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No. 19.

Local Government

Districts 13, 14, 16

From Charles Booth,
9, Adelphi Terrace,
Strand, London, W.C.

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Mr. C. L. Young (Hackney)

Experience, &c.

Social Decline of Hackney

District 13 — 1G/13/1 — July 20, 1892 — J. A.

Mr. Chas. L. Young, 21 High St. Kingsland

Mr. Young is in a large way of business as a maker & dealer in Domestic Machinery, Grassmotters &c. He has been in the district 20 years, & during all that time has been connected with the Middlesex Conference Hall. He has been a member of the Hackney Guardians for 5 years, & of the Vestry for 3 years. Has done a great deal of lecturing & public speaking on religion & temperance, travelling about a good deal for this purpose under the aegis of the Conference Hall.

Socially, the Hackney district has unquestionably declined during the last 10 to 15 years. Large numbers of good houses — such as those in Colvestone Crescent, Albrighton Crescent, Sandringham Rd., &c. — formerly occupied by single families with servants, are now let out in tenements or lodgings. The building of new houses further out, & a very good tram & train service, have led to the migration of

Poverty & Crowding.

many of the better class, & their places have been taken by a decent working class, who now form the bulk of the population. He does not know of any influx of poor from a particular part, but generally of population & a gradual settling of people from other places, has led to the filling up of houses vacated by the well-to-do, so that there has been no falling off in rents – rather the contrary – more being sometimes made of the former-built houses than when they were let to one family.

There is a good deal of poverty & overcrowding in the district. In the West Hackney ward, for wh. he acted as Secy to the Jubilee Dinner Committee, there were 6,000 applicants for the dinner, & in many cases the people were living 3, 4 & 5 families in a house. The streets adjoining Dalston police station, with Gillett St. & "Norris Island" (a group of poor streets off Rendlesham Rd, Hackney Downs) are instances of poor & crowded streets.

"Navvies Island."

Drink.

"Navvies Island" consists of some half dozen streets in a well-to-do neighbourhood. The property is modern, & was erected by a builder out of spite because he could not get certain land adjoining. It is entirely small houses, & has considerably depreciated the surrounding property. The other builders have retaliated by shutting it in, so that the only public entrance is from Pendlebury Rd. Exit may be obtained, however, through one of the houses on the other side by paying 1d a week. This is generally done, & on Sunday mornings a man may be seen going from door to door collecting the penny toll. –

The land is let on a short lease, wh. will soon expire, & the property will then no doubt be demolished.

Mr. Young does not think there has been any decrease in the drinking habits of the people. The public houses are all thriving, & have gone up greatly in value. This he knows

Early Marriages & Immorality

as a member of the Hackney Assessment Committee. The Women are speculating very largely, & are spending a great deal of money on altering & renovating the public-houses.

There is not the enthusiastic temperance spirit that existed a few years ago, when the great revival took place.

The Guardians frequently have instances before them of the very bad results of early marriages. There is a good deal of sexual immorality. At nearly every ~~[illegible]~~ fortnightly meeting 4 or 5 cases of pregnancy of single girls come before the guardians, & in most cases the girls do not even know the father of their child, or where he lives. They may just know his Christian name - "Tom" or "Jack" &c. - but that is all. By far the greater part of this improper intercourse takes place on Bank Holidays or similar days. The girls are mainly laundresses or servants. The laundry girls are rather a bad lot.

"Rescue" agencies

The Salvation Army is partly responsible for so many of these cases coming before the Hackney Guardians, as they have a home for fallen girls in Mare St., to wh. cases are brought from various districts, & many of them, either before or after confinement, find their way to the workhouse.

There is a private committee of 5 ladies wh. works with the Guardians in trying to rescue these fallen girls, getting them situations, which the Guardians will take charge of the babies for a time or they are provided for in other ways.

The Wh. Y.B.S. looks well after workhouse girls, & there is a society for rescuing girls who have fallen. Rev. Y. admits that there does not seem to be so much done for girls who have not misbehaved, or who are not workhouse children, but there is a branch of the Y.W.C.A., & the Chesterton Girls Club in High St. Homerton.

Poor Law Administration

Out relief is given to a large extent, the Guardians believing it to be a better plan, wherever practicable, than forcing people into the house. It is essential, however, that the recipients shd. have other means of support, the relief being intended to augment what is obtained from other sources. Usually there is a house to keep together, friends will help a little, & something may be earned. The relief averages about 3/- a week per adult, with a proportion of bread, tea, sugar, or rice, in some instances 5/- in the winter.

The people have an ~~old~~ abhorrence of the workhouse, but come for out-relief more frequently than they need to do, usually because some neighbour is getting the relief — "hers. So-&-so has it, so why should not I?" Such people, however, do not get the relief, strict inquiries being made in each case.

The great difficulty the Guardians have is in getting the people to state their

true circumstances. They are afraid to say how much they get for fear their application shd. be refused, whereas it would be more likely to be the other way, the Guardians being always glad to hear there is a little income to wh. they can add so as to ensure an adequate subsistence. People will frequently say they have nothing, & so lead to the refusal of the out-relief for wh. they are applying.

Mr. Y. complains (like almost all Guardians) of the unsoundness of some of the Local Govt Board regulations. Instances that wh. compels the Guardians to make each inmate a certain fixed allowance of bread. This leads to very great waste, & the Guardians have now taken the matter in hand & are "defying the lightning" by giving each inmate what he asks for & no more.

A few of the Workhouse children are boarded out, with very satisfactory

Amusements

results. They have also cottages at Homerton, near the Workhouses, to wh. the children are sent without ever entering the Workhouse at all. The clothing of all the children (both in the cottages & at the schools at Brentwood) is of a strictly non-distinctive character, & is not even of a uniform type. Mr. G. was the originator of this practice, 3 years ago.

There is not much in the way of indoor amusements in Hackney. A theatre is now being built in Stoke Newington, & the Colosseum at Dalston, after being closed for a long time, is now being altered to a Theatre of Varieties. There are the Wilfore Rooms & Mortlake Hall, for concerts, dances, &c. Hackney has a fine town hall, but it is rarely used except for parochial purposes, as the Vestry itself meets in the large hall & it is seated accordingly. Considerable additions have

Thrift.

Religion.

Sunday Recreation &
Sunday Drinking.

just been made, however, or may lead to the hall being more generally used.

He does not think there is any growth of thrift. People as a rule spend all they get. He has about 5000 customers who have goods on the hire-purchase system, & they pay worse than ever they did.

There is a good deal of activity amongst religious bodies. Every organization has its missionaries & various agencies; there is open air preaching at almost every street corner, & a great deal is done, but with little result. The people are not hostile; many listen respectfully & there is no opposition, but they are mainly indifferent. He thinks this is largely because of the many ways in wh. people can now spend the Sunday, ~~&~~ the result of the work of the Sunday League, & of

Open air Preaching.

Radical Clubs, &c. Take Ben Bridge, for instance. He has, for some years, lectured there on Sunday mornings. Where 10 or 15 years ago you would hardly see one brake a day you will now see 300 pass there, whilst enormous crowds go out there in order to get a Sunday morning drink. Not long ago he counted 800 people go into the "Ship Aground," Ben Bridge Rd. in about 2 hours on a Sunday morning. They come largely from Hackney & Hackney Wick, & many of them he is sure are not the necessary 3 miles from home. He has got up at his meetings & told them so, but they take it in good part.

Temperance meetings are held at this Spot, but they make very little headway.

The Conference Hall alone sends out 50 men to preach every Sunday, & has a great number of agencies of all kinds. It is a quite non-sectarian body, & is

Charity.

Police

supported almost entirely by voluntary contributions & voluntary work.

Attendance at the different places of worship varies greatly – some are nearly full & others the reverse – all depends on the minister.

A good deal of charity is given, but nearly all in connection with the churches. The Guardians have a legacy of £100 left them from wh. to give £1 a year to 10 poor childless widows. The widows are changed each year.

The police do their work very well, & are on good terms with the people.

People to see: –
Col. Norton (Conference Hall)
Mr. Hulland, schoolmaster Rendlesham Rd Bd School, Chairman of Sanitary

Committee of Vestry.

Dr. Jackman, police surgeon & union medical officer.

Dr. Barlow (Walsham Lane) very old resident.

J. Fenton Jones, Chairman of Guardians
12 K. Edward Rd., S. Hackney

Jas. Chambers, Chairman of Vestry
Lauderdale Rd.

Dr Warry.

Sanitary matters 6 years ago.

Dr. J. K. Warry. Med Officer of Health for Hackney
July. 26th

Dr. Warry is a rather stolid looking man of middle age, though quite courteous is not of a communicative nature I could not get him to talk, but by dint of questions with aid of his reports I got a fair idea of the work of the public health department of the Hackney Vestry. As to the other work of the Vestry he knew - or professed to know - very little.

Although he did not actually say so, I gather that when he took up his position 6 years ago Sanitary matters in Hackney were in a backward state.

For this great parish of well over 200000 people there were only 5 sanitary inspectors, & anything like a systematic house inspection was both impossible & unattempted. There was no division of the work, the inspectors visits depended on complaints being made of unsanitary conditions, Dust & refuse were removed in a haphazard way depending first on the initiative of the householder the finding of the big D. when wanted, next on the ability or willingness of the dustman to see the D when displayed, & generally on the efficiency of the private contractor employed. Bakehouses were rarely inspected

Increase of Inspectors in 1894
& position now.

Dust Removal.

factories workshops never; & tenements or lodging houses only on outside report of nuisance existing.

The doctor set himself to work to alter this, & in 1894 as a result of 2 or 3 years dogged complaint, got the number of inspectors increased to 9; now there are 11 of them & each has his district of from 2000 to 3000 houses, ~~so that they may~~ 2 of them having smaller districts so that they may devote part of their time to the inspection of canal boats & the procuring of samples under the Food & Drugs act.

The removal of dust is now performed on a weekly house-to-house system & much improvement has resulted there being very few complaints, but the inhabitants are not yet used to the system, & a large number refuse to allow the weekly removal, not apparently realizing yet that they are liable to a penalty for refusal. The doctor advocates now the due cautioning of these people with a view to proceedings, & bearing in mind the risks attending the present method of carting dust away, & also the proportional increase of expense lately, has got the Vestry to agree to construct a dust destructor in connection with their proposed electric light scheme.

New Duties Imposed by the
Public Health Acts, 1891 & '95

How these Duties are being carried out.

The Public Health Act of 1891 imposed several new duties upon the local Sanitary Authority, chief amongst them being the inspection of factories & workshops, tenements, & houses let in lodgings, the proprietor of the latter ~~having~~ having to obtain a certificate of proper sanitary conditions from the medical officer. Other new duties are the abatement of smoke nuisances; removal of dung or refuse & cleaning & disinfecting of rooms after infectious disease. Where these matters have been neglected by the owners; examination of water supply fittings of new houses, &c.

These duties were further added to by the amending Act of 1895, which brought laundries under the provisions of the Acts, prohibits new underground bakehouses, increases the cubic space necessary for each worker in a factory, &c, & makes it compulsory for each occupier of a workshop to notify the same, with a few general particulars, to the Sanitary Authority.

The officials of the Vestry have not yet fully grasped all these fresh tasks, but are gradually getting up with them.

A commencement was made in 1893 with the making

Factories & Workshops

Lodging Houses.

Cowsheds, &c.

& issuing of bye laws as to paving of yards & open spaces attached to dwellings & the cleansing of cisterns.

In 1894 the inspection of factories & workshops began, 72 being visited of which only 13 were found to be satisfactory. The number increased to 170 in 1895, 96 of them having some defect which had to be remedied. In 1896 103 were registered under the Act of the previous year [already alluded to], & 234 were inspected, defects being found in about 200 cases. The doctor believes there are fully 2000 factories & workshops in the district, so that some time must elapse before these are all properly brought under supervision.

~~Early~~ In 1895 bye-laws were ~~compiled~~ drawn up dealing with lodging houses. These are being brought gradually into operation. 477 notices requiring information were sent out in 96, & 380 of them brought in returns, though further inquiries were necessary in 153 of these. The doctor estimates that in the present year at least 500 lodging houses will be fully registered & under periodical inspection.

Cowsheds & Slaughterhouses are well looked after. They have decreased in number since 1892, the former from

Bakehouses.

Canal Boats

Water Supply

68 to 49; the latter from 47 to 37.

Bakehouses have also been brought into a considerably better condition. In 1894 the medical officer was able to take up this neglected work & inspected 122 ~~bakeries~~ bakeries finding a bad state of things to generally prevail. Inspection & improvement has been steadily kept up since.

Canal boats, now allotted to one regular inspector, are more frequently inspected. No work being made last year.

The question of water supply has given a good deal of trouble, & is still defective at times. About ⅔ of the parish is supplied by the S. London Waterworks Compy. & ⅓ by the New River Co. The latter compy has delayed considerably in giving a constant supply & has only just completed doing so. As far back as '92 the doctor complained of the intermittent supply given by the N.R.Co. in Stoke Newington, showed that out of 346 houses visited the supply to 246 was liable to contamination. But it is the S. London.

Condition of River Lea.

Co, with its professed constant supply, that has given most dissatisfaction. In '94 the supply was defective in many cases; in 1895 there was the historical water famine, & in 1896 there was a short supply for 2 months or more. He has no doubt that in the last 2 years the failure has seriously affected public health.

Connected with this question of water supply is the condition of the River Lea, against which the doctor has been protesting ever since he entered office here. The river is polluted by the Walthamstow & Leyton sewage farms & in hot weather emits very bad smells & is certainly injurious to health. Large numbers of persons bathe in it, & take great risks in doing so. In 1886 a select committee of the House of Commons inquired into the matter & presented an interim report showing a bad state of things. Then came the recess & no more was heard of the Comt. The condition of the river is much worse now, & the Lea conservators do nothing to remedy it. A memorial was last year sent to the L.C.C. by the Sanitary Committee on the subject. Last year the L.C.C proposed [subject to approval of Hackney] to make bathing pools, to be partly ~~paid~~ fed by subsoil water & partly from the

Improvements:

(a) Jerusalem Gardens.

(b) Hackney Wick.

Lea at high tide, but the Hackney Vestry represented that it would be unwise to thus give official sanction to what, owing to the pollution of the river, would be dangerous to health. The scheme was consequently abandoned, & the bathing goes on unrecognised & unregulated. The condition of things is aggravated by the fact that the Council has made a large recreation ground adjoining the river.

An effective improvement was carried out in 1894 by the demolition of the old back-to-back cottages in Jerusalem Gardens, Mare St. [opposite the Town Hall] They were an unhealthy class of buildings - defective & dilapidated - & were a source of anxiety for years. The houses, on the representation of the Med. Officer, were closed by the magistrates order, & the site cleared.

A most troublesome part of Hackney from a sanitary point of view is Hackney Wick. In 1895 a very heavy mortality, especially amongst infants, called the doctor's special attention to this part. He found that the houses were built on bad soil, made up - horse refuse &

Illegitimate Children.

Health.

on a bed of clay, the basements were rarely concreted, but consisted of wood, which allowed the exudations from the soil to readily penetrate into the houses, & the walls were consequently damp. The drains & sewers had not a sufficient fall & sewage stood in them. Poverty & over-crowding were rife, & the mothers went usually to work. Under such conditions a high infant mortality was to be expected. Since this time a great many of the houses have had concrete basements put in, new damp courses in walls, others have been reported on & properly done up, & the L.C.C. are constructing a new sewer to relieve the drainage of this part.

Last year 275 illegitimate births were registered in Hackney, but 123 ~~took~~ took place in the Salvation Army Rescue Homes. Apart from ~~these~~ these, the Hackney sub-district had by far the most of these births.

(1896) Hackney has a good health record; its death rate last year was 16.4 & it is rarely above 18 per 1000. Diphtheria has been a prevalent disease, & the doctor traces the spread of this largely to schools

Births & Marriages.

Sanitary Work.

The Man.

Both birth-rate & marriage rate are rising.

Comparison figures of rates for each year cannot however be accurately made, because Stoke Newington was formerly combined with Hackney. The separation of the 2 parishes took place about 3 years ago.

Subjoined are some figures relating to the work of the sanitary department of the Vestry in 1896.

Houses inspected.	6800
—"— reinspections	31000
Cowhouses shed visited	114
Bakehouses —"—	78
Fish, poultry & greengrocers yards.	88
Letters, notices, summonses &c sent out.	18000
Articles disinfected	7700
Food. Condemned	35 cwt.
Food samples analysed	218
—"— —"— adulterated	46

Dr. Warry does not strike me as being either brilliant or conceited. He is abreast - but not ahead - of orthodox sanitary science, & possessed of a quiet determination to

"pull his Sanitary Authority up to the accepted standard."
"It's dogged as does it," might I should say, be taken as his motto in dealing with his employers, the Hackney Vestry. In getting hold of the men & the machinery for carrying out the sanitary laws with thorough efficiency he has done a good deal & no doubt considerable improvement has already been effected. But the full results yet remain to be seen & experienced.

Separation of Stoke Newington & Hackney.

Exodus of the Rich.

Force 40s 13 2 CD July. 29th. 9 a.

Mr. G. Orcott. Vestry Clerk of Hackney. Town Hall Ward St.

Mr. Orcott is a stout dark bearded man of 50 or so & of the average solid comfortable official type. He has been a parish official in one capacity or another for 33 years.

Until about 3 years ago Hackney & Stoke Newington Parishes were combined under a Board of Works elected by the Vestries of the 2 parishes. Stoke Newington then obtained separation from Hackney & the Board of Works gave place to an administrative Vestry with full local powers.

The most marked social feature of Hackney is the exodus of the rich & the coming in of the middle & good working class. Take Upper Clapton & Stamford Hill for instance; a number of old mansions have been demolished, & streets of middle class houses built. The Priory House & grounds formerly occupied nearly the whole of Clapton Park, with its now nearly 3500 houses, known as the Priory Estate. The Salvation Army Congress Hall at Clapton was an old orphan asylum. Many large houses formerly occupied by good class families, have now become boot & other factories.

Drink & Counter-attractions:

Open Spaces

Baths.

Indoor Amusements.

There are some very good temperance Societies in the district & their precepts have had good effect in checking the drink traffic. ~~Although~~ But the principal counter-attraction to the public houses is no doubt the splendid open spaces which Hackney possesses. The parish is rich in recreation grounds [mostly under the L.C.C.] & there is an abundance of out-door amusements, ~~&~~ athletics, music, boating, swimming, sand pits for the children to play in, &c.

Free baths have lately been added by the Vestry at a cost of £6000. There are two swimming baths for men & one for women, as well as private baths & washhouses. They were opened last Feby, & their popularity is shown by the fact that they are now used by about 400 bathers a day. Last week £185 was taken in small sums. The people are evidently getting cleaner in their habits.

There are places of popular indoor entertainment like Morley Hall & Manor Rooms, but no theatre or music Hall. People prefer to go to the London centres for these forms of amusements, believing that they get better value for so doing.

There is a great fondness for the music-hall style of entertainment.

Sunday Excursions.

Religion:

Proposed Polytechnic

Sunday amusements have increased to such an extent as to have become a nuisance to those who like a quiet rest on that day. Wt Ave St is the main artery for Epping Forest, every Sunday enormous crowds & brakes go by, mostly accompanied by a cornet player who blows out the most secular of tunes. Mr. G. thinks the latter annoyance should be stopped, though pleased to see ~~the~~ the people going to the Forest.

Judging by the above fact alone, Mr. G. does not think that religion can have made much headway among the people – rather the opposite, but he does not know much about religious work, keeping as studiously clear of religion as he does of politics on the assumption apparently that both are equally incompatible ~~wt~~ with his official position.

The People's Palace provides for a fair number of Hackney Residents, but there is need of a polytechnic & an effort is now being made to erect one, with the aid of a nucleus of money from Cass's Charity. A meeting for this purpose was lately held, presided over by the Lord

Education.

Morality.

Police

Health & Sanitation

Municipal Enterprise

Chief Justice & attended by the local M.Ps. & various other prominent people.

Education has a good effect in improving the habits of the people.

In its standard of morals, Hackney is quite up to the average. The overseers are vigilant in suppressing any bad houses brought to their notice, but this only happens occasionally. These questionable people are soon got rid of, but they simply go somewhere else & start again. While human nature is what it is, this will always go on.

In this matter, as well as in the suppression of any nuisance, the police co-operate very readily with the authorities, & no doubt do their duty well.

Hackney has an excellent health record, & its housing & sanitation are well looked after by a large staff of sanitary inspectors. There has been much advance of late in sanitary affairs.

An electric lighting order has been obtained

Wage Policy

Thrift.

Charities.

& it is proposed to utilise the dust for heating purposes, after the fashion of Shoreditch, but they are waiting a little to see the result of the experiment in the latter parish.

The policy of the L.C.C is adopted in regard to wages & conditions of work.

The poorer inhabitants are not on the whole a thrifty people, but the tendency is to save more encouraged by the great facilities offered.

A movement is on foot to revise & consolidate the charities of Hackney, & place them under control of a Board of Trustees. The greater number of the charities are parochial rather ecclesiastical, although hitherto administered mainly by the Church. The dole charities he believes to have a very bad effect, tending to pauperise the recipients & he hopes to see them diverted to the purposes of education.

Experience.

*Mr. Hosgood was defeated at last Vestry election, but is still, I believe, entitled as churchwarden to a seat on the Vestry.

Character of District.

Local Gov. 13/2 UD July 27th 97. S.A.

Mr. J. Hosgood. Supt. Registrar for Births

Mr. J. Hosgood is Supt. Registrar of Births &c for Hackney, is & has been for several years a member of the Hackney Vestry, has served as overseer & is now churchwarden.* Claims 30 years official service, & is about 50 years of age but looks younger. Is a Progressive - pleasant mannered decidedly optimistic with just a suspicion of egotism & of the dandy. Professed to know our work well & to be much interested in it. This may have been a little put on, but at any rate he seemed a good fellow & very willing to give information.

Is the nearest suburb to the City [he said] Hackney formerly had a large residential population of rich City men, but lately the expansion of the East End has drawn the people further afield. Hackney has now a big working class population including some though not a large proportion of the poorest. Hackney Wick is the poorest part but even here the houses are very clean as a whole. The houses in Hackney are mainly of modern build, the older houses formerly occupied by the well to do ~~consequently the place is free from~~ have been built ~~insanitary~~ taken for business purposes. So that there are not many old tumbledown houses, the courts & alleys are but few in number. Consequently the place is open & healthy.

Hackney Vestry

Sanitation

Until the passing of the Local Govt. Act of 1894 the Vestry was always Moderate in its composition but since that time it has been Progressive. It has certainly altered in character but he denies that it has at all deteriorated. Formerly the members were all of one type & thought much alike on most questions. Now they represent all classes so there is more difference of opinion & matters in the Vestry are fully debated which formerly would have gone through without comment. Formerly a few men met together & elected each other as Vestrymen - now there is often ~~[illegible]~~ great interest taken in the elections & they are keenly contested. There is a labor party of 15 to 20 members, who usually work & vote with the Progressives. They are all good-class artisans & none of them are socialists or extremists, nor is there any very prominent man or leader among them

Aided by the Public Health Act of 1891, which greatly increased their powers, the Vestry has of ~~late~~ late made much progress in sanitary matters & is fully alive to their importance. He thinks the

Drink

Early Marriages & Immorality.

parish is well looked after by its local authority.

There is not the open drinking that there used to be. Temperance organizations are doing good work & although the results are not up to what was expected, their influence has permeated indirectly. You do not see so much drunkenness in the streets at holiday times as you used to.

It is ~~true~~ true however that several public houses have been enlarged & seem to being doing good trade. There is great speculation in the trade & the boom probably will not last.

A good many people come to him to be married but he has not noticed any large proportion of early marriages; does not regard early marriage as an evil in itself; it is only so when the people are too poor.

Hackney is as morally pure a district as any in England. This he attributes to the fact that it is an old Nonconformist stronghold & has the pure teaching & character of Nonconformity instilled in its old residents

Religion.

Education

Charity.

He believes Religion is slowly gaining ground among the people. The Church people are doing a great work [he says this as a Nonconformist] There is much religious activity — a great deal of open air preaching & mission work.

Education has been of much value. The orderly behaviour of the Jubilee crowds he puts down to the effect of education. People have been taught to keep their physical passions more under control; they are more subject to discipline & there is not the open brutality there used to be. There is a desire among the people for improvement. Reading & writing are general, the few who cannot do so are ~~not~~ at once noticed.

Much of the Charity given in Hackney is in the form of doles. This he believes to be very degrading & harmful. Efforts are being made to get the charities ~~involved~~ consolidated & put under better control. The charities ~~now~~ given by popular vote are very fairly distributed. If doles are to be given ~~out~~ at all, this is probably the best way to give them. The people around know who are

Poor Law Administration

Police.

the really needy & deserving & usually these get it. The applicants have to give various particulars of themselves & these are published, so that any ~~mis~~ mis-statements are generally found out.

The Poor Law. Mr. H. thinks is very fairly administered, but the out-door relief given is quite insufficient to live on. There is no doubt a personal sense of degradation at first in going for relief which tends to keep people away, but once this is got over the applicants go readily. They find the ordeal is not so great as they thought. He thinks the sense of shame is an innate personal one & does not arise from any fear of neighbours talk. Nor does he think people go for relief much because their neighbours are getting it. The need is very real which first drives people to the Guardians.

The local police are very efficient & on good terms with the people. Hackney has very few disorderly houses, should any be brought under notice, the police act readily with the overseers in closing them

Amusements

Pauper Children 100 years ago.

There is plenty of outdoor recreation in the parish, & it is much appreciated, as are also the baths. For indoor amusements the people mostly go out of the district. Very good concerts are given at Worley Hall.

In illustrating the great strides which have been made in the last century - Mr. Hosgood produced an old minute book of the Hackney Guardians, & pointed out to me the official record of one transaction. A Nottingham cotton manufacturer came up to the Hackney Workhouse & selected a number of boys & girls whose ages ranged from ~~2~~ 6 to 8 years & by agreement with the Guardians took them away with him to work in his factory, he undertaking to feed & clothe them

Mr. H. recommends us to see
Mr. Clarke.
Harbatus Pl. High St. Clapton
A very old resident & vestryman.

Experience

L.G. 13/3 July 30th. 1.a.

Wm. G. Chambers. Chairman of Hackney Vestry

Wm. G. Chambers is chairman of the Hackney Vestry & has been connected with public work for 35 years. He is member of an old firm of wholesale tobacconists, & met him at his City Offices. A man of about 66, quiet & rather sad in expression, he is not quite the sort of person I expected to find considering his official position. A Liberal rather moderately Progressive, very conscientious & straightforward, I should say, but with no great initiative power or force. ~~Quite the~~. Unlike Mr. Hosgood, he is very pessimistic & has something of the air of a disappointed man. The reason for this I soon discovered in our talk.

Mr. C. is a congregationalist, & comes of a very strict Nonconformist family - was born into his church he says. A Sunday school scholar, church & Bible class member, Sunday School teacher, & then for many years Supt.te, he has served the whole round of (lay) Religious Offices. For half his lifetime he was connected with the old Mearbeby C. Congreg.l Chapel in Balls Pond Rd. Then, on removing to Clapton, he joined the Lower Clapton Congreg.l Church, & sat & served under the Rev. Peter Williams.

Some 2 or 3 years ago Hackney was started one morning

by the news of the Rev. Williams's sudden disappearance, & inquiries showed that he had left on account of heavy debts incurred. He had at this time a salary of £500 a year & a reputed extravagant wife. His large & well-to-do congregation were divided upon the question of forgiving him, but the senior deacon on ascertaining his whereabouts in America wired to him to come back & all would be overlooked. The runaway returned, was reinstated but Mr. C & several other influential members objected & severed their connection with the Church. He holds that Mr Williams can no longer be a fit & proper leader & teacher of the young, at any rate in his old position. Mr. C. has not joined any other congregation - says he has done his work - but he evidently feels a good deal the breaking away from the associations of a lifetime.

The effect of the split on the Lower Clapton Congrl. Church has, he says, been disastrous. The Church is in a state of bankruptcy - so much so that one old lady who after 32 years service as organist was about 4 years ago pensioned off with £20 a year, has now ~~been taken~~ had her pension refused through the lack of funds.

Religion.

Talking of the above naturally led up to Mr. C's views on Religious work. As might be expected they are despondent under the circs are v. discounted.

He thinks the sects work well together & are active but that the results are discouraging. The children are got hold of - they come to Sunday School at even too early an age [often at 3 years old] but in a great many cases they are sent in order that the parents may get an hour or two's rest on Sunday afternoon [I did not in any way suggest this statement - indeed I tried to shake Mr. C's opinion on the ~~subject~~ point but he adhered to it]

Thus there is, so far as all these people are concerned, no real desire that their children should lead religious lives nor any earnest endeavour to keep them up to it. The parents do not attend worship, & as they grow up the children break away. Young people he thinks are not so steady or thoughtful as they used to be. They are ~~not~~ more flippant & fond of pleasure. There is a loosening of moral ties & he sees evil in the more ~~genial~~ general & more unrestrained intermingling of young people of opposite sexes. He has his doubts about the modern P.S.A methods of propaganda - the general cheapening of religion

& sees a falling off in respect for religion amongst the general public. Open Air Services are held at the corner of the road in which he lives [Queens Down R.] & he has more than once heard jeering remarks made by the bystanders. This may be due to the indiscretion of the young men who speak; but he never noticed such a thing years ago [I think Mr. C's feeling though he did not directly say so ~~so~~ is that youth is a little too prominent in the ~~circumstances~~ councils of the Church now a'days.]

There was a considerable contrast between the two churches with which he was connected. At Balls Pond they were like a happy family - seldom had new comers & knew all about each other. If anybody left to go to another part there was quite a commotion with farewell gatherings, &c. There was not this lonely feeling at Clapton, & many of the congregation were comparatively strangers to each other.

There were 2 little missions connected with Balls Pond but they were kept distinct from the Church, tit was only on the anniversary day that the people from the missions came to the Church.

Social Condition

Housing Sanitation Vestry Work &c.

Mr. C. bears testimony to the great social deterioration of Hackney. 26 years ago he lived in a house in Downs Park Rd & paid £70 a year rent. That house is now let to 3 families & the value of the property in the road has gone down quite £20 a year. Little shops have been built where large old houses stood.

He mentioned that there used to be two springs on Hackney Downs. At one of these which was abolished when the railway was made his old minister at Balls Pond R. used to make appointments to meet applicants for Church membership at 6 in the morning, in order to have uninterrupted freedom & quietness. The other spring was in Downs Pk Rd & was closed some years ago because the water was not pure.

Housing & Sanitation are now well looked after in Hackney. Dr Tribe, the late med. officer, was old & rather easy going. The present one is well up to his work.

The question of the pollution of the Lea has had the earnest attention of the Vestry & it has held several public meetings on the question. As a result

Drink.

the Wheatham Sewage has been diverted into the L.C.C. new sewer, instead of going into the river.

They are doing all they can in getting open spaces & have a plentiful supply of them.

In addition to the opening of the two new baths &c. which are having a great success, the vestry is spending £20.000 on the enlarging & renovation of the ~~to~~ town Hall. They will now have, besides the large hall a long room to seat about 350 which they hope to let for meetings &c.

The large hall is occasionally used for ratepayers meetings, & has been let sometimes but only at a fee to cover necessary expenses & of removing seats, gas &c.

He regards the Hall as intended for a parochial work & not for purposes of amusement. Doubts if there is need for it in that way. Working Hall does not pay.

He sees no improvement in regard to drinking habits. On Sundays he meets crowds of young people in Wand.t who are more or less excited with drink. Does not believe in any form of compulsion in dealing with this evil, but purely in moral suasion & the force

Immorality.

Improved Dwellings

of example, & gave instances of what he himself had effected in this way. The work of the temperance societies is not permanent. They get hold of the children but do not keep them.

Mr. C. thinks there is an increase rather than otherwise of immorality. Complains of disgraceful behaviour on the part of young people on Hackney Downs. His residence overlooks the Downs, so he sees a good deal of what goes on there.

Mr. C. is great hope of improvement lies first & above everything in better dwellings for the working classes. He is greatly impressed with the ~~unreasonable~~ unreasonableness of expecting men to lead moral sober & steady lives when penned up with a large family in one or two poor, ill-furnished rooms. Thinks a great advance has been made in that there are now easy & cheap means of access to the suburbs, & hopes for still further strides in this respect. Sees a marked superiority in country over town life, speaks of the value of a garden.

Education.

Thrift

Habits of Navvies

In a lesser degree he looks to education especially technical, for improvement.

Doubts if the people get more thrifty. One form of extravagance he has particularly noticed is in funerals & he thinks this is partly due to the example set by the better to do. The poor think they must do as others do. Instanced one poor woman who spent £17, the whole of her club & insurance money, on her husbands funeral.

Mr. Chambers has been interesting himself in the habits of the navvies who are ~~constantly~~ constructing the new reservoirs of the East London Waterworks Co. Says they eat a pound of steak & drink a pint of tea at their midday meal. They work in gangs, & are so uneducated that they cannot share out any odd money earned, but fool that & spend it in beer!

Area. Rating &c.

Wm. Jas. Lovegrove. 1 G / 13 / 4 CD Sessi Chapb. July 28th

Wm. Jas. Lovegrove is Surveyor to Hackney Vestry & has held the position for 40 years. A pleasant old gentleman with white hair & beard. He speaks of the marvellous growth of the parish in his time, going back to the period when many of the streets he now has charge of were green fields or planted with mangold wurzels, & when he had 20 or 30 men under him as compared to the large number now. (about 250).

He could not spare time for an interview now ~~[illegible]~~ owing to proximity of the vacation, but gave me some of his reports & promised a fuller talk after the holidays. He says he was the first surveyor in London to prepare an annual report. He makes a point each year of tackling some particular question, & making that the principal feature of his report. One year it is the unemployed another wood paving, another storm flooding, or open spaces, or sewerage works & so on, reverting from time to time to such improvements as he has advocated until he gets them accomplished.

The rateable value of Hackney Parish in 1896 was £1053514. Its area is 3299 acres & the length of roads & streets in the parish under the control of the Hackney Vestry is over 93 miles, having increased

Enclosed letter is from Mr. Lovgrove in reply to queries as to how often the streets were cleansed, & as to the dirty condition of the roads in Hackney Wick. The street list sent (w. is with other papers) shows that streets in H. Wick are swept as follows:—

Care of Streets.

Sainsboro' Rd.	3 times a week
Victoria Rd. (opposite shops)	
— " — remainder	Twice a week
Chapman Rd.	
Prince Edward Rd.	
Daintry St.	Once a week
Felstead St.	
Sainsboro' Square	
Hamfray St.	
Mallard St.	
Montague Rd.	
— " — Ter.	
Osborn Rd.	
Percy Rd.	

Contractor not objected to remove sweepings till next day.

Lighting

The above wd. be sufficient, one wd. think, to account for anything.

Length of roads, 1856 - 39½ miles
— " — — — 1871 - 58¼ — " —

by about 10 miles in the last half dozen years. Stoke Newington when separated from Hackney in 1894 had 16¾ miles of public streets.

For the purpose of sweeping & ~~cleansing~~ cleansing the streets, the parish is divided into 8 districts, each under the charge of a road ganger who is assisted by a leading sweeper & a gang of men. A separate staff of 8 men (one for each district) is employed to pick up loose paper lying about the roads, this forming a considerable portion of the refuse both of streets & houses.

The lamps & lamp-posts for street lighting are affixed by the Vestry, at an initial cost of about £2 each; they are lighted & maintained by the gas company under contract with the Vestry, at an average cost of £3. 2. 4 per annum, £2 - 4 - 4 of which is for gas, 15/- for lighting & cleaning, & 3/- for repairing & painting. These lamps burn 5 cubic feet per hour, & the gas is supplied at the rate of 2/3 per 1000, the consumption being ascertained by meter. In order to improve the lighting it was decided in 1889 to reduce the distance apart at which the lamps are usually fixed from 70 to 50 yards. This has been gradually effected since. In addition several large lamps burning 10 ft per hour have been placed at important points in the principal thoroughfares.

Ev. C. 2

The Hackney Vestry.

TELEPHONE No 59089.

JAMES LOVEGROVE, Assoc. Memb. Inst. C.E.
CHIEF SURVEYOR.

ATTENDANCE
BETWEEN 9.30. AND 11 A.M.

SURVEYOR'S DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL, HACKNEY, N.E.

4th May 1898

Care of Streets.

Lighting

Extract

Clause 3.:-
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As to Hackney Wick roads,- like all other roads repaired with Broken Granite, after a fall of rain, the smaller constituent parts of the road turn up into mud, & then complaints are made; but unreasonably so, as it is impossible, after a shower of rain, to clear off the mud from 90 miles of streets concurrently.

With regard to your question (C.)- the average number of men engaged in paper picking is eight.

Yours faithfully,
J. Lovegrove
H.R.

Jesse Argyle Esq.,
9, Adelphi Terrace,
Strand, W.C.

South St. roads 1856 - 39½ miles
- 58¼ -

years Stoke Newington
had 16¾ miles of public Street.

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TOWN HALL, HACKNEY, N.E.

4th May 1898

Care of Streets.

Lighting

Extract from Contract for Road Sweepings, &c.

Clause 3.:- The highways will be cleaned (but not necessarily the whole surface of the road swept) and the sweepings heaped by the Vestry's workmen, ~~and~~ the number of times per week shewn on the lists of streets hereto annexed, but the Vestry will not be bound absolutely to the lists as they stand, as it may occasionally be necessary to cleanse some of the streets more frequently, and others less. All heaps arising from the sweeping of crossings and channels are to be cleared the same day as swept, irrespective of the number of times the roads or streets may be entered in the printed list for clearing. (By the sweeping of the crossings and channels, one time of sweeping the whole road may probably be occasionally omitted.)

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As to Hackney Brick roads,- Jesse Argyle Esq.
9, Adelphi Terrace,
Strand, W.C.

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Care of Streets.

Ex. C. 2

The Hackney Vestry.

TELEPHONE No 59089.

JAMES LOVEGROVE, Assoc. Memb. Inst. C.E. CHIEF SURVEYOR.

ATTENDANCE BETWEEN 9.30. AND 11 A.M.

SURVEYOR'S DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL, HACKNEY, N.E.

4th May 1898

Cleansing of Streets.

Dear Sir,

I must apologise for not having been able to reply to your letter of the 28th ult. before this.

In answer to your questions (A) (B.) & (D.) – I forward herewith a copy of our Sweeping list, – together with a copy of Clause 3 in our Sweepings Removal Contract.

As to Hackney Brick roads, – like all other roads repaired with Broken Granite, after a fall of rain, the smaller constituent parts of the road turn up into mud, & then complaints are made; but unreasonably so, as it is impossible, after a shower of rain, to clear off the mud from 90 miles of streets concurrently.

With regard to your question (C.) – the average number of men engaged in paper picking is eight.

Yours faithfully,
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This is a further reply from Mr. Lovegrove on the subject of street sweeping in Hackney Wick.

It is instructive as showing he still regards this & like questions from the old point of view. ~~The rich, as they pay light~~ People are to be looked after in sanitary matters according to the rates they pay so that to sweep once a week & clean the refuse next day (quite regardless of the probability of its all being picked about in the meantime) is quite good enough for A poor a district as H. Wick.

This is quite in keeping with his plan to make up Hack. Marshes with house refuse.

Road Watering

In 1856 [the year the present surveyor was appointed] the number of lamps was 1128 [33 being naphtha]. For recent years the number has been:-

1891	
'92	2844
93	2879
94	2915
95	2952.
96.	3038

many have also been fitted with improved burners.

In his report for 1896 the surveyor suggests a trial be given to an improved system of incandescent lighting. Hitherto he had not considered the results of incandescent lighting for street purposes sufficiently satisfactory to recommend their adoption.

A provisional order empowering the vestry to install the electric light was obtained in 1892, but no installation has yet taken place, & the matter is still in the inquiry stage.

Street watering is under the control of the Vestry which has its own vans & carts for this purpose, but hires the horses & drivers as required of a contractor. The amounts expended for the purpose in recent years has been as over:-

Road Watering

The Hackney Vestry.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO
JAMES LOVEGROVE,
ASSOC. MEMB. INST. C.E.
CHIEF SURVEYOR.

ATTENDANCE BETWEEN 9.15 AND 11 A.M.
TELEPHONE No. 89 DALSTON.

SURVEYOR'S DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL, HACKNEY, N.E.,

9th. May, 189 8

Dear Sir,

In reply to yours of the 5th. inst., with regard to the streets at Hackney Wick,—three being the most important, the wagons have to follow the sweepers; 8 of the streets have to be cleared about 5 hours after being heaped; and 9 on the following day. This arrangement, having regard to the character of the district, is a suitable one. Of course, it would never do to apply city rules to a district like Hackney, where we have over 90 miles of roadway, neither is it at all necessary to follow the sweepers all through the streets;- it would cost a very large sum extra, and there would be no adequate advantage.

Yours faithfully,

J. Lovegrove
H.R.

Jesse Argyle Esq.,
9, Adelphi Terrace,
Strand, W. C.

I was astonished the other day to see that you had

d burners.
I suggest a trial of
sent lighting. Hitherto
sent lighting for streets
send from adjacent
& instead of instead of
o install almost least
Queen Stage.
Road of the Yates which
but miles & miles
unknown extended for the

Sewers:

Public Improvements.

	£
1890 - 1891.	4097
91 - 92	4132
92 - 93	5243
93 - 94	6179
94 - 95	4341
95 - 96	4720

The cleansing & flushing of the sewers as well as some small repairs are executed by the Vestry's own employees but all the construction work & most of the repairs are performed by Contractors. The amts expended have been as follows:-

	Vestry labour.	Contract work.
1891 - 92	£ 994	£ 1386
92 - 3	1049	2591
93 - 4	1016	3010
94 - 5	1268	3093
95 - 6	1595	

The Vestry maintains 92 miles of sewers. Sn. 1894 the tank system of flushing sewers was adopted with very good results.

The most important street improvement effected in recent years in Hackney has been the widening of the roadways.

Open Spaces.

& Junction of Old Newington Green, Green Lanes & Albion Rds; & the complete paving of the latter with wood at a cost of about £9000. This was carried out by arrangement between the Islington & Hackney Vestries & the Hornsey Board. About 1890 the Hackney Vestry drew up a scheme for the channelling & Kerbing of a large number of thoroughfares. A loan of £12000 was obtained from the L.C.C. for this purpose, & the work completed in 1894. Wood paving is being slowly introduced into the parish & each year sees a few small street improvements effected. The widening of the G.E.R. in 1892-3 enabled a number of small desirable alterations to be made.

The Town Hall is being enlarged (now 1897 completed) & will have much more than double its former accommodation. The contract price for this is about £12000 raised by loan.

An underground convenience was opened at Wells St in 1893 [first in parish] & one at Stamford Hill in 1895. They are very largely used.

The parish contains 11 acres of open spaces under the control of the Vestry, & 160 acres under the L.C.C. exclusive of Victoria Park & Hackney Marshes.

In 1892-3. Ne. Beauworth was laid out as a.

Disposal of Dust.

The Unemployed.

recreation ground, & a shelter erected, & in 1894 a large part of Hackney Churchyard was opened to the public, the cost of laying out being £1165, towards which the LCC gave £500.

The recreation grounds are generally opened about 8 am & closed at sunset.

In his report for 1894 the surveyor referring to the increased cost & difficulty attending the disposal of dust & refuse, suggests that it should be used for the raising the level of Hackney Marshes. It states that Gainsboro' Rd was raised in this way. The suggestion probably did not find favour with the Sanitary Dept, & there is no later reference to it, but a dust Destructor proposed to be erected.

The provision of work for the unemployed in winter has engaged a good deal of the Vestry's attention. In 1892-3 owing to the disastrous effects of wet & frost on the roads about 150 extra men were usefully employed in preparing the material for, or in repairing the roads, & about another 150, out of off, were engaged in some important sewerage works. About 50 different carpenters were also put on in completing sheds, offices &c, & paid

8d per hour, but their work cost 10 to 15% above contract price. Another contingent of men [No. not stated] were employed in the stone yard at a cost of £296. The material was found useful in mending the roads, but stone breaking, the surveyor says, is unsuitable for 9/10 of the unemployed, for after working most strenuously all day many of them were only able to earn 2/. At least 75% of the men were in earnest & strove hard to do the work. The surveyor speaks sympathetically of the unemployed but points out the futility of their working mainly to the Board for work in winter.

In the winter 1893-4 a Labour Bureau was opened & the parish paid £2060 in wages to the otherwise unemployed, including 800£ for snow clearing, £600 for laying out of Hackney Churchyard, & £450 for stone breaking. The pay given was 3/6 a day. The bureau was a relief to the regular offices in dealing with applicants for work but very little employment was found by it apart from parish work. The number of applicants was greatly in excess of that for which work could be found, & much disappointment & complaining had to be endured.

In 1894-5 about £2730 was spent in wages to the unemployed – £1629 for snow removal, £786 for stone

Labour.

breaking, & rest for road repairs, sewers, painting &c. Largest number employed on one day was 1673. There was a great rush for the work of snow sweeping - many more applicants than previously - & preference was given to those on Labour Bureau list.

The applications in 1895-6 were much fewer in number. Owing to the mild weather, paving works were continued throughout the winter, & a number of extra men engaged on these. The loss on the stone yard work was £250 (nearly half).

After an exhaustive inquiry into the conditions of labour of the Vestry employees, a number of changes were introduced in 1895. The minimum pay was raised to 24/-, a weeks holiday with pay granted to permanent men, Saturday half-holiday, weeks notice of dismissal, & extra rate of pay for overtime. The total annual increase in wages resulting from these alterations was £780

Since 1893 the sewer men have been supplied with boots, smocks, stockings, hats, shovels, tool for lamps, & since the report of 1895 the roadmen have been provided with shovels & waterproof capes. Previously they found these articles themselves.

The total expenditure for labour employed directly by the Vestry has progressed as under:-

1890 - 91. £10786.

Tram & Bus Traffic.

The Lea.

	£
1891 - 92.	13548
92. 93	15252
93 - 4	16927
94 - 95	16653
95 - 96	16086.

The decrease from 1893-4 is caused by the separation of Stoke Newington from Hackney.

The following figures give the increase of Tram & Bus traffic (No. of journeys per day)

	Cars.	Busses.	Total.
1891.	1270.	934.	2204
92.	1391.	894	2285
93.	1453.	1166.	2619
94.	1672	1168	2840
95.	1548	1220.	2768.
96.	1600.	1204.	2804.

The Surveyor reports much improvement in condition of Lea, owing to diversion of Tottenham Sewerage to the Metropolitan System.

There are also reports of serious storm floodings in 1892 & 1895 with suggestions as to remedies.

Experience

Health Housing &c.

Local Gov
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Dr Clarke.

Dr. Clarke is 77 years of age & has been in practice in Clapton for 42 years. Lives in a nice old house with a splendid garden in Clapton High Rd. Active Vigorous he talks freely & proclaims himself a Tory of the old school with great contempt for Radicalism & all its works & profound dislike for the present regime in the Hackney Vestry. Thinks a great mistake was made in lowering the franchise & that the result has been to crowd the Vestry with men who pay about half a crown a week rent who are ignorant selfish & narrow minded & as they are not ratepayers do not mind how they put up the rates. This charge he made with some fervour & yet a moment after, he, speaking of his own experience as a district medical officer in the early days, when such officials were first being tried as an experimental luxury, complained of the very bad state of the homes of the poor & of the great difficulty of getting the local authorities to do anything because of their great fear of raising the rates

Dr. Clarke was not able to give me much time being called out to a patient [he being still in practice], but

I talked with him long enough to gather that with all his professed dislike of Board Schools, the popular franchise & modern ~~ideas~~ innovations generally, he is in sanitary matters thoroughly progressive.

He is strongly impressed with the wretched condition of the dwellings of the poor & the difficulty of securing efficient repairs. His views on the all importance of good houses for the poorer classes, on the subordination of people's character & habits to their surroundings, & on the superiority of country life & country people, owing to their more wholesome surroundings, agree exactly with those of Mr. Chambers [the Progressive Chairman of Hackney Vestry], save that he would go further than Mr. C. & find a remedy in ~~the~~ drastic legislation on the subject. He would, by Act of Parliament, withdraw ~~the~~ all such property entirely from local control, & would have something in the nature of a district health department, directly controlled by, & responsible only to the Government. The appointment of the Officials might perhaps be left to the local authorities, but after that they should have no further control over them. They should be as independent as are the Customs Officials. He would also [or perhaps failing the above extreme step] prohibit all owners, builders, lessees &c, of the poorer class of property from sitting on the Vestry or holding any office connected

Deterioration of Locality.

therewith. He says the work of the medical officer is often retarded, & he cannot do what he would in the interests of public health because of the influence of these men on the local bodies.

Dr. Tribe, the ~~late~~ late medical officer of Hackney who was a fellow pupil & intimate friend of Dr. Clarke, often spoke of the difficulty he experienced owing to the presence of interested persons on the Vestry & had he not been a man of much determination very little would have been done.

Dr. Clarke believes that the houses are better looked after now adays, especially from a sanitary point of view & that the people are healthier & more cleanly. The latter he is willing to give education & the Board School some credit for.

He is favorable to the erection of municipal dwellings under Government Control.

Dr. Clarke describes the deterioration of the locality as deplorable. Although he has still a very fine garden, he says a good deal has been taken for building purposes, several houses in Ickburgh Rd, being on land formerly attached to his house. His pet aversion is the working class flat, of which there is a block overshops opposite his house, & adjoining Clapton Station. He says they are always out of repair.

Drunk Early Marriage

Immorality

There is not so much open drinking as formerly, but he ~~the~~ believes there is more secret drinking, & has come upon some very bad instances of this in his practice. He has seen also so much misery as the outcome of early marriages – large families, poverty & immorality – that he would make it illegal for young people to marry under 21. He does not think this would lead to an increase of improper relationship between the sexes.

Open spaces after dark such as the Hackney Marshes are hot beds of immoral ~~ity~~ behaviour & generally he feels there is an increase of immorality. The children are brought much into contact in the B^d Schools & the religious moral training they receive is not what it should be.

[Mr. Clarke had to leave before our talk was finished but offers me another interview].

Mr. Lovegrove

Personal.

Lecture 13/5

Sept. 17. 1897

Mr. J. Lovegrove (Surveyor to Hackney Vestry)
2nd attempt.

My experiences of interviewing Mr. Lovegrove have been somewhat unfortunate & peculiar. On the first occasion he cd. not spare me time, & at our 2nd meeting he arrived half-an-hour late & had to leave early; & altho' he gave me nearly an hour, he wd. talk so much on other questions that I could get little from him of his own work or views. He had prepared some copious notes, wh. he insisted were too roughly written to give me, & wh. he wd. read. They were partly irrelevant & partly in the nature of a judge's charge to a jury, rather than a record of either facts or opinions. Thus for example: "You are going to inquire into the question of marriage. Such an inquiry, if fully undertaken, shd. give some very interesting results. In order to do this

you will have to go into the question of the relationship of young people working together in factories & find out what influence this has on the number of early marriages. It may be found that ____ is the case or ____ & so on.

So, by the time I had got my sitter fairly "focussed" he had to leave me, & the picture is but a blurred one.

He is, however, a kindly old gentleman — quite old I shd. say — upright & vigorous, with white beard, &c., & is of much the old school of Dr Clarke (see interview preceding this) to whom he referred as a man who had written a book about ancient Hackney wh. he had most promptly sent to the Queen, & who would talk for hours about what the place used to be. Like the worthy old doctor, tho. I d. c. has strong prejudices against the present order of

things. He would probably, as a favor, treat his men very well, but would make short work of such nonsense as "rights." [I do not mean he actually said this, but I inferred it from his meaning]

He has not recovered from the shock of the 1894 act, which, in abolishing the property qualification, quite upset the divine order of things. Working men should not be on the Vestry, he thinks, at all, but he only advanced the usual stock reasons for this, viz., that they pander to the Vestry employees, & set class against class – the men against their superiors – by trying to cut down the salaries of the ~~former~~ latter & raise the wages of the former. His own idea was to keep the wages bill low, in order that the poor workmen who were not Vestry employees should have their burden lightened [I didn't think it worth while to remind Mr. L. that he had just previously put forth the statement

working men on the Vestry.

Schoolmasters.

Drink.

? Does Mr. L. refer to the headmaster at Rotherham Pk. Bd. School, who as chairman of the Sanitary Committee, wd. probably have different ideas to the surveyor in regard to sanitation. I think there is often a little friction between the Sanitary Dept. & Works Dept. of a Vestry. J.A.

that workmen didn't pay the rates, as a reason why they shd. not be on the Vestry.] His ban would also extend to schoolmasters, who as public servants shd. not be on a public body. There is a schoolmaster on the Hackney Vestry who causes a good deal of trouble.

Mr. L. is an old Nonconformist, & has been deacon of Clapton Pk. Congregational Church for many years. His late wife was an active temperance worker. Naturally he regards the drink traffic as a great evil. A large amount of poverty is caused by the facilities & temptations for drinking wh. prevail, many palatial public-houses in the locality being supported by the wages of the working classes. The amount spent in drink in Hoxton must be enormous, & many poor wives & mothers

High Rents.

Sanitation.

be the sufferers thereby. There is no improvement in this respect.

The proportion of the working wage paid for rent is deplorable. This is not the fault of the landlords, rates & expenses being so heavy. Thousands of men have to pay one-third of their earnings in rent. The consequences are overcrowding, adultery & dirt. In the so-called model dwellings rooms are small & rents too high. 1/- per room should be the maximum charge. The problem ought to be solved, & he suggests as the way of so doing that all small property be relieved of rates & the deficit made good by grants from the National Exchequer.

Sanitary matters are well looked after in Hackney, but the question of storm flooding is a very serious one.

Proposed Improvements

Open Spaces & Municipality.

owing to the low lying character of parts of the district. He is advocating the construction of a new sewer to intercept the storm water. It will cost a very large sum, but is the only effectual remedy.

The chief improvements in contemplation are the widening of the Cat & Mutton Bridge, near London Fields, & the Rosemary Branch Bridge, Southgate Rd. Negotiations are also in satisfactory progress with the Leyton Local Bd with a view of improving the approaches between Hackney & Leyton by constructing a new road.

Mr. L. dreads the influence of open spaces after dark, & suggests that inquiries be made of police & caretakers as to this.

Public House Amusements

Changes in District.

Consequent increase in Unemployed.

Concerts are held at many public houses & singing clubs formed. The influence of these is not good.

The large number of small houses built of late years, the erection of factories, & the building of more modern houses of good class, has drawn the most respectable tenants from the older houses & caused a 20 or 30 % reduction in the rents of these. They are now occupied by working people or used for manufacturing purposes.

These changes, & the large amount of building work going on, have had the effect of making the question of the unemployed a serious one in winter time. Mr. L. referred to what had been done to help the unemployed (vide pp. 93-7) & emphasised the unsuitability of stone-breaking for the bulk of those out of work. An expert at

Old Reports – 1856-71.

the work wd. break a cube of stone in from ½ to ¾ of a day, & earn 4/- a man not used to it wd. take from 2 to 3 days to do the same quantity.

He thinks that in finding work for the unemployed there is not enough thought given to the poorer class of ratepayers who have to bear the expense.

Mr. Lovegrove gave me two short printed reports, the first dealing with works executed between 1856 & 1860, the second with those between 1860–71. In the former period the principal work carried out was the construction of 10½ miles of sewers, at a cost of £14,600, the money being borrowed. The most important work of the latter period was the taking over by the

parish of ten miles of turnpike roads, under the Act of 1864 abolishing tolls.

Between 1856 & 1871 the following important works affecting the district were constructed:-

Gt. Northern high-level sewer
Branch low-level sewer
North London Railway - City branch
Great Eastern Ry. scheme (part)
Stoke Newington & Lea Bridge Reservoirs.

Hackney Charities.

Summary of Hackney Charities.

(From Report presented to House of Commons, 1894)

Hackney has about 100 distinct endowed charities, but originally there were considerably more than this, several of the present charities having been made up by a combination of smaller endowments. Even now, however, they are mostly of quite a small character, only 12 of them having an income of over £50 a year, & of these only 6 or 7 reach £100.

In 1824, Hackney was divided into 3 ecclesiastical parishes, called Hackney, South Hackney, & West Hackney; & following this an Instrument of Apportionment was drawn up, by wh. the old charities were allotted, either wholly or in proportion, to the 3 parishes. This apportionment still holds good. The total value of the charities (1894) is £3730, & the amount is divided as follows:- Hackney £2282; S. Hackney £506; W. Hackney £424.

The remaining £515 is not divisible, being used either for exhibition scholarships open to all Hackney children, or for Nonconformist purposes.

The money, wh. comes mostly from dividends on stock, is expended as follows:-

	£	s.	d.
Education	426	18	
Church purposes	5	7	4
Apprenticing & advancement of children	20	4	4
Purposes of Nonconformist bodies	169	13	8
almshouses & pensions	1004	6	5
medical relief & nursing	501	5	6
Distribution to poor:			
In money	1370	3	1
In kind	201	15	9
Other public uses	30	-	-
Total	£3729	14	1

By far the largest charity is that connected with the Spurstowe Almshouses, wh. has an income of £1263 . 6 . 11 . Over

£1000 of this is derived from the ground rents of 196 houses (105 in Graham Rd., 28 in Greenwood Rd., 43 in Navarino Rd., & 20 in Wilton Rd.), & the rest from dividends on stock & interest on bank deposit. The charity is managed by the rector, churchwardens, & 15 other trustees who meet quarterly & have a clerk paid £50 a year. There are 6 almshouses, occupied by 6 aged women parishioners, who are elected by the trustees as vacancies occur, such vacancies being duly advertised. These women each receive £25 a year from the charity. Ten other old women, who are inmates of Bishop Wood's almshouses [described later] are paid £16 a year each from this charity. £300 is spent in annuities of £15 each to 20 out-pensioners, selected by the trustees; & about £500 is devoted to sending poor

people who are recovering from illness to Convalescent Homes. This last branch is managed by a Committee of the trustees, who in 1893 sent 262 persons to homes at a cost of £443, & spent £60 in secretary's salary & £4 in management expenses, the cost per head of patients sent being £1. 14. 10

The leases of the houses belonging to this charity will not fall in until the middle of next century.

Next in importance is Valentine Poole's charity, wh produces £375. 10 per annum, arising from ground rents of houses in Wells St., Valentine Rd., Poole Rd, Terrace Rd, Qu. Anne's Rd., Bishop's Rd & Kenton Rd. The money is divided between the 3 parishes, Hackney taking half, & S. Hackney & W. Hackney ¼ each, & is in each case given away in money doles by the rector

& churchwardens.

Vynnes Charity consists of 8 houses in Wells St., the rents of wh. produce £328 a year. About £260 is divided between the 3 parishes, & is spent in exactly the same way as Porter's Charity (i.e. money doles). £8 goes in apprenticeship fees, £6 in gifts of bread, & the rest in repairs, insurance & general expenses.

The Hackney & Spitalfields Exhibition Foundation (£183 per annum) is the outcome of funds wh. were left for the support of schools now taken over by the London School Bd, & is expended in scholarships, competed for by children from the public elementary schools of the parish.

Bishop Wood's almshouses for

shelter to 10 aged women. There is an endowment of £100 a year, from wh. about £7 each is given to the inmates, in addition to the £16 they receive from the Spurstow charity, or bringing their yearly pension to £23 each. The other £30 goes in repairs & expenses.

The above are the only charities wh. appear to call for particular mention.

Mr. W. L. Beurle, vice chairman of the Hackney Guardians & representative of Hackney on Metropolitan Asylums Board.

Mr. Beurle is a leading anti-vaccinationist, a teetotaller & vegetarian. His opposition to vaccination led to his triumphant election to the Bd of Guardians 8 years ago, & following this the majority of the Bd underwent a speedy conversion in regard to vaccination, so that there have been no prosecutions in the parish under the act for seven years now.

Mr. B. is not quite the manner of man one might expect to find, having these facts in mind. There is nothing headstrong or fanatical about his style or expression — on the contrary he is a very mild-mannered, & reasonably spoken man, elderly, & seemingly anxious to appease. He occupies a large house in Victoria Pk. Rd, & is apparently in very comfortable circumstances.

He has known the district 20 years, & gives the usual corroboration as to determi-

tion of locality socially. But mostly the people are middle or decent working class, & even the Hackney wickites give the guardians little trouble when work is good. It is only in bad times that they come back upon the Poor rates.

The Hackney Guardians do not print any annual report or statement, but they have a fortnightly return issued of cases & expenditure, & for the last 2 years have had a vota-book, in wh. half-yearly returns are printed in tabular form. It is only since the advent of the new clerk that this has been done. The former clerk — an old man — was very averse to printing anything. He liked to keep all the information in his own hands, & to have people come to him who wanted to know about any matter.

From the returns shown me I conclude the tendency is to gradually increase outdoor & reduce outdoor pauperism. Mr.

B. thinks this may be so in regard to members, but that expenditure on outdoor relief has been increasing, owing to more adequate relief being given.

In administering relief the guardians confine themselves strictly to the law. They do not co-operate with outside agencies, nor do they seek to obtain contributions from anybody not legally liable. If children or parents are able to do so, they ask or expect them to contribute, but are not hard, & in a great many cases people are excused, even after the guardians have decided that they shall pay.

Relief in kind is given strictly in accordance with law, & nourishments under medical order. They have a system of granting loans in maternity cases, but this is a farce, for the money is rarely repaid.

There is a good deal of hereditary pauperism, but not so much as there

was. R. O's say they can trace applicants back 3 generations.

He thinks out-relief shd. be given, but only under most careful supervision, & believes in offering the House as a wholesome check.

His idea of dealing with the poor would be to get the young entirely away from workhouse influence, & to provide for the old either by largely increasing the number of almshouses thro' voluntary agency or by a system of classification in workhouses. To this end he strongly supports the unification of London for poor law purposes. The best workhouses might then be used for the most worthy of the old people, & the rest graduated in other houses according to character & deserts. Now, classification is impossible without great expense to the parish wh. attempts it.

The scandal at Brentwood Schools,

wh. belong to this union, some 4 years ago, resulted in much indignation & the clearing out of the majority of the old guardians. The new men seem in impressed with the importance of an entirely different regime for the children, but without, I am inclined to think, any very clear or practical notion of how to carry it out. They, however, got rid of the master & matron, appointed new people in their place, & introduced a more humane system into the schools, with, Mr. B. says, quite satisfactory results in the healthier & brighter appearance of the youngsters. They were not satisfied with this, however, but proceeded to try experiments in the shape of cottage homes. The Guardians had purchased some houses in Sidney Rd. adjoining the workhouse, partly with a view to possible extensions & partly in order to provide apartments for married couples if such were required, whilst a third idea was to provide for girls who had fallen for the

first time, & so prevent them mixing with the more brazen cases wh. were sent to the workhouse. These proposals were, under the new fervour, relinquished, & plans drawn out & settled for turning them into cottage homes for the children. Two of the houses were actually started, & 11 children placed in each under the charge of a foster mother; this was about 12 mos. ago, & they were still going on allright. But just as further extensions were about to take place, the District Surveyor stepped in & insisted on these houses being treated as public buildings, & demanded alterations wh. wd. involve an expense of new £3,000. The Guardians refused to do what was required, but were summoned to a police court & got the worst of it. They then tried to buy off the enemy by giving him a job to draw out specifications or some such thing, & paid him a 20 guinea fee, but without securing any modi-

fication worth mentioning, & they will no doubt, Mr. B. says, have to do the work. meanwhile the houses stand empty & idle.

Mr. Beurle says he was quite against this attempt to buy off the District Surveyor, nor is he much enamoured of the scheme as a whole. The houses, he thinks, are too much under the shadow of the workhouse to have the good effect intended. The system of scattered homes — not cottages — he believes the right one — homes here & there, but each within range of a Board school to wh. the children can go. Apart fm. the social advantage of allowing the children to go to a Board school, he says they get better teaching. It is very difficult to get good teachers in Workhouse schools. The teachers do not like the surroundings, nor yet the extra duties or restrictions. They are now improving the Weed at Brentwood by allowing the teachers to live out, & by appointing servants to do

the watching & discipline work.

Believes drink does a good deal of mischief, though thinks it is as often poverty as inducers drink as vice versa. There has been trouble in the workhouse over the drink questions. When he went on to the Board over 100 gals. of beer a week were consumed in the House; now there is none. Supply of beer to officials has been commuted to a money payment, & last Xmas for the first time as a consequence of complaints of embezzlement, &c., the supply of intoxicants was stopped to the officials, & other things given instead.

He sees a tendency to improvement in the morality of the population generally; people are living under more civilized & wholesome conditions. There are, however, rather a large number of cases of illegitimacy, & some of the young women

are very brazen about it.

Methodists, Primitive Methodists & Salvationists are most in evidence & seem to get hold of the people best. Other sects have become too respectable.

Sunday schools do a good deal for the children, tho' they largely for the choice of parents to be rid of them, or for the good things provided.

Temperance work, tho' the Bands of Hope, he thinks more lasting than the religious work.

Agrees that Hackney is well supplied with amusements, & that the needs of technical education are not being neglected. Cassland House is a centre of technical instruction (supported by grant from L.C.C.; hopes to get help from the Cass charity), & the movement progresses for getting a Polytechnic.

The endowed charities do good in assisting cases wh. the guardians cannot relieve. Commend the work of the Spurstow Charity in convalescent cases.

The scheme for placing the non-ecclesiastical charities under the control of a trust is now nearly completed. It does not think the Doles charities do much harm. The money usually goes to poor widows, & is very acceptable at the time.

Personal.

Oct 1. 97 - J.R.

Locellas 13

Interviews with Relieving Officers.

Messrs Pease & Fenton, relieving officers of Hackney Union, Relief Offices, Mayfield Rd., Dalston.

Mr. Coles, clerk to Guardians, advised me to see these 2 men, they both having been relieving officers for some years. I found them to be officials of a very perfunctory type, knowing, or professing to know, next to nothing of their districts outside the range of their own immediate duties. They seem to consider that a relieving officer shd. efface himself as much as possible, & take no interest whatever in anything that goes on in the locality, for fear it may lead to ~~them~~ his being asked for relief. Should it be necessary to enter a house, he shd. carefully shut his eyes to anything or anybody therein apart from the immediate object. "They must be so careful, lest they provoke the resentment of the people." I tried them on various points, but was invar-

Mr. Pease's district.

Charitable aid.

Free Dispensary.

ably met with a child-like & blank expression - the matter was too deep, too difficult for them to offer an opinion upon.

Mr. Pease has No. 6 district, comprising the whole of Stoke Newington. He has on the average 200 cases in a district comprising 33,000 people: 122 are old people, 50 are children, & the rest principally widows. About £22 a week is spent in money & £2 in kind. His cases come mostly from turnings out of or adjoining Church St., & he has none north of Lordship Pk. & Manor Rd.

He thinks a good many cases are kept off the parish through the charitable assistance of the churches, &c., & in sickness by the Free Dispensary in High St., Stoke Newington, where people can go & get advice & medicine gratis. He believes many people get assistance at this dispensary who are in a position to pay.

Mr. Fenton's district.

Relief Cases.

Mr. Fenton's district includes the whole of London Fields, & extends from Broadwater Pk & Amherst Rds on the north to Albert Rd. & Brougham Rd. (the boundary of our district 13) on the south; & from Queen's Rd. on the west to Mare St. on the east. He has 245 persons on his relief list, of whom 98 are old people & 109 children, whilst 36 are able-bodied women (mostly widows) & 3 are a.b. men. Mr. F. says that out-relief is given only in urgent cases after strict inquiries, & then it is sometimes by way of loan. His cases are spread all over the district, & no two are alike. Appearances are very deceptive in regard to the condition of the people, & it is very difficult to find out their true position. Even after full inquiry they get deceived.

The district is no doubt going down, & the class of people has changed much in the last few years.

Causes of Pauperism.

Mr. Rudling.

His district

Improvidence is probably the telling cause of pauperism, & drink plays a prominent part, but he does not know – says he has no means of knowing – to what extent these evils are being influenced, or whether for better or worse; nor does he know anything of the agencies who are at work, or what they are doing.

[Dr Birch, medical officer to Guardians, says of these 2 officers that Pearce is wooden & unsuited to his position, whilst Fenton is obstinate & ill-tempered].

— " —

Mr. Rudling, whom I also saw at Mayfield Rd, is a younger & I shd. say more intelligent type of relieving officer, but he has only been on his present district 3 or 4 months. He has the whole of De Beauvoir Town, & his district extends east to Queens Rd, including part of Dalston Lane & the Rhodes Estate.

He has an average of about 220 per

Relief & its Recipients.

Charity.

A Shifter Class.

week on his relief list, of whom the great bulk are respectable old people. Many of them are quite old residents living in such streets as those on the Rhodes Estate. They are partly supported by their children, &c., the Guardians making up any deficiency.

He does not think there is very much grain in his District in the way of charitable assistance. Most of the old people relieved are connected with some place of worship, mothers meeting, &c., but he does not know of any cases amongst them who get regular help from these sources – only two or casual gifts.

Amongst the younger applicants for relief he has a more shifty class – comparative new-comers in the district, & distinct from the great bulk of the population, 99 out of every 100 of whom wd. scorn to apply for relief. This less worthy class have come in, he thinks, concurrently with the great deterioration of the district, wh. is

Decline of District.

Housing, &c.

A Bad Spot.

very marked in De Beauvoir Town. Several of the fine, substantial houses in De Beauvoir Square are let in tenements, & he has a number of cases from them. The well-to-do who still keep houses here are only waiting, in most cases, a favorable opportunity to leave. In some cases they own the houses, & keep to them for that reason.

Housing & sanitation he believes to be very good in De Beauvoir Town; & on the Rhodes estate fairly so; but in the 2 or 3 back streets on north side of Balstow Lane (nearly opposite the Junction) there are a number of small modern houses wh. are in a bad condition. These include Lysson Pl. & Passage, Bath Row, &c., wh. are inhabited by a low, semi-criminal class - not so poor, however, but that they can keep themselves clear of the Poor Law, for he rarely has a case amongst them. They are largely costers, &c., particularly in Abbott St. Recommends

Character of Population.

us to see his friend. Detective Kemp, of Dalston Police Station, about these, as also about the 'Kingland gate mobs', who, he thinks, come partly from Hoxton.

Mr. Rudling previously had a district at Homerton, & thinks the people here are of a better & more independent class than there. He does not think drink is particularly prevalent in his district. Men like their social glass, & drink more for company's sake than anything else. He doubts if this habit will ever be eradicated.

Dr Birch – Personal.

Experience.

Advance of Medical Science.

Doc 400 / 13

Oct 5. J. A.

Dr Birch, outdoor medical officer to Hackney Guardians, resides at 105 Downs Rd – N.E. He is an amiable, thoughtful-looking man, of advanced middle-age, with full, dark beard & moustache. Rather below middle height, not very robust, & stoops slightly.

The doctor has known Hackney for 30 years & has been medical officer to the Guardians for 16 years, having, of course, a private practice as well. He used to have the Stamford Hill & Upper Clapton District, but now has Kingsland & Dalston, & consequently a larger number of medical relief cases.

He says the improvements wh. have taken place in medical science & appliances during the period of his practice have been remarkable. In his early days small-pox & other infectious diseases were rife & there were no public hospitals for them & proper means of isolating them – no disinfectants save chloride of lime, wh. it was often necessary & even dangerous to use – no anaesthetics –

Housing & Sanitation.

no public places at wh. to see the poor law patients, who used to come all day long to the private residences of the medical men.

So also has there been much improvement in the general condition of the people. Sanitation has made wonderful strides, & some perhaps at High Hill Ferry (where there are some very bad houses) & one or two other exceptional spots, the houses are good, the old style of cottage dwelling - built below the level of the street & with the floors laid directly on to the earth, thus allowing no ventilation to the foundations - has almost disappeared. Model blocks of dwellings for workpeople are a great advance, for altho' they still get dirty people in them, the dirt cannot do the mischief it used to. The drainage is well looked after, w.c's properly trapped, water supply sufficient, yards paved, dust emptied frequently, &c. - & dirt, deprived of its old accompaniments, is soon detected

Character of applicants for Relief.

& removed. All medical men are invited to point out any defect they see on their visits, & any complaint made by them is promptly attended to by the authorities. The relieving officers always insist, too, as a condition of relief, that the recipients shall keep their houses clean.

There is also scarcely any want of food among the people, & those who come for relief are mainly of the hereditary pauper class. You recognise them again & again; certain people get into a regular habit of coming, & they bring their children, who, becoming familiarised with the surroundings, come themselves in turn. Others come through pauper association. Examples of this are seen in Gillett St., Kingsland, - a street of decent-looking houses, but in many of wh. there is a family in almost every room. Families moving into these houses are influenced by the

Method of Administration.

example of their relief-receiving neighbours in the adjoining rooms or next floor, & soon are found applying themselves.

He is not satisfied with the present method of administering relief. Rather favours the gradual abolition of out-relief, for it has led to the establishment of a permanent pauper class, quite content to live in this way, & with no heart for anything better. But failing abolition, he would have the relief given by a paid government official. He does not think it shd. be left to voluntary workers, like the guardians. At present the whole work of the relief committees devolves upon a few - there is an absence of uniformity in administration, favoritism or the reverse is shown, & there is an undue pottering about with the relief given (knocking off a sixpence here & putting one on there), & often an inadequate grant. Tea or other things wh. have no nourishment

Charity v. Poor Law Relief.

are given instead of strengthening food, & cases are kept going on a miserable pittance wh. would be much better treated in the House. He thinks a paid official might perform the work in much the same manner as a police magistrate - hearing relieving officers & applicants & deciding the cases as brought before him.

Dr B's opinion of voluntary charity is not high. He says it is generally spasmodic & inadequate, & hardly ever lasts a sufficient time to be of real service. He instances the case of widows left with young children. Churches, chapels & the like intervene, & give a little help, & the widow struggles on for a time, getting a little help one week & none the next. She & her children gradually get weaker thro' want of proper or sufficient food, & ultimately, when down in health & destitute, she comes upon the parish. It would

Drink.

have been much better had she come at first. The guardians wd. have taken some of her children into the schools, where they wd. be well cared for, & she herself assisted to earn a living whilst her strength remained. She comes when her health has gone, & it is too late.

Recommends us to see Mr. Crane (Lots a relieving Officer) about these points.

Drink is a very serious cause of poverty leading to pauperism – not because of actual drunkenness, but because of the habitual spending of so large a portion of earnings in drink. People come to him for medical relief at 11 a.m., smelling of drink. Tippling has become an ingrained habit with them.

Alcoholism is a disease affecting all classes – & he knows some sad cases amongst the well-to-do – but it is not this wh. is the prevalent mischief. It is the

Religion & Education.

general drinking habit – the frequenting of public houses.

Insurance money – apart from extravagance in funeral trappings – goes largely in drink, & it is surprising how quickly widows of this class who have had £20 insurance money find their way to the relief office.

On the whole, drink is not so great an evil as it was, & there is good hope that the younger generation will grow up an improvement on the older. Temperance organizations are working effectually amongst the children, though a failure with adults. Temperance in life generally he holds to be preferable to total abstinence.

Religious organizations, this active are a factory, he thinks, in their effect on the lives of the mass of the people. Education has done more, & there is not the low depravity there used to

Early marriages.

be. If only the children had good homes to go to when they left school great benefits would result.

The doctor has a grievance against certain of the churches, wh. undertake to supply stimulants to poor persons on the order of a medical man. They give a printed form to patients, who bring these forms to him & beg him to sign them. He does not himself prescribe stimulants to patients – has set his face against the practice, & does not think his task shd. be made harder by this method. Mentions St. Mark's, Dalston, as an offender in this respect. If he does prescribe stimulants, they must come from the parish dispensary.

Many couples live together in the district without marriage.

Early marriages are not uncommon, & are usually a bad thing, leading to

Immorality.

Clothing.

poverty & to weak & sickly offspring. Pauperism, the result of weak stamina, is often bred through it.

Nothing can surpass the scenes of immorality on Bank Holidays – indecent attitudes, talk & suggestiveness. He attributes this to the factory system. Board School education is deficient in that it does not teach the children how to behave themselves.

A few many servant girls get into trouble & come upon the parish.

The poor never seem to save anything to buy new clothing. If they are given ~~good~~ things they pawn them, & put on their old, dirty clothes again. There are enormous sales of clothing which have been pawned & not redeemed.

He believes that more might be

done in the way of providing amusements for the poor. The outdoor games are exclusively confined to clubs, & poor people get shut out from them altogether. He wd. like to see the apparatus for various games provided by the L.C.C., & kept at depots in the parks, from wh. they might be borrowed, under supervision of the officials, & the recreation grounds & the sports thrown open for all comers to join in freely. At present you seldom see the labouring folk taking part in any of the sports.

More wholesome indoor amusement is also needed for the people, particularly on Sundays. He feels for the large numbers of men & boys who on the dreary Sundays of winter walk the streets with nothing to amuse them, until the public house, with its warmth & glitter, opens to receive them. Museums & art galleries are too far away to be of any practical use to

Lack of Food on Bank Holidays.

Health

the people here. Places of rest & recreation, with good music, &c., are needed. As a musician himself, he has great faith in music as a good & refining influence.

Another great need, the doctor thinks, is better provision for feeding the public on Bank Holidays. The shops are closed, & the public-houses provide hardly anything but drink. He wd. compel them by law to keep a decent supply of eatables for such occasions. Many families go out on that day & get nothing but beer & biscuits, returning home exhausted & the worse for drink when they wd. not have been had they had proper food.

Much drinking, he believes, is due to poor victuals & bad cooking.

He agrees that the health of the parish is very satisfactory. With an

Police.

elevated situation & good soil, infectious complaints are few.

The police here finds efficient & capable. Takes pains to keep people out of trouble. He has never seen them act cruelly in any case.

Mr. Crane, relieving officer.

Personal.

Experience.

Mr. E. L. Crane, 88 Florence Rd, Lower Clapton, has just obtained an appointment as a registrar of births, &c., in Hackney, but was for 18 years a relieving officer in the district.

Is of advanced middle-age, very pale, with white beard, & dresses in a manner that gives him much the appearance of a missionary. Naturally cautious & reserved, I should say, but spoke to me more freely than is his wont, owing to my introduction fm. Dr. Birch, with whom he is very friendly. Said he feared he could be of very little use, because as an R.O. he had kept strictly aloof from any religious or political organisation. Considered it his duty to do so, because of the very mixed complexion both of the guardians & of those who sought relief.

Eighteen years ago he was appointed to the whole area of what is now Districts 1 & 10, extending fm. Stamford Hill (N.) to the N. L. Ry (S.) & fm Stoke Newington

Character of Poor Population of District.

Rd (W.) to the Sea (E.) Two years before this was divided, & he had the upper part (upt Clapton & Stamford Hill) for about 14 years, whilst for the last 2 years of his service he came back to the lower part (including Lower Clapton & Shacklewell).

He had 3 poor spots on his old district:

(a) Navvies Island, so called because the houses were built about the time the G.E. Ry was constructed, some 25 years ago, & were originally inhabited by navvies & others working on the line. In his early days it was a very bad quarter & contained many of the poorer class, but a few years back the owners weeded out the worst characters, & induced a number of policemen to live there. Since then it has much improved, & applicants for relief are not nearly so numerous, & are of a more respectable type.

(b) Two or three small streets near the junction of Dalston Lane & Clarence Rd., the principal being Orchard Pl. Poor, but honest

Drink

Morality.

& decent people.

(8) Shackelwell – a nest of very poor people in the street extending from the Board School, Hindle St., to Shackelwell Lane. There were many rather cases from this district, but they were usually decent people.

In fact, none of the poor population of this latter district are conspicuous for vice. Intemperance is their chief failing, & even in this respect there has been improvement. The growth of the teetotal movement, & the marked tendency on the part of the young to take the pledge & keep it, have had good effect.

The people are pretty good morally. He has not noticed, in his visits, any undue overcrowding or very bad conditions as to sleeping accommodation. For one thing, rents are cheap comparatively, a room being got for 2/- or 3/- wk. wd. cost 5/. or 6/- in the more central parts of East London. The houses also are well looked after, & the

Religious activity.

Education.

Early marriage.

Sanitary staff efficient.

He has found the Salvation Army very active in Lower Clapton, & knows that the religious organizations do a good deal of home visitation, more particularly the Nonconformists, but has no opinion as to the effect of it all in increased religious tendencies.

Mr. Horn, a member of the Bd. of Guardians, has a mission in Queen St. Shacklewell, & is doing a large amount of good. He believes it is connected with the Ragged School Union.

He agrees that Education has had a wholesome & refining influence on the people.

Many young people get married when not earning sufficient to keep a decent home. The husband is driven to the public house because of home discomforts. Early marriages have caused much trouble

Administration of Poor Relief.

to Guardians & Relieving Officers, many cases being directly traceable to this cause.

Relief in Hackney is administered by 2 Committees, one of wh. meets at Homerton Workhouse every Monday at 3, & the other at Dalston each Tuesday at 11. Every Guardian is entitled to sit on either of these Committees, & no relief may be given unless 3 members are present. The relief committees are usually well attended, quite $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Guardians taking an active interest in relief work. The cases are gone into much more thoroughly than they used to be.

Absolutely destitute persons are offered the House, & so are simple out-door work cases; but if people can find at least sufficient to cover their rent, & are otherwise suitable, outdoor relief is granted them. Independent of rent, he considers 3/6 a-wk the least on which an old person can live on. In addition the old people get

Proposal to administer by Government Official.

Out Relief.

– especially if, as is usually the case in this district, they are old residents – many little gifts wh. cannot be set down in figures. The poor help each other a great deal.

The Guardians do not co-operate with the religious bodies at all, but the R.C.s work with the C.O.S. so far as to assist each other in Inquiry work.

Altho' some of the Guardians take great pains with the relief work, & are active in making personal inquiries – & altho' on the whole administration is good – he thinks that the appointment of a paid Government Official to administer relief might be a wise change. Elected Guardians have always got to consider what is most likely to please their constituents, & each election may destroy continuity of policy.

Out relief saps the independence of many of its recipients. They have at first a great

Treatment of Pauper Children.

Funeral Extravagance.

dread of applying, but this wears off, & often the seeds of hereditary pauperism are sown.

He does not however see his way to the entire abolition of out relief. It would certainly have to be amended by some better form of help, for many of the poor must have assistance, particularly the aged.

He has a great objection to Workhouse Schools. Shut up in the schools, the children are brought up under artificial surroundings, & do not get proper ideas of life. They shd. be allowed to mix as freely as possible with other children; to bring them up in small homes, under the care of foster parents, he regards as the best thing, if it can be carried out practically.

On other points Mr. Crane is at one with Dr. Birch:

Agrees with him as to funeral extra-

Voluntary Charity & Widows

Thrift.

vagance, the other waste of insurance money, & the rapidity with wh. under such circs. the widows find their way to the relief office.

It is also of the doctor's opinion that many striving widows are mistakenly propped up for a time by voluntary sporadic charity, & come to the guardians too late. An able bodied widow can usually support 2 children, & it is better that the rest, if any, shd be taken by the guardians while she has her health, fearing their being put into a good school.

Saving, apart from insurance, is usually for immediate objects – as putting by for Xmas clubs, &c. – & is less often of a permanent character.

Dr Gordon.

Experience.

Enlargement of Infirmary

Loc Gov 13

Oct. 18 – J. A.

Dr. Gordon is resident medical supt. of Homerton Workhouse & Infirmary. He is a short, middle-aged man, with a round, cheery, good-natured face. Dresses in light tweed, & has not much of the professional air about him. Is perhaps a little brusque in dealing with patients, but was most courteous to me.

He has been 16 years, & so has seen the poor neighbourhood of Homerton & Clapton PR. grow wonderfully. The people have come largely from Shoreditch & Bethnal Green, driven out by the building of warehouses, &c. Does not think there has been much change in the social status of the people – they came poor & remain so.

The Infirmary is registered for 418 patients, but at times in winter they have had to crowd in nearly 600. A new building to accommodate 226 more is almost finished, & will be opened very shortly. It adjoins the present infirmary, & is built on the most approved modern

Medical & Nursing Staff

Infirmary preferred to Hospital.

principles.

At present he & one assistant take entire charge of infirmary & workhouse, but a second assistant is about to be appointed. They train their own nurses, taking young women as probationers. Lectures are given to them by the medical supt., assistant, & matron. There are charge nurses, staff nurses, & probationers, who take duty after 6 mos. training. Night & day duty are taken by turns, 2 mos. day & 1 month night duty being the rule. There are 60 beds on a floor (divided into 2 wards, separated by a central landing) & for this number there are 1 charge nurse, 2 staff, 1 probationer, & 1 night nurse. Old women from the workhouse are not employed at all here - none but trained nurses.

There being no hospital nearer than Dalston, a good many accident cases are brought here wh. in the ordinary way wd go to a hospital. The people do

Infirmary regarded very differently to Workhouse.

Many get medical Relief who could Pay

Immorality

not at all mind coming - in fact they express an open preference for it to the hospital, & do not look upon it as in any way leaving to them. On the other hand they regard entering the Workhouse as a disgrace. Whenever it proposes to send an infirmary patient across to the Workhouse (wh. adjoins the infirmary) the patient asks for his discharge.

It has no doubt this feeling towards the Infirmary leads to many obtaining medical relief when they could afford to pay, & the local doctors complain of it; but they dare not refuse to admit a case brought to them - the odium wd. be so great if anything serious occurred as a consequence.

They have a lock ward, & get cases from Dalston Junction & locality. They have also a rather large number of illegitimate children, many being those of young women ~~brought~~ who come from the S.A. shelter & the refuge in Dalston Lane. Last

Illegitimate Births.

Drink.

A Healthy Workhouse.

year there were 108 births in the Infirmary, of wh. 77 were illegitimate. Generally speaking, however, the neighbourhood is not an immoral one, & prostitution has undoubtedly decreased. Some bad houses in Graham Rd., &c., have been closed.

A great many cases come in thro' drink, not so much that the illness is due to drink, as that means have been exhausted thereby wh., if saved, wd. have paid for treatment outside. They have many cases of delirium tremens, but no increase in proportion to population. There are a small number of abstainers among the patients.

Stimulants have been abolished in the Workhouse, & are rarely used in the infirmary, but he does not hesitate to prescribe them when really necessary.

The health of the workhouse inmates is remarkably good, & many live to a great

age. The old people usually lead a comfortable contented life, well fed, clothed & looked after, & devoid of worry or care.

The doctor afterwards conducted me over the Infirmary. Everything was beautifully clean; the ~~[illegible]~~ wards are very well lighted & ventilated, & there was an appearance of cheerful comfort about the place. I was struck with the number of juvenile patients - accident cases mostly, from the neighbouring streets.

Mr. Poles.

Relief Statistics – a changing policy.

Doc Gov 13

Oct. 18. – J. A.

Mr. Poles, clerk to the Guardians, had appointed me a quite short space of time between two other engagements, so there was not much time to talk. He is however a young man, who only by (tho' previously assistant clerk for some years) hard work for 18 mos. N. Co. & did not seem to have much general knowledge of the people, & as I had some difficulty in arranging an appointment with him, I did not think another interview necessary.

He had armed himself with a number of ponderous volumes of official returns relating to the Union, & was prepared to give an unlimited supply of statistics, if needed. I just called the following almost at random, in order to show the tendency as to the N. Poor Relief. Any other statistics required he will readily supply to us.

Year.	Indoor	Outdoor	Total	Cost of our relief.
1863	504	1626	2130	£98
1873	797	3290	4087	£260
1883	1604	2348	3952	£200
1886	2040	2395	4435	£190
1890	2215	2582	4797	£219
1896	2583	2761	5344	£256
1897	2894	2791	5685	£256

The figures are in each case for the 2nd week in Oct., thus taking a fairly normal period of the year. The marked change between 1873 & '83 may be partly accounted for by the enlargement of the Workhouse, wh. was completed about 1881-2. In the sewer part of winter there is usually an increased proportion of out-relief, the Guardians relieving a number of the unemployed by means of the stoneyard.

Mr. C. says the Guardians are usually inclined towards out-relief when first elected, but experience shows them that in many cases the House is the best place for the applicants.

The present Board are now well into their third year of office, & are just getting into touch a little with the C.O.S., recognising the fact that certain cases are best dealt with apart from the Poor Law. His own idea is that a special officer shd. be appointed to act in conjunction with the C.O.S. & other voluntary agencies.

Improved Administration

He thinks the 1894 Act, in extending representation to all classes, led to increased efficiency. The Guardians represent now all shades of opinion, but work well together, & between them get a better grasp of the cases than formerly.

Boarding Out.

Men sent to S.A. Colony.

The present Board attends to the work of relief better than any previous one within his recollection. The relief committees are well attended & cases looked into carefully.

The system of triennial (instead of annual) elections has done much to increase efficiency of administration.

The boarding-out system has only been adopted to a very limited extent yet, 27 children being now dealt with in this way. Too early to speak of results.

The Guardians have sent 70 or 80 men to the Salvation Army Farm Colony, paying 5/- a week for each. Good has been done in a few isolated cases, but the results generally are not over satisfactory. He thinks the S.A. have done a good deal of good in this & other ways, & are not to blame

Religion & Temperance.

Influence of Poor Relief.

Police.

Rowdy lads

for the poor success of the colony. The material to be dealt with was too bad. Mr. C. is busily connected with a mission in Drummond Lane, & is favorably impressed with the work being done by missions more particularly in the direction of temperance, by means of the Bands of Hope. He thinks that a large number keep the pledge in after life.

Mr. C. quite agrees as to the magnetic influence of Poor Law relief. If a person comes once it is a hundred to one that he or she comes again.

The police are much more efficient than they used to be, & work very well with the local authorities.

The only complaints is as to the gangs of rowdy lads & boys who infest the streets & open spaces on Sundays, & who, with corresponding parties of girls,

The Assessment of Property.

are a great annoyance in Mare St. on Sunday evenings. These lads have got too old for Sunday school or Band of Hope; they will not go to church, & little else is done for them.

The usual rule in regard to the assessment of property is that in cases where parishes are quite distinct the assessing is done by the Vestries, but where there is a Union of parishes the Guardians are the assessment authority. The latter is the case in Hackney (wh. is still joined to Stoke Newington for Poor Law purposes). One curious anomaly remains as a result of the recent conversion of Stoke Newington into an administrative Vestry, that whilst the Hackney Vestry appoints its own rate collectors, those for S. N. are appointed by the Guardians.

Mr. J. Mason, Workhouse Master

Experience.

Huge Workhouses a mistake

Suggested Industrial Army.

Oct. 14 - J.a.

Lee Gov 13/8

CB

Mr. J. Mason has been an official at Hackney Workhouse for 24 years, & has been Master for last 18 years. He is a man of medium height & age, thin & stooping, with a tuft of red beard wh. gives him a Yankee bore-keen eyed, & furtive almost.

He says he knows little of the world outside, but judging of the very poor neighbourhood wh. he has seen grow up near the Workhouse, he says of the people that considering their homes, &c., he wonders they are not much worse. But his interest evidently centres on his own work inside the House; on this he has evidently thought much, & expresses himself fully & with emphatic conviction. He regards these large workhouses as a great mistake (Hornsey holds about 1400 people) & the millions spent annually on Poor Law relief as to a large extent wasted or misused - particularly in regard to able-bodied men. He points out that these men are in the main a helpless, shiftless, or lazy class. There is, however, work to be got out of them, but it must be under the strictest oversight & discipline. Instead of being put, as now, to

A large helpless class.

the useless labour of oakum picking or stone breaking (wh. is much better done by machinery) he wd. have them formed into an industrial army & made to do useful work under military discipline. There are all sorts of useful public works – the reclamation of waste or marsh lands, &c. – wh. cd. be done by these men without any increase of expense, & the community wd. have useful returns for their money. He is impressed with the large helpless class there are – men who must have everything found to their hands – who have no idea of getting work for themselves – but who if set to work & shown just what they are to do will do it steadily & faithfully. He mentioned some remarkable instances of men of this kind. In one case a Bank of England clerk died & left 2 grown up sons whom he had educated – one in engraving & the other in painting – but ~~had not~~ neither of whom had been put in the way of earning anything. They soon got through the money left them (£600 or 20) & both came to the workhouse, where they have been now for something like 20 years. They are both steady men – have no vices – will

Personal Influence - Impossible in Big Workhouses.

do what they are told, but are quite helpless to get their own living. The engineering was offered by the Guardians 28/- a wk. to tend the workhouse engine, &c., & live independently outside, but he declined, & now does the work & lives as an ordinary inmate. The other has gradually found a little round of duties in the House, & faithfully performs them. Both are absolutely honest & contented. These are extreme examples of a large class of men who lack all initiative or ambition, & who seem to prefer to be under discipline, & to whom working in an industrial army wd be no hardship. There are of course the other class - the lazy & vicious - but it wd be just as easy - probably easier - to make them do useful work as to perform their present wasteful task.

Mr. M is a great believer in the value of personal individual influence, & gave instances within his knowledge of men who had been rescued from a bad, drunken life by the persistent & untiring exertions of a companion. In our great workhouses it is impossible to bring this personal influence to

Workhouse inmates rarely make a fresh start.

The Pauper Look.

bear. He feels himself helpless - a mere part of a big machine.

He has known cases where workhouse inmates have made an independent start in life again, but they are rare. The whole influence of the place is against it - the character of the inmates is against it. He had one pet case which he quoted for years - a well-educated man who was in the workhouse for a time & then got a good position (partly thro' his influence) as secy of the Southend for Company. He held the position for some years, but then committed suicide, & there was, he believes, something wrong with the accounts. And so bro. Mr. quotes his only case no longer!

You can nearly always recognise the habitual workhouse inmate, no matter where met or how dressed. His very walk shows it. There is an easy, shiftless, don't-care air about him, as tho' void of all purpose in life. He proved this for himself when on a holiday at Margate, where there is a workhouse sanatorium. Found he cd. almost invariably tell if an inmate passed him.

S. A. Farm Colony.

For these people the chance of reform is very slight. The severest discipline, if of temporary nature, fails. The guardians have from time to time sent men to the test houses, formerly at Poplar, & latterly at Kensington — comfort places, worse than prisons — but the men come back no better.

A steady, permanent discipline in an industrial army, from wh. there is no escape but to a more decent life, he believes to be the ship best worth taking, tho' he does not advocate this with any ideal of reform, so much as that in this way the community wd. get some value for money. There is a residue wh., tho' moral, mental, or physical defect, must be kept by the State — in return let the State get the best value it can out of them.

The S. A. farm colony is largely a failure, men drift away from it in one way or another. He is glad that the experiment has been tried — glad they have sent men there — for anything is better than the House with its stores & volume. But if they cd. only point to one really successful case! He fears they cannot.

So the casual ward — he also has

The Casual Ward.

Female Paupers.

strong objection, & thinks that at least for women & children it shd. be abolished. No inquiries are made, & neither cleanliness or decency required. There are many men who spend their lives in roving fr. Ward to Ward. They are miserably fed & housed, yet wd. never think of entering the House. Travelling is so easy & cheap now-a-days that the purpose for wh. the casual ward was established – to give shelter to those travelling in search of work – hardly exists now.

One winter the Guardians substituted soup for gruel at the midday meal, but were so over-run with applicants that they had to give it up.

He does not think the casual is at all of worse class than the workhouse inmate. It is an innate roving vagabond ~~life~~ disposition, that induces the life. Of course there are decent exceptions.

Able-bodied women, unless overburdened with children, are usually considered to have less excuse for coming to the House than men, for a woman can nearly always get work. They have a little test house of their own on the women's side of the House – laundry work, &c. – & not only is it useful for discipline, but it

Workhouse Children.

The Guardians.

also feels the women on their mettle, & some of them soon take work outside. They have plenty of applications for domestic help.

Workhouse children usually do well & seldom come back if properly started by the Guardians & looked after. But if, as often happens, they are taken away by bad, dissolute parents, the reverse is the case. He thinks that not only shd. the Guardians be empowered to refuse to give up children to parents of known bad character, but also that children shd. be compulsorily removed for the worst homes & taken care of publicly, & the parents made to pay.

Boarding-out he regards as a doubtful experiment. Has more hope of the scattered homes idea.

When first elected the Guardians look upon stone breaking as very cruel work; in the 2nd year they regard it with equanimity; in the 3rd they wish it was iron instead of stone that the men had to break! Similarly his own character changes in their eyes — severe at first, he becomes easy & sentimental towards the end of the term.

Paid Relief Commissioners.

Poor Law Unification.

The aged.

Mr. M. favors appointment of paid Commissioners to administer relief — it wd. lead to that most important result, continuity of policy.

He is also entirely for the unification of London for Poor Law purposes. It wd. tend in every way to the advancement of his own ideas as to the treatment of pauperism.

The old ladies & gentlemen have got to be kept without work practically, & he is not much concerned about method, so long as they are decently cared for.

[I have set down but a very bare & imperfect outline of Mr. M's talk. It was discursive & anecdotal, & was interrupted by duty calls, but had much human interest. On first looking thro' our Form he did not think he cd. be of any use, but encouraged to talk about workhouse life & character, he did so readily. I feel I have not done his conversation full justice here — partly from inability — I cd. make very few notes — & partly because brevity is necessary in writing of what is beyond the direct scope of this inquiry.]