appear,
They for the poor have so provided there,
That if a man should walk from Morn till Night,
He shall not see one beggar: nor a mite
Or anything shall be demanded ever,
But every one there doth their best endeavour
To make the idle work, and to relieve
Those that are old and past, or sickness grieve."  

1. Ibid., f. 177v0.
2. Ibid., f. 177vo.
CHAPTER VII.

General Conclusions.

In conclusion, it remains first to recapitulate the main features in the development of policy whereby the London authorities by 1552 had formulated a scheme to clear the streets of all sorts of beggars: "The poore fatherlesse children in a house by themselves, the lame & aged in a house by them selves, the Lazar kepte in the Lazar house........ The ydell lustie Roges and strompets were broughte to Bridewell, & the decayed housholder releved by pencyons wekely;" secondly to estimate the relation of this policy to that of the State and other municipalities, especially to that of Hull; and lastly to bring it into line with continental developments of a similar nature.

The first general point which may be noted is the influence of extraneous circumstances upon the

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1. John Howes' MS., 1582, ed. W. Lempriere, p. 62. Dignitie continues to say: "This worcke was begun in a good tyme & tooke good sucoease yf the contynuance was aunsweable to the begiining. The lyke provysion was never in any Chrystian kingdome."
development of policy in London. The outbreaks of foreign war were generally accompanied by temporary lapses in activity against vagrancy, whilst at the conclusion of war, when disbanded soldiers swelled the ranks of the idle poor, the authorities were once more impelled to deal with vagabondism in the interests of law and order and had also to consider the relief of the needy poor, for available alms were insufficient when the claims upon them were thus multiplied. In the same way internal disturbances such as the Evil May day riots, the Pilgrimage of Grace and Ket's rebellion gave an impetus to the development of vagrancy policy because the idle, loitering members of the community were found to be very ready to join in rebellion. Sir John Cheke rebukes the rebels of 1549 thus: "Yee have hainously & traiterously encamped your selfe in field, & there like a byle in a body, nay like a sinke in a towne have gathered together all the nasty vagabonds and idle loiterers." \(^1\) Again, in periods of food scarcity and pestilence great numbers of idle beggars and needy poor complicated the difficulties of the authorities and

1. Sir John Cheke, *The true subject to the rebell or the Hurt of Sedicion how greivous it is to a Common-wealth, 1549, (1641 edition)*, p. 15.
emphasised the need for activity in dealing with the problem. Other factors affecting especially the foundation of the Royal Hospitals and either hastening or impeding the development of the scheme were the personnel of the king's Council and the state of relations between the king and the City. In a survey of poor law policy in the City it has therefore been necessary to take into account numerous external factors which partly explain the various phases of policy.

The most original contribution of the London authorities to the general development of vagrancy policy during the period under review lies in the foundation of Bridewell. The fear for social order first drove the City to take steps to check the spread of vagabondism; the early measures therefore aimed at policing the City and relied on cruel and severe punishment as the means of dealing with the vagabond nuisance. Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia* notes the "great and horrible punishmentes" enacted against thieves in England and observes that "much rather provision should haue ben made, that there were some meanes, whereby they myght get their liuyng, so that no man shoulde be dryuen to this extreme necessitie,"
firste to steale, and then to dye." It was some time before any such theory found expression in the City policy. It has been seen how the punishment increased in severity as the menace grew more violent, until at the very end of the period, when punishment was still proving ineffective, the plan of providing work for the idle in a house of correction was initiated. The lack of realisation that unemployment might be the direct result of economic circumstances may partly account for the reliance placed on punishment as a corrective in the first stages of policy.

Apart from this development in theory and policy the administrative activity is of interest from the point of view of municipal administration. The aldermen were responsible in their respective wards for carrying out the orders dealing with vagabonds, and were assisted in these duties by the constables, beadles and ward inquests. New officials were also created, namely the beadles of the beggars, who had definite duties concerning vagrancy and begging. In addition, special searches, watches and ward enquiries were organised to facilitate the administrative activity.

The link between the problem of the vagabond and that of the needy poor lay in the growing inadequacy of existing sources of relief, which would in any case have been insufficient to cope with the great increase of poverty and could not stand the strain of numbers of sturdy beggars added to those of the genuinely needy. This led the City authorities to interfere and reorganise relief of the poor. At the beginning of the period City activity was concentrated rather on vagrancy policy and the maintenance of order than on the relief of the poor, whereas at the close of the period the situation was reversed; the gradual assumption of civic responsibility was one of the most striking features of the years under review. The main contributions of London to the general development of policy in this sphere lay in the regulation of begging by the badging of the poor, the census of the City's poor, the experiments in raising money for charitable purposes which foreshadow the later compulsory assessment by the State and the comprehensive scheme formulated by 1552, which attempted to differentiate between the several classes of persons needing relief.

It might seem that by 1552 the City had initiated a poor law policy based on sound principles and with every possibility of success, yet Phillip Stubbes in
his **Anatomy of Abuses** (1583) could write: "There is a certen Citye in Ailgna (Anglia) called Munidnol (Londinum), where as the poore lye in the streets vppon pallets of straw, and well if they haue that to, or els in the mire and dirt, as commonlie it is seene, hauing neither house to put in their heads, couering to keep them from the cold, nor yet to hide their shame withall, penny to buy them sustenance, nor any thing els, but are permitted to dye in the streets like dogges, or beasts, without anie mercie or compassion shewed to them at all."¹ The London scheme failed partly because of the difficulty in raising funds, the negligence of officials and the change in the attitude of the Crown under Mary,² but mainly because it was municipal and not national. Miss Leonard quotes


2. This point is stressed by John Howes who in his Dialogue concerning the Royal Hospitals makes Dutie say concerning them: "In King Edwardes tyme they floryshed & in Quene Maries tyme the Cyttie had muche to doe to kepe them from suppressing. And therefore no hope of augementing or encreasing." John Howes¹ MS. p. 74. In the second Famyliar and Frendly Discourse Dialogue Wyse, 1587, he gives as one cause for the great numbers of beggars still about the streets, the "Lacke of good order in the execucion of the officers" (R. H. Tawney and E. Power, Tudor Economic Documents, III, p. 422.)
from an entry in the Journal for March 1568/69 which
shows clearly the results of a system of poor relief which
was confined to the City: "Forasmuch as experience late
hath shewed that the charitable relief gyuen as well by
the quenes maties most noble progenitors as also the
charitable almes from tyme to tyme collected within this
citie and bestowed by the cittizens, aswell upon the
poore and nedy citizens, being sicke, impotent and
lambe as the poore orphans and fatherless children...aswell in Chryste Church and Bridwell as in other
hospitalles founded for the reliefe of the poore within
the said citie, hath drawn into this citie great nombes
of vagabondes, roges, masterless men and Idle persons
as also poore, lame and sick persons dwellyng in the
most partes of the realme."

The principal features of the London experiments

relief, p. 40. A similar illustration of the City's
attraction for vagabonds is quoted by Mr. Lipson;
in 1582 when a search was ordered for "rogues and
masterless men" the City recorder wrote to Burghley:
"I did note that we had not of London, Westminster,
nor Southwark, nor yet Middlesex nor Surrey above
twelve..... The residue for the most were of Wales,
Shropshire, Chester, Somerset, Berkshire, Oxford
and Essex.\textsuperscript{1} (Original Letters illustrative of
English History, (ed. Ellis), 1st ser., ii, p. 286,
quoted in E. Lipson, The Economic History of England,
III, p. 413.)
were, after a discreet interval, adopted by the State. It was natural that the lead should be taken by the municipalities, and especially by London, as they were in close contact with destitution and being complete units of government in themselves were able to experiment within their bounds. From the time of Henry VII the State was gradually curtailing the practice of indiscriminate almsgiving by legislation of an increasingly severe character against vagrants and beggars, and eventually it followed the City in the adoption of houses of correction for the idle and of a compulsory poor rate for the relief of the destitute. The relation of the City experiments to State policy is mainly important in that these experiments prepared the way for the series of poor law statutes. A further point of interest is that during the period under review a certain amount of State influence may be discerned in the City's activity; even before 1531 experiment in the City was sometimes at the direct instigation of the State, whilst after the statutes of 1531 and 1536 the City's administrative activity was often directed towards enforcing State regulations.

London was however not alone in its experiments; other municipalities faced with similar difficulties were developing poor law policies along the same lines.
as London in the early sixteenth century. These included regulations against vagabonds,¹ public provision of corn,² surveying and badging of the poor, provision of work, compulsory assessments for relief of the poor and the reorganisation of hospitals under municipal control.³ From the accounts of the various municipalities which have been investigated it would appear that, although the same features of policy occur, on the whole London led the way in these matters. In this thesis the policy of Kingston upon Hull has been examined for comparative purposes. It has been seen that Hull was more backward than London and did not commence serious activities until the middle of the century. When however vagrancy policy did develop a certain similarity to London in motives and methods may be noted, although it was mainly the desire to stabilise labour which

1. For example, a set of ordinances were issued in Chester in 1540 which included orders for the repression of valiant beggars (L. and P., XV, 141).


influenced the Hull authorities in developing policy. In the matter of relief of the poor the town tended to follow the State rather than to formulate a policy of its own, but even so on its own initiative it arranged for surveys to be made of the poor and also exercised control over various charitable foundations. The relationship between the developments in London, the State and Hull during the period under review may therefore be summarised thus - early experiment by London, the incorporation of a similar policy in statutory law and the local application of this State policy by the Hull authorities.

Lastly it may be noted that experiment in poor law policy was by no means peculiar to England in the sixteenth century, nor was this country even particularly advanced in this respect. Distressed economic conditions existed on the continent, and early in the century municipalities abroad were busy with experiments which were similar to those occupying the attention of the London authorities at the same period.¹ Martin Luther

¹ For accounts of activities on the continent see S. and B. Webb, English Poor Law History, I, (The Old Poor Law), pp. 29-41; Sir W. Ashley, English Economic History and Theory, I, ii, pp. 335-350 and F.R. Salter, Some early tracts on poor relief, passim.
in 1520 in his manifesto To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation declared that "every town should provide for its own poor people. Each town could maintain its own; .......and it could discover which were truly poor."¹ This was followed in 1523 by a scheme prepared by Luther and the leading citizens of Leisneck, now Leisnig, for dealing with problems of vagrancy and poverty. By this Ordinance for a Common Chest begging was prohibited, relief being administered to poor people and beggars out of the Common Chest.²

Sidney and Beatrice Webb in their English Poor Law History state that "Luther's injunctions seem to have been immediately made the basis of a municipal organisation of poor relief not only in Protestant but also in Catholic cities."³ In 1522 the authorities of Augsburg prohibited street begging and appointed guardians to superintend the distribution of relief. This example was followed within the next few years by Nuremburg, Strasburg, Breslau, Ratisbon, Magdeburg and others.

Very similar measures of reform were initiated in

¹ Quoted in W. Ashley, op. cit., p. 342.
² For Luther's Ordinance see F.R. Salter, op. cit., pp. 80-96.
French towns - in Rouen in 1521 and 1534, in Lyons in 1531 and in Paris in 1530 and 1544. In 1525 the city council of Zurich, following the advice of Zwingli, introduced reform measures designed to stop begging and indiscriminate charity.¹ About the same time interesting reforms were being made at Ypres which came so much into public notice that the magistrates published an account of the regulations in 1531 under the title of A Method of Poor Relief practised at Ypres, and most profitable to the whole Christian World.² These brief examples serve to show that the period was one of widespread experiment in poor law policy abroad as well as in England, and in this continental development also the municipalities played a large part.

This survey of the development of poor law policy in the City of London and Kingston upon Hull brings out clearly the conclusion already reached by other investigators, that the policy of the municipalities although anticipating the main features of later State policy could not in itself achieve complete success because it was confined to a small area; only a national

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¹ F.R. Salter, op. cit., pp. 97-103.
² Ibid., pp. 36-76.
application of policy could hope to deal with the problem effectively. The value of municipal activity was that it formed the basis on which State policy developed; as Mr. Lipson states in the latest volume of his Economic History of England: "In its essentials the Elizabethan poor law was little more than the application, on a national scale, of principles which had already been worked out by the municipal authorities: and its importance lies less in the novelty of the organization which it created, than in its extension to the rural community at large."¹

¹ E. Lipson, op. cit., III, p. 411.
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XX  Arrangements for searches, 1559.  p. 469.

XXI Orders for the good government of the town, detailing the duties and powers of the aldermen in their respective wards, 6 August 1560.  p. 470.

XXII Town ordinances of 1563 for the correction of whoredom, drunkenness and idleness.  p. 477.

XXIII. An order of the mayor and aldermen for the departure of certain poor from the town, 1575. p. 481.

XXIV The first provision for the employment of poor people, 6 June 1577.  p. 484.

XXV An order for the formation of a town "stock", 6 June 1577.  p. 485.
Appendix I.

Verdict of the wardmote inquest of Portsoken.
21 December 1471.

The file of Portsoken presentments preserved at the Guildhall Record Office contains fifteen verdicts — fourteen of the time of Edward IV and one of the time of Henry VII. These are the only verdicts preserved in entirety in the possession of the corporation for the period prior to the sixteenth century. References in other records of the City to the verdicts of other wards bear witness to their existence; for example, Journal VIII, f. 46\( ^{vo} \) seq. contains extracts from the verdicts of several wards for April 1473.

Portsoken was the ward without Aldgate and until 1531 was under the constant aldermanship of the prior of Christ Church. The verdicts extant, of which the one for 1471 is appended in full, are all of more or less the same nature. They contain lists of ward nuisances which fall into two classes, nuisances relating to property and those concerning people. For the purpose of this essay the latter sections are of importance,
since the types of offenders are those found so often swelling the ranks of the vagabonds. The following instances of presentments made in the verdicts illustrate some of the most common offences within the purview of the ward inquest: "Also we endite John Hyselet for a faytour begger and his wyfe for a comon skolde, defectyff." "Also we endite Thomas Dyrwyn for a comon baratour and for a resseyuour of suspessious and misruled peopulle, that is menis prentis & seruauntes, comon defectyf." "Also we endite William Malmayne for a comon baratour and a comon breker of the kyngis peace, and a nyght walker and for a preuy pykar, comon defectyff." "Also we endite John a Campe for a comon hasardour and a ressayver of suspecious & mysrewlyd pepill, comon defectyf."

At the foot of the verdict were inscribed the names of the ward officials, common councillors, constables,

1. Portsoken Presentments m. 1.
2. Ibid., m. 3.
3. Ibid., m. 7.
scavengers, beadle and raker. The verdict of 1471 is given in full to serve as an example of the nature and form of such a document, since wardmote government played a prominent part in policy directed against vagrancy.

Portsoken ward presentments, 5-22 Edw. IV, m. 6.

This is the verdite of the enqueste of wardemote holden & taken before Sir Thomas Pomeroy, priour of Crichirch and alderman of the warde of Portsoken of London on Seint Thomas day, the appostill, in the yere of the regne of Kynge Edwarde the iiiij th aftyr the Conqueste the xj th yere; by the othis of vs Robert Boltyng, Thomas Russell Robert Noore, William Gylmyn, John a Borne, John Michell, Richard Raafe, Robert Seman, William Farham, Richard Sisworth, William Cutson and John a Strete, which presente & endite the comon noyauncis & defaultis suyngly expressid by vs found within the said warde, that is to witte:

Fyrst, we the said enqueste presente & endite the maister of Seint Kateryns for settyng of stulpes in the

1. Stulpe is an old form of stoop meaning a post or pillar. (N.E.D.).
kyngis hie way on the comon grounde at the mille door with a grete cheyne lokkyd, stoppyng the hye way, the which is grete noyauns to the peopull comyng and goyng by that way, comon defectyf this xiiiij\textsuperscript{e} yere.

Also we endite William Graunte for a comon baratour & a comon breker of the kyngis peas, & for a comon strumpetmonger, comon defectyf. Also we endite Julian Reedere for a comon strumpet, defectyf. Also we endite Robert Wilforde, the seruaunte of William Wilforde, for a privy pykar, and the said William for a mayntenour, defectyf. Also we present Richard Wellis & his wyfe for resseyuours of suspessious & misruled peopull, that is menis prentis & seruauntis, defectyf. Also we presente John Arderne & his wyfe for kepynge & mayntenynyge of a yonge mayde that is a privi pikar, defectyf. Also we endite John Hayne & his wyfe, her for a comon strumpet & him for a mayntenour, defectyf. Also we endite John Browne & his lemman, him for a comon strumpetmonger & her for a comon strumpet, defectyf. Also we endite John Edward & his wyfe for comon bawdes, defectyf. Also we endite William Robert for a faytour begger & a privy pykar,
defectyf. Also we endite John Bulle for a comon baratour & a comon breker of the kyngis peas, defectyf. Also we endite Alson Haryngton for a comon bawde, defectyf. Also we endite Savnder Wavse & his wyfe for occupieng as frefolke & be forens, & for resseuyours of suspessious & misruled peopull, and her for a comon strumpet, defectyf. Also we endite the wyfe of Gerveys for a comon strumpet, defectyf. Also we endite Robert Lygh, clerke, for a common strumpetmonger, defectyf. Also we endite William Towkar & his wyfe, her for a comon strumpet & him for a mayntenour, defectyf. Also we endite William Chamburleyyn & his wyfe, her for a comon strumpet & him for a mayntenour, defectyf. Also we endite Pers Blake & his wyfe for comon bawdes, & her for a comon strumpet & him for a privi pikar, defectyf. Also we endite Jone Hewet for a comon strumpet, comon defectyf. Also we presente Thomas Harrison & his wyfè for occupieng as frefolke & be forens, and be resseuyours of suspessious & misruled peopull, that is menis prentis & seruauntis, defectyf. Also we endite the wyfe of John Mokke for a comon strumpet, defectyf.
Also we endite Herre Goodwyn & his wyfe for comon bawdes, defectyf. Also we endite the wyfe of Robert Heyfelde for a comon bawde & a comon strumpet, defectyf. Also we endite Annes Grove, wydowe, for a comon bawde, defectyf. Also we presente John Mayndevelde for a noyous and a sklaunderous man to his neyborowis, & will not bere lott & skotte accordyng to his othe & to the weele of the Cite & of the warde, comon defectyf. Also we endite Wymende of Colen & his wyfe for comon bawdes, comon defectyf. Also we endite Joys Florens for a resseyuour of suspessious & misruled peopull, defectyf. Also we endite William Boteler, otherwise called William Chatton, for a resseyuour of suspessious & mysruled peopull, defectyf. Also we endite John a Campe for a comon hasardour & a resseyuour of suspessious & mysruled peopull, defectyf. Also we endite Herre Rooche for a resseyuour of suspessious & misruled peopull, defectyf. Also we endite Dyryk Bramer for a ressyuour of suspessious and mysruled peopull, defectyf. Also we endite Neme Straunge for a comon strumpet, comon defectyf. Also we endite Jane Cotton for a comon
strumpet, comon defectyf. Also we endite Robert Yonge and his wyfe for comon bawdes, defectyf. Also we endite Water Whith for kepyng of gees & dookis, & for makyng of a diche in the kyngis hie way, defectyf. Also we endite William Harrison for kepyng of kene & hoggis to the noyauns of the towne diche. Also we endite Joys Florens & John a Campe, Herre Rooche & Dyryk Bramer for kepynge of closchbanis, & ouer them howsis couered with reede, comon defectyf. Also we endite the wyfe of William Emmsley for a comon bawde & a comon strumpet, defectyf.

Also we endite a swelowe in Gracis Aley which is perlous for man & beeste, comon defectyf. Also we endite a swelowe in the pricurs rente of Crichirch, comon defectyf. Also we endite a noyous place betwene the cornour of the abbottis place of Goksale & the Belle late a brewehous, comon defectyf. Also we endite

1. A closch-bane is a bowling green. (N.E.D.).
2. Swelowe is an early form of swallow meaning a deep hole or pit. (N.E.D.).
a chymney of tree in the priovrs rent of Crichirch, comon defectyf. Also we endite the pamente ayens the grate in Hovndisdich, comon defectyf. Also we endite all the pamente that John Welkys hath within the said warde, comon defectyf. Also we endite all the pamente that John Bulle hath within the said warde, comon defectyf. Also we endite all the pamente that Thomas Brian hath within the said warde, defectyf. Also we endite all the pamente that James Day hath within the said warde, defectyf, and within the same rente a chymney of tree & a hous couered with reede, defectyf. Also we endite all the pamente that longith to the Chambur of London, defectyf. Also we endite a schedde couered with reede within the ij Nonis, defectyf. Also we endite a chymney of tree in the hous ther as the coriour dwellith, defectyf. Also we endite a chymney of tree in the abbas rente of the Menories, comon defectyf. Also we endite ij scheddis couered with reede, theras John Browne, bocher, dwellith, defectyf. Also we endite

1. Pavement.
iiiij chymneyes of tree in the chirch rente byside the Schippe, defectyf. Also we endite a hangyng gete in Cornewales rente which is perlous for men, comon defectyf. Also we endite a schedde couered with reede, theras William Harrison late dwellid, defectyf. Also we endite iiiij scheddis couered with reede & ij chymneys of tree in the abottis rente at the Towre hille, defectyf. Also we endite all the palys gardens & brekewallis that the abbot of the Towre hille hath from the Hartis Horne vnto the cornour hous ayenst the vij Sterris that stonde vpon the comon grownde, defectyf. Also we endite xj scheddis couered with reede, and v chymneys of tre in the said abbotis rente on Seynt Kateryns syde, comon defectyf. Also we endite iiiij chymneys of tree in Edmund Legge is rente at the Towre hille. Also we endite vj scheddis couered with reede, theras Lawrens Gyles dwellyth, comon defectyf. Also we endite a whurlepitte at the Towre hille in the wateryng plase perlous for man & beeste, of the which the mendynge longyth to the Chambur of London, comon defectyf.
Also we endite all the stulpis & stakis fro the
ij Kynges vnto the cornour hous of the abbottes of
Coksale, defectyf.

William Chestyr    John Rooke
William Stalon    Thomas Dalstone
Comon Counsell    John Rooke    Constabull    John Gardenere
Thomas Dalstone    William Pywale

Scavageours    Bedel
Raker

In witnesse where of we the sayd enqueste haue sette
owre sealis to this owre present verdite.
Appendix II.

A City of London proclamation dealing with murders and other offences. 5 July 1510. Journal XI, ff. 112-112v.

Proclamation pro murdres & other offences.

My Lord the Maire and my masters thaldermen of this citie of London considering the manyfold mischevous and heynous actes vsed and fallen as in commytting of open murdres, makyng of affrays and other offences done contrary to the kinges peas within this Citie to the grete enquieting of the citemenis and other the kinges liege people repayring to the same, charge and commaunde on the king our soueraign lordes behalf in avoiding thoccasions of the breche of the seid peas, that no maner of persone bere nor cause to be borne within the Citie or libertie of the same eny maner of weppyn invasive, wherby the seid peas in any wise may be distourbed or broken, vppon payn of imprisonement and also forfeature of all suche wepyns borne contrary to this proclamacion. And furthermore my seid lord maire and my masters the aldermen chargeth
and commaundeth on our seid soueraign lordes behalf that all maner of myghty beggers, vagaboundes and idill people, whiche haue no maisters to wayte vppon nor no other reasonable cause of abidyng within this Citie, depart and avoid out of the liberties of the same before tomorowe at nyght into other places in the cuntre, where by their labour and servise they may gete theire necessary lyving, vppon payn of imprisonment in the stokkes and other paynes lymytted and ordeigned in diverse actes and lawes therof heretofore made. And that all constables and other officers of this Citie endeavour theym self diligently after to morowe at nyght to take, arrest and sett in the stokkes all suche vagaboundes, myghty beggers and idell people abiding or found within the fraunches of this Citie contrary to this proclamacion.
Appendix III.

Regulations relating to the punishment of vagabonds found in the City of London. 24 September 1517.

These regulations of Letter Book N are also found in Repertory III, f. 164 and in Journal XI, f. 305. The first part, down to the words "Standard in Chepe", occurs in the Repertory and is headed "Ordinacio pro vagabundes", whilst the rest may be found in the Journal and to it is appended a list of thirteen vagabonds presented for punishment on 24 September.

Item, it ys agreed that all such myghty beggers & vagabundes as nowe be in the prisonis & cages of this Citie shalbe brought this afternone by the beddellys to Ledenhall. And there euery of theym to haue sette on his brest a letter of V of yelowe cloth in signe & token of a vagabund, and frome thens to be dreven thoroughoute all Chepe, with basons ryngyng afore theym
with proclamacion to be made at the Standard in Chepe as hereafter folowyth.

Forasmoche as all these persons which here be were lately taken as vagabundes beyng myghty in body & able to gete their levynges, and in nowise will exercise any labour or lawfull occupation, but spend ther tyme in idlenes and lyve be beggyng & other mennys labour contrary to the plasure of God & contrary to diverse actes of Parliament thereforordeigned & prouided. Wherefore it ys ordred that they & euery of theym as vagabundes and ydle people shall haue & were vpon their brestes a letter of V of yelow cloth as they nowe haue in signe & token of vagabundes. And that they & euery of theym shall nowe forthwith departe oute of this Citie vnto their countreyes, where they were borne or to oder places in the contrey, where they may gete theire

leuynges in hervest or makyng hey. And if that they or eny of theym eftesones resort & cumme ageyn to this Citie havyng no reasonable excuse, that then he or they so founde withyn this seid Citie or the liberties of the same shalbe taken & comytted to prissone; and ouer that
shall haue an hole stryken in one of his erys with a stamp made for the same, and thenne to be banysshed this Citie for euer.
Appendix IV.

The London articles of February 1517/18 for restraining vagabonds and beggars.

The transcripts given in this appendix include the London articles of February 1517/18 and other entries from the City records relating thereto:—

(a) Instructions from the Privy Council, 29 January 1517/18.

(b) Arrangements for an enquiry in the City concerning vagabonds and impotent poor, 29 January 1517/18.

(c) Notice of the compilation of the articles in the Court of Aldermen, 1 February 1517/18.

(d) The articles of 1517/18.

(e) The articles granted by the Court of Aldermen, 6 February 1517/18.

(f) Distribution of badges to the London poor, 18 February 1517/18.
Memorandum, that yesterday at afternoon my lord mayor with diverse of his brethren were at Westminster afore my lord cardynalle & others the lordes of the kinges honorable Counsell by the commandement of the same for the redresse of certeyn articles herafter ensuing.

Articles devised by the kinges Counsell to be reformed.

Fyrst, for the excess prices of vytaylles & of bakers & bruers.

Item, to make enquyry of alle suche persone as haue had eny sedicous wordes & also of the mutyn & murmuryng ageynst the kinges proclamacion concernyng thavoydyng of the contagious infeccions of the grete plage of pestilence.

Item, to make specyally enquyry & serche of alle receptors & comfortors of theves, of the which article the seyd Counsell ys credibly enformed that diuere grete riche men of this Citie been suspectyd etc

Item, for thavoydyng of the grete multitude of myghty beggers, vagabundes & other suspecte persone oute of this Cite.
Item, that diuerse wacches & serches to be made
in euery ward.

Item, to devyse articles with thassistance of my
lord Chief Justice & M. Ponynges that repyers may bryng
in fysh.

(b) Letter Book N, f. 63½ Repert. III, f. 190.
29 January 1517/18.

Att this court yt ys agreed that for the avoidyng
of all myghty beggers, vagabundes and all other suspecte
& evell disposed persones oute of this Citie & subburbs
of the same, that euery aldreman in his ward shall call
to hym ij or iiij of the most discret persones of euery
parisshe within his seid ward and charge them to certifie
hym within ij or iiij dayes then next folowyng, the names
of all the impotent, pouere, seke or sore persones
lyvyng oonly vppon thalmes of the people, in a bill by
yt selfe, and also the names of all myghty, valiant and
strong beggers, vagabundes & suspect persones abidyng or
resortyng to or within their seid parisshes, in writtyng
by yt self. All which billes so certified to the seid
aldreman shalbe by hym presented in the counsell chamber
on Wensyday next by ix of the cloke, to thentent that a farther direction may be hade in that behalfe etc.

(c) Repert. III, f. 190v. 1 February 1517/18.

At this court tharticles were devysed for thavoydyng of all myghty beggers & other suspecous persones oute of this Cite.

(d) Letter Book N, ff. 74-75.

An ordre devysed for thavoydyng & puttyng out of myghty beggers etc.

Articles devised by the maire and aldremen of the Citie of London at the commaundment of the lorde of the kynges most honorable Councell for thavoydyng and puttyng out of myghty beggers and vacabundes out of the same.

First, it is certified by every aldremen the nombre and the names of every persone abidyng withyn his warde being so impotent, aged, feble or blynde, that they be not able to gette their livynges by labour and worke, and also be in suche extreme povertie that they may not lyve but oonly by almes and charite of the people, whose names appere in the Guyhald in the billes of certificat of every aldremen more at large,
whiche is & amounteth to the nombre of a m^1^ and aboue.

Item, there is deuyseyd as many tokens to be made as be certified poore almes parsones in the seid billes — that is to say a payre of beedes rounde, with tharmes of London in the myddys, to be streken with a stampe in metall of pure white tynne, and the tokens seu[er]ally shalbe deleyuered to euery aldreman accordyng to the nombre of the seid pore almues persones by hym certified; to thentent that he shal deleyuer to euery suche poore persone impotent, aged & feble that can not gette their lyvyng by labour and worke as is aboueseid, and to none other, one of the seid tokens by the seid aldreman to be sette wpon their right shulders of their gowynes openly to be seen. Which persones havyng the seid tokens wpon theym shalbe suffered to begge and aske almes of the people within the Citie and the suburbes of the same.

Item, if it happen any of the seid poore people havyng the seid tokens to decesse that then the constable or bedell by the commaundement of the aldreman of the warde & parissh where the seid poore persone was admitted & hade his token deleyuered shalle cause the seid token
to be brought to the seid alderman and with hym to remayn, tyll the tyme that some other lyke poore, impotent, feble, blynde or aged persone by the same alderman be admitted to the same token.

Item, that none other persone as vagabund or myghty begger nor any other be suffered to begge withyn the seid Citie, but oonly such seid persone as haue the seid tokens vpon thym, as is aforeseid.

Item, yf any suche vagabund or myghty begger come in to the seid Citie that then the lawes, in suche cases ordeyned and prouyded, be duely executid vpon them accordyng to the statute therof made in the tyme of Kyng Henry the vij, without any favour or forberyng of the hole punysshment therof.

Item, it is farther aduysed that certeign persones, that is to say Henry Barker carpenter pryncipall with other two persones vnder hym, shalbe assigned to survey aswell the seid beggers and poor folke hauyng the seid tokens as other vagabundes and myghty beggers repayryng to the Citie. That they from tyme to tyme geve notice & knowlege to the seid alderman, constable and bedill
of every suche vagabund and myghty beggar commyng into
the Citie, to thentent that they may be advoided out
of the same and to goo to ther conteys ther as they
were borne, or to the place where as they last made
their abode by the space of iiij yeres, accordyng to
the statute in that case ordeyned & prouyded.

Item, that the seid persones hauyng their tokens
do ther lawfull endeavour to expelle and kepe out the
seid vagabundes and myghty beggers out of the Citie
by exclamacions, expulsions and puttyng out of theym.
And yf they be not able of theym selfes so to do then
they to reso rt to the seid surveyours, constable, bedill
and to the aldreman if nede shalle requyre, and of theym
to haue helpe and assistence in that behalf vpon the
payne of lesyng & forfeitureng of there seid tokens.

Item, it is ferther ordred that the seid people
hauyng the seid tokens be of good behaviour in askyng
their almes of the people, and if he or they be denied
of almes of any persone owther by his worde or
countynance of his hande, that then the seid poore
persone or persones so askyng almes to cease to any
further craveyng of the seid persone so denying and to depart from hym for that tyme, and thus from tyme to tyme as often as it shall so happen, vpon the payn of lesyng or forfeytyng of their seid tokens endeouer them selfe deligenly to obserue & performe all thother premisses afore rehearsed for & concernynge the seid avoydyng of the seid vagabundes & myghty beggers vpon the payn aforeseid.

Provided alwayes that all such poore people as been visited with the great pokkes outwarily apperyng or with other great sores or maladyes tedious, lothesome or abhorible to be lokd vpon & seen to the great anoyaunce of the people, be nat suffred to begge and aske almes in churches & other open places, but that they be sent to thospytalles, shuch nombre as the seid hospytalles may or ought to logge accordyng to their foundacion, there to tary & abide vpon thalmes and charite of the worshipfull and substanciall persones of the Citie & suburbes of the same, for whose relife & conforte their shalbe a proctor admytted for euery suche hospytalles hauyng aswell oone of the seid tokens
vpon hym as a token of the seid hospitall to gather & receive the almes of the people within the seid Citie & suburbs of the same.

Item, that a proclamacion be made of the premisses.

(e) Repert. III, f. 192. 6 February 1517/18.

Item, at this court tharticles for thavoydyng of myghty beggers & vagabundes oute of this Citie were red & graunted by the same.

(f) Letter Book N, f. 76\textsuperscript{vo} Repert. III, f. 194. 18 February 1517/16.

Hereafter folowyth the nombre of the tokens that euery alderman hathe receyved to deliuer to the poore people within euery of their wardes, certified by euery alderman accordyngly.

First to the maier. [Cripplegate]\textsuperscript{1} xl.

Item to M. Aylmer. [Walbrook] xij.

Item to M. Monoux. [Bassishaw] xxj.

Item M. Buteler. [Cheap] xx.

Item to M.Rest. [Dowgate] xxx.

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1. The wards have been added after the names of the respective aldermen in order to indicate the geographical distribution of the badges.
Item to M. Myrfyn. [Bishopsgate] xxx.
Item to M. Yerford. [Candlewick] x.
Item to M. Brugge. [Langbourn] xx.
Item to M. Basford. [Tower] liij.
Item to M. Fenrother. [Aldersgate] lx.
Item to M. Milborne. [Aldgate] xxx.
Item to M. Warley. [Broad street] xl.
Item to M. Aldernes. [Billingsgate] xx.
Item to M. Semer. [Farringdon Without] cc.
Item to M. Spencer. [Bridge] vj.
Item to M. Baldry. [Gordwainer] j.
Item to M. Wilkysnon. [Queenhithe] xxvij.
Item to M. Aleyn. [Vintry] xxiiij.
Item to M. Partrich. [Farringdon Within] viij.

These were sent to thaldremen

Item to M. Prior of Crist Church. [Portsoken] xxxij.
Item to M. Moundy. [Bread Street] xvij.
Item to M. Jenyns. [Lime Street] xij.
Item to M. Accheley. [Cornhill] xx.
Item to M. Thurston. [Castle Baynard] xx.
Item to M. Bayly. [Coleman Street] xx.
And vppon this it is agreed that eu[er]y aldreman shall certifie in wryttyng the names of such pore people as haue receyued tokens, and yf eny of the seid tokens remayn undelyuered that then euery aldreman to redelyuer the same to the chamberleyne.
Appendix V.

Proclamation of the City of London dealing with preparations for the session of Parliament there.
15 April 1523. Letter Book N, f. 233\(^{\circ}\) 234.

This proclamation is interesting as coming at a time when there was a confluence of people to London, so that it was necessary to regulate prices, make arrangements for the lodging of the visitors, and also apparently to achieve order in the City by making regulations for dealing with vagabonds. It is interesting to note the mention of the growth of evil life in the City and of the distress of the impotent poor resulting from increased numbers of vagabonds. No new policy is introduced, but the proclamation shews a determined effort on the part of the City authorities to put old regulations into force.

Proclamatio facta in ciuitate London' erga parliamentum tentum in eadem et inchoatum xv\(^{\circ}\) die Aprilis
Anno regni regis Henrici octauui xiiiij° in domo conventualii Fratrum predicatorium eiusdem.

My Lorde the Maire and his bretheren thaldermen of this citie of London welle consideryng how that it hath pleased the kinges highnes to appoynt his moost high courte of Parlement to be holden here withyn this his Citie of London, to the grete conforte of all the citezenis & other inhabitauntes of the same Citie, streightly chargen & commaunden that noo maner of viteler or eny other persone sellynge eny vitaylle or eny other wares or marchaundises selle the same at eny high & excessiue price or prices, but at good and resonable prices, as they & euery of theym will answere at their perelles.

And also that euery inholder and other parsones honestly entreate & receyve all suche persone as nowe shall cume and repaire to this same Citie, and mooste specially this tyme of Parliament as they and euery of theym will answere at their perelles.

And furthermore in eschewynge the fowle, stynkyng & detestable synne of lechery, the whiche dayly growethe
and as vsed more then yt hath been in daïes passed by the 
meanes of strumpettes, bawdes, mysgyded & idell women 
dayly vagraunt and walkyng aboute the stretes and lanes 
of the Citie and suburbes of the same, and also repayrynge 
to tavernes and other privat places of this Citie provokyng 
many other parsones vnto the said synne of lecherye, 
whereby moche people, aswell men as women, beyng of theym 
selfffes well disposed fallen dayle into the said myschevous 
and horable synne to the grete displeasure of Almighty God, 
and disturbans & brekyng of the kynges pease and of the 
politique guydyng of the Citie aforesaid.

And furthermore consideryng that for asmoche as by 
the greate multitude of vagabundes, idell persones & comon 
begggers dayly vagraunt & goyng abowte within the Citie and 
suburbes of the same, beyng of myghte & power to gett 
their lyvyng by their labour of their bodies or other 
lawfull ocupacion. And the sustenances and lyvynges of 
the poure people not beyng of power by the labour of their 
odies to gett their lyvynges dayly is with drawen and 
taken awaye to the greate infamysyng & hurt of the said 
pore people, soo not beyng able to gett their lyvynges,
as is abouesaid.

Wherfore my said lorde and maisters streightly
chargen and commaunde on the kyng, our soueraigne lordis
behalffe that all suche strumpetts, bawdes & mysgyded
& idelle women aswell dwellyng as resortyng to and within
this Citie or suburbes of the same shortly depart &
withdrawe themselfe, and in nowise be so hardy to
comme agene, resorte or abide within the same Citie or
suburbes thereof upon the payne therfore ordeigned.
And that noo persone within the same Citie and libertie
comfort, herburghe nor receyue ony suche mysgyded & eville
disposed women upon the payne of imprisonment and ferther
to make fyne by the discretion of my lord and maisters.
And also that all suche idell and mighty beggers aswell
men as women beyng of powre to gett their sustaunces and
lyvynges by the werkyng of their handes or other laufull
occupacion in lykewise depart and withdrawe themselfes
owt of the Citie & liberties thereof, and in nowise be
soo hardy to cume agene, resort or abide within the same
vpon the payne of imprisonment and furthermore to suffre
grevous payne & punyshement as by my said lorde and maisters
shalbe thought & devised in example of all lyke offenders. And also that all constables and all other officers of this Citie endever theym selfes to take & arreste aswell all suche strumpettes, bawdes, mysguided and idell women as all suche idell persones, vagabundes and mighty beggers, and theym bryng & sett in stokkes in the same warde or wardes, where they shall be taken, there to remayne vnto the tyme that they & euery of theym shalbe justified accordyng to the kynges lawes, as the said constables and alle other officers will answere at their perelles. And God save the kyng.
Appendix VI.

Punishment of vagabonds in London ordered by the Court of Aldermen in 1524. 13 December 1524.

Repert. IV, f. 215.

Item, yt ys agreed th at to morowe at nyght shalbe a prevye serche for vagabundes & all other suspecious persones, the same to begynne at xj clock at nyght. And that suche vagabundes & suspecte persones as shalbe taken there beyng myghty of body & able to labour shall haue this punyshement. Fyrst, that suche as nowe be taken & in warde shalbe tayed at a cartes tayle & strepyd naked from the waste vpwarde & to be beton by the shireffes ofycers with whyppys in dyuerse places of the Citie, that ys to sey Smythfelde speciali & so throws oute the Citie. And that the chamberleyn shall cause rownde colers of iron to be made of euyry of theym havyng the armes of this Citie vppon theym, & the same colers to be putt aboute their nekkes.
Appendix VII.

List of vagabonds whipped in the City of London, 1528. Journal XIII, f. 43.

It may be noted that the folio following this entry has been left blank, and that there is a space in the title for the date of the last whipping. These facts suggest that the list was abandoned before completion.

Hereafter foloweth the names of suche vacabundes as hath ben whipped in the citie of London from the xxx day of Januarij in the xix yere of the reign of King Henry the viij unto

d. Archelok Dylkrye borne in Perith in Comberlande.

Thomas Welshe, a boye borne in Sepulcrese parisshe.
John Bulleyn borne in Essex at Rumford.
d. John Miles.
d. Jacobus Spencer boren at Scarborough in Yorkeshere.
d. Johannes Beller borne at Ramford in Essex.
d. Thomas Rede borne at Newcastle.
d. Robert Durham borne at Oxbrigge in Meddelsex.
d. Elizabeth Philip borne at Yorke.
d. Johane Gray borne in Kent at
d. Thomas Jenys borne at Swansey in Walys.
d. John Bradney borne at Stafford in
d. John Fletcher borne at Seynt Edmondes bury in Suffolk.
    William Cade at London.
    Edward Rutlond, a fonlyng in London.
d. Cristofer Bray borne at Cambrige.
d. Robertus Medeaulffe of Kytishston in Middlesex.
d. Robertus Gibbys of Lye in Oxfordshire.
d. Thomas Chasyr of Lankester.
Appendix VIII.

A proclamation concerning the punishment of offenders against certain statutes. 11 March 1537/38.

This proclamation is an example of the type of general proclamation issued fairly frequently by the king after 1531, enforcing vagrancy laws among others. Although only part of the proclamation concerns directly the question of vagabondage, the whole is here transcribed as valuable for purposes of comparison, since it bears a marked similarity to an old black letter proclamation of this period, which was owned by Mr. Edward Almack F.S.A., and is calendared by Mr. Steele. This proclamation was printed by T. Berthelet, and is noted amongst the undated

1. E. Almack, Fine old bindings with other interesting miscellanea in Edward Almack's library, pp. 32 - 34. He states that there is no other known printed copy of this proclamation. Mr. Almack died on 26 March 1917, and we do not know what has since happened to his collection.

2. R. Steele, I, p. 15, No. 132. Mr. Steele places this proclamation in 1533, noting that it was issued after 24 Henry VIII.
pieces of Berthelet's printing in Dibdin's edition of 1. Ames' Typographical Antiquities. From a comparison of the notices given by Steele and Dibdin with the proclamation in the London records we find that both were printed by Berthelet,—the copy in the City Journal ends: "Thomas Berthelot Regius Impressor 2. excudebat, Cum privilegio"—and contained similar orders although the list of statutes, which was appended to the proclamation and is given in full by Dibdin, is not found in the London records. The conclusion from these facts is that the printed copy, the original, was issued between 1532/33 and 1537/38, the proclamation being made in London on 11 March 1537/38.

Proclamacion A proclamacion concernynge punysshement of transgressours and offenders agaynste the lawes and statutes of thys realme proclaimed the xj day of Marche

2. Journal XIV, f. 70.
in the xxix th yere of Kynge Henry the viij th.

Where dyuers and many good holsome statutes and lawes haue bene made and establysshed aswell in the tyme of the moste gracious reign of our most drad soueraign lorde as in the tyme of sundrye his noble progenytours for the weale, proffytt and vtiltye of thys realme, and for conservacion of the kynges lovynge subiectes in good peax, concorde and vnytize accordyng to the estates and degrees that euery of theym ys callyd vnto; and yn especyall amonche other the estatutes made agaynst suche as craftelye ymagyne, invent, make & publishe newe fangled newes, tydynges and false tales to provoke and styre sedycion, murmour, grudge and devysyon amonche the people; the statutes provyded for ydle beggers and vagabundes; the statutes for vnlaufull games and playes and for mayntenunce and vsyng of artyllary & archerye; the statute made for reformacion of excesse in apparell and the statute made for sewers. For lak of due execucion of whiche good statutes the offendors for whome thei were made dayly encrease and be encoraged and the offences for whyche the said estatutes were prouyded be not reformed, punysshed nor represed to the greate hurte of the comon
welthe of this realme; the veray defaulte whereof restithe in the kynges justyces of peax, mayers, sheryffes, baylyffes, chyef constables, constables, tythyngmen and other mnystyers of justyce yn euery shyre, cytye, bوروuge and place of thyss realme, whiche for the mooste parte so neglygentlyye, dulcely, favorablye and vnwylynglye vse theyyre offfyces, by reason whereof the offenders beinge shameles stonde without drede of the lawes and so daylye encrease in multitude and nombres, and take corage and boldnes without shame or drede to commytt daylye offences contrarye to the forme of the said good lawes and statutes of thyss realme to the highe dyspleasure of Almyghtye God and to empeshement, hinderaunce, damage and the hole subuerction of the comon wealthe of thyss realme, yf spedy remedy be not otherwyse provyded in this behalfe. The kynges mooste royll maiesty, who nothynge more ernestlye desireth then thadvancement of the comon welthe of thyss realme, the due exetucion (sic.) and equall admynistracion of justyce and the good apeace, reste and quyetnes of hys loynge subiectes, moche lamentithe that hys sayd justices,
offycers and mynysters to whome his highnes hathe comyttted the cure of admynistracyon of justyce and the due execucion of suche estatutes do so neglygentlye and vnwylynglye vse the thynges comyttyd to theyre charge within the lemyttes of theyre aucthoryties contrarye to the good expectacion and truste that hys maiestie hathe in them. Hys highnes therefore most prudentlye consyderynge the premyses and myndynge fyrste moste gracyouslye to admonysshe them of theire negligences & defaultes in the same, dothe streightlye charge and comaunde all and singuler his justices, commyssyoners, mayres, sheryffes, bayliffes, constables, vnder constables, tythyng men, borsholders and all other hys mynysters of justice, of what authorytye, degree or estate soeuer thei be, that they and euery of them fromhensforthe dylygentlye, ernestlye, trulye, indyfferentlye and equalllye doo and exercyse the offyces, cures and authoryties comyttted to theyre charges without drede, corrupcion, affeccyon or parcyaltyye. And that specyallye thei shall put in execucion the lawes and statutes abouemencyoned havynge also most vigilia in and ernest eye and regarde to
thapprehensyon & commyttynge to sure pryson all suche
persones as shall setfurthe any newe rumours, tales or
reportes that shall in any wyse sounde to the sclaunter
or dammage of hys maiestye, or of any hys Counsell, or
to the prouocacion of sedycion or murmur amonges his
subiectes, or to the violacion of any good lawe, order
or custome of thys hys realme. And in theyre good
doynges and procedynges his maiestye wyll ernestlye
from tyme to tyme assyste them, and for the same love
favour them and yn all theire reasonable suytes most
gracyouslye here them, and ouer that reacquyte theyre
good seruyces and diligences in hys comonwealthe in
suche wyse that thei shall thinke theyre travaylls and
paynes right well employed and bestowed in that behalf.
And in case that after this hys most gracyous admonyton
no amendement be had nor respecte to theyre dutyes, hys
highnes than signifieth to suche as doo and wyll
obstynatlye contynue and persiste in theyre negligences,
follyes and defaultes, that they and euery of them shall
runne into hys moste highe indygnacion and dyspleasure,
and ouer that hys grace wyll pursue theym as very
ennemyes of his common welthe, and punysshe theym in theyre bodyes, landes and goodes after theyre demerytes, that yt shalbe to theyre confusyons and undoynes to the moste terrible example of suche offenders. And furthermore hys maiestye streightlye chargeythe and commaundeth all and synguler persones within thys his realme and domynyons of what estate, degree or condycion soeuer they be, that they and euery of them for theyre partes do from hensforthe observe and kepe the sayd good lawes and statutes vpon the paynes and penaltyes conteigned in the same, whiche his highnes entendethe to take and levye without pardon or remyssyon in case thei doo obstynatlye persiste in the brekynge of the sayd statutes and lawes after thys hys graces proclamacion. God save the kynge.
Appendix IX.


By the mayere.

To the alderman of the warde

Where afore this tyme we have wylld & commandded you on the behalf of our soueraygn lorde the kinge that ye shuld kepe good & convenable watche with good & honest men wel harnyssed for the deprehencion & takyng of myghtie, strong & valyant beggers, ruffelers, theves, vagaboundes with all other vnthryftie persones; and for asmuoch as it is comen to the kinges knowlege & his honourable Counseill that ye have had but lytle regarde to our commandementes to you heretofore declared or shewed but kepe your watches with many vnharnyssed & not as watchemen & not observing the howres to you lymytted as men not regarding your dueties, therfore we woll and comand you on the behalf of our soueraygn lorde the kinge & as ye woll aunswer
to his grace at your uttermost perylls that ye immedyatly upon the syght herof kepe a good &
substanoyall watche within your warde this present
nyght with men well harnyssed & to take all suche
vagabundes, beggers, ruffelers, theves with all
other unthryftee persones as ye shall fynde & to
commytt theim to warde there to remayne vntyll ye
knowe further of our pleasure; the said watche to
begynne att ix of the clock in the nyght & so to
contynue in good ordre vntyll iiij of the clock in
the mornyng, & so nyghtly vntyll you have otherwyse
from vs in commaundement at your perylls. Gyven
at the Guyldhall the xxix day of January in the
xxx yere of the reygn of our soueraygn lorde
Kinge Henrie the viij.
Appendix X.

Offer of the Barber-Surgeons to minister to the sick poor. 23 October 1541.

Repert. X, f. 229vo, 10 November 1541.

Item the byll of the Surgeons declaryng theyr good wylles & help to be gevyn & mynystred to the poore was red and agreyd that the same byll shalbe entryd of recorde, the tenour wherof herafter ensuyth:

To the ryght honorable the lorde mayer of the Cytye of London & the worshipfull masters, the aldermen of the same Cytye.

Pleasyth yt your lordeship & mastershypes to vnderstonde that on Tuysday the xviiij day of the moneth of October in the xxxiiij th yere of the reign of oure soueraign lorde Kyng Henry the viij th att a Court holden att the Barbours or Surgeons Hall in London by Thomas Vycarye, James Thomson, Thomas Johnson & Rychard Bowle master & wardeyns of the felyshyp of Barbours & Surgeons of London & the
felyshyp of the same craft, yt was fully agreyd, concludeyd & condescendyd bytwene the seyd master, wardeyns & felyshyp and the assystence of the same felysshyp that yt yt shall please your lordshyp & mastershypes to provyde & ordeyn a place & rome convenyent for the releyf & comfort of sycke & sore poore people that have great sycknes & deceasses, they the seyd master, wardeyns & felyshyp, theyr successours & assygnes, shall frely att theyr owne proper costes & charges mynystre vnto theym alle suche salves, plasters & other thynges necessary & belonging to the scyence or crafte of Surgerye. So alwayes that theyre be not att any one tyme aboue the numbre of twentye suche deseased persons so by theym to be mynystred vnto.

By me, Thomas Vycarye.
Appendix XI.

Precept of 1 October 1547 to each alderman for the collection of half of a fifteenth for the relief of the poor.

Journal XV, ff. 326 - 326\(^{\text{vo}}\)

By the mayre.

Preceptum pro sustenacione pauperum.

Where att a Comen Councell holden in the Guyldehall of the Citie of London on Michellmas daye laste past, yt was emonge other thynges enacted, agreyd, graunted & establysshed by authorytie of the same for dyuerse good reasonable & charitable consideracions & causes the same Comen Councell then especially movyng that the citozeins and inhabitantes of the said Citie shuld contrubyte & paye furthwith towards the mayntenance, releif & fyndyng of the poore, syck & indigent persones within the house or hospital lateyle for theim ordeyned & provyded in Westesmythfeld in the suburbes of the same Citie for one hole yere from thens next ensuyng one half fyftene, in the lyeu & stede of the deuocion that
of late hathe byn appoynted & accustomed to be wekely vpon the Sondayes collectyd & gatheryd of the said citezeins & inhabitantes, and that the said wekely collectyon shold from thensforth utterly cease & be discharged as by the sayd acte more playnely yt dothe apere, we therfore vpon the kynge our soueraigne lordes behalf straitlye charge & commaund you, that ye immedyately vpon the sight hereof callyng together before you the inhabitantes of your sayde warde, gyvyng vnto them & every of theim straitly in commaundment that they furthwith, accordyng to thauuncyent customes, lawes & vsages of the sayd Citye in syche behalf heretofore vsed & accustomed, doo electe & choyse certeyne honest dyscrete & sadd persones within the seuerall parishes of your said warde to assesse & reasonably taxe aswell there owne selfes as all other thenhabytauntes of the same warde [f.326\(^v^0\)] for the payment of all suche somme & somes of money as ys lymytted & of old tyme hathe bene accustomed to be levyed & payd towards the payment of half a fiftene by the inhabitantes of your said warde; after suche assessement & taxacion so had & made to choyse &
appoint certen collectors to levy & gather all the same sommes of money, and the same & every parcelle therof so gathered truly with all expedition to deliver & paye over to Mr. George Barnes & Augustyne Hynde, Aldermen, highe collectors in that behalf assigned. Fail ye not thus to do as ye will answer at your uttermoste perelles. Yovan at the Gulydhall of the said Citie the first of October in the firste yere of the reigne of our Soueraign Liege Lorde, Kynge Edwarde the sixth.
Appendix XII.

Proposed brotherhood for the relief of the poor.

10 April 1548.
Letter Book Q, f. 237.

Martis decimo Aprilis anno regni Edwardi vj
secundo.

Maior, Recorder, Waren, Roche, Laxton, Bowes,
Hoberthorn, Amcotes, Tolos, Wylford, Dobbys, Hyll,
Barne, Jervys, Hynde, Turke, Goodyer, Lyon, Lambert,
Garrard ac Whyte et Chertesey, vicecomites.

Item, this daye after mocion made by Mr. Bowes,
aldreman, that there might be a brotherhed newly
erecte of the poore thurrough out the hole Cytie, and
that certeyn persons might be apoynted to collecte
the devotion & quarterage of all suche persons as
shuld be contentyd to be of the seid brotherhed,
my lorde mayer & all my maisters thaldermen above
named, savynge Mr. Roche, Mr. Hoberthorn & Mr. Goodyer,
agreeing to be of the seid brotherhed graunted to
give yerelye towards the fyndyng of the pore
xiijs iiijd a peace to be payd quarterly by evyn porcions. And the seid Mr. Roche & Mr. Recorder agreid to paye yerelye xs at lyke tyme & in lyke sorte, & Mr. Atkynes vjs viijd & as for the seid Mr. Hoberthorn & Mr. Goodyer they were departed before the tyme of the seid graunte.
Appendix XIII.

A proclamation against "tale tellers and seducyous runneagates", 8 July 1549.

Idle vagabonds often stimulated rebellion at times of general unrest by carrying tales and rumours. Authorities realised this fact during the rebellions of 1549 and the appended proclamation was issued to deal with the situation. Even after the disturbances were over the king sent orders "to certen speciall men in the Shires where tumultes and rysinges have byn to enforce the proclamations against vagabonds and to hang without delay all promoters of tumults".

A proclamacion set furthe by the kynges majestie with thassente of his dearest vncole Edwarde, duke of Somersett, gouernor of his moste royall person, & of his realmes, domynyons & subjectes protector & others

of his moste honourable Counseyll touching tale
tellers & sedycyous runneagates.

Proclamation

The kynges moste excellent majestie hathe
certeyn knowledge geven aswell to his owne majestie
as to his moste dere vnclle Edward, duke of Somersett,
gouernor of his person & protector of all his
realmes, domynyons & subiectes & to the reste of
his highnes Counseyll that in dyuers his majesties
countryes of this his realme there be dyspersed &
severed abrode sundrye light, lewde, ydle, sedycyous,
busy & dysordred persons wherof the moste parte
have neither place to inhabyte in neyther sekethe
anye staye to lyve bye, but havynge ben eyther
condempned of felonyes & pryson, breakers runne
from the warres & sea rouers departed from the
kynges garrysons and loyerers; wherbye they
becomme desperate persons & nowe employe & labour
theym selves runnyng & postynge from place to place,
countye to countye, towne to towne, by daye to daye
to styrre vp rumours,rayse vp tales, ymagyning
newes wherby they seke to styrre, gather together
& assemble the kynges true subiectes, of symplycyte
and ignoraunce deceyved. And by that pretence suche
tewde ruffyans, tale tellers & unrulye vacaboundes
becomme rynge leaders & maysters of the kynges people,
sekyng to spoyle, robbe & ravyn where & whome they lyste
& maye, & so to lyve, waxe ryche and fede of other
mennes labours, monye & fode, they theym selfes nother
wylynyng to serve where they might nether abyding when
they be well entereteyned. And being thus in seuerall
places of this his realme at the laste not able longe
to contynewe together with their assembling accordyng
to their myscheuous purposes, the same assemblies being
in substaunce of suche the kynges pore subiectes as
though by ignoraunce & entycementes of those forseid
tale tellers they offende yet shortelye by the goodnes
of God acknowledge their faultes & returne theym selves
to their duetyes moste sorrowfullye repente, receyving
for the same the kynges maiestyes greate mercye by his
pardon, & by the reason of the quyet order, the fallyng,
ceassyng & appeasyng of suche assemblies the seid
runagates, tale tellers & sedycious persons fayle & lacke
their purposes & myschevous intentes; so that they
accustomyng their evell nature and escapyng from the
places of their fyrste attemptes have & do daylie resorte to newe places, & so from place, shire to shire, never quyetinge theim self but devysing slaunderous tales & dyvulgyng to the people suche kynde of newes as they thincke maye moste readelye move theym to vprores & tumvltes, & for the further deceipte also pretende to theym they seke to redresse the comen welthe. Therfore his maiestye by thadvyse of his seid dere vnclle the lord protector & the rest of his maiesties Pryvyye Counseyll to the avoyding of the greate inconvenyences which of the sufferaunce herof daylie dothe ensue, & to admonyshe his good subiectes which hetherto have not felte the peryll of these poysened evyll people, mooste streightlye chargeth & commaundeth all maner & everye his justyces, sheryffes, constables, baylyffes, hedborowes & all other his maiestyes mynysters & offycers whatsoeuer they bee to be moste dyligente & from tyme to tyme to be in their charge attendaunte, & therin also to take somme good esspecyall pollytycke order for the apprehensyon & attaching of all maner of suche persons whatsoeuer they be which eyther as vacabundes, wayfeyring men, straglers or otherwyse,
in what manner so ever he be, shall bringe any tale to annye place, or inuente or tell annye newes, or conceale & kepe close lenger then he maye conveyent gett the bryngier, inuenter, or teller; which tale or newes so brought, inuentyd or tolde shall, dothe or maye cause annye vnlauffull assemble of people or annye tumulte & vprore, or shall sounde or be slaundorous to the kynges maiestie, his crowne, the lord protector & other of his Couseyll, or annye other wyse shall move the people vnlauffulye to remedye or redresse their owne causes & greiffes by forse & withoute lawe, which offfece belongyth onelye to the kynges maiestie and to the magystrates vnder hym, & therin daylie his maiesties seid dere vncole and Couseyll moste studyouslye travayleth; and the same lewde person & persons so apprehendyd to be brought vnto the kynges maiestie or his seid vncole & Couseyll or to annye one of his seyd Couseyll, for euerye the whiche so brought the kynges maiestie assureth his offycer and mynyster, the bryngier of hym, not onlye his costes & charges fullye to be payed but also to have his maiesties moste harte & effectuall thanckes. And yf annye other the kynges maiesties loyynge subiectes shall
at anye tyme knowe certeynlye anye suche tale carryer or rumer runner, newes spreder or sedycyon sower, & of hym so informe & gyve knowledge to anye of the kynges maiesties officers or mynysters so that the same evyll person eyther might or be taken & apprehendyd by the same officer & for or of the seid informacion then lykewyse the same informer, knowledge gever, accuser & vtherer shall have of the kynges maiestie rewarde for everye suche malefactor by hym dysclosed & apprehendyd, in maner as is aboveseid, xx crownes besydes lyke hartye thanckes from his maiestie.

Geven at Rychemount the viij th of Julye in the thirde yere of the reign of the kynges excellent maiestye, Edwarde the Syxte. God save the kynge.
Appendix XIV.

A proclamation "for straungers to repayre to their owne countreis". 7 May 1550.

Letter Book R, ff. 66

For straungers to repayre to their owne countreis

Edwardus Sextus dei gratia Anglie, Francie et Hibernie rex, fidei defensor et in terra ecclesie Anglicane et Hibernice supremum caput maiori et vicecomitibus London' salutem. Vobis mandamus quod statim visis presentibus in singulis wardis et parochijs et aliis locis infra ciuitatem predictam ac suburbes eiusdem tam infra libertates quam extra vbi magis expedire videritis ex parte nostra publicas proclamaciones fieri faciatis in hec verba.

The kynge our soueraign lorde by thadvyse & consente of his highnes moste honourable Pryvie Counseyll streightlye chargeth & commaundeth that all & everye person & persones of what estate, condycion or degree so ever he or they be, beinge his graces naturall subjectes borne, which were not borne within his majesties Cytie & Chamber of
London, the burrough of Sowthewerk or the suburbes within the lyberties of the same, nor be howseholders there or have suffyciente to lyve bye & good & reasonable cause theyre to remayne, nor have contynued & dwellyd with in the same by the space of three yeares to gether now laste paste & now do contynewe, soiorne & abyde there within the seid Cytie, borough & suburbes, not being reteyned in servyce with any person nor applyinge theym selves to any bodelye labour or lawfull occupacion & takyng stypende & wages for the same, do not onlye furthwith vpon this proclamacion departe & avoyde owte of the seid Cytie, borowgh & lyberties therof, but also with all convenyent spede do retorn & gett theym selves home ageyne eyther into their natyve countreys where they were borne, oreles into the places within the realme where they laste dwelte by the space of iij yeres togyther, accordyng to the tenour, forme & effecte of the estatute in that behalfe concernyng the orderyng of aged & ympotente persons & the punyshement of vacabondes, idle and loytering persons & maysterles men, latelye made & provyded vpon the paynes in the
same estatute lymyted & expressed. And the seid
mayer, aldremen & sheryffes, & evert of thym & all
& evert other his maisties offycers & mynysters
within the seid Cytie, burrowgh of Suthewerk and
lyberythes therof, all excuses sessyne & sett afarte,
endeavour thym selves with all convenyent dylygence
from henseforth from tyme to tyme to see, procure &
cause the seid estatute & every braunche & artycle
therin conteyned iustely to be observyd & put in due
execucion accordyngly as thym & every of thym tender
his maisties favour & wyll avoyde his highnes
indygnacion & dyspleasure. Et hoc sub periculo
incumbenti nullatenus omittatis. Teste me ipso apud
Westmonasterium vij die Maij, anno regni nostri
quarto.
Appendix XV.

Form of begging licence and vagabond passport used by the London authorities in 1550. 16 May 1550.

Memorandum, that A.B. of London, for reasonable considerations, is lycensed to begge within the Cytie of London & the lybertyes of the same. Yeven vnder the seale of the Cytie of London for suche causes ordeyned, the xvij daye of May, Anno domini M ^D L .

B.C. whypped for a vagaraunte stronge beggar at London accordyng to the lawe, the xvij th daye of Maye, Anno M ^D L , was assigned to passe furthwith & dyrectly from thens to in the county of where he saithe he was borne or laste dwelt by the space of iij yeares; and he is lymytted to be there with in xiiij dayes nexte ensuvinge, at his peryll. In wytnes wherof the seale of the Cytie of London for suche causes provyded herunto is sett the daye & yeare abovesaid.
Appendix XVI.

A letter sent by the mayor and aldermen to the Privy Council complaining of the number of disbanded soldiers in the City. 25 September 1550.

The copye of a lettre sent to the Counseyll for avoydyng sowldyers owte of the Cytie.

Pleasyth yt your good lordships to be advertysed that vpon the dyssolucion of the garrysons repayring from the kynges peeces beyond the sea & from other places within this realme there be suche a nembwer of souldiers at this present within the Cytye of London that on lesse spedye order be taken to rydde & bestowe theym abrode into the countrey greate daunger & peryll wyll thereby ensue. For we are partly enformed by suche as harde somme of theym speake that their reporte is this that they cannot worke ne wyll not worke, and yf they cannot opteyne a lyvinge at the kynges handes, in consyderacion that they have longe served the kynges highnes & the kynghe his father, that then they wyll appoynte theym selves in severall companyes in
London, & comme ovte of seuerall lanes & stretes in London, & mete alltogether in somme one place in the seid Cytie & there vpon sett vpon the cytezens & their houses & take there suche botyes and spoylle as they can ley hand vpon, & that then they wyll departe owte of the Cytie. And that yf thay have their botye & be ones owte of the Cytie then they wyll not care yf their comme x thowsand men after theym; & have further reported that yf yt shall fortune theym not to be orderyd somewhat after their expectacion that then they wyll turne all Englond vpso doune at their pleasure. And also they have made reports that they have apoynted to moystuer theym selves in Fynnesburye felde, their purpose therin being to vs muche doubtfull, which matter accordyng to our bounden duetyes we notyfye vnto your good lordships, requyring the same that suche spedy order & staye maye be taken therin as to your wysdomes shall seme expedyent. At London the xxv\textsuperscript{th} day of September anno 1550.

To the moste honourable & their singuler good lorde, the lorde of the kynges majesties moste honourable Counseyll. Your assured at all commaundementes the mayer & aldremen of the kynges maiestyes Cytie & Chamber of London.
Appendix XVII.

Contributions to the relief of the poor made by the mayor and Aldermen of London. 1 August 1552.

Pecuniae concessae pauperibus per aldermannos

Item, this daye my mastres the aldermen, herevnder named, graunted & agreid to gyve presenttly in hande towards the releyf & maynteinance of the pore the seuerall sommes of money herafter fyrste mencioned, and also wykely as longe as they shalbe hable the seuerall somes hereafter secondaryly wryten videlicet:

In hande.

My lorde mayer     xl markes.   Wekely.
M. Waren          xx li.   xxd.
M. Champneys      —     —
M. Laxton         x li.   xijd.
M. Bowes          xx li.   xxd.
M. Hobthorne     —     —
M. Gressham        xxv li.   xxd.
M. Amcottes      x li.   xijd.
M. Hyll           —     —
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[In hande.]</th>
<th>[Wekely.]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. Judde</td>
<td>xx li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Barne</td>
<td>x li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Jervis</td>
<td>x li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. White</td>
<td>xx li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Hynde</td>
<td>x li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Turke</td>
<td>x li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Lyon</td>
<td>x li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Garrard</td>
<td>xx markes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Woodrof</td>
<td>v li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Kyrton</td>
<td>xx li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Offley</td>
<td>xx li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Aylyf</td>
<td>xx li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Wether</td>
<td>xls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Huett</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Robyns</td>
<td>viij li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Curtes</td>
<td>vj li.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Lamberd</td>
<td>xx marcs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix XVIII.

Ordinances proclaimed annually in Kingston-upon-Hull in the fifteenth century.
Bench book III, ff. 96\textsuperscript{v}o 97.

It was the custom in Hull for ordinances to be issued by the mayor for the regulation of the town's affairs; they were of a comprehensive nature and were designed to deal with all sides of town life—discipline, trade, cleanliness, hostelries and strangers etc.
Numbers of these sets of ordinances dating from the early fifteenth century are entered in Bench book III.
The ordinances transcribed below are not associated with any particular mayoralty, being proclaimed yearly for the good rule of the town; they are undated but are entered in the Bench book between entries of 4 Edward IV (1464) and 7 Edward IV (1467).

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1. The earliest ordinances entered are those made during the mayoralty of John Tutbery, 1412-13, and confirmed during the mayoralty of John Aldwyk, 1439-40, Bench book III, ff. 16\textsuperscript{v}o-17.
Ordinaciones et constituciones ab antiquo factae et annatim a tempore quo non extitit memoria annate per maiorem et ballivos et nunc per maiorem et vicecomitem publice proclamatae etc. secundum constituciones et ordinaciones predictas factas vt patet in veteribus libris etc.

Furst it is ordeyned & established by a comon assent that the mayre & the shireff shall proclayme onse in the yere, & also se that thes ordenancez vnnder wretens be trevly fulfilled & trevly kepeth.

Furst, that the pease be kepeth amonghes all the kenges leige peopull within this fraunch in comyng, comyng, convyrsant & dwelling.

Also, that no man bere armor, ne wapen, agaynst the peasse, ne make non affray on payn of imprisonment & fyne to the kyng.

Also, that no man drawe no knyff, swerd, ne dagere in violence agaynst the peas on payn of xld.

Also, that no man drawe blod of an other in violence agaynst the peas on payn of vjs. viijd.

Also, that no man by no vitaill comyng to the markytt afore it be comyn to the markytt vppon payn that may fall thervppon.
Also, that no man sell any corne ne open no sek afore ix of the clok & that itt be sold afore one,afternone.

And also that no man by any corne afore ix of the clok on payn of forfaytour of the same corne.

And also that no corn be sett vpp fro the markytt, ne that no man of this toun resseyue it to kepe from the markytt on payn of every mettre corne iiiijd. to be payed to the comons of this toun.

And also that all comon bakers bake gode brede & holssom halpeny loves, farthyng loves, kepyng the assise & wele sesoned vppon payn that is ordeyned therfore.

And also that no man ne woman bake mans brede, ne horsbrede, to sell bot they be first sworn be fore the maire on payn of imprisonment & fyn makyng.

[f. 97] And also that all common brevers brewe goode & holssom ale to the peopull & that the sell a galen of the best no darrer then a peny & a farthyng from the fatt, & for jd. ob. stale ale and that by mesure inseled on payn that fall therfore.

And also a galon small ale that it be holssom for an halff peny j galon.
And also that no cokes ne bochers sell no flessh ne any other vitaill bot it will be sesonabull & holssom for mans body.

And also that no coke ne vitellere by no vitell by two myle nere this toun for to retayle agayn.

And also that all maner flesshours bothe that dwelles within the toun & without, reparyng with flessh to this toun kyt out ther flessh to the peopull halfpenyworths, penyworths, two peny worthes, after the peopull will ware ther money.

And also that no man no woman sell no fissh in the markytt bot his aun fissh that he bought at the see or in Humber, ne take non to sell bot his aun fissh on payn of forfatur of the same fissh & imprisonment of body & fyn to the kyng, & that they sell no fissh be fore vij of the clok in wynter & vj of the clok in somere vnder the same payn.

And also that no man ne woman dwellyng within this toun by no maner of vitaill within this toun, ne take any vitall of other mans to sell agayn to any man of this toun, that is to say flessh, fissh or wyld foull
on payn of forfatour of the same vitaill & imprisonment of body & fyn to the kyng.

And also that every man gare clens be fore his dore every Seterday on payn of vjd.

And also that no woman ne seruant wessh ther clothes negh the busdyke ne the toun dykes on payn of xld.

And also that no man ne woman lay no mok negh any of the toun dykes or vppon the toun walles ne at the northende yates on payn of iiiijd. as ofte as it is founden, & ther vessell that is born in forfeitt.

And also that no man cast any lastage, strave ne mok out of shippes keles ne botes in to the havyn or roode on payn of every shippe that so does vjs. viijd., of a kele xld., & of a bote xxd.

Also, that no man ne woman cast ne lay any mok, ne draff, ne other filth in to the havyn out at any statthes or at any lane endes in hynderance of the havyn vnder the same payn.

And also that no man of this toun sell ne colour any straunge mans goodes or merchandisez vnder colour of his aun on payn at every tyme so don vjs. viijd.
And that no hostylers ne hynhalders bake no horsbrede within ther innes on payn of vjs. viijd.

And that all candelmakers of this toun make gode candell without drepyng, & that they sell j pond of candell no derrer then jd., and that they wey trevly ther candell on payn of forfatour of the same.

And that no ostyler, ne inhalder herbour any straunge man ouer a nyght & a day, bot if he will answer for hym & for his dedes.

And that no tauernere, brevstere, ne typlere hold no tauerne open after couerfue be rong on payn of xld.

And that no alyen walke within this toun after vij of the clok at even withouten a light.

And that no alien bere no bowe ne arowes to shot with vsually, ne walke on the walles, ne make any assembles ne gederyng to gedere in feld ne in toun on payn of imprisonement & fyn to the kyng.

And that no hukstare ne no other man ne woman within this toun dwellyng retayle no brede within this toun bot only the brede that the comon baxters of this toun bakes, that ere sworn therto, & for to kepe the assise on payn of forfatur therof.
And all maner of forens that bakes any brede
to sell that they cum & sell itt in the markytt on
the markyt dayes, & to sell non bot of the markyt
dayes on payn of forfatur of the same brede.
Appendix XIX.

Some cases from the quarter sessions records in Kingston-upon-Hull, 1509-1547.

Hull Corp. Rec., Sheriff turn and quarter sessions book.

(a) Unlawful assemblies.

f. 30\textsuperscript{v}o 7 September 1512.

Qui dicunt super sacramentum suum quod Johannes Roger nuper de Kyngeston super Hull in comitatu ville de Kyngeston super Hull, glasyer, vicesimo quarto die Junij, anno regni Regis Henrici octauoi quarto apud Kyngeston super Hull predictam, in comitatu predicto, vi et armis videlicet gladijs, baculis et cultellis domum Ricardi Dene fregit et intrauit, et ibidem tam te predicta xxiiij die Junij quam diversis diebus et noctibus ante et postea cum servientibus eiusdem Ricardi insidiaiones et conuentica illicta custodiunt et continuant adque dampnum (sic) ipsius Ricardi et in perturbationem vicinorum suorum ibidem prope commorantium ac contra pacem eiusdem domini regis etc.
(b) Houses of ill fame.

f. 41, 12 August 1517.

Qui dicunt super sacramentum suum quod Georgius

finis

Merston, tyler, est custodiens malum regimen in domo

xijd.
sua et est communis receptor diversarum suspectarum

personarum. Ideo

iiis.

iiiijd. Qui quod Agnes Johnson, alias swete lyppes,

custodit malum regimen in domo sua et est communis

receptor diversarum personarum et suspectarum. Ideo

(c) Theft of corn.

f. 70, 7 May 1527.

Qui dicunt super sacramentum suum quod Thomas

Watter, miller, est latronniculor et furatus fuit

sexta (sic) libras frumenti ad vaclenciaim sex
denario rum de bonis et catallis Johannis Bonthom de

Kingston super Hull. Ideo adiudicatur et pro curia

quod standeth collistrigium et exiat villam predictam

nuppertim.
(d) Vagabonds harboured.

Qui dicunt super sacramentum suum quod Willelmus Whikhup de Kyngiston super Hull, glover, xiiij\(^{0}\) die Junij anno regni Regis Henrici octaui vicesimo apud Kyngiston super Hull, in comitatu villet de Kyngiston super Hull, habet et tenet commune hospicium communiter hospitando vagabundes vagrantes et suspectos vagantes et inquietantes vicinos in malum exemplum aliorum taliter dilinquencium nisi in eo casu apponatur remedium contra pacem domini regis.

(e) Illegal games.

Juratores predicti dicunt super sacramentum suum xld. quod Georgius Shawe et Brianus Bowmer habent domos illicitos, et custodiant homines in eijsdem ludentes ad talos et carpinas et exercientes alia joca illicita et in lege prohibita contra formam statuti in domini regis contemptum et aliorum malifactorum malum et perniciosum exemplum ac contra pacem dicti domini regis.
Appendix XX.

Arrangements for searches in Kingston-upon-Hull, 1559.
Bench book IV, f. 25.

Item, on the same daie it was agreed as byfore that
where as by the said sherif torn queste it was presented
that manye pore peo[p]le being able to worke is suffered
to beg within this town and woll not worke but rather be
ydle, and inconsideracion that they robbe other poore
ympotent people of the almosse & not hable to worke yt was
ordred that evrey alderman within his warde with the
constables shall make serche what nombre people is within
the same warde, and therof also shall make presentmente
viz. the names of all suche as be ympotent and not able to
worke, to thentent they may be releifid with the almes of
good people, and the names of thother whiche is able to
laibour and worke, that they be constrayned to worke
or elles to be banyshed cwt of this town; and also
everie yere for ever herafter the like of this serche
to be maide once in the yere;
Appendix XXI.

Orders for the good government of Kingston-upon-Hull, detailing the duties and powers of the aldermen in their respective wards. 6 August 1560.

Bench book IV, ff. 27vo-29.

Adhuc de tempore predicti Jacobi Clarkeson maioris anno regni domine Elizabeth etc. ijd

Hereafter followith certen prescribed actes & orders setfurth the vj day of August in the yerez beforeseyd by the maior and aldermen with the assent & consent of the burgessez of the same towne for the more better & quiett orderyng and gouernyng therof, and also what euery alderman shall fromhensfurth be chargyd to do & execute within their seuerall wardes etc.

What aucthoritie Furst, euery alderman which nowe be or hereafter shalbe, shall fromhensfurth for ever haue full power & aucthorytie as often & when as nede requerith to sherche, viewe and also
to take in wrytyng the namez of all the idell persons, vacabondes, beggers, bawdes & of all other light or suspectyd persons resortyng, remaynyng or abydyng within his warde, and the same persons to examyne, here, correct, punysshe and order accordyng to justice etc.

Item, that fromhensfurth euery alderman shall haue the heryng, orderyng, punysshyng and determynyng, aswell of all the brawlers, chiders, scolders and of all suche lyke, as also of all suche as shall absent themselfes from the churche or kepe or vse any disordryd housez, evill rule, vnsemely demeanours or misbehaveour within his warde contrary to the lawes or statutes of this realme, or contrary to any auncient order or acte heretofore made or hereafter to be made by the seyed maior and aldermen or their successours.

Item, if any variaunce or contenoion shall arise or growe for brawlyng, scoldyng, chydyng or suche lyke, or vnsemely demeanours betwene any person or persons wherof the one partes inhabiteth in one warde and the other parte in an other warde, that then the alderman or aldermen of bothe the wardes together to haue the heryng, orderyng & determynyng of the same etc.

Item, that euery alderman shall fromhensfurth haue the
full & whole appoyntyng & orderyng for the makyng, repayryng, mendyng, scoouryng and kepyng clene of all the streatez, lanes, gutters and of all other noyfull or vnsemely placys within his warde; and shall lyke wise fromhensfurth haue full power & authorytie to lemytte & assesse suche reasonable fyne or fynes, or suche reasonable punyssshement & correccion for non doynge therof as to hym shalbe thought good and convenient, which fynes shalbe leveyed & taken to the vse & behofe of the maior and burgessez etc.

Item, it is orderyd, enactyd and agreyd by the seyed maior and aldermen with the assent & consent aforeseyed that fromhensfurth the constablez within euery warde shalbe appoyntyd & taken as the officers of the alderman or aldermen of the warde and to their deputie or deputiez there for the execucion of all & syngler the premissez; and also be reddy att all tymes att his or their commaundement to carrey or brynge to warde all manner of person or persons beyng commyttyd to warde by the seyed alderman or aldermen or his or their deputie or deputies for any of the causes, matters or offences aforeseyed; and shall lyke wise be reddy
for the fetchyng, bryngyng or deluyeryng of them or any of them further of warde for any of the causez or matters before declared, vpon payne & forfayture of every constable makynge defaulte or absentyng hym self contrary to the true meanyng hereof vjs. viijd. to be leveyed of his or their goodes & cattalles to the vse & behofe of the maior and burgessez etc.

Item, that fromhensfurth every person, resiaunt or inhabytynge within the seyed warde, shall att all tymes convenient come to the seyed alderman or his deputie vpon lauffull monycion or warnyng to be geven for any of the matters or causez before remembred, vpon payne of every person or persons makynge such defaulte to forfayte for every tyme ijs. to be leveyed and taken as is before declaryd to the vse & behofe aforeseyed.

And whereas before this tyme the maior of this towne for the tyme beyng hath byn onlie chargyd & troubled with the herynge, orderynge & determynyng of all the seyed former causez & matters of all the seyed wardes within the same towne by meanez wherof he coulde nott so well and deligently discharge & execute his office of maioraltie
as of right apperteyned, for reformacion wherof and to thentent that he may the better supplie & execute the same it is orderyd, enactyd & fully concludydyd and agreyd by the seyed maier and aldermen, with the assent & consent aforeseyeyd, that fromhensfurth the maier for the tyme beyng shalnott be chargyd or troubled for the heryng, orderyng, correccion & determynacion of all & syngler the causes & matters, before expressyd & declared, & of any of them butt onlie of those which shall happen to rise or growe within the warde wherof he is alderman etc.

And further it is orderyd and enactyd that the maier and euery alderman for the tyme beyng shall fromhensfurth for ever att their libertie and pleasure elect, name, assigne & appoynt within their seuerall warde or wardes suche sufficient person or persons to be his or their deputie or deputiez, there beyng resiaunt or inhabytyng, as they or any of them shall thynke most honestyst & discretist for that rowme or place, and lyke wise att the libertie & pleasure of euery of them to discharge, displace, remove, or putte oute the seyed deputie or deputiez, which deputie or deputiez so electyd & namyd shall also
fromhensfurth, in the absence or by the appoyntement or assignement of the maior, alderman or aldermen of the warde wherof the shalbe deputie or deputiez, haue full power, libertie & authoritye by vertue & forsse of this acte & ordenaunce to here, order, correct & determyne all & syngler the seyed causez, articlez, offences & matters, & euer of them.

Item, it is also orderyd & enactyd by the seyed maior & aldermen, with the assent & consent aforeseyed, that the maior for the tyme beyng shalbe aydyng & assistyng to the aldermen & their deputiez in the execucion of all & syngler the causez & matters before remembryd.

Provided alwey that if any person or persons shall hereafter be commyttyd to warde or fyned by the alderman or aldermen of the warde, or their deputie or deputiez for or concernyng any of the causes or matters before particularely declaryd, and do theruppon fyned hym selfe grevyd, that then vpon complaynt or relacion therof made to the maior & the rest of the aldermen by the person or persons so grevyd, the same imprisonment or fyne to be metygatyd, orderyd, reformyd and determyned by the maior
and all the aldermen or by the most parte of them, determined by the maior & all aldermen, any thyng before declaryd, expressyd or setfurth to the contrary in any wise nott withstandyng.
Appendix XXII.

Town ordinances of 1563 for the correction of whoredom, drunkenness and idleness in Kingston-upon-Hull.

Bench book IV, ff. 50-50.

Godly ordynance very convenyent to be put in execution for ponyshyng of vyce, whoredome, dronkennes, idelnes, skoldyng, sweryng.

For as muche as in euerly well ordered common welth most princypally ys sowght out the heynows offenders & insensible persons whiche be delited in dronkennes, excesse, ryot, howerdom, wantones, lightnes, idlènes and skoldinge with suche like, that thei by reasonable & politike lawes and ordinunces may be corrected, maid sensible and brought to good order, we therefore the said maior, aldermen and burgesses, knowinge nothinge more convenient, nedefull or requisite then to redresse, supplant or plucke vppe these greate infeccions and enormyties most especially at this present time reaninge (sic) in this towne, doe with one assent, consent and agrement inact, ordein and agree that
from this present xvij\(^{th}\) day of December in the yere afforesaid no manner of person or persons with in this towne or any the liberties of the same be so hardy to commytt any whoredome, fornicacion or advoultrie, nor vse or exercise him selfe in excessive drinkinge, ryot, dispendinge his or there time in idlenes, wantonnes, lightnes, skoldinge or maliciouslye blaspheminge the name of God to the great provocacion or kindlinge of Godes wraithe against this towne, vpon peine that every one offendinge contrary to the tenour and effect of this of this ordynnance or any parte or member thereof to be punisshed and maide an example to all others whither it be by carte, tumbrill, cookestoile, thewe, stockes, pillory or otherwise by imprisonment at the distrecion of the maior for the time beinge and the moste parte of the aldermen at that time resident within the said towne etc.
No inhabitantez within thys towne may howge or resaue any lyght person to dwell wythe in his howse vpon paime vjs. viijd.

Whereas there be many light and suspicious persons hauntinge this towne received, lodged or yoined and maide fellewes in howsholde with other inhabitinge this towne for there owne vantage and lucre althoughe that the same persons be of verie evill life and conversacion, nothinge at all regardinge neither lawe, honestie nor truiethe, therefore it ys agreed, ordenyed and concluded with thole assent and consent of the said Master Maior, thaldermen and burgesses of this towne, beinge assembled together the daie and yere last aboveheresed, that no howsholde man or woman within thes said towne shall fromhencefurthe lodge, take into thare howse or joine with them to dwell any light suspect persons, or of evill life, or vacabondes whatsoever they be, but shall present to Master Maior for the time beinge all suche persons as loyter and remaine in
this towne not havinge not whereby and
wherewith honestlye to lyve, that the same
maior may take suche order with them as by the
lawes of this realme ys provided, vpon peine
that euery person inhabitinge the said towne
and offendinge contrary this order shall
forfeit for a fine to thvse of the same townes
chaimber vjs. viijd., and shalbe further
punysshed at the distrecion of the maior for
the time beinge.
Appendix XXIII.

An order of the mayor and aldermen in Kingston-upon-Hull for the departure of certain poor from the town. 1575.
Bench book IV, ff. 141v-142.

An acte for poore people that have not dwelt here by three yeares or that were not borne heare to avoide the towne.

For as muche as it is apparant and moste evidently knowne to Master Maior and his brethren thaldermen of this towne to whom the government of the saime belongithe & ys committed, that a very great number of poore people not able to live of them selfes have of laite crept into this towne from diuers and sundry other partes and plaices of this realme, contrary to the lawe and statute in that caise maide and provided, for that by the saime they ought to dwell, maike their abode and be provided in suche partes and plaices where they were borne or last dwelt by the spacie of three yeares last before the makinge of the said statute, whiche was in the fourteen yeare of the reigne of our soveraigne lady the quenes majestie; whiche
things haith发生了 chiefly by reason thei have been permitted and suffered to thrust in and yoine together two or three howsholdes in one howse contrary a good and auncient order in that caise also maide and provided. Master Maior therefore and his said brethren assembled together, the day and yere afforesaid, intendinge to reforme the premisses and to putt in execucion the said statute and ordinnance have thought good that the curaitez of the churches within this said towne shall vpon Sunday next in publicke and oppon mannour testifie and declare to all person and persons, and specyally to the said people and their landlordes, that althoughthe thei the said Master Maior and aldermen might presently remove them to the plaices where they were borne or last dwelt by the space of the said three yeares, yet consideringe this tyme of the yeare to be very fowle and inconvenient for that purpose they will not at this present tyme deale so hardly with them, but doe admonishe, will & chairge them to provide
them selfes either where they were borne or last dwelt as is afforesaid before the feast day of the Annunciacion of the Blessed Mary, the Virgyn, next comminge, vpon payne to be ordered and punish-ed as in and by the said statute is lymited and appointed. And also the landlordes and owners of the howse in whiche their shalbe then fownd e above one howesholde shalbe grevously punishshed as disobedient persons and brakers of good lawes and ordinances.
Appendix XXIV.

The first provision in Kingston-upon-Hull for the employment of poor people. 6 June 1577.

Bench Book IV, f. 167.

An order for settinge the poore to woorke by knittinge.

Item, the said day and yeare the said maior and aldermen, to thende to the poore people might be kept from idlenes and from goinge & wandringe from doore to doore contrary the lawes & statutes in that caise maide & provided, did with one full assent and consent conclude, order and agree that inquyrie shalbe fourwith maide howe & in what order the poore arre sett a woorke at Doncaster by knittinge, and to procure some one, two or three of those their that be skilfull to come hither to inhabite and to instruct and treyne vppe the poore of this towne in that facultie.
Appendix XXV.

An order for the formation of a town "stock" in Kingston-upon-Hull. 6 June 1577.


An order howe the stocke to sett the poore a woorke shalbe provided.

Item, the saime day and yeare the said maior and aldermen with one full assent and consent did order, conclude and agree that the stocke wherewith to sett the poore of this towne a woorke shalbe bought and provided with suche money as shalbe received & had by grauntinge licence to buy and transporte corne by vertewe of the quenes majesties licence graunted to the maior and burgesses of this toune, & that thinhabitauntes shalbe eased thereby of the chairge that otherwise wolde ensewe by provided the said stocke accordinge to the statute in that caise maide and provided.
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Classification.

A. Primary.

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   Listed according to Repository.

II Printed.
   (i) Collections and Calendars of Records.
   (ii) Literary Sources.
       1) Chronicles etc.
       2) Tracts, ballads, sermons etc.

B. Secondary.

   (i) General.
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