

Notwithstanding the increased speed the Guilds are putting forth, none of the work is scamped. The quality of Guild work is of a very high standard. The Surveyor to the Bently-with-Arksey Urban District Council stated in writing: "The quality of the work is extra good and far superior to that done by any other contractors in the district." A high official of the Ministry of Health declared that the work of the guildsmen at the Clayton Estate was "the best in England and Wales." The Chairman of the Contracts Subcommittee of the Manchester City Corporation said, "Work on Guild contracts beats everything." The brickwork on the Clayton Estate is the finest I have ever seen. I heard complaints concerning this scheme; production was excellent, but quality was too good! The Guild, of course, could reduce costs even lower by putting in inferior work. But no Guild craftsman would willingly consent to scamp his work. One of the most hopeful signs of the Guild movement is the revival of the craft spirit. "We shall do work worthy of the Middle Ages," exclaimed one of the Manchester operatives. Every guildsman I talked to appeared proud of the work the Guild was doing. A London operative said: "We want the people to point to those houses, and say, 'Those fine places were built by the Guild.'"

A wood worker of 35 years' experience said it was a real pleasure to work for the Guild. Life was worth living because his craft was "honoured and not debased." In the joinery shop the men took pleasure in pointing out the excellence of the work, and how it differed from ordinary jerry building. At Walthamstow, where the men had insisted on doing *all* the joinery work on the site, I examined the cottage dressers. The drawers were made to fit, and were dove-tailed not only in front, but at the back. On another scheme a carpenter was at work on the frame of a mansard roof. It is usual to mortice and tenon only the main posts, and to "cut in" the intermediaries. On this job all were morticed and tenoned. "We are craftsmen," said another, "and the first thing with us is our craft. We like doing our work well. There's no pleasure in scamping. Any man who is a craftsman will tell you that."

PAYMENT FOR LOST TIME.

Guilds reserve the right to pay guildsmen full wages in wet weather or fine, in sickness or on holiday. Continuous pay, it is claimed, does not increase the cost of production, but actually reduces it, because the workers "pull their weight" under this system. This is corroborated by the resident architect on the Walthamstow housing schemes, who said: "I have never seen a contractor who was able to get his men to work so well." Cynics have stated that this provision for continuous pay will tend to encourage operatives working for the Guild to make their job a convalescent home. This prophecy has not, as far as I could gather, been fulfilled. The pay sheet of the Manchester Guild for the quarter ended

December 30th, 1920, showed that the amount of money paid out in respect of time not worked was less than 1 per cent. of the total wages paid, notwithstanding the fact that during the quarter under review a considerable amount of bad weather was experienced.

At Walkden, where an average of forty men had been employed for twenty-three weeks, the amount paid in respect of time lost through wet weather averaged 17s. 6d. a week over the whole period. The fact is, that under the Guild system there is less "raining off" than on the other jobs. The Chairman of the Worseley District Council Housing Committee informed me that the men on the Walkden scheme had worked during all sorts of bad weather. One man, who had been on the job for twenty-three weeks, had only "rained off" three hours. The Chairman of the Housing Committee said: "The men worked many a time in bad weather when I would not have worked in it." It should be stated, however, that under the Guild system men are willing to be put to any job that can be found when weather conditions make it impossible for them to carry on their own craft.

I came across much evidence to show that guildsmen generally are very anxious not to "lean on the pool." Of course, there are exceptions. In Manchester I had my attention drawn to an instance of two men who "went sick" and drew their pay just the same as though they had been at work. Their "sickness" did not prevent their being discovered in a public-house! This instance was reported and the men were dismissed, and their dismissal met with the approval of the Works Committee.

COSTS OF BUILDING.

As to the claim that the Guilds can build cheaper than ordinary contractors, there are grounds for thinking that when the figures of actual cost have been ascertained, the claim will be supported by facts. Judgment on this point, however, must be suspended. With the exception of two non-parlour houses (part of a contract for seventy-seven houses) built by Guild labour for the Bentley-with-Arksey Urban District Council, no houses have been completed under Guild contracts. This contract was undertaken in November, 1920, and in less than four months the first two houses were ready for occupation. The summary of cost, certified by the Council's surveyor, was as follows:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|------------------------------------|-----|----|----|
| Bricklayers' materials | 238 | 14 | 7 |
| Tilers' materials | 96 | 1 | 8 |
| Plasterers' materials | 41 | 17 | 9 |
| Plumbers' materials | 109 | 0 | 6 |
| Painters' materials | 2 | 3 | 8 |
| Carpenters' and Joiners' materials | 203 | 14 | 1 |
| Ironmongery | 58 | 14 | 1 |
| Electrician | 40 | 8 | 0 |
| Water charges | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Carriage (railway) | 9 | 12 | 0 |
| Carting | 17 | 18 | 0 |
| Wages | 457 | 6 | 6 |

£1,367 10 10