

fees, he should be paid in part by salary and in part by fees, to be regulated by a moderate and fixed scale, the meaning of which, as we know from the frequent complaints recorded, was that the fees were arbitrary, uncertain, and depending very much on the amount that it was thought could be extorted.

A similar report was made respecting the records in Scotland, but much less detailed.

A new Commission was issued in May, 1806. The records of Ireland were examined by some of the sub-commissioners named, who reported to the Lord-Lieutenant, and a separate Commission for Ireland was issued in 1810. Subsequent Commissions were issued in June, 1817, in June, 1821, in April, 1825, and in March, 1831. Reports which had been submitted annually, had ceased from 1819, so that the proceedings during several years cannot well be ascertained.

It was on the final report of the last named Committee, made in 1837, that the Public Records Act was passed, under which they are now managed. During the thirty-seven years over which these Commissions had extended, their attention, it is stated, was directed more particularly to printing the records, and very little was done for their care and future preservation. It appears also, that their expenses exceeded the Parliamentary votes. In fact, the Report of the Special Committee on this Commission in 1836, with the evidence adduced, shows a want of supervision and a gross state of neglect of the most ordinary checks on expenditure, that would be simply incredible, were it not so clearly proved. The Report of 1837, called forth apparently by the strictures of this Committee, gives the steps taken to carry out the objects of the Commission.

Questions more minute than those of 1800 had been sent to three classes :—

I. To the keepers of Public Records.

II. To persons having the custody of papers of the nature of records, or of other historical writings.

III. To town clerks or other officers of municipal corporations. A list of the different classes sending returns will, I think, be useful.

If the questions were sent to Scotland, there is no mention made of the fact in the report or returns.

General Repositories	7
Houses of Parliament.....	2
Offices of State.....	8
(Privy Council sent no return.)	
Courts of Justice.....	17
(No return, 4.)	
Exchequer.....	29
Circuits	6
Great Sessions of Wales.....	12
Counties Palatine	7
Cinque Ports	2
Stannary Courts	2
Clerks of the Peace	31
(No returns, 23.)	
Maritime Courts	0
Ecclesiastical Courts	9
(No returns, 9.)	
County Registries.....	4
Cathedrals	12
(No returns, 15.)	
Universities:	
Oxford.....	9
(No returns, 15.)	
Cambridge	1
Inns of Court.....	3
(No return, 1.)	