

[Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Rotherhithe].

Contributors

Rotherhithe (London, England). Parish Council.

Publication/Creation

1859.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/ntqvesqt>

Provider

London Metropolitan Archives

License and attribution

This material has been provided by City of London, London Metropolitan Archives where the originals may be consulted.

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution, Non-commercial license.

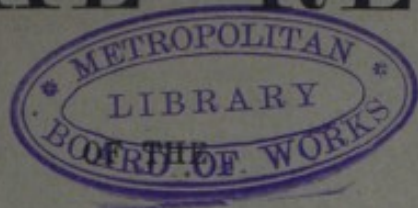
Non-commercial use includes private study, academic research, teaching, and other activities that are not primarily intended for, or directed towards, commercial advantage or private monetary compensation. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

THIRD
GENERAL REPORT



VESTRY OF ROTHERHITHE,

SURREY.

PRESENTED TO THE

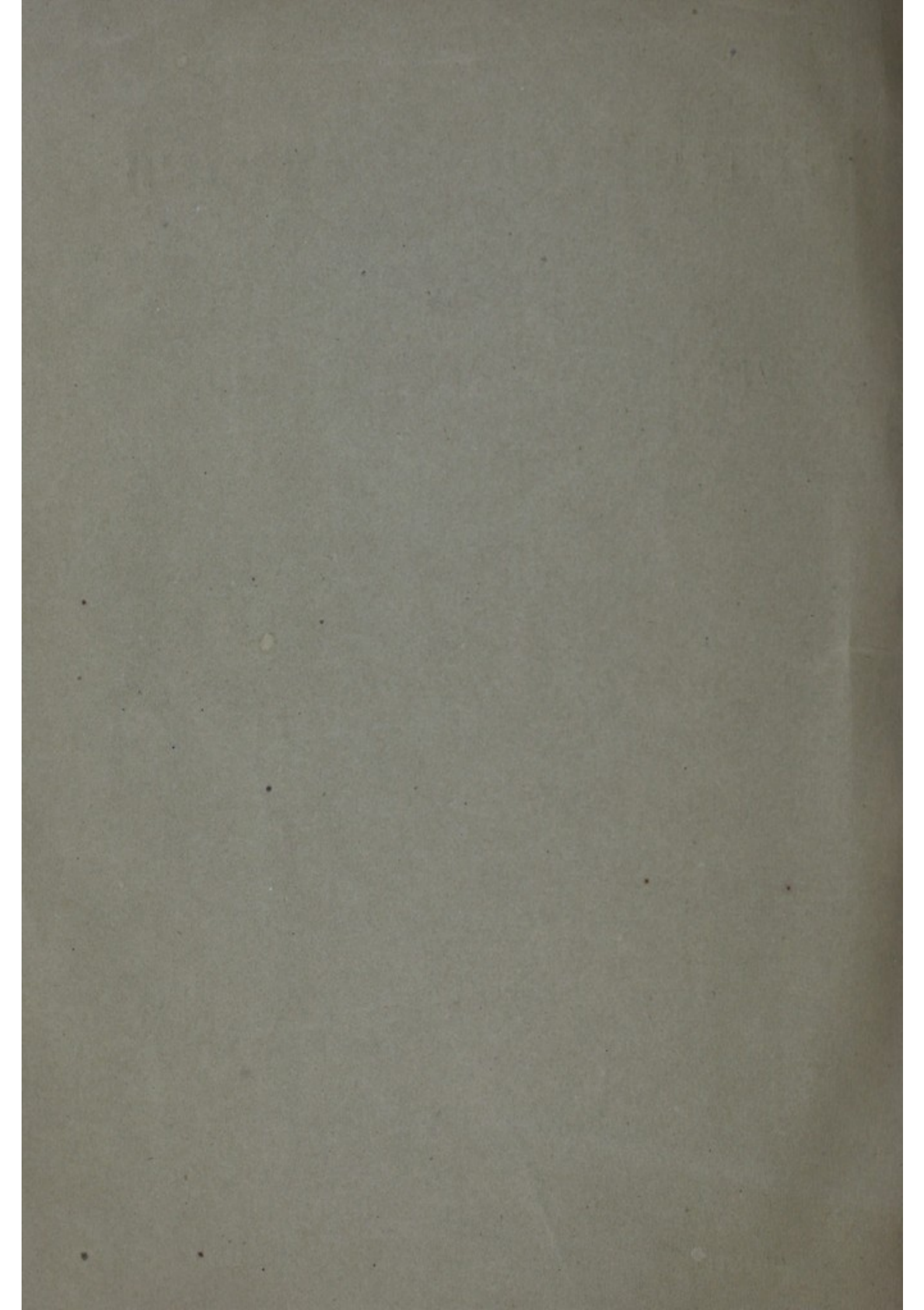
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

JUNE, 1859.

London :

PRINTED BY B. BATT, POST-OFFICE, ROTHERHITHE.

1859.



THIRD

GENERAL REPORT



VESTRY OF ROTHERHITHE,

SURREY.

PRESENTED TO THE

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

JUNE, 1859.

London :

PRINTED BY B. BATT, POST-OFFICE, ROTHERHITHE.

1859.

WE, William Henry Hackwood, William Henry Stevens, John Sanderson, Edward James Naylor, and William Caston, the Auditors appointed by the Parishioners of the Parish of Rotherhithe in the County of Surrey, to examine and audit the accounts of the Vestry of the Parish of Rotherhithe in the County of Surrey, for the year ending 25th March, 1859, having carefully and diligently examined and investigated the accounts of the said Vestry for the period aforesaid, and the vouchers in support of the same; and the books, papers, instruments and writings in their custody or control relating thereto, do hereby certify and declare, that we have this day audited the said accounts of the said Vestry, at the Board Room at the Workhouse, Rotherhithe, in the County of Surrey, in the presence of the following, viz.:—William Henry Hackwood, Chairman, William Henry Stevens, John Sanderson, Edward James Naylor and William Caston, and that the said accounts are true and correct in all particulars; and we do allow the same accordingly, and sign the same in token of such our allowance thereof.

Given under our hands this 25th day of May, 1859.

(Signed)

W. H. HACKWOOD,

W. H. STEVENS,

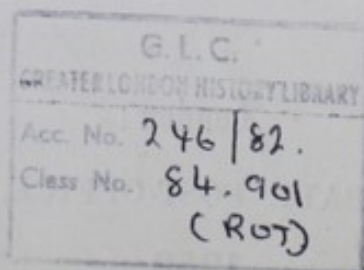
JOHN SANDERSON,

EDWARD J. NAYLOR,

WILLIAM CASTON.

Auditors.

Office, 61, Paradise Street, Rotherhithe.



Under the "Metropolis Local Management Act," 18 and 19 Vic., cap. 120.

RATE, &c.	Cash Balance at com- mencement of year.		RECEIPTS DURING THE YEAR.					PAYMENTS DURING THE YEAR.										Cash Balance on the 29th March, 1869.	
	In Credit.	To Debit.	Rates, &c.	Contributions &c.	Loans, &c.	Incidentals	Total	Assessments by Metropolitan Board.	Works.	Establishment and Lighting.	Loans, &c.	Contingencies.		Total.	In Credit.	To Debit.			
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			
	119 16 4	...	...	...	...	...	119 16 4	...	Paviour's Labour. 376 13 6 Day Labour. 339 14 10 Cartage. 267 5 0 Stone. 384 11 10 Scavenger. 278 8 4 Improve- ment. 353 5 4 Accounts. 316 16 5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Paving, Lighting, and gene- ral purposes .....	...	...	4753 17 5	Metropoli- tan Board. 151 1 9 Gas and Water Cos. 189 13 11 Sundries 2 1 11	...	...	4753 17 5	...	Interest. 22 0 8	...	...	...	...	22 0 8	...	1945 7 4
							342 17 7		...	...	...	...	...	2316 15 3		
									Salaries. 503 0 0 Commission. 134 9 8 Rent. 36 0 0 Accounts. 106 6 0	...	...	...	...	773 15 8		
									Lighting. 1582 10 9	...	...	...	...	1582 10 9		
Sewers.....	...	...	1817 11 3	Drains, &c. 158 13 0	...	...	1817 11 3	...	Sewers. 689 14 2 Labour. 298 1 11 Cartage. 23 0 0 Accounts. 85 3 9 Compensa- tion. 30 0 0	1500 0 0 Interest. 76 4 8	...	...	...	1576 4 8		
							3000 0 0			...	...	...	Repay- ments. 68 7 9	68 7 9		
							0 4 9			...	...	...	...	1125 19 10		
									Salaries. 400 0 0 Commission. 53 11 4 Accounts. 83 0 2	...	...	...	...	536 11 6		
								1145 6 11	...	...	...	...	...	1145 6 11		
							10193 0 4			...	...	...	...	9147 13 0		

VESTRY OF THE PARISH OF ROTHERHITHE, SURREY.
 CONTRACTS FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF GENERAL WORKS AND THE SUPPLY OF MATERIALS.
 Subsisting at the commencement of, or entered into, during the year ending 25th March, 1859.

Rate, &c.	Date of Contract.	Names of Party with whom Contract was made.	Nature of works to be performed, and materials to be supplied.	Observations.
Paving, Lighting, and General purposes.	10th October 1858.	The Surrey Consumers' Gas Company	For lighting the public lamps, £4 15s. each per annum.	Entered into for three years from 29th September, 1857.
	16th November 1858.	Alfred Thomas Hobman	Scavengering and dusting, at £275 per annum.	Entered into for one year from 17th November, 1858.
	16th February 1859.	Benjamin Batt.	Printing and Stationery, as per schedule of prices.	Entered into for one year from 25th March, 1859.
	18th February 1859.	Samuel Wright	Team hire and cartage.	Ditto ditto.
	15th March 1859.	A. and F. Manuelle	Supply of Guernsey granite, carriage, and York paving, curb, &c., as per schedule of prices.	Ditto ditto.
	25th March 1859.	W. and T., N. Gladdish	Supply of stone and ground lime as per schedule of prices.	Ditto ditto.
	25th March 1859.	John Downey	Supply of Sand and Ballast as per schedule of prices.	Ditto ditto.
Sewers.	11th March 1859.	William Kent	General jobbing works as per schedule of prices.	Ditto ditto.

GENERAL ABSTRACT OF WORKS.

Executed under Contracts, Agreements, &c. for Special and General Works. Year ending 25th March, 1859.

CONSTRUCTION.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																								
Sewers' Rate.	BRICK SEWERS.									COST.	PIPE SEWERS.				COST.	Openings to Sewers.					Repairs and alterations to Sewers, Gulleys, &c.	Cleansing, including Flushing, Casting Lifting, Cartage and Repairs, caused thereby.	Incidental Works.	Improvement Works.	Total Cost.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																															
	SIZE.										IRON. SIZE.			STONE-WARE. SIZE.			Side Entrances.	Air and Flushing Shafts.	Gulleys.	Drain Mouths.						Flaps.	COST.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																													

GENERAL ABSTRACT OF WORKS.

Executed under Contracts, Agreements, &c., for Special and General Works. One year, ending 25th March, 1859.

[illegible]

VESTRY OF THE PARISH OF ROTHERHITHE, SURREY.

Account of Moneys owing to, and Debts owing by, the Vestry of Rotherhithe, on the 25th March, 1859.

Rate, &c.	MONEYS OWING TO THE VESTRY.					DEBTS AND LIABILITIES OWING BY THE VESTRY.						
	Cash Balance.	Uncollected Rates, &c.	Contributions to be received.		Total.	Cash Balance.	Assessment by Metropolitan Board.	Loans, &c.	Estimated value of Compensation Annuities granted.	Special Contracts outstanding.	Tradesmen's bills and other obligations not under special contracts.	Total.
	£ s. d. 1045 7 4	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d. 1045 7 4	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d. Mrs. Arnold 500 0 0	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d. 500 0 0
Paving, Lighting, and General Purposes.		264 0 0	.. ..	.. ..	264 0 0							
			Southwark Water Company.	.. ..	108 10 9							
			108 10 9	.. ..	108 10 9							
Sewers.		170 0 0	.. ..	.. ..	170 0 0							
			Kilsby. 9 0 0 Bradshaw. 18 15 0 Wilson. 11 6 2 Landon. 10 2 0 Shephard. 16 14 4 Glassborow. 8 11 10 Bliss. 13 2 0 Hazelwood. 10 19 6	.. ..	98 10 10			London and Westminster Bank. 1500 0 0	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1500 0 0
			.. ..	.. ..	1686 8 11							2000 0 0

VESTRY OF THE PARISH OF ROTHERHITHE, SURREY.

SUMMARY STATEMENT.

Paving, Lighting, and General Purposes. One year ending 25th March, 1859.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Balance on 25th March, 1858	620	0	5½	Salaries—Medical Officer of Health, Clerk, Surveyor, Inspector of Nuisances, and Street Keeper, one year	503	0	0
Cash received from Paving Rates, viz:—				Commission ditto	134	9	8
No. 1, made February, 1856, at 8d. in the pound	£11	6	4	Lighting ditto	1582	10	9
No. 2, made July, 1856, at 8d. in the pound	25	3	3	Paviour's Labour ditto	376	13	6
No. 3, made January, 1857, at 8d. in the pound	80	8	8	Day Labour ditto	339	14	10
No. 4, made July, 1857, at 1s. in the pound	309	9	1	Cartage ditto	267	5	0
No. 5, made February, 1858, at 1s. in the pound	2253	6	2	Stone, viz., Granite, Spalls, &c.,	£137	6	6
No. 6, made October, 1858, at 8d. in the pound	2074	3	11	York Paving Curb, &c.	247	5	4
	4753	17	5	Scavenging and Dusting	364	11	10
Surrey Consumers' Gas Company, Repairs to Trenches	189	14	1	Interest on Loan (Mrs. Arnold)	278	8	4
Kent Water Company ditto	2	14	4	Rent	22	0	8
Southwark Water Company ditto	6	5	6	Stationery	30	0	0
Sundry Contributions for Paving, &c.	2	1	11	Removal of Nuisances	34	16	4
Metropolitan Board of Works Contribution towards cost of improvement Rotherhithe Street, east side, Surrey Dock Entrance	151	1	9	Sundry Tradesmen's Bills, &c.,	1	1	4
				Cost of ground for Improvement of Street, east side Grand Surrey Dock Entrance	182	7	5
				Fence at ditto ditto	353	5	4
				Wall at New Laystall	20	0	0
				Fire Plugs	89	16	0
				Lime	29	8	0
				Gravel	31	17	10
				Balance at Bank	33	15	6
	5716	15	5½		1021	13	1½
					5716	15	5½

Sewers for one Year, ending 25th March, 1859.

Cash received from Sewers' Rates, viz:—				Overpaid, 25th March, 1858	500	4	1½
No. 1, made February, 1856, at 6d. in the pound	9	10	0	Salaries	400	0	0
No. 2, made November, 1856, at 6d. in the pound	28	5	9	Commission	53	11	4
No. 3, made July, 1857, at 6d. in the pound	217	3	3	Loan (London and Westminster Bank)	1500	0	0
No. 4, made October, 1858, at 6d. in the pound	1562	12	3	Interest	76	4	8
	1817	11	3	Kent General Drainage	623	16	8
Cash received from various persons for putting in drains	158	13	0	Kent Contracts for Private Drainage	60	17	6
Sundry Contributions	0	4	9		689	14	2
Loan from London and Westminster Bank	3000	0	0	Stationery	29	4	6
				Burton and Sons for Iron Gratings, covering Plates, &c.	27	2	6
				Compensation	30	0	0
				Metropolitan Board of Works	1145	6	11
				Returns upon amounts paid for Drainage works	68	7	9
				Labour	298	1	11
				Cartage	23	0	0
				Sundry Tradesmen's Bills	111	16	11
				Balance at Bank	23	14	2½
	4976	9	0		4976	9	0

Assets to 25th March, 1859.

Balance at Bank	1045	7	4
Net outstanding Rates, viz., Paving No. 5,	40	0	0
" " " No. 6,	224	0	0
" " " Sewers, No. 4,	170	0	0
	434	0	0
Account rendered Southwark Water Company for making good Trenches	108	10	9
Accounts for private drainage under Agreement, to repay by instalments	98	10	10
	1686	8	11

Liabilities to 25th March, 1859.

Loan, London and Westminster Bank	1500	0	0
Mrs. Arnold on Loan	500	0	0
	2000	0	0

THIRD GENERAL REPORT

OF THE

VESTRY OF THE PARISH OF ROTHERHITHE, SURREY.

1859.

During the past year, the Vestry have held nineteen General Meetings, and thirty Committee Meetings.

SEWERS' WORKS.

The lengths of drains and sewers laid by the Vestry to Lady-day are:—

	Feet.
4-inch pipe	26
6 do.	752
9 do.	568
12 do.	1122
18-inch drain (West-lane)	271
24 do. (Near "Victoria," Deptford-road)	35
3 feet by 2 feet sewer ditto	50
Total.....	2824

Old high level sewer, Deptford-road, filled up and done away with	400
Open sewer piped and surface filled in	250

Eighty-four applications have been made to drain houses into sewers, and plans checked and approved, comprising about one hundred and seventy-eight houses, one hundred and forty-seven of which have been drained and completed.

About one hundred cesspools have been done away with.

Two penstocks and fifteen new road gulleys have been formed.

Ten old gulleys trapped, and eleven repaired.

Three flushing shafts have been fixed, and two urinals made.

The Vestry having again had under consideration several complaints from flooding, in consequence of the water backing up the Earl Sewer, they caused the following Letter to be sent to the Metropolitan Board of Works.

To the Chairman and Members of the Metropolitan Board of Works.

10th July, 1858.

GENTLEMEN,—I am directed by the Vestry of Rotherhithe, to call your attention to the injury sustained by the inhabitants in the neighbourhood of the Deptford Lower-road, by the flooding of their premises, in consequence of the admission of the tide much more frequently into the Earl Sewer, and to a higher level than it ever previously used to be; which we are informed is by direction of your Board.

The effect upon this Parish is most injurious, as it stops the flow of sewage into the Earl Sewer entirely, and causes great injury to the neighbourhood.

In consequence of the complaints, the Vestry during the latter part of the last month had the sewage gauged in the Deptford-road Sewer, and found that it stood only three feet three inches and three feet nine inches beneath the level of the road.

The Vestry desire me to refer you to their Memorial, asking for an improved entrance to the river, and calling your attention to the injury that would result to the Parish of Rotherhithe by reason of the connection with the sewage westward, and the works now in progress in Jamaica-row, Bermondsey.

This Vestry desire also to refer you to the plans submitted by them for the drainage of Adam and Albion-streets, and other places adjoining, which they proposed should drain as hitherto into the Lime Kiln Sewer, in Swan-lane, Rotherhithe, but that such plans were reversed, and the sewage turned for nearly *seven hundred houses westward* into the Deptford-road Sewer, which was protested against by their engineer in consequence of the known bad outlet to the said Deptford-road Sewer.

The Vestry would further draw your attention to the fact that since 1854, the Deptford-road Sewer has to receive the drainage of nearly *twelve hundred houses*, and which they trust will prove to you the necessity of immediately proceeding with the northern or Bermondsey intercepting sewer (part of the main drainage scheme of your engineer) which they have previously urged so strongly on your Board, otherwise, should the present outlet of the Earl not immediately be considerably enlarged, the most disastrous results must accrue to Rotherhithe.

The Vestry have received with surprise the report of your engineer, of the first instant, as Mr. Catchpole's complaint to the District Board, with others, attributes the flooding to *the tide let into the Earl Sewer, the real cause of the flood*, and as respects the tidal flap being examined and cleared once a week under the late Commissioners of

Sewers is an entire mistake ; your officers will find that from May, 1853, to December, 1855, it may have been attended to twice or three times, but certainly not more,—so much so, that the officer of the late Board then in charge of the District, was fully aware of the state thereof, and the Vestry have only been enabled to keep this part of the parish drained by the most vigilant attention to the tidal flap, which is constantly attended to, and the man-hole has been altered and enlarged, and gratings and regulators provided, at the cost of the Vestry, to afford ready access to the flap, although they regret that since the tide has recently been so largely admitted to the Earl Sewer, a much greater quantity of deposit has been flushed up to and left on the outside of the flap, causing additional expense to the Vestry for the removal thereof, and stopping the outlet of the Deptford-road Sewer.

The Vestry would urge upon you their strong conviction that the Deptford-road Sewer has more work than it can do, and that it is absolutely necessary that increased facilities should be afforded by your Board, without delay, to accelerate the delivery at the outlet.

To
The Metropolitan Board of Works.

I am, gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) R. SHAFTO HAWKS,
Clerk.

To which the Vestry received a reply, enclosing copy report of the Engineer to the Metropolitan Board of Works, together with an order declaring the Deptford-road Sewer to be a main sewer, as follows —

Metropolitan Board of Works,

1; Greek Street Soho,

12th August 1858.

DEAR SIR,

I am directed to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a Report, made by the Engineer to the Metropolitan Board of Works, and a copy of the order of the Board, relative to the Deptford Lower-road Sewer mentioned in your letter of the 10th instant.

R. S. Hawks, Esq.
61, Paradise Street
Rotherhithe.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
(Signed) E. H. WOOLRYCH,
Clerk to the Board.

Engineer's Department,
1, Greek-street Soho.

30th July 1858.

On communication from the Vestry of Rotherhithe, having reference to the connection recently formed by this Board, between the Earl and the Duffield Main Sewers, by the construction of the Sewer in the Deptford Lower-road.

GENTLEMEN,—

On the 2nd of July the Board ordered that a copy of my report, recommend-

ing that Deptford Lower-road Sewer be declared a Main Sewer, should be sent to the Vestry of Rotherhithe, and the decision of the Board upon this subject has from time to time been postponed.

The accompanying communication has since been received from the Vestry of Rotherhithe.

This letter is of itself sufficient evidence of the objections, arising from a divided responsibility in this case. At present the officers of this Board have charge of the Main Sewer outlet, and the officers of the Vestry have charge of the Flap a little higher up. So long as these works were under the control of the Commissioners of Sewers, there was no danger of flooding; the present divided responsibility is full of difficulty and danger. With respect to the present allegations of the Vestry, I reply:—First: that our Sluice Keeper has had charge of the Sluice for Twenty Years, and it is worked now as formerly; and any want of attention to the flap in the District Sewer, would cause the waters to rise in it as alleged.

Second.—That the connection between the Duffield and the Earl, although it was objected to by the Vestry of Rotherhithe, is advantageous to the drainage of the District, and forms a most important link in every arrangement that has been proposed for the relief of the tide locked Sewers.

Third.—The plans submitted by the Vestry of Rotherhithe, for the drainage of Adam and Albion-streets assumed the permanent retention of the Lime-kiln outlet, which it is intended to abolish; and did not fall in with the proposed Main Drainage of the District.

Fourth.—The enlargement and improvement of the Earl outlet was ordered on the First of January, and now waits the decision of this Board with respect to the Earl pumping station.

Fifth.—The works contemplated by this Board will relieve the Deptford Lower-road, and all the adjoining Sewers from being overcharged.

I beg further to report that there is no security against flooding, and no scheme of drainage for the Southern Districts can ever prove effective, unless the Deptford Lower-road Sewer, being a length of about 7,200 feet, be declared a Main Sewer, as recommended in my reports dated 12th February and 1st July.

(Signed)

I have, &c.,

J. W. BAZALGETTE.

Engineer,

Metropolitan Board of Works.

Extract from the Minutes of proceedings at a Meeting of the Board, held at Guildhall, in the City of London, on Friday the 30th day of July, 1858.

Whereas it has been made to appear to the Metropolitan Board of Works, that

a certain Sewer within the limits of the Metropolis, as defined by the act of the Nineteenth Year of Queen Victoria, for the better Local Management of the Metropolis, which Sewer is not vested in the said Board in or by the said Act, that is to say, the Sewer commencing in Jamaica-row, in the County of Surrey, and within the said limits, about 50 feet west of Salisbury-street, thence passing along Millpond-street, Union-road, Paradise-row, and Lower Deptford-road, to the Main Earl Sewer, in the County and within the limits aforesaid, being a length of 6,160 feet, or thereabouts, ought to be considered a Main Sewer, and to be under the management of the said Board. Now, therefore, it is ordered by the said Board, that the said Sewer be, and the same is hereby declared to be a Main Sewer.

(Signed)

E. H. WOOLRYCH.
Clerk of the Board.

In October 1858 the Metropolitan Board of Works caused eight large air-holes to be made in the Deptford-road Sewer, for the purpose of ventilating it (see Reports of the Medical Officer of Health, for November and December 1858, and March 1859), and upon complaints of the nuisance arising therefrom being made to this Vestry, and also being warned by the Medical Officer of Health of the danger to the health of the inhabitants likely to arise in consequence of the letting out of such large quantities of sewer gas, in the most frequented thoroughfare of the Parish, the Vestry memorialized the Metropolitan Board of Works to stop up the air-holes, (see Appendix No. 1), but no alteration being made, they petitioned the House of Commons upon the subject, (see Appendix No. 2), and from thence the petition was referred to the Metropolitan Board of Works for consideration; since which that Board have caused the large air-holes complained of, to be replaced by smaller ones, and in consequence the nuisance is not now so great as before the alteration was made, but it is much to be desired that some other plan for the ventilation of this Sewer should be adopted, and the present air-holes abolished altogether.

The Vestry have also memorialized the Metropolitan Board of Works to proceed immediately with the Northern or Bermondsey Branch of the main drainage, in order to relieve the water-logged condition of the sewers in this Parish.

PAVING WORKS.

The following works have been done with new and old stone:—

New dressed crossings and channels	.	.	.	225	yards
New granite carriage-way	.	.	.	182	do.
Granite carriage-way rough dressed	.	.	.	396	do.
Old carriage-way relaid	.	.	.	2,373	do.
New York paving laid	.	.	.	9,377	feet super.
Old York paving relaid	.	.	.	17,722	do.
Old York new faced	.	.	.	1,333	do.
New granite curb laid	.	.	.	766	feet run,
Old curb reset	.	.	.	6,351	do.
Curb reworked	.	.	.	297	do.

The following materials have been used in reparation of the roads, footpaths, &c.

	192	yards.
Guernsey granite	151	do.
Common ditto	311	do.
Thames ballast	2,062	do.
Ground carted	45½	do.
Lime	18	do.
Sand	403	loads.
Foundry Clinkers		

The improvement in Rotherhithe-street, at the east side of the Grand Surrey Dock entrance, is now complete, and the following is a statement of the cost thereof.

Cost of site, after deducting £150, paid by the Grand Surrey Docks Company, for piece of ground near the Dock House by agreement	303	5	4		
Less contribution received from the Metropolitan Board of Works,	151	1	9		
				152	3 7
Compensation to Messrs. Talbot				50	0 0
Fence				20	0 0
Labour				104	16 8
Material				94	16 0
Cartage				26	8 0
Total cost				£ 448	3 10

The works at the Laystall, back of the Workhouse, have been continued, and are nearly completed.

The Grand Surrey Dock Company requiring the site of the right of way, by side of the "Waterman's Arms" for their new entrance, an arrangement has been made with them for the better accommodation of the Inhabitants, that the street near their new entrance, and also the New Bridge, shall be increased in width over and above the width required by the Act of Parliament, in lieu of such right of way.

LIGHTING.

In consequence of the diversion of the street, near the Grand Surrey Dock entrance during the alterations, two of the public lamps have been discontinued, one new lamp has been set up in Glebe-Road, Jamaica-level, and the lamp at the "Ship," Rotherhithe-street, has been numbered with the rest of the parish lamps, making the total number of gas-lamps in the Parish, lighted under contract with the Surrey Consumers' Gas Company 332. (For particulars of Contract, see page 4.)

This Vestry have joined with the St. Olave's District Board of Works, and the

Vestry of Bermondsey, for the purpose of erecting an apparatus for testing the quality and quantity of the gas supplied in this District, and a Committee has been formed to make the necessary experiments, and the Vestry has voted that a sum not exceeding £100 be paid towards the erecting and working apparatus, in testing the quality of the gas, and in meeting the necessary expenses of such Committee.

CLEANSING, &c.

The Vestry have entered into a contract with Mr. A. T. Hobman, for the removal of dust from the dwellings of the Inhabitants, and for cleansing the paved streets. (For particulars of Contract, see page 4.)

REMOVAL OF NUISANCES' PROCEEDINGS, &c.

From 25th March, 1858, to 25th March, 1859, eighty Notices have been served under the Nuisances' Removal Act, upon complaints made by the Medical Officer of Health, and Inspector of Nuisances; thirty-two of which have been effectually abated by proper drainage being made from the respective houses into covered sewers, and forty-eight have been abated by removal.

Four Summonses have been issued, and Magistrates' orders obtained and carried out.

Sixty-two notices to make drains and provide water-closets, ash-pits, and water-supply have been served by order of the Vestry. In thirty-six cases the Owners have properly complied therewith, and twenty-six are still standing over.

Twelve Notices of intention of Butchers to apply to have slaughterhouses licensed in this Parish, were received by the Vestry, which were severally inspected and reported upon by the Medical Officer of Health (see Medical Officer's thirty-third Report, October, 1858). and eleven slaughterhouses were licensed by the Magistrates in October, 1858.

In June, 1858, the Vestry appointed a valuer, under the Act of 10th George 4th, cap. 131, to assist the Churchwardens and Overseers in ascertaining and estimating the annual value of all or any houses, lands, &c., and other rateable property within the parish, also four assistant valuers, viz.,—Mr. Benjamin Shipley Slipper, valuer, and Messrs. Henry Ravenhill, James Ford, Gervase Foottit, and Charles Hay, assistant valuers, and have voted the sum of £30 towards payment of the necessary expenses for the current year.

A schedule of the duties of the several Officers of the Vestry has been drawn up and printed.

A Committee consisting of the Churchwardens, Overseers, and the whole Vestry has been appointed to investigate into the several charities of this parish.

The vaults under St. Mary's Church, were on the 27th January last, visited by R. D. Grainger, Esq., the Government Inspector, (see the Medical Officer of Health's Reports for February and March, 1859) and upon receiving the favourable report of the Medical Officer of Health, as to the condition of the vaults, the Vestry made the following resolution which was forwarded to Mr. Grainger, viz :—

“That it is the unanimous opinion of this Vestry that the vaults of the parish church are well kept, quite pure, and not in the least detrimental to health; that it would be useless to adopt Mr. Grainger's recommendation, and very inexpedient to make any alteration whatever; except as to cutting off the communication with the body of the church by erecting a brick wall; and that an extract from the report of the Medical Officer of Health be forwarded with this resolution to Mr. Grainger.”

A conference was subsequently held at the church with Mr. Grainger, who ultimately stated he must adhere to his opinion that the coffins in the vaults should be covered over with earth, and the vaults bricked up, and that he should report accordingly to the Board of Health. And in May last, the following Order in Council was received by the Churchwardens.

“At the Court at Buckingham Palace, the 13th day of May, 1859.

Present,

The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

Whereas by an Act, passed in the session of Parliament held in the twentieth and twenty-first years of Her Majesty's reign, intituled “An Act to Amend the Burial Acts,” it is amongst other things, enacted, that it shall be lawful for Her Majesty, upon the representation of one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, from time to time to order such acts to be done by, or under the directions of, the Churchwardens, or such other persons as may have the care of any vaults or places of burial, for preventing them from becoming or continuing dangerous or injurious to the public health; and that every such order in Council shall be published in the “London Gazette,” and that such Churchwardens or other persons shall do, or cause to be done, all acts ordered as aforesaid, and the expenses incurred in and about the doing thereof, shall be paid out of the poor-rates of the parish; provided always, that no such representation should be made until ten days' previous notice of the intention to make such representation should have been given to the Churchwardens or other persons, or one of the Churchwardens or other persons having the care of the vaults or places of burial to which the representation relates.

And whereas the Right Honourable Thomas Sotheron Estcourt, one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, after ten days' previous notice of his intention to make such representation had been duly given to the Churchwardens, or other persons having the care of the vaults under the several churches and chapels herein-after mentioned, has made a representation, stating that he was of opinion that, for the purpose of preventing the said vaults from becoming or continuing dangerous or

injurious to the public health, an order should be made for the adoption of the measures hereinafter set forth.

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, by, and with the advice of her Privy Council, is pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, that the Churchwardens or such other persons as may have the care of the vaults under the undermentioned churches and chapels respectively, do adopt, or cause to be adopted, the following measures in respect of such vaults, viz :—

(Here follow orders upon several other parishes.)

SAINT MARY, ROTHERHITHE.

1. That the coffins in the public vaults beneath the parish church of Saint Mary, Rotherhithe, be covered with fresh earth and concrete, and that the existing entrance be bricked up.

2. That the works be effected under the superintendence of the Medical Officer of Health of the district, and that McDougall's powder, chlorine, or other disinfectants, be used whenever necessary.

(Signed)

WM. L. BATHURST.

The Vestry have petitioned the House of Commons praying that the standing orders of the House may be altered so that the promoters of bills for Railways, Canals, Docks, or other public works in any parish in the Metropolis, may be required to deposit copies of the plans thereof with the Vestry Clerk of every parish affected by such bill.

The following special resolution relating to the management of the business of the Vestry, has been made during the past year.

3rd August, 1858.—“That in all cases where drainage works are wholly carried out by the applicants themselves, a charge of One Shilling be made for the attendance of the Clerk of the Works, to see that they are properly carried out.”

APPENDIX (No 1).

TO THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS, THE MEMORIAL OF THE VESTRY OF ROTHERHITHE.

SHEWETH,—That the low level Sewer running along Paradise-row, and the Deptford Lower-road into the Earl Sewer, has been until the month of August last under the direction and superintendence of this Vestry.

That in the said month of August, last year, your Board took the management of this sewer, and connected it with the sewer in the neighbouring Parish of Bermondsey, with a view of relieving that Parish.

That this sewer is below its outlet into the Earl Main Sewer, and in consequence thereof a vast amount of deposit has accumulated therein.

That the Vestry of this Parish prevented the increase of and reduced such deposit, by frequently flushing it out with fresh water from the Mill Pond, situate at the west end of Paradise-row (being the head of the sewer in Rotherhithe), which water was obtained by the Vestry for the small annual payment of five pounds, and also by other means of flushing which were adopted along its course.

That this sewer has within the last three years received a very large increase of sewage from the several new sewers, draining several hundred houses within this Parish, and made under the direction of the Vestry.

That from the low level of this sewer, it only discharges a portion of its contents for two hours in every twelve, under the most favourable circumstances, and sometimes not at all, and therefore there is constantly a very considerable quantity of sewage remaining locked in by the tidal flap, at the south end against the East Sewer.

That this Vestry has been informed from your Board that this sewer is to be cleansed, and emptied for the whole length in this Parish, and that a contract has been entered into for that purpose.

That this Vestry is strongly of opinion, that from the very imperfect outlet of this sewer as before mentioned, such sewer would in a short space of time be again filled up with deposit, there being in addition to the sewage formerly taken into it a large quantity of sewage, which has been diverted from the Lime-kiln Sewer, and also from its connection with the Parish of Bermondsey, now about to be relieved through this sewer.

That this Vestry desires to impress upon your Board, the necessity in the first place, of providing a better outlet for this sewer, as proposed by your Board last year, as a work of urgent necessity.

That since your Board has taken the control of this Deptford-road Sewer under their jurisdiction, there have been eight very large air-holes made in different parts, all of which are very much larger than any to be found in other localities.

That very numerous complaints have been made by the Inhabitants and Passengers of the extremely offensive and dangerous exhalation of gases from these large air-holes; and the attention of your Board has been repeatedly called to this subject.

That this sewer being generally charged with sewage, which must remain stagnant and pent up for many hours, the noxious gaseous matter steams up from these air-shafts in very large and dangerous quantities.

That this Vestry is desirous of impressing upon your Board, that this sewer from the low level thereof and most imperfect outlet, is very different from other sewers of the Metropolis which have a good fall, and where the sewage runs quickly away upon the ebb of the tide, while this sewer remains for a considerable period increasing in contents but not discharging (it being in fact nothing less than an enormous cess-pool), from which there is a continuous emission of vapour, composed of an accumulation of most dangerous gases.

That the Medical Officer of Health, and all the Medical Gentlemen of this Parish, are constantly complaining of the danger to the health of the Inhabitants, arising from this sewer, the gases from which are the most deleterious of all gases, and they have warned the Vestry that these shafts must materially affect the health of the residents, and also that, should this Parish be visited with any epidemic, the results in the locality of this sewer will, in all probability, prove most severe and fatal.

This Vestry, under a sense of the very deep responsibility that attaches to it, earnestly requests the immediate consideration of your Board, to this most important subject, and urge that prompt measures should be adopted to remove the very serious evils, and nuisances, now inflicted upon the Inhabitants, and which this Vestry suggest might be at once partially mitigated, by providing at a comparatively small cost, a proper penstock at the junction of the Deptford-road Sewer with the Earl Sewer, and the stopping up of the large air-openings recently formed.

The Corporate seal affixed by
order of the Vestry, on the
22nd February, 1859.

L. S.

(Signed)

R. SHAFTO HAWKS,
Clerk.

APPENDIX (No. 2).

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

The Humble Petition of the Vestry of Rotherhithe, in the County of Surrey.

SHEWETH.—That the Parish of Rotherhithe contains by estimation nearly twenty thousand persons, and that there are about three thousand three hundred houses in the Parish.

That there is a low level sewer running through Paradise-row and the Deptford Lower-road, being a portion of the Parish of Rotherhithe which is most densely populated.

That this sewer was made by the Commissioners of Sewers, for the District of Surrey and Kent, about the year 1842, and runs into an open tidal sewer, called the Earl, which empties itself into the River Thames, about three miles and a half below London Bridge.

That the drainage of the Parish of Rotherhithe, has very considerably increased, by reason of your Petitioners having enforced the provisions of the Metropolis Local Management Act, and filled up some miles of open sewers and ditches, which formerly intersected the Parish.

That this low level sewer, has to receive the drainage from upwards of one thousand seven hundred houses, and several large manufactories, and in consequence of the low level of the Parish of Rotherhithe, and also from the construction of the outlet into the Earl sewer, it can only discharge its contents during two hours in every twelve, under the most favourable circumstances, and sometimes not at all, and therefore there is constantly a very considerable quantity of sewage remaining locked in by the tidal flap at the south end, where it joins the Earl sewer.

That in the month of August, 1858, the Metropolitan Board of Works took the management of this sewer under their jurisdiction, and added to its already overburthened condition by turning the sewage of the neighbouring Parish of Bermondsey into it.

That since the Metropolitan Board of Works have taken this Deptford-road Sewer under their control, they have caused eight air-holes to be made in different parts thereof, all of which are much larger than are to be found in different localities, and from which large volumes of deleterious gases are continuously steaming.

That very numerous complaints, have been made by the Inhabitants and Passengers, of the extremely offensive and dangerous exhalation of gases from these air-holes.

That this sewer being generally much charged with sewage—which must remain stagnant and pent up for many hours—large volumes of deleterious gases are continuously steaming up from those air-shafts, poisoning the air for a considerable distance, and rendering the houses in the neighbourhood unhealthy, and at times, almost uninhabitable.

That the Metropolitan Board of Works are also cleansing this sewer, but in so doing their contractors or men, leave the deposit-matter taken out from such sewer, lying on the Road, and extending thereon to an area of about two hundred square feet, in different places,—exposed to the air for days, previous to its removal.

That the Medical Officer of Health and all the Medical Gentlemen of this Parish, are constantly complaining of the danger to the health of the Inhabitants, arising from the inhalation of the gases from this sewer, and which they state to be the most deleterious of all gases, and they have warned your Petitioners, that these air-

shafts must materially affect the health of the residents, and also that should this Parish be visited with any epidemic, the results in the locality of this sewer, will in all probability, prove most severe and fatal.

That your Petitioners have found with great satisfaction, that the health of this Parish has been greatly improved within the last few years, the cause of which they confidently attribute to the covering in the open ditches and sewers, and the carrying out and enforcing the several provisions of the Metropolis Local Management Act.

That in the carrying out effectually the provisions of the Metropolis Local Management Act, your Petitioners have been anxious to get rid of cesspools, and also to see that no exhalations should arise from the covered sewers and drains, and they cause all inlets thereto to be properly trapped.

That from the peculiar position of the Deptford-road Sewer, and its being so constantly charged with sewage matter, it is in effect nothing less than an elongated cesspool, of about a mile and a half in length, and is now worse than an open sewer, as the streams of gases are concentrated and forced up these air-holes in such considerable quantities, as not to admit of their gradual diffusion through the air.

That your Petitioners have repeatedly complained to the Metropolitan Board of Works of these most serious and fatal evils, and have also memorialized the Board upon the subject, and pointed out the danger to the health of the Inhabitants, but no steps have been taken to remedy such complaints.

That from the causes herein mentioned, your Petitioners are fearful that some serious and fatal disease, similar to that which some few years ago broke out in Croydon, will visit this Parish, unless prompt measures are taken to prevent the Neighbourhood being poisoned with the gases from this sewer.

Your Petitioners therefore most humbly pray your Honourable House to take in consideration this most important and urgent subject involving especially the health of the Inhabitants of this Parish, and that your Honourable House will be pleased to appoint a Committee to investigate into the matter, or that your Honourable House will be pleased to grant such further or other relief as to your Honourable House shall seem meet.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

The Corporate seal affixed by
order of the Vestry, on the
29th day of March, 1859.

L. S.

(Signed)

CHARLES ERWIN.
Chairman.

(Signed)

R. SHAFTO HAWKS.
Clerk.

VESTRYMEN, AUDITORS, AND OFFICERS OF THE PARISH OF ROTHERHITHE, SURREY.

Under the "Metropolis Local Management Act," 1855.

1859.

VESTRYMEN.

REV. EDWARD BLICK, M.A., Rectory, Church-street.
 MR. CHARLES ERWIN, Walker-place, Lower-road, } *Churchwardens.*
 MR. WILLIAM JONATHAN SMITH, Globe-street, }
 MR. JAMES FORD, 354, Rotherhithe-wall.
 MR. SAMUEL TILLEY, 27, Paradise-row.
 MR. HENRY BOOTH, 1, Union-road.
 MR. HENRY RAVENHILL, King and Queen Iron Works, Rotherhithe.
 MR. SAMUEL BRANDON, 33, Paradise-row.
 MR. ROBERT BRACKENBERRY, 358, Rotherhithe-wall.
 MR. JOHN WOODWARD BARRETT, Thames-street.
 MR. JOHN HEDGECOCK JENKINS, 35, Princes-street.
 MR. ROBERT NEWHAM, 381, Rotherhithe-wall.
 MR. GEORGE SMITH, Church-street.
 MR. WILLIAM JAMES BLAKE, Sarah-place, Swan-lane.
 MR. ROBERT ALLEN, Union-road.
 MR. JAMES ROBERT GOODHEW, Lower York-street, Rotherhithe.
 MR. AUGUSTUS FREDERICK TIMOTHY, Grices's Granary, Rotherhithe-street.
 MR. JAMES HARE MATTHEWS, Paradise-street.
 MR. JAMES ARNOLD, Church-passage.
 MR. EDWARD TALBOT, Church-street.
 MR. JOHN SANDERSON, Church-street.
 MR. WILLIAM HENRY STEVENS, Princes-street.
 MR. EDMOND GEORGE DANNELL, Bedford-place, Deptford Lower-road.
 MR. CHARLES HAY, Deptford Lower-road.
 MR. WILLIAM CASTON, JUN., Lower York-street.
 MR. BENJAMIN HOLMAN, Commercial Dock-road.
 MR. WILLIAM HARRIS, Mary's Cottages, Plough-road.

AUDITORS OF ACCOUNTS.

MR. WILLIAM MATTHEW MARSHALL, Rotherhithe-wall.
 MR. ROBERT STRANACK, Paradise-row.
 MR. THOMAS SMITH, Church-street.
 MR. BARTHOLOMEW ROBSON, Lucas-street.
 MR. JOHN WOODLEY SMITH, "Spread Eagle," Rotherhithe-street.

OFFICERS.

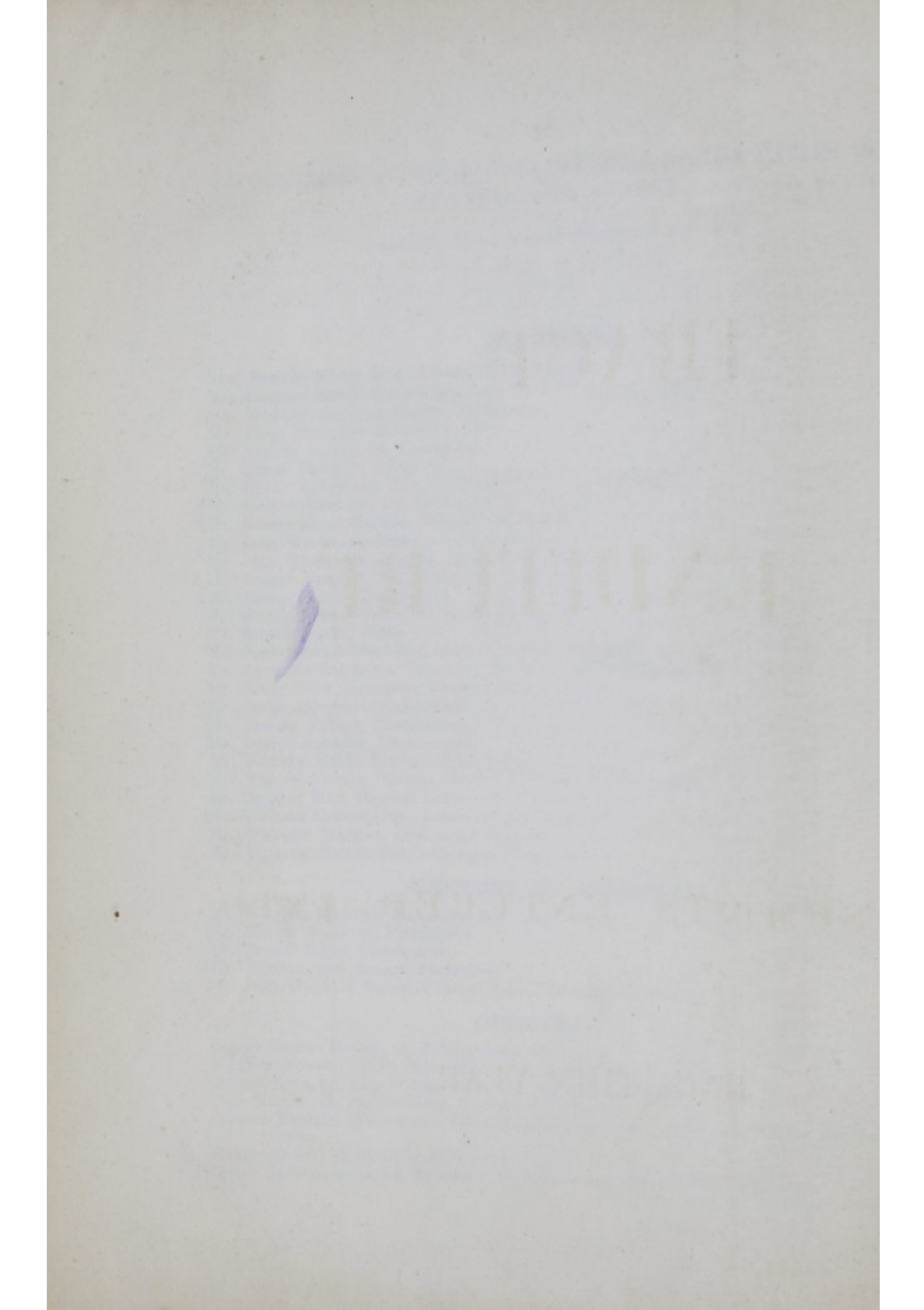
ROBERT SHAPTO HAWKS, 61, Paradise-street, Clerk.
 WILLIAM MURDOCK, M.D., Rotherhithe-street, Medical Officer of Health.
 GEORGE LEGG, 61, King William-street, City, Surveyor of Sewers.
 JOHN KELSEY, 72, Paradise-street, Surveyor of Pavements.
 CHARLES RICHARD WESTLOTORN, Seven Houses, Trinity-street, Collector of Paving and Sewers' Rates.
 JOSEPH BISHOP, Paradise-row, Clerk of the Works.
 JOSEPH JOHN SANDERS, 49, Paradise-street, Sanitary Inspector and Street Keeper.

TRACE

INDENTURE

ENTERED INTO

THE YEAR



METROPOLIS LOCAL MANAGEMENT ACT, 1855.

REPORTS

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

TO

The Vestry

OF

THE PARISH OF ROTHERHITHE,

SURREY.

From April, 1858, to March, 1859.

London :

PRINTED BY B. BATT, POST-OFFICE, ROTHERHITHE.

1859.



METROPOLIS LOCAL MANAGEMENT ACT, 1855.

REPORTS
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
TO
The Vestry
OF
THE PARISH OF ROTHERHITHE,
SURREY.

From April, 1858, to March, 1859.

London :
PRINTED BY B. BATT, POST-OFFICE, ROTHERHITHE,
1859.

THE MEDICAL MANAGER AND THE

REPORT

ON THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

THE OFFICE

THE PART OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER

IN THE

MANAGEMENT OF THE

HEALTH OF THE

TWENTY-SEVENTH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

At the last meeting of this Board it was remarked, that the Surrey Consumers' Gas Company had caused certain pipes to be laid across Rotherhithe-street. I have made these pipes a subject of special inquiry.

Three pipes have been conducted from the north side of the premises into the Thames. The first, ten inches in diameter, and which I have not seen, has been carried to low watermark, and is pronounced by the officers of the company to take away the superficial drainage of the works only. The other two, one being four-and-a-half and the second five inches in diameter, have no connection whatever with drainage; they open into the river about three-and-a-half feet below the edge of the wharf, and are used for loading craft, with coal-tar and the mother liquor of muriate of ammonia, which was formerly evaporated on the premises, and is now transported to Bow Common to undergo that process. This mode of loading a barge by running the liquids into it, is found less expensive and more convenient than that previously employed, of bringing them across the road in wooden vessels.

The stinking effluvia spoken of by several gentlemen as having arisen from the gas works, during the month of February, have been traced by me to their proper cause. A thousand or more tons of coal stored on the premises had spontaneously ignited, and the fire smouldering from below drove off from the upper strata into the atmosphere large quantities of impure gas, which when it first rises from the coal is strongly impregnated with sulphur and ammonia. In the ordinary process of gas-making the greater part of these ingredients are deposited in the water and in the purifiers through which the gas passes before it is sent out to the consumers.

Two of the Patent Manure makers, the smell of whose premises had been complained of, have agreed to make any alterations in the mode of conducting their work, which this Vestry, through the medium of its officers, may require.

Notices have been served on the owners of the houses mentioned in the Agenda Paper, and in several the work of improvement is already in operation.

The cesspool common to the dwellings, Nos. 367 and 368, in Rotherhithe-wall, encroaches three or four feet upon the yard of No. 1, Queen-street, out of which it has been dug. It is merely boarded over, the boards being covered with earth, and is an impediment to the drainage of the latter house. Notices have been served at 367 and 368, to the effect that they be properly drained.

The vaults under Rotherhithe Church have been visited by me. I shall not describe them, as their extent and situation are generally known to the parishioners. Suffice it to say, that several hundred bodies are accumulated there in coffins of wood, lead, or iron. Any suggestion to remove them would naturally revolt the feelings of the parishioners. On being asked for an opinion as to what I thought should be done, I remarked that they might easily be hermetically closed with brick-work. As the expense of this proceeding may, however, prevent this idea from being favourably received, and as the vaults are clean and orderly, without smell, and well-ventilated, I should merely suggest that they be left as they are for the present, and that they, at stated periods, say once every three months, be inspected by competent persons.

In January the number of deaths was 68, in February 52, and in March 46:—the figures evidently showing a decreasing mortality. The measles, which alone carried off eighteen persons in January, and eight in February, seem to have entirely disappeared, no death from that cause having been registered for March. Two fatal cases of scarlatina, two of hooping-cough, and one of typhus, occurred in Rotherhithe during the last month.

One hundred and sixty-six persons died in the quarter ending on the 1st of April, 1858, viz., ninety-one males and seventy-five females, and there were two hundred and sixteen births, viz., one hundred and two males and one hundred and four females. The excess of the births over the deaths being fifty.

Yours respectfully,

April, 1858.

W. MURDOCH, H.C.

TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

On a piece of waste-ground between Lavender-cottages and Lavender-place, there is an ashpit, into which the inhabitants of the locality throw the dust and offal from their houses. Not only is the ashpit full, but the patch of land for some feet around it, is covered with ashes and decomposing animal and vegetable matter, which may, in warm weather, produce bad consequences.

to health. I beg, therefore, to call to it the attention of this Board. Complaints are continually made to myself and the Inspector (particularly in the eastern district) of the remissness of the scavengers in removing the refuse from the houses.

The open ditch, south of Rotherhithe-street, and running east and west from the neighbourhood of the Surrey Canal towards Lavender-lane, where it terminates by a dead head, is exceedingly filthy near its eastern extremity, and sends forth at low water a nauseous smell. Let us hope that the day is not far distant when every ditch in this parish will either be covered or filled in, for there is little doubt that the number of ponds, ditches, and open sewers in former days gave in Rotherhithe, more than any other cause, unusual severity to the various epidemics of cholera which have visited us.

The Patent Manure makers, whose factories have so often been brought by me under the notice of the Vestry, are erecting apparatus for destroying by combustion the foul effluvia emanating from the process of mixing.

I was requested by the Trustees of the Burial Grounds of Rotherhithe to visit with them on Thursday, April 22nd, the ground attached to All Saints' Church, Deptford Lower-road, that we might examine whether it was still fit for purposes of interment. The part of the ground used as a cemetery, measures in length from the back of the church to its further extremity, two hundred and ninety-one feet, its breadth being one hundred and ten feet, giving an area of thirty-two thousand and ten square feet. As a matter of course, the number of burials therein have much increased, since the churchyards connected with the Church of St. Mary have been closed. The funerals at All Saints' average at present about seventy-five in three calendar months, or nearly six a-week, and consequently the limited space above described is fast filling.

However, there being still several patches of land free from graves, the Trustees were of opinion that funerals under proper surveillance might still take place there for a time, to be hereafter determined, and on condition that all adult graves be six feet and all childrens' graves five feet deep *at least*. Several of the recently filled up graves were examined with an iron rod, and in one or two cases there was found but four feet of earth over the coffin. These were declared to be family graves.

The situation of the ground is good. It is removed from dwellings, surrounded by fields, and not easily seen from the public road, from which it is in a great measure hidden by the church and the parsonage.

Some remarks were made on the untidy appearance of the place, the Incumbent at once satisfied us that it was not his

fault, stating, that when an Irish person is buried, such immense shoals of natives of the Emerald Isle follow, that they trample down the graves and destroy all his arrangements.

Much has been written on the impropriety and unwholesomeness of allowing interments within the precincts of large cities. With proper precautions, however, the body of man may safely be deposited anywhere in the earth without injury to the living.

These precautions are to make the graves sufficiently deep and not to disturb them when once covered in. In the churchyards formerly, the bodies were often buried so near the surface that decomposition went on very much as it would have done in the atmosphere, and in hot weather, the earth over the coffin was frequently raised by the evolution of the gases struggling to make their way through the loose soil into air. The interments were so numerous the half decomposed organic matter was often thrown up to make way for fresh graves, exposing sights disgusting and emitting foul effluvia. When the body is deeply buried in the earth, the process of decomposition is exceedingly different to what it is in the air. In damp ground like that of Rotherhithe, the flesh is rapidly converted into a sort of hard, soapy, homogeneous substance, called by the chemists adipocere, and popularly grave-wax, which gets tough and dry in process of time, and finally crumbles into a powder resembling in appearance powdered plaster of Paris, or rather French chalk. The bones break up more slowly by a different action. The nails, teeth, and hair being the last parts to disappear. In dry ground the same transformation takes place, only a longer period is required.

In exercising surveillance over a burial ground, the depth of the graves and the avoidance of disturbing those already filled in ought to be particularly attended to.

The monthly mortality of April is under the average, only thirty-four deaths having occurred. The deaths have decreased every month since January. Scarlatina, hooping-cough, and measles are still prevalent. Seven deaths from scarlatina, three from hooping-cough, and two from measles having been registered.

Yours, respectfully,

May, 1858.

W. MURDOCH.

TWENTY-NINTH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

An abundant supply of wholesome water and good drainage, are two essential requisites to the healthfulness of any locality.

second to these only, is the frequent removal of the dust and refuse from the houses. Such removal being for the offensive and insoluble solid matter, what drainage is for the noxious quids.

In Rotherhithe, our drainage has improved and is daily improving, our water-supply, although too scanty in the western district, is certainly of better quality than formerly, but in regard to getting rid of the solid refuse, we seem to retrograde instead of advancing. Complaints are being continually made to me of the neglect of the scavengers, and dustbins are shown to me crammed and overloaded with offal.

The landlord of Hanover-street called (on May 22nd), by a letter, my attention to the state of the above-named street. In every yard there is a huge heap of dust, ashes, and rotting vegetable matter, the latter at this season of the year becoming particularly offensive, and likely to breed fever. The quantity of refuse in this locality alone was estimated by the landlord at thirty cartloads, which estimate, after personal inspection, I consider too low. I have thought it my duty to bring this matter under the notice of this Board, that such a growing nuisance be suppressed at once, and some regulation be adopted for a systematic removal of the refuse from the houses. Days were originally fixed by the Board for this object, and placards were posted up allotting a day of the week to each district, that the inhabitants might know when to expect the dust-cart. This excellent scheme has been practically annulled by the carelessness of the scavengers.

The house No. 1, Albion-street, has been frequently examined by me. A slight urinous smell can always be detected at that part of the wall where the urinal of the Albion public-house is placed. The urinal has long stood there, and is much used. Great inconvenience arises from the suppression of such places, the public still continue to resort to the spot after they have been suppressed. This unpleasantness is felt in Rose and Rummer-lane where an old urinal has been bricked up, and the inhabitants of the neighbouring houses complain of the indecent consequences.

A large cesspool, common to the three houses Nos. 27, 28, and 32, Surrey-place, is full, and occasions a nuisance in Record's Cottage, Cow-lane, which is adjacent to it. A notice has been served.

The cesspool of 367 and 368, Rotherhithe-street, has been dug out of the yard of No. 1, Queen-street, where it is merely boarded over. The covering of the cesspool occupying about half the yard, and being eight or nine inches above its level, when the cavity is full the liquid matter oozes through the

boards, and at all times stinking gases arise. It is an intolerable nuisance to the inmates of the house No. 1, Queen-street. At 366, Rotherhithe-street, a pork-butcher's shop, the cellar is often flooded with sewage, which there is every reason to believe comes from the same cesspool.

The two patent manure makers alluded to in my previous reports, consume by combustion the gases arising during the process of mixing. I have repeatedly visited the burial-ground of All Saints'. The instructions of the Committee with regard to the depth of the graves is carried out.

My attention has also been turned to the Railway arches. They are freer from nuisance than heretofore, indeed the amount of business *at present* done there seems but trifling compared with *formerly*.

Fifty-one persons died in Rotherhithe during the just elapsed month. Measles, scarlatina, and whooping-cough are still prevalent.

Yours respectfully,

W. MURDOCH.

June, 1858.

THIRTIETH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

The numerous dustheaps complained of in my last report are gradually diminishing under the vigilant supervision of the Inspector of Nuisances, but it is of little use causing our own dust to be diligently carted away, if Rotherhithe is to become the receptacle of all the ashes and offal of a large neighbouring parish. That it is such is proved by the following fact:—On a piece of land in Corbet's-lane, near the Viaduct, there stands an immense heap of house refuse, covering an acre of ground at least, and forming quite an artificial hillock, the level of the surface having been raised by it twelve or fourteen feet. The bulk of the heap is composed of ashes with a due admixture of putrefying vegetable matter and fish. The principle of allowing the offal of other parishes to be quietly brought into Rotherhithe and shot there is radically wrong, and I deemed it necessary that an evil of such magnitude should at once be made known to this Vestry.

Four chimneys have been erected near the spot. The process of boiling linseed-oil is carried on there, but the apparatus is so well constructed that no smell whatever arises therefrom.

The ditches being rather foul in that neighbourhood, I would suggest the propriety of flushing them occasionally.

A catgut maker lives in St. Helena Cottage, and pursues his

tinking avocation at the back of the house. As he declared he was about to move his business to another locality in a few days, the service of notice has been postponed.

The Railway arches have been frequently and carefully visited, the stench occasionally smelt on the Deptford-road do not proceed from them.

The piggery remains in the same state as heretofore.

The houses mentioned in the Agenda Paper are in want of proper drainage.

Rotherhithe, in common with all other Metropolitan riverside parishes, has suffered considerable inconvenience during the just elapsed month from the stench arising from the filthy state of the Thames water. Perhaps in the annals of mankind such a thing was never before known, as that the whole stream of a large river for a distance of seven or eight miles should be in a state of putrid fermentation. The cause of the putrescency, and of the blackish-green colour of the water, is admitted by all to be the hot weather acting upon the ninety millions of gallons of sewage which discharge themselves daily into the Thames. Now, by sewage, must be understood, not merely house and land drainage, but also drainage from bone-boilers, soap-boilers, chemical works, breweries, and above all from gas factories, the last, the most filthy of all, and the most likely to cause corruption of the water. Should any person doubt this assertion, let him compare the foul black and stinking liquid of a sewer which passes by a gas work, with that of a sewer which receives only house and land drainage. To take our examples from Rotherhithe, the state of the Earl, with that of the Limekiln or Globe Stairs Sewer.

It is quite impossible to calculate the consequences of such a moving mass of decomposition as the river at present offers to our senses. London may be healthy enough just now, but who can foretell how long that healthfulness may continue, while all the waterside population are hourly breathing poison by instalments? Sewer gas, which is the gas exhaled from the Thames, kills (when concentrated) man and animals with the rapidity of lightning; but when diluted and breathed for a certain period of time, is said to generate typhus and diarrhœa. Although fortunately, but few cases of these maladies have yet appeared there can be no doubt, that by the foul exhalations from the river, the health of the inhabitants is being gradually impaired, and they are thereby rendered more ready recipients for disease, and if any ailment seizes them, while under such influence, that ailment is more likely to put on the typhoid character, than it would have done had they been inhaling previously a pure instead of a poisonous atmosphere.

The debilitating effect of this gas has been felt by every one who has had occasion to travel much on the river. If the sewage of London were diverted into another channel, the Thames would purge itself in a few weeks. It is deplorable, indeed, to see the noblest stream in the British Isles, the self-preserving qualities of whose waters were formerly renowned all over the world, now converted into a huge tidal ditch, bearing the germs of disease and death into the heart of this densely-populated metropolis.

The average temperature of the month of June, 1858, was higher than it has usually been in the same month of preceding years. The hottest day was the 16th, when the thermometer marked $94^{\circ}5$ in the shade, at one o'clock P.M. It is asserted that there is no instance on record of its having ever before attained so high a maximum in this country during the month of June.

The monthly mortality is about the average, there having been forty deaths registered, among which are five from scarlatina, one from hooping-cough, and two from malignant sore-throat, probably diphtheria, though not registered in that name. A few cases of diarrhœa have appeared, principally among persons employed on or about the river.

No case of cholera has shown itself among us, and notwithstanding the hot weather and the stench of the Thames, I am happy to say that the parish of Rotherhithe was healthier last month than it generally is at the same time of the year.

In the quarter ending 30th June, one hundred and thirty-six deaths have been registered, namely, seventy-eight males and fifty-eight females, and there were born one hundred and seventy-six children, namely, ninety-three males and eighty-three females.

Yours respectfully,

July, 1858.

W. MURDOCH.

THIRTY-FIRST REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

In cases of fire in Rotherhithe, the length of time which elapses before any water can be obtained from the pipes of the companies supplying the parish, has always been to the inhabitants a source of grievance and complaint. On Sunday, the 25th of July last, a fire took place at Acorn Wharf, and from information gathered on the spot, there is every reason to believe that an hour and a quarter passed away, before any water supply reached the Rotherhithe mains from the Kent Waterworks, and when it did come it was so scanty, that only three

erines could work, there being at the time seven or eight pre-
 sect. As this subject interests the lives as well as the property
 of the parishioners, I have thought it my duty to submit it to
 the consideration of this Board.

Complaints have been made by Mr. Carpenter, of No. 10,
 Paradise-street, of the overflow of soil into his yard from the
 cesspools in Pasfield's Rents. I cannot better describe the place
 than by making an extract from one of my previous reports:—
 "The row consists of seven houses. The yards at the back are
 about two feet wide, and each yard extends the length of the
 corresponding building. In this narrow space the builder has
 managed to stow a privy a few feet from the back door. The
 privies, in two of the houses, were crammed to the boards—in all
 in a highly disgusting state—and every time the back door is
 opened a puff of gas is let in. Well one woman might tell me
 that she had lost two children with the cholera during the last
 epidemic, and that two other persons in the court died of the
 same complaint; four out of twenty-four, or one-sixth of the
 whole population of the place. The privies, however, remain
 in the same state as they were in 1849 and 1854, exhaling
 their successive instalments of putrefaction and death, and wait-
 ing quietly till some other epidemic comes to more than decimate
 the inhabitants of the row, unless the merciful hand of this
 Assembly interfere to prevent such a calamity."

After that report the privies were emptied, but they are now
 in worse condition than ever, the soil penetrating into the houses,
 and overflowing into the yards of the neighbours. The only
 remedy would be the introduction of proper drainage. A notice
 has been served. The other houses mentioned in the Agenda
 paper require improved drainage.

The huge dustheap in the Rotherhithe New-road has again
 been visited by myself and the Inspector (29th July), and
 although some efforts are evidently being made to *hide* the
 putrefying animal and vegetable matter, the south-east end of
 the heap emitted at the time of my visit a fetid nauseous smell,
 which might easily be accounted for by the quantity of recently
 collected house refuse lying there. Sixteen loads a-day (often
 more) are brought to this place. I can see no reason for altering
 the opinion on this nuisance given in my last report.

The ditch running by the side of the heap is in a foul state
 and wants flushing.

Forty-two deaths were registered in Rotherhithe during the
 last month, among which four were from scarlatina, one from
 measles, one from hooping-cough, one from typhoid fever, and
 three from diarrhœa. Several cases of the latter disease have

been treated in different parts of the neighbourhood, although diarrhœa has not prevailed epidemically.

Yours respectfully,

August, 1858.

W. MURDOCH

THIRTY-SECOND REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

On a piece of ground situated at the southern end of Union-place, Union-road, an operative chemist, has erected a brick shaft, about twenty-four feet in height, and commenced making sulphuric acid. In the process of manufacture, after the sulphuric acid has compounded itself from the two generating gases in the chambers of the apparatus, there is a small quantity of waste gas, binoxide of nitrogen which escapes through the tube. The tube had been in this case carried by the manufacturer over a coke fire into the shaft. This, however, did not prevent a certain quantity of binoxide of nitrogen from passing unabsorbed into the atmosphere, where by absorption of oxygen from the air, it immediately converted itself into the orange-coloured vapour of nitrous acid, which vapour diffusing itself round about the factory, did injury to the vegetation, and occasioned uneasy sensations in the air-passages of delicate persons. A notice was in consequence served on the 20th August. The chemist immediately stopped his work and modified his apparatus, making the refuse gas pass first through wet lime, then through coke moistened with sulphuric acid, and finally into the fire under the boiler. So that if the apparatus be kept perfectly air-tight, no gas can find vent at all. I have repeatedly, at all hours of the day, both alone and with the inspector, visited the premises since the alteration has been made without being able to detect any offensive smell. The neighbours, however, still declare the place to be a nuisance. I have, therefore, invited them to send for the Inspector when the smell is actually a nuisance to them. My object being to discharge my duty justly and impartially, unbiassed either by the statements of the manufacturer, or the clamour of the neighbourhood. I beg to invite the attention of the Committee of the Western Division to this factory.

Let me, however, add, that even in the best regulated chemical works, stench being apt to arise either from leakage or accident, it is undesirable that they should be established in crowded localities.

A large quantity of damaged grain, the salvage of one of the

back fires, was landed and housed in the early part of the month at Mr. Fisher's premises, Rotherhithe-street. The process of kiln-drying it was then attempted. A terrific stench arose therefrom, extending above a hundred yards around. I caused notice to be served late on the evening of Saturday, August 14th. The operation ceased at once. The kiln-drying of damaged grain is such a horrible nuisance that it ought not to be tolerated under any circumstances.

A case of aggravated English cholera occurred in Kenning's-buildings, Swan-lane, on the 10th of the elapsed month. The child aged two years, daughter of a labourer, died in twelve hours. The dwelling was carefully examined. It is well drained, well supplied with water, and cleaner than the majority of houses inhabited by the same class of persons. There is, however, near it and in front of it, a street gulley, which the inhabitants pointed out to me as being a nuisance. I beg to suggest the propriety of trapping it, and two other gulleys in Adam's-gardens, which are also much complained of. The filthy ditch, east of Manor-lane, is flushed under the direction of the Clerk of the Works, as often as the state of the tides will allow.

Thirty-seven persons died in August. The mortality being rather under the monthly average. I am happy to say that the Parish of Rotherhithe was during last month, and still continues, remarkably free from disease.

Yours respectfully,
W. MURDOCH.

September, 1858.

THIRTY-THIRD REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

Complaints are being continually made of the foul effluvia emanating from the Surrey Consumers' Gas Works. If any parishioner would point out to me on the premises a source of obnoxious smell not arising from the legitimate process of gas-making, it would be made known to this Board, and steps immediately taken for the suppression of it. But I must again repeat that gas-making cannot be carried on without stench, and that every gas work is necessarily a nuisance, and that the people of Rotherhithe must have been strangely asleep to their own comforts when they allowed such a nuisance to be established permanently by Act of Parliament in this populous Parish.

The damaged grain, housed on Mr. Fisher's premises, Rotherhithe-street, and spoken of in my last Report, has again become

a cause of annoyance to the inhabitants. The process of turning it and sifting it having been attempted, a fearful stench pervaded, for several days, the piece of ground lying between the School of Industry and the Ragged School. Teachers and children were affected thereby, some of the latter went home ill. It is difficult to conceive any application or education of the mind to be possible amidst the bodily discomforts produced by these effluvia. A notice was served, and should a renewal of this nuisance take place, the employment of more stringent measures naturally suggests itself.

The Railway Arches have been carefully examined. Thirteen of them have been occupied for some years by an oilcloth maker who has erected on the spot a proper apparatus for boiling linseed oil and the combustion of its vapour during the process. I have never found any interference necessary. No pigs are kept under the arches, nor is any pigs' food boiled there. The piggery so often alluded to in my previous Reports, is not under the Railway Arches, but stands on a piece of ground completely detached from them. The piggery has been recently visited by a Committee of this Board. As, however, the proprietor has taken to boiling fat, and the smoke on the day of my inspection smelt offensively, a notice was served on him. Another notice was also served on a person who has accumulated stores of decomposing animal and vegetable matter under the arches of the Brighton Railway, at its point of divergence from the Greenwich line.

All the slaughterhouses have been visited personally by me, and I beg again to recommend them favourably.

The ditch in Swan-lane, notwithstanding all the care bestowed upon it, is a great nuisance, particularly at the point where the open joins the closed sewer. Horrid stenches rise from that archway. Let us hope that ere long all open ditches will disappear from this parish, as well as those barbarous remnants of the dark ages, namely, the Black-ditch, the Millpond, and the King's-mills' stream.

The houses mentioned in the Agenda Paper are in want of proper drainage.

Forty-one deaths were registered in September, and although the number of individuals actually sick has not during the month exceeded the average, yet all the zymotic diseases have been more or less prevalent or fatal. Thus, there were five deaths from scarlatina, one from measles, one from whooping-cough, one from small-pox, three from diarrhoea, and four from fever, two of which were registered as typhus. The houses in which these latter occurred were carefully examined soon after. One of the houses, No. 11, York-street, was clean and in good order, but in

the back-yard of the other, No. 6, York-street, a cesspool was overflowing from a house in Swan-lane—steps were immediately taken to remedy the evil.

October, 1858.

Yours respectfully,
W. MURDOCH.

THIRTY-FOURTH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

Several air-shafts have been opened into the sewer in Paradise-row and the Deptford-road. At their upper extremity is an open grating generally placed in the middle of the road. That these shafts let air into the sewer and ventilate it, there can be no doubt, but unfortunately, they also let out large quantities of sewer gas into the atmosphere, and at certain times the stench arising therefrom is nauseating in the extreme, and becomes a horrible nuisance to the inmates of the houses near which the gratings are placed.

While this Vestry is forcing individuals to trap drains and abolish cesspools, while they themselves are continually expending sums of money in trapping street gulleys, with the idea, that the gases arising from them are subtle poisons and deleterious to health, it does seem a strange contradiction that numerous exits of these gases should be made in the principal thoroughfare of this parish.

No. 9, Yeoman-terrace, is situated within a few feet of the Black-ditch, the garden fence is upon the bank of the sewer. Two children of the family residing in the house died last month, within a few days of each other, of dysentery, and a third of malignant sore-throat at the beginning of the year. A medical gentleman dwelling close by states, that all disease puts on a more malignant form in the neighbourhood of this stream of pollution. Now, if such a predisposition be due to the gases arising from the open sewer, is it unreasonable to suppose that the same gases let loose in Paradise-row and the Deptford-road, may have the same effect upon the health of the inhabitants of these localities?

At the request of the Burial trust, I drew up a special report on the state of the places in Rotherhithe still used for the interment of the dead. The Report was read and approved of on the 25th of October. The substance of it may be condensed as follows:—

“That at the burial-ground of Trinity Church, Lower Rotherhithe, there are three-quarters of an acre of unbroken surface, and at All Saints’ nearly one-third of the ground originally

apportioned as a cemetery is still untouched, that in their present state neither of these places is injurious to public health, and that the ground of All Saints' is capable of receiving at least three hundred more bodies without impropriety or inconvenience, and finally, that it will be a great boon to the poor of Rotherhithe, if permission can be obtained from the Government to keep the latter open a little longer."

The sulphuric acid maker in Union-place has applied to the Metropolitan Board for permission to erect a higher shaft, and to improve his premises. It is to be hoped that these improvements will abate the nuisance hitherto complained of.

The salvage of the London Dock fire, composed of sugar, rice, pepper, hemp, &c., housed at Mr. Fisher's, Rotherhithe-street, has fermented, and evolves foul effluvia. Steps for its removal ought to be immediately taken.

The houses and cooperage on the east side of West-lane, West-place, Iphirgenia-cottages, the Ironmonger's shop, and the Black Bull, Rotherhithe-wall, have been carefully examined. As yet the drainage of only two houses, Nos. 10 and 11, has been connected with the new sewer. The others, with the exception of the cooperage, and the ironmonger's-shop, and the Black Bull drain, directly or indirectly into the Mill-stream. Nos. 18, 19, and 20 have no water supply. I am happy to say that this defect is becoming of rare occurrence in Rotherhithe.

The heaps of putrefying animal and vegetable matter under the Brighton Railway arches have been covered with tan, and are at present comparatively harmless.

The Parish continues remarkably healthy. The monthly mortality of October was thirty-one, considerably under the average.

Yours respectfully,
W. MURDOCH.

November, 1858.

THIRTY-FIFTH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

During the severe weather of the elapsed month, passengers on their way along Paradise-row, and the Deptford-road, must have frequently observed columns of vapour rising from the gratings of the air-shafts recently sunk into the sewer of that locality. The cause is simple, the gases of the sewer being in cold weather warmer and lighter than the air, rush up the vents in obedience to the laws governing æriform fluids. Now we know by experience, that sewer gas in the concentrated state is a fearful poison, killing with the rapidity of lightning, and that

in the diluted state it is still fatal to animal life, often generating typhus and other maladies, and always causing diseases to put on a more malignant form in the vicinity of drains and sewers. It does not then appear rational to let out this gas wholesale in the most populous thoroughfare of Rotherhithe. Surely some other means of ventilation might be found, the emissions from these air-shafts being as bad, if not worse, than those from an open ditch, which are spread over a large surface, and consequently more surely diluted. Large tubes extending from the sewer high up into the atmosphere might be easily had recourse to, and should the gases still prove obnoxious to the inhabitants, it would require no great effort of human ingenuity to decompose them by fire. Volumes have been written upon these gases, their poisonous effect upon man and animals, and how to get rid of them, but it is questionable to me, whether any method of getting rid of them can be worse than the one recently employed in Rotherhithe.

The damaged grain and other decomposing vegetable matter has been removed from Mr. Fisher's premises.

The tank containing ammoniacal liquor at the Gas-works has been covered, as recommended.

The houses numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Swan-lane (north end), are certainly among the oldest in Rotherhithe, and are wanting in everything conducive to health and comfort. At Nos. 2, 3, and 4, the privies are dilapidated with large holes in the sides and roof: at No. 4 there is no privy at all, and the effects of such a want might be seen scattered about the yard. Add to this, stopped drains, absence of dustbins, and no water supply. Upon the importance of the latter to the sanitary education of the people I have often insisted in my previous reports.

Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, Kenning's-buildings, were partially put in order in the beginning of this current year, but no water has been laid on to the closets, and they have become stopped. Notices have been served.

At No. 1, Wells'-tenements, there is occasionally a smell of drainage at the back part of the house. I am inclined to think that a drain passes under the house and is out of order.

The parish was not so healthy last month as in October. The low temperature which prevailed for some days much affected the aged, and the sudden vicissitudes of temperature affected all ailing persons. Thus, on the 24th of November, at four A.M., the thermometer stood in the Tunnel-yard at 22° , or ten degrees below the freezing point, at noon on the same day at 32° , and at noon on the next day, 25th November, at 48° , giving a rise of 26° in thirty-two hours.

Bronchitis and inflammatory affections of the chest have been

prevalent during the whole month, and the fatal cases from these maladies have considerably increased the mortality—fifty deaths from all causes having been registered in November.

Yours respectfully,

December, 1858.

W. MURDOCH.

THIRTY-SIXTH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

Between the private gardens at the back of the Infant School, Deptford-road, and the adjacent land of Mr. S. Brandon, market-gardener, runs an open ditch, which serves as a boundary to the latter. The foul effluvia exhaled from that ditch have often been a subject of complaint. On examination of the place, it became evident that the flushing process was impeded by several penstocks, some of which were entirely useless. One has since been removed at my suggestion, and the ditch is in a better state than it was a few weeks ago. The penstocks cannot, however, be all removed, as there would be then no water supply to the gardens. The filthiest part of the ditch is at the end of Claremont-place, and although I could detect no drain-pipe, it seemed to me from the nature of the stagnant fluid, that the surface drainage from some of the houses found its way into it. The simplest remedy would be to fill up the ditch, and if this be not practicable, the tide ought to be allowed to sweep round as often as possible.

Dunn's Cottages form a block of houses (five in number), near the turnpike, Deptford-road, inhabited now by about 34 persons. For the accommodation of these, there are two privies erected over one cesspool, which is full and in a filthy state. I must again express the opinion so often urged in my previous reports, that no cause contributes more to the demoralisation of the humbler classes than the habits of indecency and indelicacy engendered by want of proper water-closet convenience. Schools may mould the intellect of the people, and inculcate principles of religion and morality, but the social habits characteristic of the civilized man, can only be gradually formed by proper sanitary regulations and arrangements.

An open tidal ditch passed formerly by the yards of the houses 4, 5, 6, 7, George Street. It has been replaced by a closed sewer. The drainage of these houses has not been connected therewith, and the consequence is an accumulation of filth and garbage, solid and liquid, on the top of the new sewer, which is rather below the level of the neighbouring yards. When visited by the Inspector and myself, we found over the sewer one or two

small holes, which we suspected had been made to run off the surface water, but we had at hand no means of ascertaining whether a way had been broken into the sewer or not.

At No. 5, Lavender-lane, the drain is stopped. At No. 355, Rotherhithe-wall, the privy is close to the kitchen door. The cesspool ought to be filled up and replaced by proper drainage. Notices have been served in each of the above cases respectively.

An accident resulting in severe injury to the shoulder of the person who was the subject of it, happened on Christmas Eve, from the peculiar construction of the tramway which traverses Rotherhithe-street, near the Pageants'-stairs. Where it crosses the footway on the south side, the tram rises a little above the level of the path, and is apt to catch the toe of the passengers, and throw them forwards. I have, therefore, thought it proper to bring the matter before this Board.

The process of making patent manure is now carried on in closed vessels, as recommended by me when I first visited these factories in 1856, and the nuisance of the manufacture is thereby much lessened. About two years ago there was a disagreeable smell, or rather, a series of disagreeable smells, from Swan-lane to the Pageants; at present the atmosphere of the street is as pure as that of any other part of the parish—much purer, indeed, than that of Paradise-row, where the atmosphere is continually contaminated by the evolution of volumes of sewer gas from the recently constructed air-shafts.

Fifty-two deaths were registered in December, of which twenty-nine, or above half, were from diseases of the respiratory organs. The only epidemic now prevalent in Rotherhithe is hooping-cough, which was fatal in four cases. The appointment of public vaccinators has told favourably upon the health of this place. Since that measure was taken for the propagation of vaccination, small-pox has become much less common than formerly, and I am happy to say that during the year 1858, no death from that dreadful malady was registered in this parish.

Yours respectfully,

January, 1859.

W. MURDOCH.

THIRTY-SEVENTH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

On Tuesday, the 25th of January, I received an official letter from R. D. Grainger, Esq., inviting me to meet him on Thursday, the 27th, at noon, for the purpose of examining the state of the vaults connected with the parish church of St. Mary, Rotherhithe. There were present at the place of meeting, besides R.

about an acre and a half, and its height (which is continually increasing from the twenty-four loads of refuse carted there daily) averages about fifteen feet, but on one spot it rises to twenty feet, and towers pyramid-like above the arches of the neighbouring railway. Notwithstanding the care taken to hide under the ashes the decomposing animal and vegetable matter, there was when the Committee examined the heap on the 29th January, at its north-east end, a faint sickening smell. In justice, however, to the Vestry of Bermondsey, I am bound to say that all the vegetable matter carted there is not in a state of decomposition, as the innumerable cabbage-stalks mixed with the house refuse, are freely sprouting and exhibiting signs of lively vegetation on the fat and well-manured soil of the hillock.

Forty-three deaths were registered last month in Rotherhithe. The death register presents nothing remarkable.

Yours respectfully,

February, 1859.

W. MURDOCH.

THIRTY-EIGHTH REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

On the 17th of February, I had an interview with R. D. Grainger, Esq., the object of which was, that we might confer together on the state of the vaults under Rotherhithe Church and the means to be employed with regard to them. The opinion of the Government Officer is, that the mass of human decay accumulated in those vaults does exhale, or may exhale gases which may prove injurious to the health of the inhabitants. I stated to him the objections to this opinion given in my Report of last month, namely:—that none of the coffins in the vaults are air-tight; that no body has been buried there during the last six years, and that some of the bodies were deposited there a century ago or more, and consequently, all the gases have been given off from them long ago, and finally, that from the peculiar and powerful ventilation of the vaults, they (the bodies) are hard and mummified, and harmless as the dry preparations in an anatomical museum. I also represented that putrefying animal matter from the quantity of ammonia and its salts evolved in the process of decomposition always betrays itself to the senses, while the atmosphere of the vaults under Rotherhithe Church seems as pure as the air outside. I might have added to these statements, the undeniable fact mentioned to me by the Medical Officer of the West Division of this Parish, and confirmed by my own observation, viz.:—that the district round the church is remarkably healthy, although some parts of it—such as John's do

place and Spread Eagle-court—are inhabited by the very poorest population in the neighbourhood. I also urged to the Government Officer the great inconveniences which might arise from laying the coffins on the floor, and covering them with earth and charcoal, should the water of the Thames penetrate by percolation or otherwise into the vaults, which are considerably below level of high watermark. R. D. Grainger, Esq., promised, that these weighty objections should be duly considered by him in the Report which he is about to make to the Government.

The necessity of building a brickwall so as to cut off all communication between the vaults and the interior of the church, will, I think, be admitted by every one.

At No. 32, Lower Queen-street, the drainage is good, and everything is in order, but at times a very foul smell is perceptible in one part of the house. I expressed to the tenant, that unless the cause of the stench could be pointed out to be some imperfection of drainage, the remedy appeared to be more the business of the landlord of the premises, than of this Board.

Some pigs were discovered in a house in Oak-place, they have been removed by the activity of the Inspector of Nuisances.

The abominable stench escaping from the sewer in Paradise-row, through the newly-constructed air-shafts, continue to be a perpetual source of complaint, and should not some remedy to this miserable state of things be speedily found, there can be no doubt that the value of property in that locality will be much depreciated. The cleansing of the sewer, which is now in active operation, can only give a temporary relief for the following reasons: the sewer is so constructed that it can only discharge itself into the Earl for about two hours in twelve, and even then from its outlet being higher than the sewer itself, it only gets rid of the upper part of its contents, so that during twenty hours, daily, it is waterlogged, and is in reality not a sewer, but an elongated cesspool, a mile in length, and the solid part of the sewage must during that space of time settle to the lower part of the channel and there permanently remain.

Now, the stagnant mass thus engendered will always give off much more powerful stench than those arising from a sewer with a good fall, which can perfectly empty itself, and be easily cleansed and washed by the flushing process.

The flushing of the sewer which is the subject of my comments, can never wash away perfectly the deposit at the bottom, from the circumstance of the elevation of the outlet above mentioned.

In these times of sanitary improvement it does seem monstrous that a whole district should be filled with pestilential vapours for the sake of ventilating a sewer. Nor is this a solitary example of a

great truth, namely, *that the opinions and practices of men of science are often in direct opposition to the common sense of mankind.*

Thirty-nine deaths were registered in Rotherhithe during the month of February. The parish is at present healthy.

Yours respectfully,

March, 1859.

W. MURDOCH.