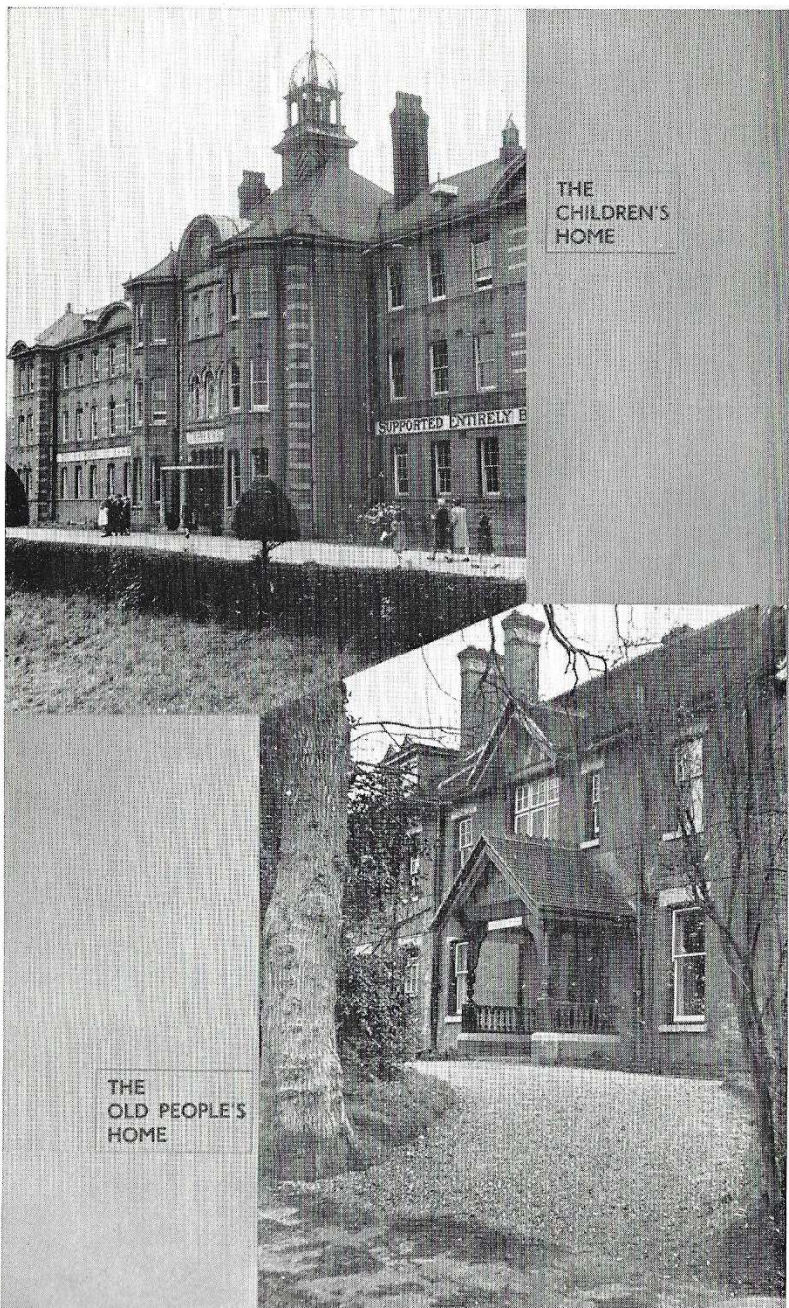




The Southern Railway Servants' Orphanage
in association with
The Southern Railway Homes for Old People
WOKING, Surrey

Notes
on
The Southern Railway
Servants' Orphanage
in association with
The Southern Railway
Homes for Old People

Woking, Surrey
1949



Notes on the Southern Railway Servants' Orphanage

President: SIR HERBERT A. WALKER, K.C.B.

Trustees:

MAJOR-GENERAL GILBERT S. SZLUMPER, C.B.E., T.D., A.M.I.C.E., M.I.T.
JOHN ELLIOT, Esq. J. H. CHITTY, Esq.

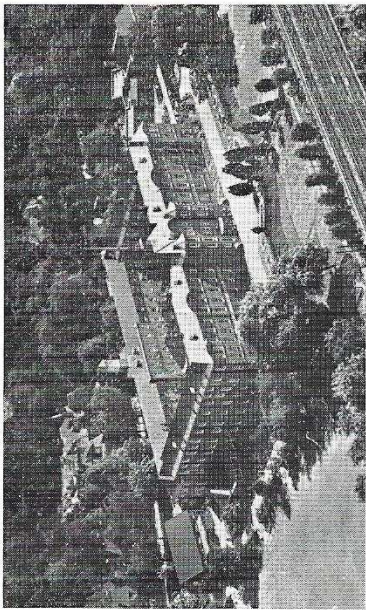
Chairman of Board of Management: G. T. PHEBY, Esq., J.P.

FOUNDATION.

The Home was founded in 1885 by the late Canon Allen Edwards, M.A., Vicar of All Saints' Church, Lambeth. It was the Vicar's custom to hold periodical special services for the Railwaymen, mainly from Nine Elms, who lived in his Parish. Being actively interested in the welfare of the men he heard of the tragedies which sometimes occurred at the Station, when a man would be killed at work, leaving a wife and family in a more or less destitute condition. He was also aware of the efforts of the victim's workmates to help the bereaved family by making a charitable collection of a few pounds for the widow, and how this help represented only a deferment of the day when, more often than not, the family would resort to the "parish." During the course of a "Social Hour" after one of his services, Canon Edwards suggested to a group of the men that they could make their collections more effective if they retained the money and by organising a regular income, relieve the mothers of responsibility for the maintenance of their children. This idea was accepted with alacrity and the lease was taken of a house in Jeffreys Road, Clapham, where accommodation was arranged for ten girls. Very soon another and then a third house was opened to make provision for boys. The demand for accommodation both for the orphans of the victims of accidents and the orphans of men who had died from natural causes continued to grow and the urge to improve the Homes was so insistent that, early in the twentieth century, the decision was taken to build a specially designed Home for the maximum number of children likely to become the orphans of the employees of the London and South Western Railway. Eventually the main block of the present Home at Woking was erected and opened in 1909 with room for a maximum of 150 children.

After the amalgamation of the Railways, which formed the Southern Railway, a demand for more accommodation arose and a new wing was added in 1935 to provide for an additional 90 children. A single storey Hospital block was built in 1930 providing for 24 beds. A fully-equipped Gymnasium was built in 1932.

THE ORPHANAGE FROM THE AIR



From the inception of the Home it has been owned and managed by the staff and employees of the London and South Western Railway, the Southern Railway, and now the Southern Region of the British Railways.

PREMISES.

The Home and grounds cover nine acres of land adjacent to the railway near to Woking Station. The main building is three storeys high and is in the form of a square with an Assembly Hall spanning the centre. The dining hall, kitchen, day-rooms, washrooms, workrooms, library, studies, stores and offices are on the ground floor. The first floor and second floor are used for dormitories (24 beds each), bathrooms, playrooms, wardrobe rooms, and staff bedrooms. A staff bedroom is adjacent to each dormitory. Six staircases give access to the upper floors. The building is centrally heated but most of the dayrooms also have open fireplaces. Spaciousness, light and airiness are a feature of the premises.

ADMINISTRATION.

The Southern Region is divided into seventeen geographically convenient areas, for each of which a District Committee is responsible. The District Committee is formed from Railway employees working or living in the area. The Committee's main duties are the raising of funds, recommending children for admission and watching over the After-Welfare of children who have passed through the Home. The District Committees send delegates to Woking to form the Board of Management of the Orphanage, which has complete control of the Institution. A General Purposes Committee, consisting of twelve members of the Board and three ladies chosen by the Board, carries out the detailed management of the Home. A Finance Committee and Central After-Welfare Committee also are appointed by the Board. All the Officers and Committees of the Board are elected annually.

FOUR OF THE FAMILY



FINANCE.

The bulk of the income of the Home is derived from voluntary contributions made by the staff and employees of the Southern Region. The usual contribution is 1d. or 2d. per week which, by arrangement with the British Railways, is deducted from wages and remitted collectively each month to the Orphanage Bank Account. No appeal is made to the general public other than by occasional local "Flag Days," organised by some of the District Committees and by Collecting Dogs operating at some of the larger Stations.

CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION.

Until 1937 it was a condition of admission to the Home that the child must be fatherless and that the father must have been an employee of the London and South Western Railway or, later, the Southern Railway. In 1937 appeals for help by Railway-men whose wives had died were catered for by the Board agreeing to admit motherless children, subject to a small payment by the father towards the maintenance of his children.

In recognition of the generous support given to the Home by women employees of the Southern Railway during the War, the Board decided, in 1945, to accept their fatherless children, even if the father was never a Railwayman. The conditions of admission in this type of case were that the father's death had occurred after the mother joined the Railway service and that she should contribute towards her children's maintenance on a similar basis to the payments made by fathers.

Until January, 1946 it was the policy of the Orphanage to refuse the admission of children under five years of age. Now, however, it has been recognised that a mother, and more so a father, often needs more help when left with a baby than when left with an older child. To provide for these children a Babies' Annex has been opened.

EDUCATION.

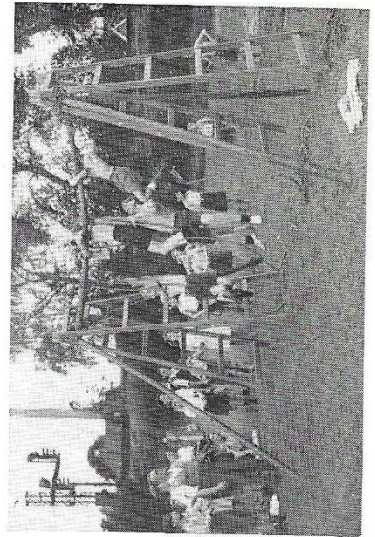
The education of the children is not carried out at the Orphanage. The Board prefer to use the Institution as a "Home", from which the children go out to school as they would from their own homes. Thus, they are not isolated but meet and associate with other children. The majority attend the local Surrey County Council Primary and Secondary Schools, whilst the children with aptitude for higher education attend the County Grammar Schools and Technical Colleges. Until the 1945 Education Act came into force it was the practice of the Board to pay the fees for higher education whenever the schoolmaster recommended a child as suitable. Expenditure has never been stinted or limits placed on the education made available. Special rooms are reserved for the use of children who are required to do homework. Many educational successes are noted in the records of the Orphanage.

In the event of a child being mentally retarded the fees are paid for the maintenance of a child in a special school, or at home with the mother.

The preparation of the children for taking their places as citizens after leaving the Home and the inculcation of a decent attitude to the various aspects of sex receive the personal attention of the Matron and Secretary-Superintendent.

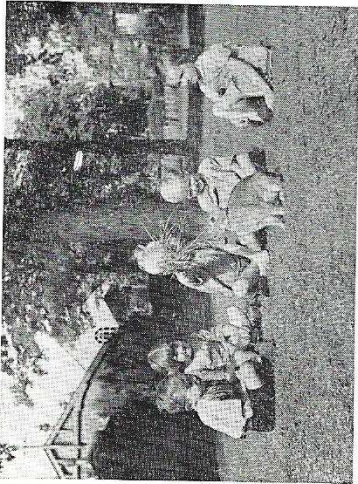
RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

Each child attends the Church of the denomination specified by the parent. All the children go to Sunday morning Services and any who wish can attend the Sunday evening Services, but no pressure is placed on the children to go to Church more than once on a Sunday. Morning prayers are said by the Secretary-Superintendent or Matron at a general assembly of the children



OVER
THEY GO!

WITH ONE OF THE PETS



before breakfast each day excepting Sundays. There are two Honorary Chaplains representing the Church of England and Nonconformist Churches who come and go at will among the children and are members of the Board of Management. Any children of the Roman Catholic faith are maintained at the expense of the Orphanage in a Roman Catholic Home.

MEDICAL CARE.

A Visiting Medical Officer is responsible for the medical care of the children. Consultants are called in whenever necessary. A fully-equipped Operating Theatre is available in the Hospital Annexe for any kind of operation and treatment. Use is made of the services offered by the Clinics associated with the local schools.

DIET.

No attempt is made by the Board to confine expenditure on food to a pre-arranged maximum figure. There is no set repetitive diet and every effort is made to introduce variety. The staff eat with the children and of the same menu.

GENERAL CONDITIONS.

The boys and girls are divided into sections grouped according to age. The junior children (5—7) years are in a mixed section. Approximately 20 children are in each of the senior sections and 15 in the mixed juniors. Men are in charge of the older boys. Mingling and visiting between the sections of boys and girls is allowed and encouraged. Every endeavour is made to promote freedom of movement, speech and personal judgment vis-a-vis with the life of a child in an ordinary well-run private family. The children are allowed to go out for walks, outings and shopping on their own, and, except for the juniors, are not escorted to school. Children of twelve years of age and over are permitted to own and ride bicycles. Friendships with

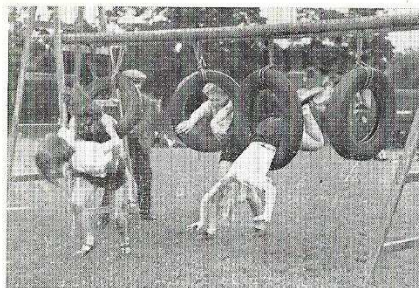
other children outside the Orphanage are welcomed and visiting between their respective homes is allowed. If any of the children wish to join they may become members of one or other of the Youth Organisations operating in the district.

Each "Dayroom" is equipped with wireless and easy chairs. The children manage their own pocket money but usually avail themselves of facilities for "banking" with the staff. Letters are not censored but in practice many of the letters are voluntarily shown to the staff because of the friendly relations between the children and the staff.

The children are permitted to use the Library freely. They are represented by a "Committee" who recommend the books to be purchased and take turns at supervising the use of the Library.

The children are allowed to go home for four weeks in the summer holidays. A holiday home is arranged for any child who has no relations. The children usually go camping for a week in the Whitsun holiday.

There is a monthly Visiting Day when the Home is thrown open to the children's parents and friends on a Saturday afternoon. The visitors have tea with the children. The opportunity is taken to discuss matters of mutual interest with the parents with whom co-operation is sought in the upbringing of the children.



MORE
OBSTACLES

PENSIONS.

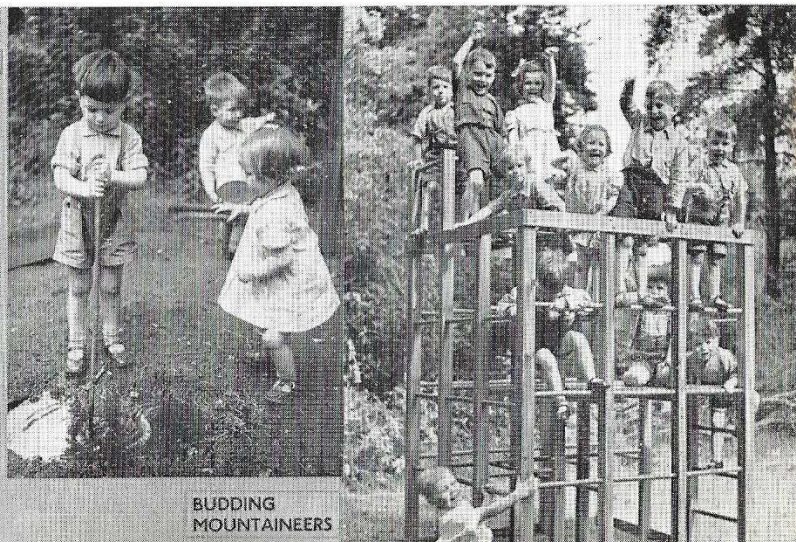
In the cases of fatherless children, the mother is allowed to collect and retain the Orphan pension as a contribution and inducement towards maintaining a home to which the children can return for holidays and when they leave the Orphanage. The "War Orphan" pension which the Government will only pay to the persons who actually have the care of the child, is collected by the Orphanage but an equivalent sum is credited to a "Welfare Fund." This is used to provide a Bank Account (maximum £50) for the child who is the subject of the pension and to assist in the maintenance of any child who needs help after leaving the Home.

AFTER-WELFARE.

When a child leaves the Orphanage full particulars are sent to the appropriate District Committee. The District Committee then arranges for a Welfare Sub-Committee to watch over the interests and welfare of the children until they reach the age of 21 years. Each child is consulted about the occupation he or she wishes to follow and assistance is given in finding suitable work if requested by the parent or guardian. Advice is offered if there is a tendency shown towards taking up "Blind Alley" employment. When apprenticeships are arranged and a premium is required, it may be paid by the Orphanage, and a supplementary maintenance allowance is paid, if needed.

Every fatherless child is provided with a leaving outfit and is re-imbursed for the cost of additional items purchased later until £30 has been expended on the total outfit. The child selects the clothing comprising the outfit. No old boy or girl who gets into trouble, or experiences misfortune, ever calls in vain for assistance and no effort is spared towards securing the re-habilitation of the child. A re-union is held on the third Saturday in October every year.

MUDLARKS



BUDDING
MOUNTAINEERS

Notes on the Southern Railway Homes for Old People

President: SIR EUSTACE MISSENDEN, O.B.E.

Trustees:

SIR EUSTACE MISSENDEN, O.B.E. J. H. CHITTY, Esq. F. G. PRICE, Esq.

Chairman: G. T. PHEBY, Esq., J.P.

FOUNDATION.

The idea of the Southern Railway Servants' Orphanage sponsoring and running a Home for old railway employees was first mooted in 1939 by the late Mr. H. J. O'Neill, who was then Chairman of the Board of Management, but the incidence of the World War caused the proposals to be shelved for the time being. In 1944, when an increasing urgency for the provision of care for old people was being more widely recognised, the matter was raised again in a recommendation to the Board of Management of the Orphanage that they should include Homes for Old People in their sphere of activities. The exploratory talks revealed many Constitutional difficulties which had to be solved and resulted in protracted negotiations and consultations with legal advisers. A scheme was eventually drafted and the necessary amendments to the Rule Book were prepared, the outcome of which was that the Board of Management of the Orphanage, in 1946, were able to constitute themselves the Board of Management of the Homes for Old People under the Chairmanship of Mr. G. T. Pheby, J.P., with Mr. J. H. Chitty as Chairman of the Managing Committee and Mr. A. G. Evershed as Secretary-Superintendent.

Once the preliminaries had been settled the problem of finding premises was tackled vigorously and many properties were looked over in a search for a suitable house. Finally the house which was to become the first Old People's Home was offered to the Board in January, 1947. Repairs, redecorations, minor adaptations and furnishing occupied the next few months, and the opening by Colonel E. Gore Browne, D.S.O., Chairman of the Southern Railway Company, took place on 22nd September, 1947. The House was named "Missenden House" in honour of Sir Eustace Missenden, O.B.E., General Manager of the Southern Railway and Chairman elect of the Railway Executive, British Railways.



RAYMOND
AND
PHILIP

COMING
CHAMPIONS

BETTY



ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE.

The Management of the Home is identical with that of the Orphanage, being served by the same Board of Management, District Committee system and Executive Officers. A Standing Committee is responsible for the detailed management of the Home.

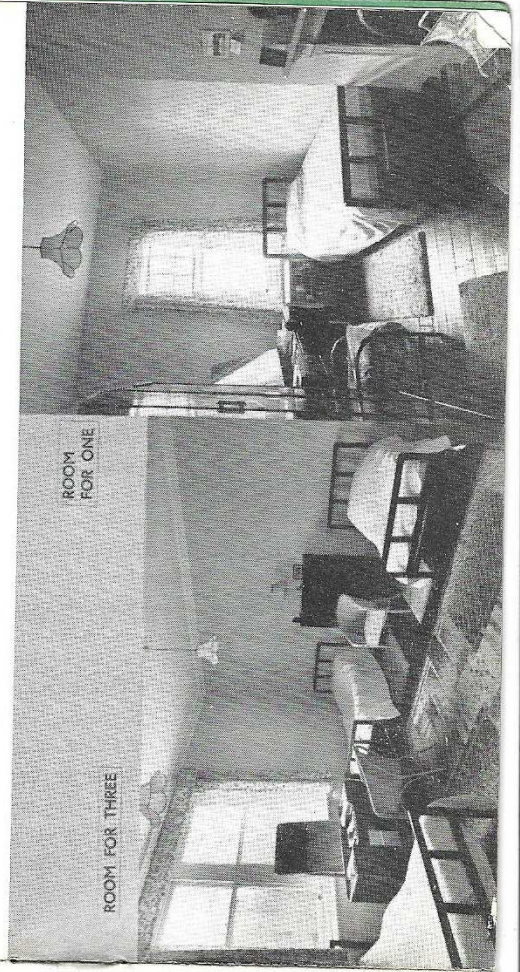
The finances of the Home, whilst joined for everyday purposes with those of the Orphanage are nevertheless kept distinct in the books of the two Institutions and published annually in separate sets of Accounts.

The income, apart from donations, is mainly derived from two sources, i.e. paybill subscriptions and weekly payments by the residents. After giving due notice of their intention to all Railway employees supporting the Orphanage through paybill subscriptions (see notes on Orphanage finance) the Board of Management annually allocate a proportion of their income from this source to the funds of the Old People's Home. The residents are called upon to pay towards their maintenance a part of their weekly income from Pensions and other sources. This payment is assessed by mutual agreement between the residents and the Board of Management, but it is the policy of the Board to leave the residents with a balance sufficient to meet their needs for personal amenities, clothing, holidays and incidental expenses.

PREMISES AND SITUATION.

The house is situated on the south side of the Railway in a residential neighbourhood, the quietness of which is pleasantly relieved by the young life to be seen, and occasionally heard, in the County Grammar School for Girls, on the other side of the road. The Station and town centre are only five minutes' walk away, a walk made easier for old people by the flatness of the terrain.

The premises stand in an acre of garden and are a model of planning for easy domestic administration. The ground floor comprises two large sitting rooms, a dining room, kitchen, a single bedroom, warden's room, a bathroom and the usual offices. The first floor provides nine bedrooms and a bathroom and the second floor two bedrooms, a boxroom and a spacious attic. Two of the bedrooms accommodate three beds, three are double rooms, and the remainder are single rooms. All the rooms have large windows and all the bedrooms are fitted with wash-basins with hot and cold water laid on. All the principal rooms are warmed by central heating and the others have alternative forms of heating to the open coal fires which are available in all rooms. Brightness is the keynote of the decorations and the furnishing. Easy chairs, rugs, flowers and other contributions to an atmosphere of peace, comfort and security abound. A large conservatory adjoins the house and the garden makes a useful contribution of fruit and vegetables to the larder.



CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION.

Subject to accommodation being available, any retired employee of the Southern Railway or of the Southern Region, British Railways, is eligible for admission, as also is his wife or widow. A condition of admission for those retiring since the inception of the Home is that of having been a regular subscriber to the funds of the Institution for a period of years, which will be laid down by the Board when sufficient time has elapsed for this purpose.

Applicants must pass a medical examination, and until a suitably staffed and equipped Home is open to infirm residents, it is necessary that the residents shall be in a reasonably sound state of health consistent with their age. By arrangement with the Management the residents may take into the Home certain personal possessions which they treasure, but as the Home is fully furnished the accommodation for personal property of a bulky nature is necessarily limited.

To obviate possible difficulties in settling the affairs of the residents when they die, it is a condition of admission that applicants must prepare their Will and for the Secretary to know the name and address of the Executor.

GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS.

The general arrangements of the Home are those which might be found in any quiet residential hotel. There are no "Institutional" rules to be observed. The residents are free to come and go and do as they please providing that they conduct themselves in a manner not prejudicial to the good name of the Home, and the comfort of their fellow residents. The policy of the Management is to foster a family atmosphere in the Home, whilst protecting the privacy and freedom of the individual.

Apart from being expected to make, or help in making, their own beds where they are able, the residents are not called upon to assist in any domestic duties. Those, however, who want an occupation and feel they would like to do something towards the house or garden chores are allowed to help as much as they wish. In exchange for their weekly "rent" the residents are provided with accommodation, food, laundry, recreational facilities and any nursing attention not supplied by the State Health Service. An "Amenities Fund" provides for the celebration of special occasions. In pursuit of the policy of preserving the independence of the residents they are expected to make their own arrangements for clothing, holidays and other personal expenses. Each resident may be absent for a total of six weeks in a year without paying "rent."

The diet is plentiful, plain and wholesome and is as varied as possible within the limits of the availability of foodstuffs. Four meals a day are provided and are taken in a "Dining Room" at tables each seating four persons.

In addition to various games and radio, the Home has received the welcome gift of a Television Receiver.

The residents may entertain their personal visitors in the Home on any day between the hours of 11 a.m. and 9 p.m.

THE OUTLOOK.

The small band of "visionaries" who inspired the Board of Management with their enthusiasm have every reason to be proud of their achievements.

With no experience and in the face of innumerable difficulties these "Pioneers" set out to prove the possibility of a "Home from Home" where old people could spend the autumn of their lives in happiness and comfort in a "family" community. To describe their efforts as having been "crowned with success" is almost an understatement as mere words cannot describe the atmosphere of cheerful friendliness which pervades the "Home." Visitors who associate the idea of an Old People's Home with the waiting room for the last train on a winter's night very quickly change their impression to an association with a party of excursionists on their way home, tired but full of happiness and good spirits after a summer outing.

A lesson from this project which the Board of Management have taken to heart is the fact that they have only touched the fringe of the need for such Homes. The discovery of so many old railwaymen who are infirm, unwanted and ill-cared for is tragic and has filled the Board with a sense of urgency in this matter. The Board cannot, however, expand their work until more money is available. They have been heavily overspending their income in recent years and cannot afford the capital outlay for the purchase and equipment of more property until their income has been substantially improved.

It is hoped, therefore, that all the staff of the Southern Region will rally round the Orphanage and Old People's Home and do their utmost to provide a 100 per cent. subscription list for their own Homes, and that any member of the travelling public who learns of the Railwaymen's efforts to look after his own orphans and old people will understand that their gifts will be gratefully received.