

Second report by the Board of Health for the City of Glasgow and Suburbs.

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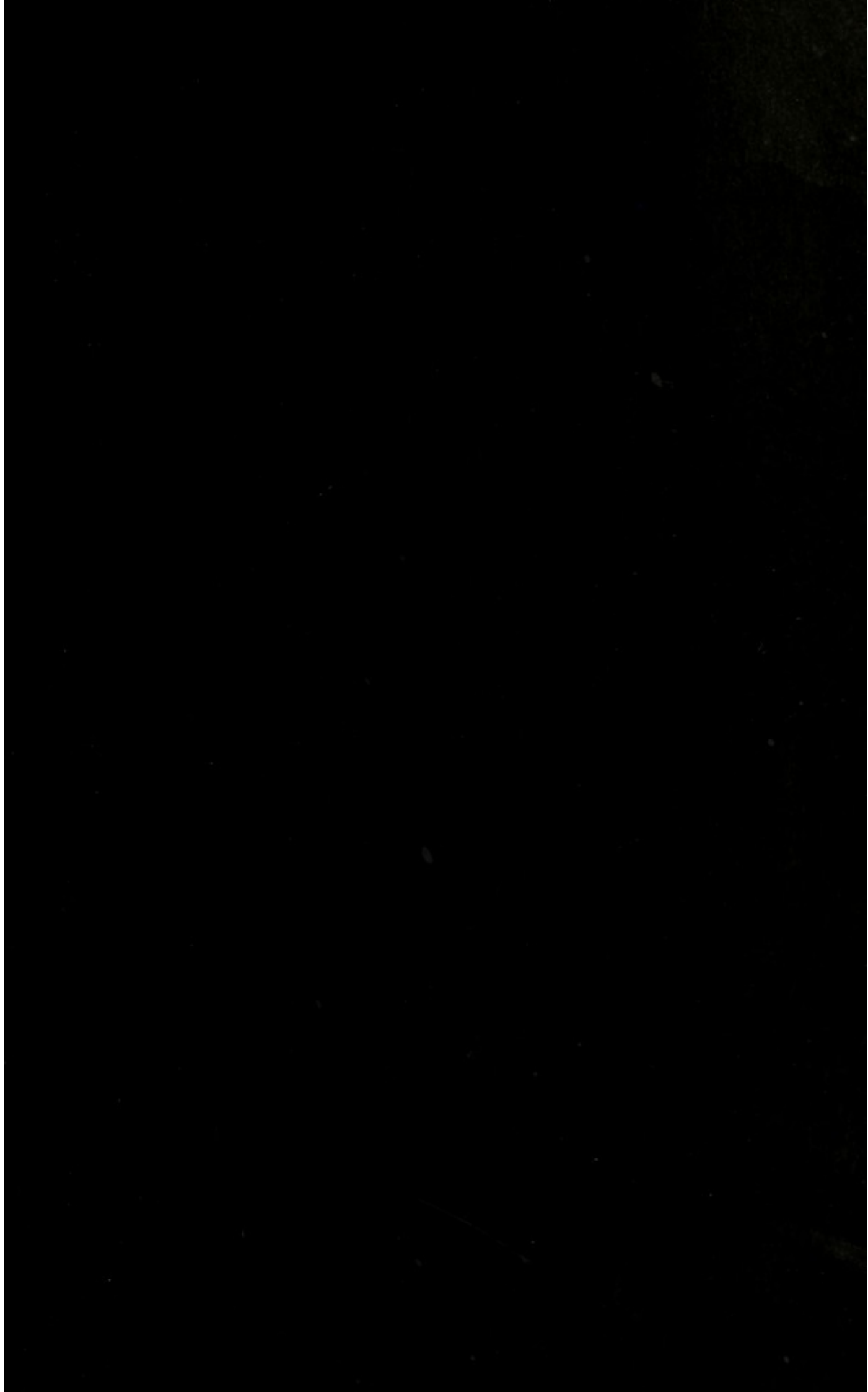
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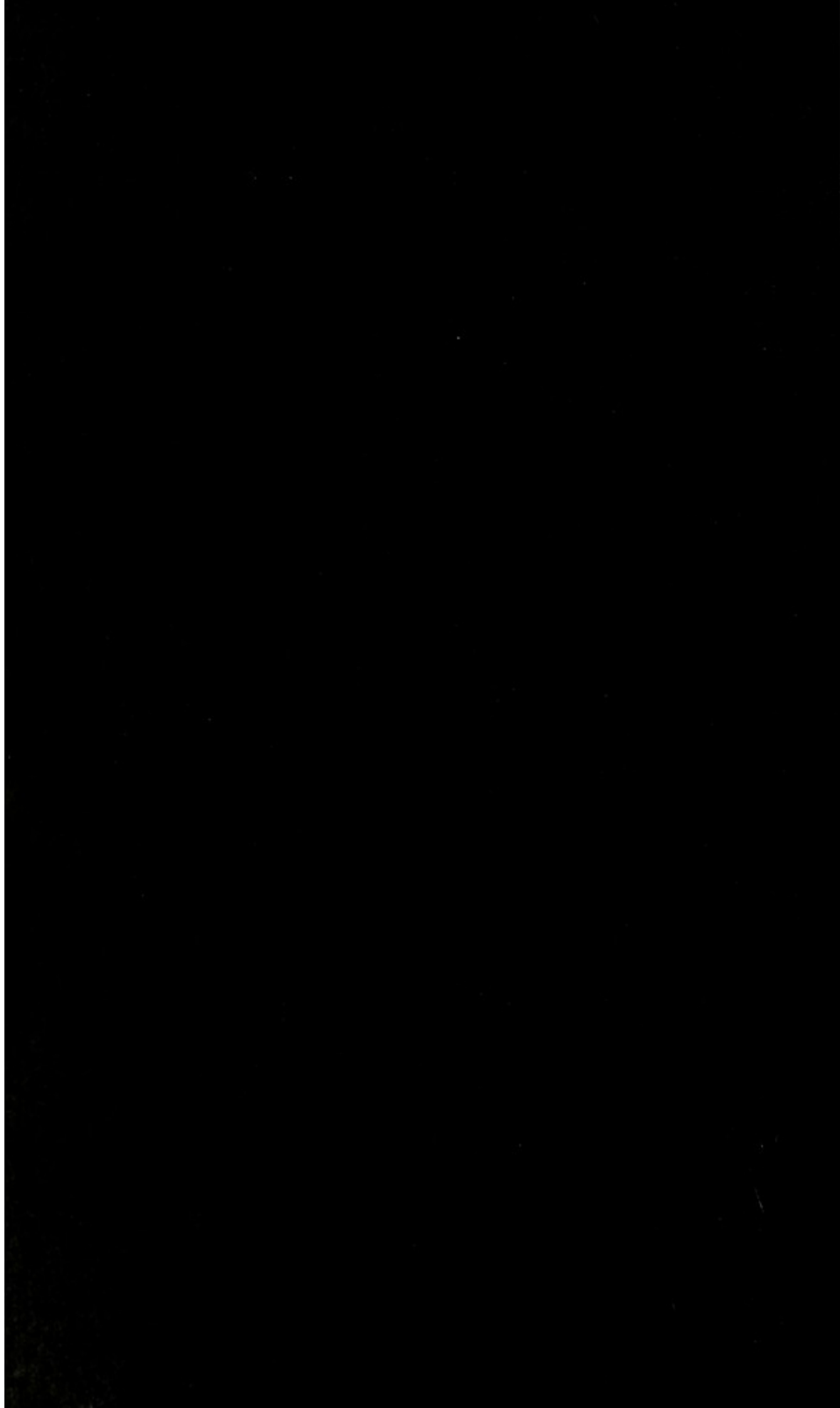
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SECOND REPORT

BY THE

BOARD OF HEALTH

FOR THE

CITY OF GLASGOW AND SUBURBS.

SINCE the First Report of their proceedings was issued by the Board, it has pleased Almighty God to visit this district of the country with the disease, so much dreaded by us; and though the number of cases which has occurred be considerable, it is matter of gratitude, that they are less, than what from the state of the population, and the localities of the City and Suburbs might have been anticipated. Whether the disease may assume a more unfavourable aspect, time only can determine;—but the measures which have been taken to promote public cleanliness—to remove nuisances—and to suppress promiscuous begging—have, it is hoped, contributed in no small degree, to mitigate the severity of the epidemic.

It is matter of satisfaction, also, that previously to the appearance of the disease among us, the Hospital and Medical arrangements were so complete, that not one case has occurred in which, when liberty was obtained, the patient has not been treated in the promptest manner, either in the Hospital, or in his own dwelling-house; and though the number of deaths may seem great, still they are not above the average number, in other places at the first breaking out of the complaint; and it is hoped, that a more early application for Medical assistance upon the very first symptoms, will in future insure still greater success in the treatment of the cases.

As connected with this department, the Board have reason to express their warmest acknowledgments to the District Surgeons, and to the numerous body of advanced Medical Students, who have so laudably stepped forward, and in the present emergency, enrolled themselves to act whenever their services shall be required. Availing themselves of the offers of these Gentlemen, arrangements have been made by the Board for regular Medical Visitations (under the direction of the District Surgeons) of the whole City and Suburbs, and particularly

of those Districts in which disease is likely to prevail; and, while already much disease and suffering have been detected and relieved, these Medical Visitations in other respects must soon be productive of good. Several of the Gentlemen complained, that upon first visiting certain Districts of the City, inhabited by the poorer classes, they had met with considerable opposition and personal abuse. But the Board cannot doubt that the real object of their visits requires only to be properly known, to be duly appreciated, and to insure the Medical Gentlemen kind reception and gratitude, even from the poorest and least instructed. Accordingly it is with much satisfaction the Board have been more recently informed, that the prejudices which at first existed, are giving way; and it would be strange, indeed, if such prejudices were to continue for any length of time in the midst of such an intelligent population. As has been already publicly notified, Medical Advice will, at all times, be promptly obtained, by application at any of the Depots which have been established in the City.

It is with peculiar satisfaction the Board can now state, to their constituents, that Local Committees, in each of the 32 Wards of the City, and also in the Suburbs, have been formed, and are in active operation, affording more extended relief to the suffering part of the community. As giving the fullest information on this subject, the Board annex, by way of Appendix, a copy of the Circular, issued by them, to the Local Committees; and they hope that, by these Local Committees, every *legitimate* application for relief will now be fully met. The fund under the charge of the Board is, no doubt, considerable, but the objects to which it is applicable are so important and varied, that it must be managed with prudence; and, besides, it would soon disappear under any thing like a *general unrestricted* distribution for the relief of the necessitous, who have a more obvious claim on the proper parochial funds. In reference to this part of their duty, and to satisfy the public that it is no easy matter to meet all the exigencies of our present situation, the Board would mention one fact, namely:—that being particularly anxious to relieve blankets and woollen articles in pawn, belonging to the poorer classes, they have obtained returns, from the Pawn Brokers, from which it appears, that the

pledged blankets and bed-covers alone, amount, in number, to upwards of 4000, and that the sums advanced thereon, amount to nearly £1000. This most important fact shows how inadequate the funds at the disposal of the Board are, to any general measure of relief, and even with regard to blankets, the most useful of all articles, in the present emergency, their funds can only enable the Board to relieve a portion of the pledged articles. They have, therefore, urged on the Local Committees to make a selection of the cases, and to recommend only those which may be considered the most urgent. In the same report by the Pawn Brokers, it is stated that the mantles now held in pledge by them, are of the same value as the blankets, and that the advance on them is to a similar amount.

Since the date of their former Report, and, indeed, for some time previously, the Board have turned their particular attention to a matter which has met the entire approbation of Dr. Arthur, Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals, the Gentleman who has been sent by Government, to watch the progress of the Epidemic, and give his aid and advice to the Board, namely :—to procuring detached uninhabited houses, in the City and Suburbs, to which, on the first appearance of the disease, in particular quarters, the healthy part of the inhabitants might be removed, and the infected houses shut up and properly fumigated. Although it would seem that no possible objection to the occupancy of property, in the way proposed, could be made, the Board regret to state, that no part of the duty, which has devolved upon them, has occasioned more trouble, or been more unsuccessful. Day after day has been devoted, by several Members of the Board, to find out proper places; the public has been entreated by advertisement, and in every other way, to place such property at the disposal of the Board; premises, in every respect desirable, had, as the Board thought, in many instances been secured, but the prejudices of the neighbourhood—the fears of the Landlords, or the apprehensions of creditors were found to be quite insurmountable, and to the present hour, the Board have not been able to procure even one private dwelling-house.

In this dilemma, the Board have, for the present, had recourse to the only alternative left—they have taken posses-

sion of the Old Powder Magazine, which is in course of fitting up, and will be ready for occupancy in a day or two.

The Board have had a good deal of their time occupied by attention to quarantine regulations. At their recommendation, the Forth and Clyde and Monkland Canal Companies, and also the Monkland, and Kirkintilloch, and Glasgow, and Garnkirk Railway Companies, ceased conveying passengers; but as the disease has now spread in many of the surrounding Districts—as it was found impracticable to put a stop to all communication by land, and as Government has allowed Steam Navigation on the Clyde, without any special restrictions, the Board have deemed it proper to allow the Canal and Railway Companies to exercise their discretion in resuming the plying of their Passage Boats, or the running of their Carriages.

To meet the wishes of the public, the Board, at very considerable trouble and expense, obtained suitable premises, on the road to Port-Dundas, which they fitted up as a house for disinfecting goods of contagion. But though it was prepared to receive goods on Saturday last, and notification thereof was given to the public, by advertisements in the newspapers, the Board have to state, that not one piece of cloth has yet been subjected to the disinfecting process. In fitting up these premises, the Board have discharged their duty—it remains with the Manufacturers more immediately concerned, to avail themselves of the means of preventing contagion which have been provided.

Agreeably to the recommendation of the Medical Committee, the Seaman's Chapel at Brownfield has been shut up, and the Established and Dissenting Clergymen of the City acting on a similar recommendation, have resolved in the meantime to discontinue all evening Sermons. In announcing this to their respective Congregations, an opportunity was taken of recommending to the heads of families to prevent their children and servants from going out unnecessarily in the evening.* A copy of the Letter of the Board, read from the pulpits, containing this and other important infor-

* A striking instance of the necessity of attention to this recommendation has occurred in the New Town: a servant, in a respectable family, having gone to visit her mother at Woodside, where the disease was prevailing, was in the course of two days herself attacked with it.

mation, will be found in the Appendix. Mr. Alexander, of the Theatre-Royal, has also, in deference to the opinion of the Board, closed the Theatre, and the Board have had under consideration the propriety of recommending the shutting up of taverns and public houses at an early hour. In next Report they will be able to state what progress has been made in this matter.

The Board have only further to add, that in conjunction with the local Committees of Gorbals, Calton, Anderston, Cowcaddens, Port Dundas, &c. &c. every exertion will be used to arrest the progress of the disease, or to mitigate its effects. Amidst the complicated and difficult duties which have devolved upon the Board, omissions will doubtless be chargeable against them, and their arrangements may not be so perfect as might be wished. For these omissions and defects, the Board throw themselves on the candour and good feelings of the community—they only ask credit for good intentions, and an honest anxious desire to have recourse to every measure, which, under Providence, may seem calculated to mitigate the present evil.

ROBERT DALGLISH, Provost, *Chairman.*

Glasgow, 22d Feb. 1832.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Hutcheson's Hospital, 18th February, 1832.

REV. SIR,

YOU are respectfully requested to intimate to your Congregation, that, in deference to the opinion of the Medical Committee of the Board, and in full confidence in the judgment by which it is dictated, the Established and Dissenting Clergymen of the City have agreed, in the present state of the public health, to discontinue, for some time, all Evening Sermons.

In announcing this to your Congregation, it is respectfully requested that you take the opportunity of notifying, that the Medical Committee strongly recommend to heads of Families to prohibit their Children and Servants from unnecessarily going out in the Evening, as without the necessary precautions, it may lead to contagion, and be attended with serious results.

The Board of Health will likewise feel obliged if you will state to your Congregation, that arrangements have been made for regular Medical Visitations of the whole City and Suburbs, and particularly those districts in which Disease is most likely to exist. This arduous, but most important public duty, has been underta-

ken by the District Surgeons and properly qualified Assistants, approved of by the Medical Committee of the Board; and you will confer an obligation on the public, by using your influence with such of the poorer Members as may require such a monition, to receive the Medical Gentlemen with courtesy—to disclose the true state of their health without reserve—and to follow out with promptitude, the prescriptions which may be given. The Public generally must be made aware, that due attention to what are called the “premonitory symptoms” of the disease, is of the very first importance; and that, however slight or apparently trivial the warnings may appear, it is dangerous to neglect them.

The Gentlemen employed in visiting certain Districts, inhabited by the poorer classes, complain of having received, in many instances, much personal abuse. But the real object of their visits requires only to be known to be duly appreciated, and to insure their being received with kindness and gratitude.

The present may also be a very fit opportunity for impressing on the public mind, the incalculable benefits that must result from prompt application for Medical Assistance, in every case in which disease shall actually appear, and for removing from the public mind many erroneous impressions, in consequence of which, in some instances, the friends of the patients have not only positively refused to allow them to be conveyed to the public Hospitals, but have even opposed the treatment of those unfortunate persons in their own houses. It is needless to dwell on the consequences of such infatuated conduct, which, if it were to be persisted in, would be detrimental, in the highest degree, to the public safety. In the public Hospitals, every means which human skill can dictate for the recovery of the diseased can at once be had recourse to, and while the very best Medical Advice which the City affords, will, at all times, be available for the treatment of the disease, either in the Hospitals, or in the dwellings of the sick, it is confidently trusted that every prejudice will give way, and that no complaints, similar to those which have already reached the Board, will hereafter come before them.

In conclusion, I have only to add, that the importance of the various matters now urged upon your notice, will, I trust, be a sufficient apology for the earnestness with which I have taken the liberty of urging upon you the sentiments and wishes of the Board, at which I preside. I am, respectfully,

Reverend Sir, your most obedient servant,

ROBERT DALGLISH, *Provost*,
Chairman of the Board.

No. II.

17th February, 1832.

As it has now been resolved to extend the limits of relief, during the existing exigency, and as Local Committees have been formed in the respective Police Wards, to take the charge of distribution—the Committee of the Board of Health, after full communications with the General Commissioners, have come to the following Resolutions:—

1. That the system of Soup-kitchens should be adopted where the state of the District renders it expedient;—that in place of large establishments for general supply, there should be small erections, embracing the wants of one, two, or three Wards, according to the necessity;—that every regard should be paid to economy in the procedure;—that a sum of L.5, or at the utmost L.6, for fitting up, shall be placed at the discretion of the Local Committee, requiring such a provision;—and that where the estimate of expense may exceed such an amount, a Report shall be previously made to this Board. It will be highly desirable, if not absolutely essential, that each Committee make arrangements for the personal attendance of some of their number to superintend, not only the management of the Kitchen, but the distribution of the Soup—so as to prevent waste, detect fraud, and secure public confidence. The Committees will themselves arrange as to the number of Tickets which they may require, and these will be furnished by Mr. LANG, Printer, at the expense of the Board.

2. That, under special circumstances, where the allotment of Soup may not meet the necessity of the case, a moderate supply of Meal, of Bread, or of Potatoes, may be afforded; but as a door may thus be still more widely opened to deception, by the conversion of these articles into the means of intemperance, great caution as to the character of the recipients will be previously requisite.

3. That with the same circumspection, small proportions of Coals may be occasionally allowed—to be purchased in waggons, and given out, as the severity of the weather, or the hardship of the case may dictate.

4. That Blankets, Flannels, and warm Clothing shall also be supplied, in cases of extreme necessity;—that a Depot having been established under the direction of a Committee, of which Mr. ANTHONY WIGHAM is Convener, the Local Committees are requested to furnish that Gentleman, at his Warehouse in South Hanover Street, with a list of what they require; and as soon as the total demand is thus ascertained, the distribution will be made according to the urgencies, in reference to the stock on hand, and the articles will be sent in a parcel to such places as the different Committees may appoint—and that with regard to Woollen Clothes in Pawn, the Committees are also desired to hand to Mr. WIGHAM a list of the names of such persons as they recommend; of the articles pawned; and of the sums advanced on them by the Brokers—after which, immediate measures will be taken for relief, according to circumstances. It will be distinctly understood, that nothing but Blankets, Flannels, or warm Woollen under-garments can be taken out of Pawn—Coats, Mantles, and all other apparel being expressly excluded—and that the party interested must consent to the articles being stamped with the words “Board of Health.” It is likewise particularly requisite, that great discrimination and prudence be exercised by the Committees in giving such recommendations, as from experience on former occasions, many attempts at imposition may be anticipated.

The Committee of the Board of Health, while they highly

appreciate the benevolence, spirit and promptitude, with which the Commissioners of Police, and their associates in this work of humanity, have come forward in the hour of need—feel assured, that the good sense of these Gentlemen will point out the necessity of the following recommendations, which are respectfully and earnestly impressed on their consideration:—

1. That scrupulous inquiries be made into the character, circumstances, and habits of the applicants for relief; so that not only a judicious discrimination may be made as to the extent to be afforded, but fraud and imposition, as far as possible, be defeated.

2. That, with this view, it will be of the greatest benefit, that the Elders or Deacons of the Established and Dissenting Churches, who have been accustomed to the practical details of charity, be associated with the Committees, or at all events consulted as to the merits of the cases.

3. That accurate lists should be kept of the cases requiring relief—containing the names, places of abode, term of residence, numbers of family, occupations, character, state, cause of distress, supply from other charity, and particulars of assistance granted. Printed schedules will be prepared for this purpose.

4. That beyond a supply of Soup and Clothing, no Sessional or Hospital cases be relieved, as it is expected that the aid will proceed from the proper quarter.

5. That, above all, the greatest prudence, economy and discretion be observed, as to the pecuniary extent of expenditure. The Committees will be aware, that the sum at the disposal of the Board, is of limited extent; that a large amount has already been laid out on preparations for the suppression of Typhus and Cholera; and that it is impossible to say how far these diseases may proceed, or how long they may continue.

With these suggestions, which are impressed on the Local Committees, with equal deference and earnestness, the Committee of the Board of Health have resolved, in the meanwhile, to confide the management to the discretion of the Gentlemen who have undertaken the duty. They particularly request, however, from each of the Committees, a Report of their procedure, to be delivered to Mr. STRANG, on Monday the 27th instant; and they will then judge whether, from the extent of expenditure in any district, it will be requisite to restrict the amount of funds to be placed at the disposal of the Committee. After that time, the Board will request that a Report shall be given in every Monday, containing the procedure of the preceding week; when an order will be given on Mr. ALSTON the Treasurer, for payment of the expenditure incurred during that period.

No. III.

Total Cases from commencement, 12th February, 1832,	-	74
Total Deaths,	-	27
Total Recoveries,	-	24
Remaining,	-	23
		74

