

**SOME RESULTS OF  
BOARDING OUT  
POOR LAW CHILDREN**

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Some Results of Boarding Out Poor Law Children by William Pitt Trevelyan & G. P. Trevelyan

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**WILLIAM PITT TREVELYAN & G. P. TREVELYAN**

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OF BOARDING OUT . . .  
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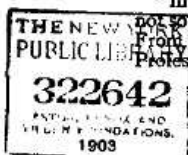
By  
THE REV. WILLIAM PITT TREVELYAN,  
Founder (1871) of the Calverton (Bucks) Committee.

With a Preface by  
THE REV. G. P. TREVELYAN.

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1933

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"In a Christian home the discipline of children is  
not so much a work of exhortation as of contagion."—  
From "Jesus Christ and the Social Question," by  
Professor Peabody.

### "OUR CHILDREN."

I looked at the happy children  
Who gathered around the hearth,  
So blithe they were, no children  
Could happier be on earth ;  
With their merry plays and their winsome ways  
And the sound of their silvery mirth.

Then I thought of those other children,  
So wizened and hard and bold,  
Who huddle in slum and cellar  
And shiver with want and cold :  
Not fresh as the dew or the morning's hue,  
But haggard and lean and old.

But yet may they still, those children,  
Be taught to forget their pain ;  
And, gathered in arms that love them,  
Their laughter may come again ;  
And the stare of woe and the craft may go,  
And the spirit be washed of stain.

But it is not in cold book-learning  
Those children's hearts to move ;  
And the stony eye of the serpent  
Is death to the stricken dove ;  
'Tis an angel alone that can touch the soul,  
And that angel's name is Love.

For whatever the world may fancy,  
And whatever the wise men say,  
Of our nineteenth century Progress,  
Of a new and a better way :  
Still it takes a soul to make a soul  
Now, as in the olden day.—A. G.

*From the "Spectator," December 22nd, 1888.*

## PREFACE.

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THE boarding-out of poor law children, when seen at its best, takes its place in the very foremost rank of philanthropic work. It gives the orphan and deserted children the inestimable advantage of good home training, and of continual loving care and interest during the years of early manhood and womanhood, and provides them with a real home, family, and friends to fall back upon when out in the world.

Mr. Trevelyan was one of the first in this country to recognise the great possibilities of the system; for thirty-two years he has brought the wonderful force and influence of his character to bear upon it.

The results may be seen in the samples which he gives of life stories of the children boarded out under the Calverton Committee. It is boarding-out work; but they who read between the lines of the stories will feel that the degree of constant prayer, heart-felt persevering interest, and loving forethought, which have been expended upon the children by those who have made themselves

responsible for their welfare, make it an unique specimen of boarding-out.

The writer of this Preface would prefer to think that, wherever a Boarding-out Committee exists, the same zeal and the same excellence of results may be found ; but Miss Mason, whose long and intimate experience, as Local Government Board Inspector, with Committees, Foster-parents and children all over England, makes her a great authority on the subject, shows in her reports that Mr. Trevelyan's untiring devotion has made the Calverton Committee an instance of exceptional treatment and exceptional success. In the Nineteenth Annual Report to the Local Government Board, Appendix B., 1889—90, she writes :—

The Calverton Committee, Buckinghamshire, (authorised 1871), has fifty-eight children chargeable to St. George's. This Committee is one of the earliest formed and the best known, the work having been begun by the Rev. W. P. Trevelyan, who still supervises it, and whose life is now entirely devoted to it.

It is not possible to class or compare it with that of any other Committee, and it is difficult to describe it, since it is of an unique character, being carried on entirely by the extraordinary personal influence of Mr. Trevelyan, who has succeeded in inspiring the Foster-parents with so strong a sense of duty and responsibility that most of them seem to have undertaken the charge of the children in the same spirit as himself, with the intention of doing a good work, not for the sake of profit, nor even from fondness for children. This fondness has, however, generally



grown up later. Besides these motives, the Foster-parents have, as a rule, that of wishing to save Mr. Trevelyan, to whom they are personally much attached, all trouble and anxiety. Some of the best instances in my first published report, which did not give the names of the Committees, were taken from this one. Since then I have frequently, and at different times, visited some of the homes and children under the Calverton Committee, at Mr. Trevelyan's request, whenever I had a spare hour or two; for the large number of children under other Committees in the near neighbourhood has called me here every year, sometimes two or three times. During the past year I made my second thorough inspection of the whole number. I have always found the same unremitting watchfulness and care for the children, and the same excellent character of their condition and homes. Most of the boys are sent, when old enough, to the training ship *Exmouth*, and the girls to situations carefully chosen by Mr. and Mrs. Trevelyan, who keep an account of all the children now in service who have been boarded out under the Committee, with full details. They continue to look after them as long as they need it, and to correspond with those at a distance. I have, at different times, seen many of these children myself, some of whom I had inspected when chargeable, either in their situations or staying with their former Foster-parents. Most of them seem to have done remarkably well, and, if any have not, it is certainly not from want of care and interest on the part of the Committee. It would be difficult to over-estimate the good that has been done here to the large number of children who have passed through Mr. Trevelyan's hands.

In the Twenty-fourth Annual Report, Appendix B., 1894—95, she writes:—

Calverton (Bucks), authorised 21st July, 1871; re-authorised 10th June, 1886. Seventy-two children

chargeable to St. George's. The work of this Committee is unique, being carried on by the exceptional personal influence of its secretary.

In the Twenty-fifth Annual Report, Appendix B., 1895—96, she uses the following words :—

The Calverton Committee (Bucks), authorised 1871, had sixty-eight children chargeable to St. George's. As I have before stated, the work of this Committee is unique, and cannot be compared with that of any other. The number of children has grown too much for the work of one secretary, and the Committee has now divided into two.

The writer of this Preface can hardly give such a description of his father as will account for the unique influence of which these reports speak. For those who know Mr. Trevelyan personally such a description is not needed: they feel at once the secret of his power; but for any sympathetic reader of this book the secret is writ large in the histories of his beloved children.

After a life of very varied experience in the army, as a sheep farmer in Australia and as a clergyman, at the age of ninety years he gives a simple account of the work which has become his chief and absorbing interest.

The reader will find in it no exaggeration or over-colouring. Miss Mason writes, after seeing Mr. Trevelyan's MS.: "I remember and recognise many of these cases, and know that they are accurate." She adds: "I should like to point

out the immense trouble taken in corresponding with, and looking after such a number of children in after-life. I have myself seen many of their letters, and think Mr. Trevelyan's little sketch gives but a small idea of their numbers, and of his trouble and loving care for them. It is these things and the care of the Foster-parents as here shown that may and should be an example of boarding-out at its best." The present writer can also give independent witness to the simple truth of the narratives from his experience of twelve years as Vicar of Wolverton St. Mary, in which parish more than thirty children were boarded out.

He also desires specially to call attention to the wise and loving care of the Foster-parents. Truly their homes have been in the highest sense "home" to those placed in their charge, not only in their early years, but also when they have gone out into the world. He knows well the high excellences to be found in our labouring and mechanic population, which boarding-out is one of the very best means of cultivating.

It is to be noted that, while only a small proportion of the favourable cases has been mentioned, the failures and quasi-failures have been fully set forth, and there is no concealment of unfavourable results.

Should this book fall into the hands of any who recognise their own story in it, they will excuse the liberty thus taken for the sake of a work to