

**Plan of sanitary improvements of the City of Edinburgh, August 17, 1866 /
by Messrs Cousin and Lessels.**

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PLAN
OF
SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS
OF THE
CITY OF EDINBURGH.

BY MESSRS COUSIN AND LESSELS,
ARCHITECTS.

AUGUST 17. 1866.

PLATE

STATISTICAL TABLES

OF THE

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

BY MISS J. L. AND J. L. L.

MINNEAPOLIS

1880

REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

LAND OFFICE

FOR THE YEAR 1881

AND FOR THE YEAR 1882

AND FOR THE YEAR 1883

AND FOR THE YEAR 1884

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AND FOR THE YEAR 1917

AND FOR THE YEAR 1918

REVISED PLAN OF PROJECTED IMPROVEMENTS

of the Old Town of

EDINBURGH

BY MESS^{RS} COUSIN & LESSELS, ARCHIT^S

Note. New Thoroughfares and widening of present thoroughfares are tinted blue. New open spaces (intended to be permanently so) are tinted yellow. New blocks of Building are tinted Red. The blocks marked A A next North College St are reserved for New College Buildings if required.



PLAN
OF
SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS OF THE
CITY OF EDINBURGH.

BY MESSRS COUSIN AND LESSELS, ARCHITECTS.

AUGUST 17. 1866.

CITY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME.

“The Plans of the proposed Improvements, as prepared by Mr Cousin and Mr Lessels, with the relative Sections, will be open for inspection by the Public in the Council Chamber, for one month from this date.

“The Lord Provost’s Committee will proceed, as early as possible in September, to consider the Plan in detail, along with such suggestions or observations thereon as may be lodged with the City Clerk on or before the 1st September next.

“A small lithographed Plan of the proposed improvements, with an explanatory statement by Messrs Cousin and Lessels, and estimates of the cost, are in course of preparation, and will be circulated as soon as they can be got ready among the various public bodies. Copies, price 6d. each, will be supplied to the public by Messrs W. & A. K. Johnston, St Andrew Square. Intimation will be given by advertisement when the copies are ready for sale.

“CITY CHAMBERS, EDINBURGH,
“31st July 1866.”

In obedience to the above, the Plan of City Improvements, in a large size, is exhibited for public inspection, along with sections, in the Council Chamber, and the present statement, with small plan, is now published for general circulation.

D. C.
J. L.

PLAN OF SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS.

17th August 1866.

THE plan of Improvements now submitted for the consideration of the Lord Provost's Committee, is based on that originally projected by the Lord Provost, but includes some important modifications, the result of careful consideration. The new plan will also be found to embrace several additional improvements, greatly calculated, as we think, to benefit the sanitary condition of the city.

Each of the sections proposed to be improved has been minutely surveyed, levels have been taken, and drawings of cross and longitudinal sections effected; and the new lines of thoroughfares now proposed have been carefully adjusted, in order to work in with the existing levels, where these could not be altered; others have been altered where admissible, so as to secure the best possible gradient for the new thoroughfares; for it must be obvious to all, that, in devising a readjustment of streets and lines of communication in districts where the levels vary so rapidly as those of the steep declivities on either side of the High Street, the direction and lie of the new streets must, in a great measure, be determined by these levels.

While the revised plan has, in all its parts, been the subject of personal scrutiny on the spot, we acknowledge having adopted, in some instances, hints from previous inquirers, particularly the Council of the Architectural Institute of Scotland, whose suggestion as to opening up the thoroughfare between Nicolson Square and Charles Street has been

adopted. We have also to acknowledge having received valuable hints from the Lord Provost, who has devoted much of his energies to this subject, and been in almost daily communication with us during the preparation of the plan.

As finally made up, the plan has received the approval of the Sub-Committee of the Lord Provost's Committee.

The cost of the several improvements exhibited on the plan, and hereinafter referred to, is subjoined; and, as will be seen, although including the additional improvements that have now been suggested in the southern districts, it is considerably less than that formerly stated. Whatever the expense be, it seems to us perfectly clear that less than what we have suggested in the way of change would not effect the great object in view.

We coincide in the opinion of the Lord Provost, that the alterations should take place very gradually, beginning with those parts between New Street and Leith Wynd, where the population is least dense; thus opening the ground for building operations previous to dispossessing families in other quarters. There can be little doubt that enterprising builders and others will be prepared to purchase stances for new houses as soon as the ground is offered for occupation.

BLOCK No. 1.

This block embraces that portion of the Old Town lying between the North Bridge on the west, and Leith Wynd on the east; and from the High Street on the south, to the Physic Gardens on the north.

From the irregularity of the ground, and the great fall towards the north, this block presents considerable difficulties in its reconstruction. The densest crowding in this and in Blocks Nos. 2, 3, and 4, is immediately behind the buildings of the High Street, the space towards the north being more open, and nearly free of buildings. In fact, much of the ground there is now comparatively of little value, from want of proper access.

The back tenements in the more westerly Closes of this

block, comprising Halkerston's Wynd, Kinloch's, Carrubber's, and North Gray's Closes, taken in general, are in good repair; but those in the lower Closes, from Paisley Close eastwards, are in a very dilapidated and ruinous condition, and in Barringer's Close, six and seven storeys high, with an opening of 4 feet 9 inches intervening between the houses, while the houses of themselves are exceedingly narrow, and, consequently, inconvenient, ill adapted for their purpose, and not susceptible of being improved, were it expedient to rebuild them on the present site.

It is therefore proposed to clear out the whole back buildings forming these closes, with the exception of a very few which are in good repair, or have been recently rebuilt, and which do not interfere with the general scheme of improvement.

It may however be observed, that none of the buildings proposed to be removed form part of, or interfere with, the main ridge or outline of the High Street.

The removal of the buildings in these closes will leave a large area of ground vacant, through which it is proposed to open a new street, 50 feet wide, forming a junction with Market Street on the west, and through Leith Wynd on the east into the Canongate, opposite St Mary's Wynd. In order to effect this, however, it is necessary to raise the level of a part of Leith Wynd next the Canongate, and also to divert the entrance of the Wynd a little to the east, so as to overcome the difference in levels, by which means an easy gradient of 1 in 34 will be obtained throughout the entire length of the new street, and the depth of cutting or filling up will nowhere exceed 10 feet. At a point near Old St Paul's Episcopal Chapel in Carrubber's Close the street turns northwards, and enters the Fish Market through the arches of the North Bridge, and from thence, with a gentle curve and gradient of 1 in 26, into Market Street.

Excellent building stances will be got on both sides of this street for shops and dwelling houses, with ample areas behind for light and air; and from the average level of the new street being about 22 feet below the level of the High

Street, the houses to be erected thereon will not interfere with the light, or even with the views from the windows of the houses in the High Street.

Broad arched openings will be formed through Chalmers's and North Gray's Closes, for the convenience of foot passengers; and also a broad flight of steps, as shewn, at the foot of Halkerston's Wynd, where the higher level of the new street is so much above the level of the Physic Gardens; and another flight of steps to form a connection with the north portion of Leith Wynd, which, as will be seen in Block No. 2, is made to diverge eastward and join the Canongate at Coull's Close.

BLOCK No. 2.

This Block extends from Leith Wynd on the west to New Street, and from thence on to Big Jack's Close on the east; and from the Canongate on the south to Macdowall Street on the north.

The south portion, abutting against the Canongate, is occupied with buildings of an inferior description: comprising, Kinloch's, Seton's, Morocco, Logan's, and High School Closes, with the ruinous property on the east side of Leith Wynd, and Old Flesh Market Close, which has so long proved a disgrace to the locality; while the north portion of the block is comparatively open, and the buildings on it of a much better description; but in this, as in the former block, much ground is wasted from the want of proper access.

As the houses in all these closes above mentioned are very ill lighted, and, from their close proximity to each other, badly ventilated, any attempt at improvement on them in their present condition would be totally useless, and the only resource is to remove the whole, and on the vacant ground thus obtained, build a new street, forming a thoroughfare through the centre of the block.

In treating of Block No. 1, it was stated that it would be necessary to divert the course of the upper portion of Leith Wynd more eastwards, so as to join the Canongate at Coull's

Close, for which purpose all the buildings on the east side of the Wynd, from Shepperd's Court southwards, must be taken down, and the wynd or street then formed made 40 feet wide, with an improved gradient.

The new street to be formed through the space of ground left vacant by the removal of the old tenements in the closes, will run eastwards from Leith Wynd to New Street, which it crosses on the level, and thence onwards to Big Jack's Close, where it will turn south, and enter the Canongate opposite St John's Street, the front tenement with the present archway being removed for that purpose; thus affording a direct and easy access to the Railway Station, or other parts of the New Town, through the Physic Gardens, from these two different points in the Canongate; and give a large area of excellent building ground along the line of the new streets, with ample space behind the houses for the admission of light and air, or drying and bleaching clothes; and at the same time, by removing the old and ruinous tenements, raise the value of the whole adjoining property.

The opening from the Canongate through Logan's Close to Macdowall Street will be improved and preserved.

These alterations are not only important in a sanitary point of view, but the new broad thoroughfares from Market Street and the North British Railway Station, and those from the Physic Gardens by Leith Wynd and the new Streets in this block, will prove of great value as regards the Canongate, and no doubt greatly revive that ancient suburb, and at the same time provide most convenient and salubrious sites for Workmen's Houses in the very centre of the town, and in the immediate proximity of the numerous public Works and large Factories in this neighbourhood, where so many workmen are daily employed.

BLOCK No. 3

Contains the area of ground between St Mary's Wynd and St John Street, from the Canongate, south to the Cowgate,

a great portion of which from St Mary's Wynd eastwards, including Hume's, Boyd's, Bell's, and Gillon's Closes, on to Chessels's Court, is covered with old and inferior buildings in a dilapidated condition. The same remark applies to the tenements on the east side of Chessels's Court with those in Plainstones, Watson's, and Milne's Closes.

It is proposed, in connection with, and in continuance of the new street from Market Street to the Canongate, that St Mary's Wynd shall be widened to fifty feet, by taking down the whole buildings forming the east side thereof, and at the same time all the buildings in the first named closes, as far east as Gibb's Close, with the old tenements on the east side of Chessels's Court, and a portion of those in Plainstones, Watson's, and Milne's Closes, and to form a new street running eastwards from St Mary's Wynd parallel with the Canongate, and forty feet in width, through and along the south side of Chessels's Court, where it will turn north and enter the Canongate through an opening to be formed by removing the front tenement between Plainstones and Watson's Closes. This improvement will obliterate Hume's Close, which is immediately behind St Mary's Wynd, and so narrow as in some parts to allow a passage for only one person at a time.

It would have improved this street very much as a thoroughfare, could it have been carried east to St John's Street, in place of turning and entering the Canongate as proposed; but to have done this would have entailed the heavy expense of buying up a portion of the ground occupied by the Edinburgh and Leith Brewery, which was not considered desirable, more particularly that the street as shewn will prove sufficient for sanitary purposes, while the ground around St John's Street and the Brewery is so open, there is no cause for its being interfered with.

The east side of St Mary's Wynd will be rebuilt, and also both sides of the new street running eastwards, leaving this when completed, one of the most open and best aired places in the Old Town.

BLOCK No. 4.

This block extends from Niddry Street on the west to St Mary's Wynd on the east, and from the High Street on the north to the Cowgate on the south.

This is one of the most densely crowded and unhealthy districts of the city; it is therefore proposed that a clearance on a large scale of the narrow closes abutting on the High Street should be effected, and wide accesses opened up into the central portion of this dense mass of buildings. The present fall of the ground to the south, particularly towards the west, involves difficulties in construction which do not appear on the face of the plan. The new street, therefore, which is proposed to be opened up between St Mary's Wynd and Blackfriars' Wynd is continued up that wynd to join the High Street, in consequence of its more easy gradient, in preference to being carried westwards to join Niddry Street, which is of so steep a gradient as to prevent it ever being used as a thoroughfare.

It is proposed to open up Blackfriars' Wynd through its whole length to fifty feet in width, and as already observed, to carry a cross street forty feet wide eastwards to St Mary's Wynd through Messrs Oliver and Boyd's printing office.

The whole of the tenements in the closes from Blackfriars' Wynd, including all the east side of that Wynd, to Hyndford's Close, with the exception of the United Presbyterian Church in South Gray's Close, will be taken down, and also some of those lying between South Foulis and Fountain Closes, and again between World's End Close and the houses in St Mary's Wynd, by which a large area of open ground will be obtained for building purposes, and also sufficient space between the houses in High Street and the street to be formed, for play-ground for children, bleaching greens, and thorough ventilation.

On the west side of Blackfriars' Wynd all the old buildings between Cant's and Dickson's Closes will be removed, and also some of the ruinous tenements in Hall's Court, so

as to open up these closes and allow a current of air to pass through them ; and for the same purpose one of the tenements in Niddry Street will be removed and an opening made into Dickson's Close. Some parts of Cant's Close are only 2 feet 8 inches wide, with buildings on each side of about 60 feet high—a state of things wholly adverse to a proper sanitary condition.

The gradients in Blackfriars' Wynd will be 1 in 12, and in the street leading from it to St Mary's Wynd 1 in 21.

If requisite, a foot passage may be made from Blackfriars' Wynd leading to a point in Niddry Street, marked by a dot of yellow on the plan.

BLOCK No. 5.

This block, commencing at Blair Street on the east and extending along the High Street to the Old Fishmarket Close on the west and to the Canongate on the south, contains some of the worst closes in the Old Town, such as Covenant and part of Conn's Closes, where the buildings are five and six storeys high, with a passage of only 5 feet 3 inches between them. The great fall towards the south on this block and the want of a proper outlet to the west, renders it impossible to open it up properly by a lateral street. As, however, there is an urgent necessity for opening up these closes, particularly behind the tenements forming the High Street, it is proposed in the first place to widen Stevenlaw's Close by enlarging the archway of the front tenement and removing the house behind the same on the west side above the Free Tron Church, also the whole buildings on the west side of the close below the church to the second land from the Cowgate ; and thence to run a cross street 30 feet wide through to the Old Fishmarket Close, where it will commence with a gradient of 1 in 12, and terminate opposite the Free Tron Church with 1 in $13\frac{1}{2}$. To the south of the line of this street all the houses lying between it and the Cowgate (which are of a very inferior description) will be taken down, which will

leave a large open space between the houses in Cowgate and this street; and another space of a similar description, averaging about 50 feet in width, will be formed on the north side by removing the houses in the closes which abut against the High Street; farther openings will be made where found practicable between this 50 feet space and the north side of the proposed street, leaving only some public and other buildings standing which are in good repair and cannot be removed; by which clearance sufficient space will be obtained to afford thorough ventilation for the present buildings, and these to be erected in forming this street.

As, however, the levels of the new street cannot be made to suit the lower part of Stevenlaw's Close, a broad flight of steps will be formed at the intersection of the new street and this close immediately below the Free Tron Church, to preserve the access to the lower part of the close, and also to the back ground of the houses in Blair Street which open into it.

BLOCK No. 6

Comprises the Cowgate between the Horse Wynd and Blair Street southwards to North College Street, and contains some of the most ruinous tenements in the Old Town, particularly those between the Horse Wynd and the College Wynd, which are so bad in themselves as to call for immediate removal. It is therefore proposed that the whole of the old buildings on this block between the Horse and College Wynds and from thence east to Hastie's Close, with the exception of the Free Church in the Cowgate and tenement on the east of it, should be taken down and the ground cleared.

This would afford an excellent opportunity of widening the Cowgate at this point, and also carrying out a very great improvement in the amenity of the College and Industrial Museum, by widening North College Street to 70 feet its entire length, so as to open up to view the College and Industrial Museum.

It is believed and anticipated that the College authorities would gladly give their aid in carrying out this scheme, and take up all the ground which could be obtained on the north side of College Street, after it was widened. The great expense attendant on purchasing up the old properties by the town, would thus be considerably lessened, and a great public benefit achieved.

A range of new houses would be built on the south side of the Cowgate, and the street widened at that point to 35 feet; the Horse Wynd would also be widened to correspond, and diverted to the east, and carried round into College Street, with a gradient of 1 in 13.

The site set apart for the proposed College Buildings is shewn on the plan, and, as will be seen, one portion (the Hall) is carried into, and would have a frontage towards, Adam Square.

It has been thought by some that if North College Street is to be widened at all, it ought to be made to run on a line with the houses on the north side of Adam Square; but the great fall on the ground from College Street to the Cowgate, which renders the access between the two both steep and difficult, at the present time, would render it impracticable if College Street were made to that width; there are also considerable difficulties to contend with in the levels at the west end, where it meets George IV. Bridge, which can only be overcome by restricting the width to 70 feet, as shewn. In addition to these difficulties in regard to the levels, it is to be kept in mind that were such a comprehensive scheme of increased width carried out, it would involve the purchasing of the large brewery of Mr Campbell, the expense of which alone would render such a scheme highly objectionable. The idea which has been thrown out, of purchasing up the old buildings on the sites above referred to, exclusive of the brewery, and leaving the whole area an open space, is equally so; for not to speak of the great expense of buying up and leaving unproductive such a large and valuable area in the very heart of the city, there would be the further objection, that the unsightly barns and brew-

houses, and the old houses of the Cowgate, would form the bounding line of this area, and give the whole a dilapidated, waste, and ruinous aspect.

BLOCK No. 7

Includes the space on the south side of the Cowgate, from the High School Wynd eastwards a little beyond St Mary's Wynd, and southwards to the Royal Infirmary.

The area of this block, although smaller in extent, is, from its proximity to the Infirmary, of equal, if not of greater, importance than any of the preceding in regard to its sanitary condition; and, from the doubts that exist in the minds of many of our medical men, as to the suitability of this district for an Infirmary, calls for very special attention and consideration.

The present position of the Royal Infirmary, surrounded and shut up by buildings on all sides to such extent as not only to deprive it of a proper circulation of fresh air, but at the same time to impregnate the surrounding atmosphere with smoke, dust, and impurities of all sorts, is by no means such as could be desired for so important an Institution.

These grave objections might be wholly overcome by removing the buildings on that portion of the Cowgate between the High School Wynd and the Heriot Schools; as also those to the east, which stand along the west side of the Pleasance, between the Cowgate and Drummond Street. In this way a large increase of open area would be added to the present area of the Infirmary grounds, which would then be entirely open and free from buildings on the north and east, leaving the streets of the Cowgate and the Pleasance as the boundaries in these directions.

After some consideration, as we understand, the Managers of the Royal Infirmary have resolved not to enter upon any undertaking of this nature in conjunction with the plan of public improvement. We, therefore, only propose to remove the whole of the old and half ruinous tenements forming the east side of the High School Wynd, and to take down

and rebuild the old tenement on the north-west corner of the Wynd, thus forming a continuation of Blackfriars' Wynd (after it has been widened) southwards, through the High School Wynd to Infirmary Street.

In the Cowgate, again, it is proposed to remove the old and ruinous house on the east side of Bull's Close, with the house immediately behind it in High School Yard, where the present stairs lead down to the Cowgate, thus leaving an open space between the Cowgate and the High School Yard, and form a broad and easy flight of steps to connect the two. Also, to take down and rebuild the corner tenement between the Pleasance and South Back of the Canongate, with some of the houses along the Pleasance and South Back of Canongate, so as to widen and improve the entrances to these streets, in connection with the alterations proposed to be made in widening St Mary's Wynd.

BLOCK No. 8

Comprises both sides of the Grassmarket, with the closes entering therefrom, and the entrance to the Candlemaker Row through the Cowgate Head.

The closes on the north side of the Grassmarket, more particularly Dewar's, Currie's, Beattie's, and Plainstones, present a very dense and over-crowded locality, and although those to the westward are less crowded, the buildings therein are of such an inferior description, and affect the sanitary condition to such an extent, as to call loudly for the whole being pulled down and removed.

It is therefore proposed, to take down the old tenements forming the east side of Dewar's Close, with the whole of those lying between Currie's and Jamieson's Closes, including the tenement forming the west side of Jamieson's, from the back of the houses in the Grassmarket north to the Castle Wynd; and also those in the closes west of Girdwood's on to the line of the old "town wall," including the five front tenements on the north-west corner of the Grassmarket.

A large open space would thus be obtained behind the

whole line of houses on the north side of the Grassmarket for light and ventilation. The five front tenements would then be rebuilt, keeping their front sufficiently back as to allow of the access from the King's Stables to the Grassmarket being widened and improved.

At the south-east corner of the Grassmarket the old ruinous houses forming the south side of the Cowgate should also be acquired and rebuilt so as to leave a broad and open thoroughfare; the tenements behind these from Warden's Close eastward should at the same time be entirely removed; as also a number of the old buildings in Aird's, East and West Smith's, Cowie's, and Gilmour's Closes, leaving spacious openings behind for thorough ventilation. We are informed that the whole inhabitants of one of these closes died of cholera at its last visitation; but this dingy alley seems to be as crowded as ever.

BLOCK No. 9

Comprises the area of ground lying between King's Stables on the north to the West Port on the south, from the Grassmarket west to Chalmers's Territorial Church.

The alterations proposed to be made on this block consist, in the first place, of removing four of the old and semi-ruinous houses at the north-east corner of the entrance to the West Port, and other four a little beyond which block up and narrow the thoroughfare at these points, where accidents are continually occurring.

New tenements would then be rebuilt on these sites; while several old tenements, including Crombie's Land, on the south side of the street adjoining Chalmers's Territorial Free Church, would be taken down for the purpose of improving and widening the street, and also to clear out the spaces behind the houses to obtain air and light.

As the Vennel is dangerously steep and inconvenient, we would propose to render it more commodious by several flights of steps—an improvement often suggested.

BLOCK No. 10.

This block lies between Spittal Street and Lauriston Place along Lady Lawson's Wynd, and is intersected by the West Port.

Between the West Port and Spittal Street the ground is taken up with a number of old and worthless houses, and passengers going from the New Town by Castle Terrace to Lauriston must go by the circuitous round of Main Point, and as the traffic between these portions of the Old and New Town is every day increasing, it is considered desirable to have a better thoroughfare, both in regard to the amenity of the place and also to improve its sanitary condition; for these purposes it is proposed to form a new line of street from Lauriston Place to Spittal Street, by continuing Lady Lawson's Wynd in a direct line to enter Spittal Street on the east side of the Free Church.

But as the gradients of Lady Lawson's Wynd, where it enters the West Port, are rather steep and the Wynd narrow, it will be necessary to widen it through its whole length to 40 feet by taking a portion of the Cattle Market and removing a few of the houses on both sides next the West Port.

Also to take down three of the houses in West Port facing the street, and clear out all the old buildings behind between them and Spittal Street, by which sufficient space would be obtained for building a line of houses on each side of the new street, and leave good open areas for drying clothes, air and light.

The foregoing operations in Blocks 9 and 10 would greatly improve the West Port and adjoining districts, and, along with the proposed improvements on the Grassmarket, would certainly raise the whole character of this interesting old part of the City.

BLOCK No. 11

Embraces the alterations proposed to be made in the closes entering from the Canongate, on both sides from St John's

Street to the Water Gate, also the rebuilding of some of the front tenements which now project into the street and are old and ruinous.

White Horse Close.—The two old front tenements, which are in a very bad condition, will be taken down and rebuilt on a line with the houses on the east side.

Ramsay's Close.—The old tenement next the street will be taken down and rebuilt, and the archway widened, and all the buildings on the west side of this close, west to the boundary wall of Whiteford House, will be taken down and removed, so as to leave a clear open thoroughfare to the North Back of Canongate, and a line of new houses then built on the west side, with an open court in front, in place of the confined and narrow close.

In Brown's, Malloch's, and Campbell's Closes there are a great many old and ruinous houses closely packed together, and detrimental to the sanitary condition of these closes, which it is proposed to pull down and erect new houses on the ground thus obtained, with ample space around to admit light and air, and, at the same time, open up wide thoroughfares with the North Back of Canongate.

Brown's Court.—The building now standing between Cadell's House and the tenement next the street will be taken down, and also the two small houses on the east side of the court, to admit a free circulation of air.

Millar's Close.—The buildings on the east side between this and Tolbooth Wynd will be taken down and removed.

On the south side of the Canongate all the houses between Reid's and Strathie's Close and part of those between Reid's Close and Haddington's Entry will be taken down, and a new line of houses erected on the west side of the space of ground thus obtained, leaving an open court in front.

Stewart's Close.—The tenements on the west side of this close will be taken down and removed, so as to leave a clear open court.

BLOCK No. 12

Comprises Nicolson and Alison Squares, with a portion

of the ground lying between the Potterrow and Bristo Street, including Middleton's Entry.

The narrow passage, called Middleton's Entry, leading from Bristo Street to the Potterrow is bounded on the north by a range of old and dilapidated buildings, of two storeys in height, and on the south by a row of three storey houses very little better than the other; and as it has become absolutely necessary that the former of these should be pulled down, it is also desirable that this access should be improved and widened, to render it available for carriages as well as foot passengers, and promote a more effectual circulation of air in this locality.

It is therefore proposed to pull down all the houses both on the north and south sides of Middleton's Entry, with the houses fronting the Potterrow and Bristo Street, and thus open up a broad thoroughfare between these two streets, and to continue this through Alison Square to Nicolson Street, by removing the centre compartment of the tenement which divides Alison and Nicolson Squares, throwing both into one, and removing the railings and levelling the centre of Nicolson Square to the line of the street. A line of new houses would then be built on each side of the new street between Bristo Street and Potterrow, thus affording a direct and easy access from Nicolson Street through Charles Street to George Square and that neighbourhood, and greatly improving the sanitary condition of the district.

Other methods of forming a broad thoroughfare from Charles Street to Nicolson Street might be fallen upon, but after long consideration we conclude that the one we have described is the best. It is doubtless matter of regret that the central compartment of the large building in Alison Square should be removed, but on the other hand, the introduction of a spacious thoroughfare lined with respectable tenements will vastly improve the district, not only in a sanitary point of view, but as regards the increased value of property. As the enclosed quadrangle in Nicolson Square has latterly been of little practical value,

its obliteration in order to substitute a wide paved street, will surely be deemed not the least of our suggested improvements on the City.

BLOCK No. 13

Is the area of ground lying between Nicolson Street and the Pleasance, from West Richmond Street on the north to East Crosscauseway on the south, including Davie and Simon Squares.

From Simon Square south to the East Crosscauseway, there are crowded together a great many of the most inferior houses in the town, many of them only one storey high, having their access through narrow and tortuous passages, the receptacle for all sorts of filth, and proving a complete hindrance to the free circulation of air and cleanliness.

In order to remedy and overcome this evil, it is proposed to take down and remove the buildings dividing Davie and Simon Squares, and also the whole of the old and ruinous buildings between the latter and East Crosscauseway, making a broad open thoroughfare between that and West Richmond Street; also to widen and raise the height of the archway leading from Nicolson Street to Simon Square, to improve the access between these two, and connect the same with Carnegie Street in a more direct line, by taking down a number of old houses on the north side of Gilmour Street where it enters Simon Square, and one at the south east corner where it joins St Leonard's Street opposite Carnegie Street.

Beside the great sanitary benefit to be gained by these operations, a direct access would be provided from Nicolson Street, and all on the west side of that, towards the Queen's Park through Carnegie Street, as will be provided for in next block.

BLOCK No. 14

Provides for an entrance to the Queen's Park through Carnegie Street and Heriot Mount.

At present no access can be obtained from any part of this District to the Park or Queen's Drive without making a long and circuitous journey, thus in a manner preventing the inhabitants from the enjoyment of a great boon, although lying at their very doors.

In order to obviate this, it is proposed to form a cutting through the rock at St Leonard's Hill, of sufficient width to allow of a roadway being made in continuation of Heriot Mount into the Park.

A considerable portion of the rock has already been removed for road metal, and as the stone could be made available both for that and building purposes, it is presumed that a ready sale would be obtained as quickly as it could be taken out, by which the expense would be lessened to a great extent; while the healthful and beneficial influence of a free access to the Park on the adjoining community would more than compensate for any additional outlay required in forming this roadway.

We cannot doubt that, on a proper representation, Her Majesty's Board of Works would cheerfully acquiesce in this improvement, so important to the comfort of the inhabitants in the south side of the town, being fully carried out.

With a view to aid the non-professional reader in forming a correct idea of the levels or gradients of the new streets, we submit a comparative view of these levels, along with the levels of some of the principal thoroughfares of the city.

Gradients of proposed New Streets.

The new street in Block No. 1, where it leaves Market Street

to join the Fish Market, has a gradient of . . . 1 in 26

The greater portion of the street being . . . 1 in 34

The new street in Block No. 2, where it leaves Leith Wynd,

has a gradient for a short distance of . . . 1 in $14\frac{1}{2}$

The principal part of the street being . . . 1 in 360

In Blocks No. 3 and 4, the new cross streets have, for the	
eastern half,	1 in 120
And for the western half,	1 in 21
The levels of St Mary's Wynd and Blackfriars' Wynd will be	
slightly improved, in consequence of the increased width,	
—these present gradients are, for St Mary's Wynd,	1 in 21
And for Blackfriars' Wynd,	1 in 12
In Block No. 5, the new street, from the top of Stevenlaw's	
Close to foot of Old Fish Market Close, will be, at the	
upper portion in Stevenlaw's Close,	1 in 12
The remainder being	1 in 13½

Gradients of some of the existing Thoroughfares.

Horse Wynd between the Cowgate and North College Street	1 in 7
Portions of Niddry Street,	1 in 9
,, North Charlotte Street,	1 in 10
,, Lord Cockburn Street, steepest part,	1 in 12
Other portions of the same,	1 in 15
,, Hanover Street, between Queen Street and Aber-	
cromby Place,	1 in 11½
,, The Earthen Mound,	1 in 12½
,, Broughton Street,	1 in 13
,, Dundas Street,	1 in 14
,, South St David Street,	1 in 15½
,, Waverley Bridge, steepest portion,	1 in 16
,, North Bridge,	1 in 17¼

We have not deemed it necessary to specify what will be required in the way of supply of water, drainage, &c., for these matters will doubtless be taken cognisance of by the framers of the bill for carrying out the proposed improvements. Care, we hope, will also be taken by the Magistrates and Council to provide building elevations for the houses of the new streets, so as to preserve the architectural character of these districts, and at the same time to limit the height of the new houses to be erected by builders and speculators on the sites which will be provided by the re-

moval of the old tenements. These elevations should be of a plain but marked character, in harmony with those fine specimens of national architecture of the early part of the 17th century, still to be found in great purity in so many of those neglected and overcrowded closes now referred to. Good sites will also be found for churches, schools, reading rooms, and large business premises.

Probable estimates have been prepared by Mr Paterson, City Assessor, of the cost of acquiring the property in the several districts; and we have prepared probable estimates of the return, or sums that may fairly be expected to be acquired from the feuing or sale of the ground on the lines of the new streets of these districts.

Mr. Paterson, in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Provost's Committee, has also ascertained the number of families that would be displaced by the removal of the old tenements in those districts. And, in order to ascertain how far this destruction of house accommodation would be met by the new plan, we have prepared sketch plans of houses such as appear to be suitable for the several districts, and the results are as follows :—

Table furnished by Mr Paterson :—

*Number of Families to be displaced, and Probable Cost of
acquiring the Property.*

BLOCK.	LOCALITY.	No. of Families.	Value under compulsory Purchase.
1.	From Halkerston's Wynd to Leith Wynd,	420	£33,000
2.	From Leith Wynd to Big Jack's Close,	516	44,745
3.	East side of St Mary's Wynd to Miln's Close,	381	28,480
4.	Niddry Street to St Mary's Wynd,	459	41,250
5.	Stevenlaw's Close to Old Fishmarket Close,	255	19,200
6.	Adam Square to Brown Square,	327	54,000
7.	Cowgate, High School Wynd, and High School Yards,	70	4,740
8.	Grassmarket (both sides),	182	17,500
Carry forward,		2,610	£242,915

Brought forward,		2,610	£242,915
9. Detached portions of West Port and King's			
Stables,	.	89	8,120
10. Lady Lawson's Wynd, West Port, &c.,	.	75	8,800
11. Canongate (both sides),	.	213	14,400
12. Nicolson Square to Bristo,	.	143	23,280
13. Pleasance to Nicolson Street,	.	127	9,480
		—	—
		3,257	£306,995

Prepared by RO. PATERSON.

LANDS VALUATION OFFICE,
EDINBURGH, 17th August 1866.

The probable cost of the whole property embraced in the several improvements in the plan is thus seen to be £306,995, while, as we believe from careful calculation, the return that may be reasonably expected from the building areas amounts to £111,071, thus leaving a balance to be provided for by assessment of £195,923. Parliamentary and incidental expenses are of course not included in this estimate. The total number of families that would be displaced over the whole plan is stated to be 3,257, while the new plan provides accommodation for from 2,500 to 3,000 families, according to the height of the houses to be erected, allowing ample accommodation for each family.

It has already been remarked that these improvements should be carried out gradually; the work of reformation being carried on block by block in a thorough manner, until the whole scheme is completed.

Such is our plan for improving the sanitary condition of the Old Town. We could very easily have suggested more sweeping alterations, but two things we have constantly kept in view—economy in expenditure, and the preservation, as far as possible, of the peculiarly picturesque character of this ancient City. Without in the least destroying the general aspect of the Old Town, our projected improvements will bring it into harmony with the sanitary

requirements of the age, and check that tendency to deterioration—we might say *degradation and ruin*—which has long been so painfully manifest.

DAVID COUSIN.
JOHN LESSELS.