

FABIAN TRACTS, No. 18.

Facts for Bristol:

AN EXHAUSTIVE COLLECTION OF STATISTICAL
AND OTHER FACTS RELATING TO THE CITY;
WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR REFORM
ON SOCIALIST PRINCIPLES.

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Bristol - Statistics.

Bristol - Politics and Government.



Facts for Bristol.

BRISTOL is in many respects the most backward of English municipalities. Most important towns in England own their own waterworks: Bristol leaves this vital public service in the hands of a monopolist company earning a dividend of eight and a half per cent. Two-thirds of the gas-consumers in the United Kingdom are supplied by municipal enterprise: Bristol depends for light on a company earning ten per cent. More than a quarter of the tramways in this country are owned by public authorities: Bristol allows private adventurers to earn five per cent. by running cars through the public streets. Birmingham, Manchester, Bradford, and many other places keep all three of these public services under public control for public profit. Bristol enjoys the bad pre-eminence of being the largest provincial municipality which allows all three to remain in private hands for private advantage. Bristol can borrow capital at three and a half per cent.: if the capital of these companies had been municipal stock at three and a half per cent. instead of private investments at an average of six per cent., the inhabitants of Bristol would be saving £50,000 per annum, representing a rate of one shilling in the pound.

Public administration in Bristol is a confused and perplexing tangle of uncoordinated authorities, exercising diverse and ill-defined powers over varying and over-lapping areas, elected on different franchises, at different dates, with different qualifications for membership. One public body spends money in opposing the projects of another. The poor rate varies from street to street within what is virtually one town. During three years, 1881-4, no fewer than 16 elections to one public body or another have taken place at a cost of about £3,000. Lack of public spirit, due largely to lack of knowledge of public affairs, is the inevitable result of this confusion.

Municipal reformers everywhere find their great difficulty in the want of accurate statistics and easily accessible facts dealing with local life. In the following pages an attempt is made to supply this want as far as Bristol is concerned, and to suggest some of the immediately practicable reforms in the local administration, which Socialists desire to press on the attention of the public.*

BRISTOL'S SIZE AND GROWTH.

The area within the parliamentary boundaries of Bristol, as extended under the Redistribution of Seats Act, 1885, measures about five miles in extreme length, east and west, from Fishponds to the river Avon, and about four miles in extreme breadth (north and south), from Stapleton to Bedminster, and comprises 10,875 acres.

* Further statistics will be found in "Facts for Socialists" (Fabian Tract No. 5).

The total population living within these limits will not fall very much below 300,000 when the census of 1891 is taken. In 1881 the numbers occupying this area, divided in 1885 into the present four constituencies, were 253,906 (North Division 64,713; West Division 60,874; East Division 61,986; South Division 66,333); of this total 206,874 lived within the municipal boundaries of the City and County of Bristol, the remainder (47,032) being made up by the local government districts of Horfield (4,766); St. George (26,433); Stapleton (10,833); and an extra part of Bedminster (5,000.)*

Before 1885 the parliamentary boundaries coincided with those of the municipality, which embrace 4,632 acres, with a circuit of 15 miles. Three-fourths of the municipal area lies in Gloucestershire; the remaining fourth, Bedminster, is in Somerset, and contains about a fifth of the population. In 1881, the municipal area had 32,061 inhabited houses, containing 206,874 persons, 4,632 acres, 45.5 to the acre, 32,120 to the square mile, 6.4 to each house, (Census Report, C. 3563). The population was estimated by the Medical Officer of Health to have increased to 232,248, up to the middle of 1890 (see his report for 1890). The figures of population are given in the following table (see *Enycl. Britannica*, vol. iv.):—

BRISTOL MUNICIPALITY.

Year.	Ancient City.	Added Districts.	Total.
1801	40,814	20,339	61,153
1821	52,889	32,219	85,108
1841	64,266	60,880	125,146
1851	65,716	71,612	137,328
1861	66,027	88,066	154,093
1871	62,662	119,890	182,552
1881	57,479	149,395	206,874
1890 (estimated)	53,656	178,592	232,248

Bristol formerly returned two members to Parliament, but since 1885 it has been divided into four constituencies as follows:—

	1886.	1891.	
Bristol West ...	7,657	7,922	registered electors.
Bristol North ...	9,002	10,533	" "
Bristol East ...	9,506	10,593	" "
Bristol South ...	10,384	11,752	" "
Total ...	36,549	40,800	

(*Parl. Paper*, H.C. No. 47 of 1886, and *Western Daily Press*, Jan. , 1891.)

As the percentage of men over 21 out of the total population is normally 22 per cent. (*Census Return* of 1881, C. 3797, p. 85), it may be assumed (taking an estimated population of 300,000), that there are about 65,000 adult males in Bristol. Therefore more than a third of the men of Bristol have no votes.† At the general election in 1885, when all the seats were contested, only 28,863 electors voted; and at the general election of 1886, only 25,422, about two-thirds of those on the register, and less than half of the number of adult males who would have been entitled to the vote under manhood suffrage.

* *Kelly's Directory* for Bristol (51, Great Queen Street, London, 1885).

† "The New Reform Bill" (*Fabian Tract* No. 14) supplies detailed proposals in exact Parliamentary terms for the reform of this anomaly.

THE POOR OF BRISTOL.

Bristol contains about 50,000 families. How many of these are able to maintain a decent existence, and how many are in poverty? It may be assumed that in Bristol, as elsewhere, four out of five of the adult males are manual laborers for weekly wages (Prof. Leone Levi, *Times*, 13th January, 1885). The Medical Officer of Health's for 1889 shows that 16·7 per cent. of the deaths in Bristol in 1889 took place in the workhouses, hospitals, and public lunatic asylums. As the inmates of these institutions are almost entirely drawn from the wage-earning class, and include an unusually large proportion of adults, it is practically certain that one in three of the wage-earners ends his or her life in a bed provided by public charity. Over a third, indeed, of these deaths were those of indoor paupers in the three workhouses.

Three public authorities are responsible for the relief of the Bristol poor, viz. :—the Bristol Incorporation of the Poor, the Barton Regis Union (which includes the parishes of Clifton, SS. Philip and Jacob (without), St. James and St. Paul (without), and part of Westbury on-Trym, all situated in the City and County of Bristol, besides eight other parishes in the County of Gloucester), and the Bedminster Union (comprising 22 parishes in the County of Somerset, Bedminster being one, and the City portion of it forming its most populous and important fraction).

The following are the latest statistics of their work :—

	Population. Middle of 1889.	Persons per acre, 1883.	Paupers relieved on Jan. 1, 1890.	Beds in Sick and Infectious Hospitals.	Total Cost of Relief, 1889-90.
Bristol Incorporation	53,972	71·5	2,970	228	30,547
Barton Regis Union			5,026	300	
„ city part...	128,815	46·1	3,204	192	29,656
Bedminster Union			2,894	140	
„ city part...	46,574	46·9	1,845	90	15,441
Bristol Municipal Area	229,361	49·5	8,019	510	75,644

See Accounts of Poor Law Authorities, and Report of Medical Officer of Health for 1889, p. 54.

The total number of separate individuals who receive parochial relief during any one year is usually assumed to be at least three times* the number receiving relief on any one day. The number of persons in these Unions who were paupers at some time during 1889-90 was therefore about $3 \times 8,019 = 24,057$, or 10 per cent. of the population, being one in eight of the wage-earning class. †

THE HOUSING OF THE PEOPLE.

Though the Bristol Committee's Report‡ in 1884 states that "there is not much overcrowding" (p. 33), according to the returns of the Medical Officer of Health, the people of Bristol are crowded

* Dudley Baxter gave $3\frac{1}{2}$ as the more probable figure ("National Income," p. 87); Mulhall's "Dictionary of Statistics" gives 3 (p. 346).

† For a statement of the reforms in Poor Law administration most pressingly required see Fabian Tract, No. 8, "Facts for Londoners," p. 18; No. 17, "The Reform of the Poor Law"; and No. 20, "Questions for Poor Law Guardians."

‡ Report of Committee appointed to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor (P. S. King and Son, King Street, Westminster, 1885), pp. 35, 47. See also p. 10 of Report of Medical Officer of Health, 1889.

together more closely than the inhabitants of any of the 27 largest provincial towns in the United Kingdom, with the exception of Liverpool, Birmingham and Plymouth. Bristol's average of 50 persons to the acre is more than double that of Wolverhampton, Bradford, Nottingham or Blackburn, and treble that of Cardiff, Sheffield, Huddersfield or Leeds.

In the City proper the density in 1889 was 71·5, and for the whole of Bristol the average has risen from 45·5 in 1881 to 49·5 in 1889. Thousands of Bristol families are huddled together in the 600 courts, and the very large number of houses without any back-let* which are mostly unfit for human habitation. The houses in the courts are densely crowded, there being an average of 4 persons to each room.* Many other houses built for one family only are now let out in tenements, and are seriously deficient in closet and window accommodation.

Notwithstanding these facts no action has been taken by the Town Council under the Artisans' Dwellings Acts to provide decent accommodation for the poorer citizens.† Other municipalities have been less backward in this respect.

In Liverpool the Corporation has cleared upwards of four acres, and itself erected five blocks of dwellings containing 322 tenements, and housing 1,300 persons at a cost for land and buildings of £130,816: 5,230 square yards remain still unbuilt.‡ In Greenock an area of about 3½ acres was cleared in 1879-81, and the local authority itself erected 197 tenements with the best sanitary arrangements, accommodating 890 persons.‡ Glasgow has erected a block of tenement houses at a cost of £3,426, and the Dublin Corporation has built 226 tenements. In London, too, a small beginning has been made by the City Corporation, in building blocks in Farringdon Street (£1,716 received as rent in 1886-7 for 150 rooms), and in Petticoat Lane (240 tenements let in April, 1888, and 923 persons in occupation).

At least a thousand of Bristol's citizens have no better home than the common lodging houses, of which there are 54 registered, with 1,128 beds.|| The Town Council has so far made no attempt to provide decent accommodation for this class—the least able to provide homes for themselves. The Glasgow Corporation maintains no fewer than seven common lodging houses (six for men and one for women), which are most admirably managed. The rooms are clean, and in each house there is a comfortable recreation room in which lectures are delivered, and music is produced by a "harmoniumist" whose salary appears regularly among the expenses. The inmates have ample opportunity for cooking their food and drying their clothes, while cheese, candles, sugar, tea, etc., are sold to them by the Corporation at wholesale prices. From May 1887 to May

* See Report of Committee on Bristol Poor, quoted on p. 4.

† The Medical Officer of Health (see his evidence before the Royal Commission for the Housing of the Working Classes, C. 4402, i., p. 223) has held that as their death-rate was not specially high, areas could not be condemned as unhealthy, and the enforcement of the tenement regulations has been used by him as a threat to compel voluntary improvement.

‡ House of Lords Return, 1888, No. 275, 3½d.

|| Report of Medical Officer of Health, 1889, p. 32.

1888, 637,581 beds were let to men, and 33,986 to women, at 4½d., 3½d., and (in the women's lodging house) 3d. per night. The net revenue from all seven was £3,999, representing 4⅔ per cent. on their cost.*

Probably not less than 10,000 families ought to be rehoused in Bristol, and allowing the minimum of two rooms per family, 20,000 new rooms would be required, which could be erected at a cost of (say) £50 a room; the cost of the sites would be comparatively small, as the Corporation owns so much property in the city which it could utilise for the purpose. A rent of 2s. a week for two rooms would produce £5 4s. a year, so that supposing the money were borrowed by the city at 3½ per cent., the scheme could not involve a large deficiency, if any, allowing for possible increased cost of building, losses and expenses of management. The rents would not be above the ordinary rate now fixed by competition, which at present is said to be 1s. to 3s. 6d. for single rooms, and 2s. to 4s. 6d. for two rooms,† for much inferior buildings. Any deficiency would properly be met out of the landlords' and not out of the ratepayers' pockets, by an addition to the landlords' income tax.‡

BRISTOL'S ANNUAL RENTAL.

No authoritative statistics are available as to the price which the people of Bristol pay for the privilege of living in their city. It may, however, be computed from the assessment of property to the poor rate, which is as follows:—

	Rateable Value, March, 1890.	Gross Estimated Rental Value.
The City proper	£383,862	£458,622
Clifton	197,458	236,949
SS. Philip and Jacob	136,401	163,681
St. James and St. Paul... ..	79,526	95,431
Westbury (city part)	101,093	121,311
Bedminster Union (city part)... ..	113,128	135,625*
Total... ..	£1,011,468	£1,211,619

* One-fifth has been added to the rateable value, the proportion given in the return of the Bristol Incorporation of the Poor for the city proper.

Therefore it may be computed that the owners of the land and houses of Bristol enjoy an annual rental of about £1,250,000, or more than £25 per annum from each Bristol family.

In London it is estimated that two-fifths of the gross rental represents the annual value of the bare site or "ground-rent."* If the same proportion held good in Bristol, the amount annually paid for the use of that narrow area of hill and marsh, beside the Frome and the Avon, which countless generations of toilers have made so productive, would be about £500,000 per annum,|| the other £750,000 representing the annual value of the buildings. But probably the value of the buildings in Bristol bears a higher proportion.

* Statement of the Trustees under the Glasgow Improvements Act, 1866, for the year 1887-8; and see Fabian Tract No. 8, "Facts for Londoners."

† P. 35 of Report of Committee of Inquiry into Bristol Poor.

‡ See proposals in Report of Housing Conference, 1890. (J. T. Dodd, Hon. Sec., 20 Old Buildings, Lincoln's Inn.)

|| See "Facts for Londoners" (Fabian Tract, No. 8) p. 11.

This shows an enormous growth of value in the present generation, during which the population has grown by more than a third. It is impossible, of course, to distinguish precisely between the increase due to the new buildings, and that arising from enhanced ground-value. But the city proper has long been entirely covered with buildings, and although some of these have been rebuilt, the steady rise in its annual assessment during the last twenty years, records mainly the growth of "unearned increment." In 1870 the rateable value of the district was £256,529, as compared with £383,862 in 1890, an increase of £127,333, or fifty per cent. in twenty years. At fifteen years purchase, this new annual rental value represents a capital sum of nearly £2,000,000, a very large proportion of which must be pure unearned increment, and therefore virtually a gratuitous present from the people of Bristol to the proprietors of their homes.

BRISTOL'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The municipal government of Bristol is centred in the Town Council, which also acts and levies rates as the sanitary authority, but there are, in all, eight public authorities of various kinds. (1) The Town Council and (2) the School Board have jurisdiction over the whole of the city. There are three Poor-Law authorities (the Board of Guardians for the city proper (3), 18 parishes: the Barton Regis Union (4), 5 parishes: and the Bedminster Union (5), responsible for the city portion of Bedminster). These spend rates assessed by the overseers of the parishes. The overseers also assess and hand over to the Town Council and the School Board, the Borough and Dock rates. The other separate authorities within the city are (6) the overseers of St. Philip and St. Jacob, (7) the St. Philip's Burials Board, composed of nine members of St. Philip's Vestry acting as a Burials Board, and (8) the administrative authority of the united parishes (called the district) of St. James and St. Paul. The times and method of election, and the qualifications of candidates for these bodies, are in almost in each case different, and it is obvious that under such conditions, there must be waste of power, of money, and lack of interest and of harmony, and an unnecessary multiplication of officials. At present there are some 180 elected members of the various governing bodies, and with *ex officio* members, about 250 in all. The facts have been brought out clearly by Mr. F. Gilmore Barnett, in his pamphlet "The Bristol Town Council as it is, and as it ought to be" (published by W. Bennett, John Street, Bristol, 1884, 1/-); and his contention is that the whole civic budget should be brought forward and discussed in its entirety, with a full sense of responsibility, before a single representative body, elected by the people, upon broad and well-understood issues. The table on page 10 is taken from the pamphlet.

BRISTOL'S ANNUAL BUDGET.

The financial arrangement of Bristol's multifarious public bodies are as complicated as their respective powers and functions. The Town Council, as a Corporation, does not levy any rate, but the General District Rate, over the whole municipal area, is made and

collected by the Town Council acting as the Sanitary Authority. The highest total rate paid in any parish in the municipality is 5s. 10d. in the £, the lowest 5s. 3d. The statistics in the table on page 10 show the rates levied within the several districts.

The balance-sheet on page 9 shows that the annual expenditure of the city is equal to about one half of the annual rental of the city. The first reform needed to render a unified budget possible is that the Docks Committee and the School Board should make their financial year square with that adopted by the Town Council and the Poor Law authorities.

PUBLIC DEBT.

	MARCH, 1890.	£
Debt in respect of Docks Estate	1,875,022
Corporation Debt on various Accounts	132,778
" " under Portishead Dock Act, 1871	89,920
Urban Sanitary Authority's Debt	417,981
School Board Debt (September, 1890)	102,577
		<u>£2,618,278</u>

(See City Treasurer's Statement and School Board Year Book, 1891.)

In December, 1883, it amounted to £1,358,513 (exclusive of the School Board debt), the great increase since then being on the Docks Account. (See Mr. Barnett's pamphlet.)

The aggregate indebtedness of the various public authorities of Bristol amounts therefore, to about £2,600,000, or almost exactly two years rental. The Bristolians pay every two years to the proprietors of their city, for the mere privilege of inhabiting it, as much as the whole outstanding cost of the docks, schools, public buildings, and street improvements.

In spite of the large Dock debt, the aggregate Bristol debt, which is 2·6 times the annual rateable value, is not higher than the average of the 58 English municipalities having municipal stock (2·65 times the annual rateable value*). This is partly due to its continued abandonment to private adventurers of its water supply, gas works and tramways, for which the inhabitants are none "in debt," and pay an annual tribute. Deducting the Dock debt, Bristol owes only 0·65 times its annual rateable value, as compared with an average indebtedness for unproductive public services of 1·12 times the annual rateable value. It is impossible to avoid the suggestion that the Bristol authorities have been less active than those of other municipalities in those departments of collective expenditure such as public sanitation, the re-housing of the people, and the common provision for the needs of crowded urban life, which, though not pecuniarily remunerative, are of such inestimable public advantage.

* See *Financial Reform Almanack*, 1891, p. 13.

BRISTOL'S BUDGET.

PUBLIC REVENUE.

(LADY-DAY, 1889, TO LADY-DAY, 1890),

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

TOWN COUNCIL—CITY TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

	£
Borough Rate (including Libraries Rate)	8,000
Rents of City Property	26,500
Town, Wharfage, and Mayor's Dues, etc.	21,500
Local Government Board Grant to Town Council ..	†23,616
Police Court Fees, Fines, etc.	4,160
Frome Floods Loan	35,000

	£
General Expenses of Municipal Corporation	32,000
Lunatic Asylum, New Buildings, &c.	12,446
Police and Police Stations	33,654
Magistrate's Clerk and Police Courts	4,418
Expenses for purchase, repairs, &c., of City Property ...	†18,628
Capital Charges—Frome Floods	30,000

TOWN COUNCIL—SANITARY AUTHORITY'S ACCOUNT.

General District Rate	148,067
Sanitary Authority's Receipts (Rents, Sale of Surplus Lands and Materials, and Receipts from Baths and Wash-houses) ..	13,500
Avon Intercepting Sewers Rate... ..	2,392

Paving, Sewers, Lighting, Street Watering, Salaries, etc. ...	92,000
Street Improvements and Bridges	55,188
Open Spaces, Baths and Wash-houses... ..	28,725
Avon Intercepting Sewers	2,580

* TOWN COUNCIL—DOCKS ACCOUNT (YEAR ENDING 30TH APRIL, 1890).

Dock Receipts	141,416
Borough Dock (£18,000) and Harbor (£2,360) Rates	20,360

Working Expenditure	103,756
Interest and Sinking Fund	72,047

SCHOOL BOARD (YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER, 1890).

Education Department Grant	9,390
School Fees (£3,418) and other receipts	5,266
Loans raised	12,739
School Board Rate (at 7d. in the £)	27,500

Elementary & Industrial Schools Maintenance & Expenses... ..	32,826
Purchase of Land, Erection, Alteration and Furnishing of Schools	10,775
Loans: Interest and Repayment of Principal	5,191

POOR LAW (BRISTOL INCORPORATION, BARTON REGIS UNION AND BEDMINSTER UNION ACCOUNTS).

Poor Rate	45,000
Local Government Board Grant	16,550
Parliamentary Grant in Aid received from Town Council ...	†13,434
Relief Repaid	3,000

Maintenance of Poor	54,119
General Establishment Charges	8,167
Salaries	8,537
Overseers and Parochial Expenditure	4,821

General Total Revenue	£567,390
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General Total Expenditure... ..	£609,878
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* The Docks Account is almost balanced by the net amount received from Town, Wharfage, and Mayor's Dues in the Town Council Account. These Dues with the expenditure per contra are excluded in this Balance Sheet from the Docks Account.

† This includes an unusual sum. £12,000, expended in purchasing property in the city.

‡ This Grant in Aid is now replaced by a share of the Probate Duty and Local Licences. The Parliamentary Grant in the Poor Law Account has been eliminated from both sides of the City Treasurer's Account.

	Popula- tion, 1881.	Inhab- ited houses, 1881.	Area in acres.	Year ending Lady-Day, 1890.					Sanitary Rate, per £
				Poor Rate, per £	Boro' Rate, per £	School Rate, per £	Boro' Dock Rate, per £	Total Receipts approx. £	
Bristol City proper ...	57,479	8,529	755	1/0½	2½d.	6½d.	6¾d.*	42,000	3/3†
Clifton ...	28,695	3,698	915	10d.	1½d.	6½d.	6d.	19,500	"
SS. Philip and Jacob ...	50,108	8,260	765	1/0¼	1½d.	6d.	4½d.	13,500	"
St. James & St. Paul ...	19,114	2,938	457	11d.	2d.	6½d.	4½d.	7,360	"
Westbury ...	13,347	2,111	703	11d.	2½d.	6¾d.	4d.	9,000	"
Bedminster ...	38,131	6,525	1,037	1/4	2d.	6d.	4d.	13,000	"
Bristol Municipal Area	206,874	32,061	4,632	51,000	8,000	25,000	20,360	104,360	£148,067

See C. 3563, pp. 285, 321, 353, 354. The area in local returns is given as 4,971 acres: the figures for Westbury and Bedminster being 653 and 1,426 respectively. Bristol Urban Sanitary District has 4,538 acres (Ordnance Calculation).

* This includes the Harbor Rate (2d. in the £) levied only upon the city proper, and yielding £2,360 (net).

† N.B.—An additional rate of 2d. in the £ (Avon Intercepting Sewers Rate) is levied by the Sanitary Authority over a portion of the city, realising £2,392.

Authorities within the City.	Date of Election.	Tenure of Office.	Method of Election.	Elected members.	Ex-officio members.
(1) Town Council	November 1st	3 years, 1-3rd retiring each year.	Ballot, occupiers one vote.	48 (16 aldermen)	
(2) School Board	Any time of year.	3 years, all retir'g togeth'r	Ballot, one vote (cumulative).	15	None
(3) Bristol Board of Guardians	1st Thursday in April.	4 years, half retir'g every two years.	Open voting in vestries, male occupiers one vote.	48.	31
(4) Barton Regis Board of Guardians	April 7, 8, 9.	One year.	* Voting paper left at house and collected.	18	51
(5) Bedminster Board of Guardians	April 7, 8, 9.	One year.	* Voting paper left at house and collected.	8	6
(6) St. Philip's Vestry, Overseers	Easter Mond.	3 years, 1-3rd retiring each year.	* Open voting in vestries.	—	—
(7) St. Philip's Vestry, Burial Board	About 1st Thu. after Sept. 3.	3 years, 1-3rd retiring each year.	* Open voting in vestries.	9	None
(8) Commissioners (18) of District of St. James and St. Paul	20 days before 3rd Monday in Sept.	3 years, six retiring each year.	Public meeting, occupiers one vote; candid'ts must be rated at £40.	18	None

* The scale of voting for Barton Regis and Bedminster Boards of Guardians is one vote to six, up to £250. for owners and occupiers; persons can vote in both capacities; candidates must be rated at £30. For St. Philip's Overseers and Burial Board, occupiers have one vote under £50 and one vote for every £25, but not more than six votes. Candidates must be resident ratepayers.

THE PUBLIC ESTATE.

As a set-off against its collective debt, Bristol enjoys not only the possession of its docks, schools, public offices, markets, and the result of its sanitary and other improvements, but also a share of the rental. The complete Schedule of the Property of the Corporation, issued in September, 1888, shows that their property in the city yields ground rents, £324, the terms or tenancies mostly dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; rents of premises let on leases for lives, £220; annual rents of premises let on leases for 40 years, renewable at the expiration of the first 14 years, £330, the total amount of the fines (one year's rack-rent) paid at the last renewals being £8,808; annual rents of premises let for terms of years not renewable, the terms being almost always 75 years, £6,245; annual rents of premises let on yearly tenancies, £10,540. Besides this, the Exchange and St. Nicholas markets (rents of stalls and standings) produce £2,700; the Corn Market (rent of stands) £490; St. James' Market (tolls and rents), £400. The Corporation also owns Durdham Down, comprising about 212 acres, the greater part of which lies just outside the municipal boundary, in addition to certain country property in the adjoining counties of Gloucester and Somerset. The Down yields no revenue, but is a most valuable open space, the Corporation being required by the Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act, 1861, to keep it open and unenclosed as a place of public resort and recreation. Most of the Corporation property is let at very low ground rents, much below the present ground value. Care should be taken that the full economic rent is exacted in each case of new letting, whatever the form of lease may be.

Besides the receipts from Corporation property (gross receipts for 1889-90, £26,500; net receipts, £21,000), the property of the Sanitary authority yielded £1,852, that of the Municipal Charities £7,500 (about) for the same year. To this extent therefore, the land is already "municipalised," and its rental duly applied for the benefit of the community, instead of to the gratuitous maintenance of individual landlords.

BRISTOL'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

About two-thirds of Bristol's children attend schools over which the citizens have no control: out of 73 elementary schools, only 19 are administered by the Bristol School Board, 54 being under the management of various religious bodies. The statistics are as follows (the figures are partly found in the Parliamentary Blue Book, C. 6079, the rest having been supplied by the Bristol School Board):

October, 1889	School Places	Numbers on Register	Average Attendance	Income per Scholar, August 1889.				Expenditure per Scholar	
				School pence	Subscriptions	Grant	Rates		
Board Schools	11,813	12,885	10,207	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	£ s. d.	
Denomnatl ,,	25,285	22,961	18,012	6 5½	—	17 10	21 10½	2 4 7	
				11 6¾	4 4½	16 11¼	—	1 15 3	
Total	37,098	35,846	28,219	The total expenditure of the School Board in 1889-90 was £48,792. the rate in the £ being 7d.					

The School Board is not specially efficient, and unfortunately cannot extend either its energy or its advantages to three-fourths of the schools in which the next generation of Bristolians are being educated. Fourteen schools have been built by the Board since its formation up to October 1890, at a total cost of £116,000 (cost of land, £26,000; cost of building, etc., £90,000), of which £113,528 was raised by loan. The debt of the Board at the end of September 1890 was £102,577 (loans from Public Works Loan Commissioners outstanding, £49,722; other loans outstanding, £52,855). Bristol stands well, so far as its School Board is concerned, with respect to its Day Industrial Feeding School (established by the late Mary Carpenter), which feeds and educates 210 poor children; its two Swimming Baths for Board School children, with swimming instructors; its pianos in the larger schools; and its provision of special instructors for pupil-teachers, as well as of classes for deaf and dumb and blind children. The denominational schools, which charge a higher fee, have fewer advantages, and yet receive in school-pence twice the amount which the School Board receives per scholar.

On the other hand, Bristol compares badly with other cities with respect to the number of children at school. The numbers on the register and the average attendance remain almost stationary, and the proportion which the latter figure bears to the total population (12·2 per cent.) is much below the corresponding figures for Bromsgrove (17·1), Frome (14·5), Keynsham (15·0).—(C. 6079, I., p. 279.) The Education Department Report says (C. 6079, p. 8) that school seats should be provided for one-sixth of the population, and that these seats ought to be daily occupied.

The statistics of Evening Schools shew the need for compulsory Continuation Classes. About 4,500 children leave school in Bristol every year, and nearly all of these ought to attend continuation classes for at least two years. Yet, during the whole year 1888-9, only 1424 children entered the evening classes, the average attendance being only 706. The total cost of the classes was £730, and the grant earned £288.* These classes are said to be well advertised, and frequent concerts, lectures and games are arranged, as well as summer evening classes; but there is a want of persistent attendance, largely due to long hours of work, for which the Board can make little remedy until it has compulsory powers. But as it is, there should be a greater variety of subjects, and more prizes should be offered. Every facility is offered by the Board for the distribution of free breakfasts.

Bristol shares, of course, with other places, the need for (a) the Abolition of School Fees, (b) the Extension of the School Age, with Abolition of the Half-time System. The standard of exemption has recently been raised to the VI. Standard.

BRISTOL'S EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS AND CHARITIES.

A summary of the accounts of the Endowed Charities of Bristol in 1873,† gave the total gross income at £48,356, of which nearly

* Figures obtained from Bristol School Board.

† Digest in Vol. xiii. of Accounts and Papers on Endowed Charities, 1873, quoted at p. 175 of Report of Bristol Committee on the Poor.

£20,000 was for educational purposes, £12,000 was for alms houses, £8,000 for distribution and general uses of the poor, and about £5,000 for church purposes.

Speaking generally, the large eleemosynary charities of Bristol are a source of pauperism, and in great measure will continue to be unwisely and wastefully employed until collectively administered. Recent changes have diverted a much larger proportion to educational purposes, and at this moment £11,000, or more than half the income administered by the trustees of the Bristol Municipal Charities, goes to support three schools, £9,000 being devoted to other purposes.

These three schools are the Bristol Grammar School (a first grade school, 300 boys, fee £9s to £13 11s. 6d.), the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (160 Free Scholarships, which entitle to residence, food, clothing and education, free of cost), and the Redmaids' School (80 girls).

Other charitable endowments go to support Colston's Boarding School, Stapleton, 100 foundationers entering before ten years of age, and leaving at 15 or 16, £5 per annum being charged for clothing, £2,500 of endowment being required for the School. The Merchant Venturers' Society administer this educational trust, and have established two schools of their own, aided by their corporate funds, which must be very large, although they maintain reserve with regard to their exact extent. They are (1) the Merchant Venturers' School—400 boys, fee £5 a year; (2) the Colston Girls' Day School, 300 girls, fee £4 per annum, opened in January, 1891, to provide education up to 17 years of age; to this school any surplus from the Colston Hospital Trust is diverted.

Clifton College (started by a limited liability company with £10,000 capital, and opened 1862; incorporated by Royal Charter, 1877), the best known educational institution in Bristol, cannot be counted among the endowed schools, and the majority of the boys it educates come from outside. Two High Schools for girls (Clifton and Redland) educate over 400 girls, and the Cathedral School (boys) about 150.

The educational ladder is perhaps less incomplete in Bristol than in other parts of England. There are charities for retaining Boys and Girls in the higher standards of Elementary Schools; and for the second step up the ladder, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital provides 100 places to be competed for among children from the Elementary Schools; Colston Boarding School provides 80 more; the Redmaids' School provides 30 for girls, and the Colston Girls' Day School will provide about 30 more. There are also nine Peloquin Scholarships tenable at the Grammar School for boys from elementary schools, and six more for boys under 16, for which Queen Elizabeth's Hospital Boys have the preference; these scholarships consist of a remission of all fees, and an annual payment of £5 in cash. There are 12 exhibitions of £6 tenable at the Merchant Venturers' School for elementary school boys from SS. Philip and Jacob Without, or St. George. But when all is said and done, these various agencies, each with its own expensive financial staff, provide without the least attempt at a common organisation some sort of secondary education

for less than 1 per cent. of the population, which is immensely below the cheap and efficient provision of a really scientific education in such towns as Stuttgart and Zurich.

The modern demand for technical education has been partially met by the expansion of the old Trade and Mining School into the well-equipped Merchant Venturers' School, and by the provision made by Bristol University College (opened October, 1876, about 500 students, exclusive of medical students), on its scientific and engineering side.

But there is no comparison between Zurich with its renowned Polytechnic costing £20,000 a year* and Bristol University College without endowment other than the sum of £1,200 a year from the Treasury, granted only since 1889, eking out a precarious existence with gifts from Balliol and New Colleges, Oxford, and with small classes of evening students.

A representative Bristol Educational Council has existed since 1888, and is doing what it can to influence public opinion; but it is a purely voluntary agency, and has no authority. Secondary education, if it is to be efficiently organized and co-ordinated, must be placed in the hands of a representative public body, which would be forced to consider the question of some systematic provision of technical education, and the application of the grant now made from Imperial taxation for that purpose, which for Bristol will amount to about £5,000.† It is high time that secondary education should be organized by local authorities, in the interests of those taught, and also in the interests of the general body of teachers, whose training, prospects, and dependent position sadly need improvement. If this were done, the University College would assume its natural place at the apex of a properly constituted system, and one of its functions would be to act as a public training college, free from test, alike for elementary and secondary teachers.

BRISTOL'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Bristol's fifty thousand families have the use of one central and five branch public libraries, maintained at an annual expense of about £4,000, defrayed from the Libraries Rate at one penny. The St. Philip's branch, which is in the poorest district, has the largest number of readers on the premises, and the Redland branch, in the well-to-do district, the largest number of borrowers for home reading, mostly women and girls. The chief reforms needed in the administration of these public libraries appear to be the following:—

(1) Opening of the reading rooms on Sundays; (2) Provision of additional branches in the growing new districts; (3) Delivery of free popular lectures on "What to read," and other literary subjects; (4) Besides legislation to enable the penny rate to be raised,

* Report of Royal Commission on Technical Instruction, vol. i., p. 191.

† An excellent provisional scheme for spending this sum has been submitted by the Bristol Educational Council to the Technical Instruction Committee of the Town Council. (See p. 108 of Second Series of Reports on Utilisation of New Fund under Local Taxation Act, 1890, by National Association for Promotion of Technical and Secondary Education, 14 Dean's Yard, Westminster. One shilling; April, 1891.)

means should be adopted for preventing any savings being swamped at the end of the year in the Borough Fund, as happened lately to £2,000 or £3,000 with which it was intended to open a new library.

BRISTOL'S WATER TRIBUTE.

Bristol depends for the supply of the first necessity of urban life upon the Bristol Waterworks Company, which has a capital of £1,200,000. On the ordinary stock (£444,000), in 1885 and several previous years, 10 per cent. was paid, for 1886, $9\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., for 1887, 9 per cent., for 1888 and 1889, $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The amount raised by water rates in 1889 was £85,435.

If the water works had been constructed by the Town Council, the annual interest payable upon their cost would have been, at $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. only two thirds of the amount annually received by the shareholders.

The supply is partly direct from springs at Barrow Gurney (five miles) and from Sherborne: the water from the springs at Watery Combe and at Chewton Mendip, 16 miles from Bristol, is intercepted by the storage reservoirs at Barrow Gurney (holding 350 million gallons) and thence brought into the city. "The water is supplied at constant service, and the supply per head is calculated at about 24 gallons a day, but the Company has power to make an annual charge for each closet flushed, in addition to the charges for other domestic purposes: hence tho majority of outdoor closets throughout the city are dependent upon hand-flushing. There is little doubt that the condition of a very large number of closets would be materially improved, if the charge were omitted on houses of the artizan class." (Report of Medical Officer of Health for 1889, p. 20.)

Such are the results, financial and sanitary, of making the supply of water a source of private profit. Bristol is the only provincial municipality having more than 150,000 population which commits this error. Liverpool and Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds, with hundreds of other local authorities, agree in the enormous public benefit of the "municipalization" of the water supply. The Sheffield Town Council bought up its waterworks in 1887, at a cost of over £7 per inhabitant. The market value of the Bristol waterworks stock and shares probably does not exceed £1,800,000, and even at this price the Town Council could make an annual profit on the purchase, besides securing important sanitary advantages, and fair treatment to all those employed in the water service.

BRISTOL'S ANNUAL GAS BILL.

Bristol gives a virtual monopoly in the supply of its main source of artificial light to the Bristol United Gas Light Company, the statistics of which are as follows:—

YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1889.

paid up Share Capital	paid up Loan Capital	Capital Total	Receipts	Expenditure	Profit
444,250	129,250	573,500	186,429	152,548	33,881
10 per cent. paid as dividend	At 4 per cent.				

Ten per cent. dividend is regularly paid on the ordinary stock—three times as much as the Town Council would have had to pay on the same amount of municipal stock. Over 170 local authorities have now “municipalized” their gas works, to the great advantage of their constituents. Why should not Bristol imitate Bradford, for instance, and, taking over its gas-works, reduce the price to the consumer, secure fair treatment of the gas-workers, improve the lighting of its streets, courts and common stairways, and make an annual surplus in aid of the rates?

BRISTOL'S TRAMWAYS.

The internal communications of Bristol are mainly in the hands of the Bristol Tramways and Carriage Company, which makes a profit out of its gratuitous use of Bristol streets, and pays its ordinary shareholders five per cent.

YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1889.

Share Capital paid up	Mortgage Stock at 4 per cent.	Cost of Works and equipment	Receipts	Expenditure	Profit
165,000	45,000	215,000	36,830	30,625	6,205

To earn this profit for the tramway shareholders, the tramway workers are kept on duty over 14 hours per day. Over 30 local authorities own their own tram-lines, comprising a quarter of the whole mileage open. This enables them to secure the interests both of the public and the tramway workers, by suitable conditions in their lease of the lines. The Glasgow Town Council, for instance, exacts the following conditions:—

“Only such persons as can satisfy the Magistrates' Committee that they have a thorough knowledge of the City and the duties of a car conductor, shall be licensed as such. The working day of conductors and drivers shall not exceed an average of ten hours. The conductors of cars shall be provided with proper uniform, consisting of tunic, trousers, and cap, and no conductor shall be permitted to be on duty without uniform. A uniform great-coat shall be provided for the winter months. No conductor, driver, or other officer shall be permitted on a car unless his clothing is in good order and his whole person clean and tidy. The lessees shall provide proper sanitary conveniences for the drivers and conductors at places where these are requisite, and as may be agreed on with the Corporation.”

The Huddersfield Town Council goes further. Under a special Act of Parliament (45 & 46 Vict. c. 236) it works its own tramways without the intervention of any contractor or other middleman. The consequence is that the Huddersfield tramway servants enjoy an Eight Hours Day, and the Huddersfield citizens low fares and an annual profit to spend for public purposes.

Under the terms of 33 and 34 Vic., c. 78, sec. 43, the Bristol Town Council will be able to take over the tramway at the expiration of 21 years from its construction, on payment only of the actual value of the plant and stock. This period will be completed, as regards the first portion of the line, in 1893. Bristol citizens should insist on the Town Council taking advantage of this option, and obtaining power, as Huddersfield and Liverpool have done, to work the lines under direct municipal management.

BRISTOL'S DOCKS.

The shipping trade of Bristol has, notwithstanding the growth of the city, declined during the last few years, while that of Cardiff and Newport has enormously increased. During the last five years the tonnage entering the port of Bristol was as follows:—

1886 ...	1,344,013 tons, viz.,	Foreign,	638,254,	Coastwise,	705,759
1887 ...	1,301,805	”	”	”	611,546,
1888 ...	1,278,554	”	”	”	615,666,
1889 ...	1,326,688	”	”	”	642,138,
1890 ...	1,293,373	”	”	”	624,222,
					690,259
					662,888
					684,550
					669,151

In 1884 the city made a determined attempt to maintain her commercial position by acquiring the docks at Avonmouth and Portishead, which had been already constructed by private companies. These docks, being near the sea, are better adapted than the old quays to the conditions of modern trade. But at present the normal traffic only takes up two-thirds of the available accommodation, and the Portishead Dock, which is almost exclusively used for grain, is worked at an actual loss. The price paid for the Avonmouth Dock and warehouses was about £550,000; the cost of the Portishead Dock and granaries £250,000. The total Dock debt of £1,875,022 (March 1890—Statement of the Corporation)—or, taking the figures in the statement of expenditure on capital account to April 30, 1890, issued by the Docks Committee, £1,901,440—is made up as follows:—

Original Works up to 1848 (Old Dock Company) ...	£424,781
River and Harbor Improvements (Act of 1865) ...	230,000
Railway Wharves, Nos. 1 and 2 ...	110,000
City Dock (Granary, Dredger, Sheds, Wharf, etc.) ...	240,877
Avonmouth Dock (Dock, Warehouses, Pump, Sheds) ...	582,696
Portishead Dock (Dock, Granary, Stores, Workshops) ...	259,212
Parliamentary and other Expenses ...	9,491
Discounts on Debenture Stock ...	6,338
Total Expended ...	1,863,395
Unexpended Balance ...	38,045
	£1,901,440

To this ought to be added a sum of £89,920 raised under the Portishead Dock Act, 1871, to subsidise the Dock, which forms part of the debt of the Corporation proper.

The loss on the working of the Dock Estate and City Quays combined, after allowing for the interest on loan capital and sinking fund, was £5,772 and £18,911 for the years ended 30th April 1889 and 1890 respectively; and for the next year the loss will be heavier. The Borough rate which is being levied in aid of the Dock Revenue is £29,000 for the current year, as against £18,000 for the year ended 30th April 1890.

For the year ended 30th April, 1890, the three accounts—Bristol, Avonmouth and Portishead—stand as follows:—

	Bristol.	Avonmouth.	Portishead.
Ordinary Revenue ...	£64,370	£60,118	£15,767
Ordinary Expenditure ...	38,944	47,802	17,008
Balance available to meet	25,426	12,316	Debt } 1,241
Interest, etc. ...			
Interest, etc. ...	38,727	22,874	11,686

The adverse balance has to be met out of the Borough rate (£18,000 having been voted for that year in addition to the Harbor rate on City Houses, £2,360).

Against this must be set the advantage accruing to the general prosperity of the town from the efforts made to keep up its trade. Before the city acquired the Avonmouth and Portishead Docks, the receipts from dues on tonnage and rates on goods fell from £44,411 in 1876, and £45,060 in 1877, to £41,363 (1878), £37,409 (1879), and £29,688 (1882). If this fall had continued, a single generation might have reduced the port of Bristol to the condition of Bruges. The gain to Bristol by the acquisition of these docks is therefore unquestionable.

BRISTOL'S COLLECTIVE PROVISION FOR THE SICK AND INSANE.

Comparatively little has been done directly by the public authorities of Bristol towards collective provision for the sick. The poor law infirmaries and infectious hospitals which in London provide out of the Poor rate two-thirds of the total number of hospital beds, supply in Bristol only 510 (see p. 4) out of a total of 1,070 hospital beds. Much additional public provision for the sick is needed before the ideal is attained of a hospital bed available for every case of serious illness in the city. The lack of adequate accommodation for infectious cases is nothing short of a public scandal. Meanwhile the various medical charities, which are under no public control, to some extent supply the want of public provision.

Bristol has three hospitals for the reception of in-patients: the Royal Infirmary, the General Hospital, and the Hospital for Sick Children and Women (102 beds); besides these there are various Dispensaries for out-patients, and such special institutions as the Eye and Lock Hospitals and District Nursing Society. The Bristol Lunatic Asylum is under the control of a Visiting Committee of the Town Council, the total expenditure being £14,555.

The two larger hospitals are utilised for the medical school of Bristol University College. Their most important statistics for 1889 are given below:—

	Approximate Income from Property	Other Receipts	Normal Expenditure	Beds	In- Patients	Out- Patients
Royal Infirmary	£3,000	£7,000	£12,000	264	3,139	26,367
General Hospital	2,000	5,000	8,000	150	2,488	22,838

Of the Infectious Hospital accommodation, 246 beds are in the hands of the Guardians, available for pauper cases only (100 for small pox, 126 for fever, 20 for erysipelas cases), but up to 1889 there were only 44 beds in temporary structures, available for non-pauper cases; steps have since been taken to provide further accommodation. With the present hospital provision, more than one disease cannot be isolated at a time, and during the 1887-8 small-pox epidemic, only cases of small-pox could be admitted. (Medical Officer of Health's Reports, 1888 and 1889.)

CONCLUSION.

This summary review of the social and financial condition of Bristol inculcates many duties upon its public-spirited citizens; but it teaches one lesson above all its others, and that is the need for

extending public control and administration to all the services, both material and educational, which are of prime necessity to the community. Since the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when Bristol sprang into importance as a sheltered and conveniently situated trading mart at the confluence of the Avon and Frome, flanked by a strong castle, its history for five hundred years records the continuous growth of commercial prosperity and of municipal liberties. At first a part of the King's manor of Barton, and under a King's reeve, Bristol was allowed, early in the thirteenth century, to elect its own mayor; and the ferm or rent of the town which belonged to the king, and was in lieu of rents, fines, and of revenue derived from fairs and markets, was leased to the mayor and commonalty. In 1225 the ferm was let at £245 a year; in the reign of Henry VI. it amounted to £460; it was reduced by Richard III., and was finally redeemed in the reign of Charles I.* This is the reason why the city to-day enjoys so large a sum from its City Property. The two signs of a free and self-governing community for which Bristol burgesses contended in the earliest days were popular elective government and municipal control of the revenues from city land and from profitable public services. A free city, in the view of our forefathers, should not be beholden to any landlord—not even a royal landlord—nor subject to any monopoly. The plain duty of the commonalty at the present moment does not differ one jot from the principles which constituted the life and breath of the patriotism of free Bristolians six hundred years ago. By a strange irony of fate, the Socialist who appears to himself, no less than to others, to be the advocate of brand-new revolutionary changes, has only to search the annals of the past to find that in his principles of municipal reform he is, after all, in truth, a most consistent Conservative. If the large income from its city property proves the wisdom of the city fathers of the past, the deficits on the Dock account prove the folly of those of the present day in allowing private competition to usurp the field and to spoil the game, when, in the end, the city was forced to step in at the eleventh hour. But, in the case of the Docks, it was the private self-interest of a number of merchants and others which forced the city into the policy of undertaking their management. This is a very one-sided application of municipal Socialism, if the city should only deal with concerns that will least pay. The public self-interest of the mass of citizens must be aroused to overcome any opposition of landholders and shareholders, and to acquire for the profit of the community those monopolies which the municipality can manage.

* Bristol, in "Historic Towns" Series, by W. Hunt, p. 51.

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