

2. (a) The Committee of 1830 had the powers held by previous committees extended, so as to include in their investigations the state of the Maritime and Ecclesiastical Courts, the Cathedral and University Libraries, the collections constituting the British Museum, and the public repositories in Scotland. A list was accordingly prepared of all public repositories, whether the papers in them had been previously examined or not. These are given in detail, but I have thought it better to give simply the classification so as to show the extent of the inquiries made by this Committee.

The repositories were thus classified: General Repositories, Houses of Parliament, Offices of State, Courts of Justice, Cathedrals and Universities, Inns of Court, and Public Libraries. A similar list was prepared for Scotland.

(b) Searching inquiries were instituted, a series of questions being sent to each repository. These required information as to its contents; the state of the building as to security and accommodation; the degree in which its catalogues, calendars and indexes were complete; the number, duties and remuneration of the officers belonging to it; distinguishing between those repositories which were open of right to all His Majesty's subjects and those only established for the safe custody of matters belonging to some particular branch of Government, or some peculiar institution. The inquiry did not extend to the nature and condition of public documents and papers immediately connected with the current business of any of the great offices of Government in matters of revenue or war, and the Committee forbore to inquire into the existence of public documents in private collections.

The Committee reporting in 1732 had received eighteen returns to inquiries. In 1800 the returns are stated in the report to have been between 300 and 400. I find the numbers on examination to have been:—

For England.....	254
For Scotland.....	49
Special reports.....	8

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These latter were most valuable, being obtained from persons eminent for skill and experience, giving an explanation of the modes it would be most advisable to adopt for writing and preserving the public records, books and papers in all offices and repositories, besides information concerning the structure and distribution of the buildings intended for their preservation.

(c) A personal examination was also made of the principal repositories in London; the state of the buildings and the care of the documents contained in them, the result of which is given in detail, chiefly of local interest, although most important in its consequences and in the power it gave the Committee to deal with matters of which they had obtained a personal knowledge.

3. The same remark as to the local value of parts of the report applies to a large proportion of the section, entitled: "Further Measures Recommended." The preparation of complete calendars and indexes is, however, considered as most important. There is one recommendation made that is liable to misconstruction if the system of paying the officers at that time is not borne in mind, and as the system is not referred to in the report, but taken for granted as existing, the recommendation might form a very bad precedent here. The Committee recommended, that calendars and indexes, "the private property of the officers, should be purchased for the public use and appropriated to the office." It must be remembered that, down to a comparatively recent date, the officers were paid by fees; some altogether, others in addition to a *small fixed salary*; that these calendars and indexes were prepared for their own use, in their own time, to guide them in searches for which they were paid by fees, and that it was not only better for themselves, but was of great benefit to the public, and they should be able at once to give the information required. The only reference I find in the report to this system is in the article referring to the "Establishment and Duties of Office," in which it is recommended that if an officer has no salary, but is paid altogether b