

Lecture on the sanitary condition of large towns, and of Belgravia : delivered before the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, and the members of the Pimlico Literary and Scientific Institution, on March 16, 1857 : with notes and topographical memoranda / by C.J.B. Aldis.

Contributors

Aldis, C. J. B. 1808-1872.
Royal College of Surgeons of England

Publication/Creation

London : Rice's Library, 1857.

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LECTURE

ON THE

SANITARY CONDITION OF LARGE TOWNS,
AND OF BELGRAVIA;

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

RT. HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY,

And the Members of the Pimlico Literary and Scientific Institution,

ON MARCH 16, 1857;

WITH

NOTES AND TOPOGRAPHICAL MEMORANDA;

BY

C. J. B. ALDIS, M.D., M.A. CANTAB, F.R.C.P.,

ONE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH FOR ST. GEORGE'S, HANOVER
SQUARE, AND FORMERLY LECTURER ON MEDICINE, ETC.

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1857.

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TO THE
VESTRY OF ST. GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE.

This Lecture

ON THE SANITARY QUESTION, WHICH COMMENCED IN
HUMANITY AND WILL TERMINATE IN THE PUBLIC GOOD,
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

Chester Terrace,

Chester Square.

July 1857

LECTURE

ON THE

SANITARY CONDITION OF LARGE TOWNS,
AND OF BELGRAVIA.

My Lord, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

Prior to commencing the Lecture for this evening, permit me to explain the reason why I appear before you on the present occasion. The Committee of this excellent Institution, which is the means of distributing much valuable information, have frequently urged me to deliver a Lecture on the Unhealthy Condition of Large Towns; and having done me the honor to select me for that purpose, I yielded to their request, although at the time quite unprepared with the usual appliances for illustrating such a subject, having, in former years, been in the habit of delivering Lectures to medical students only. I hope, therefore, that you will excuse any popular deficiencies on my part, taking the will for the deed, as the Lecture has been undertaken on the score of duty, with a view of diffusing some information among the rate-payers, on that most important branch of medical science, viz., the prevention of disease in large Towns, more especially among the Labouring Classes, with allusion to the sanitary condition of Belgravia, in which we are now assembled together.

If the principal design of human life were merely the acquisition of the few things requisite to support life, the

wild Indian, who wanders at large in his native plains and woods, would be equally happy with the most refined of mankind. The roots of the earth and the fruit of trees would satisfy his hunger, and the pure stream would quench his thirst. But the end of man's existence has a far higher aim; endowed with a mind, he is impelled to cultivate it, which has produced a social state that urges him constantly to exert himself for supplying fictitious wants. Hence, in order to meet the demand of his social improvement, it is necessary to attend carefully to his sanitary condition.

Public Health embraces within its scope all trades that produce annoying or unhealthy emanations; it observes how they act injuriously, and points out the way to diminish or destroy their inconvenience; it furnishes the legislature with the elements of regulations for a sanitary police, without which, large cities and populous districts would become uninhabitable.

After these remarks, it will be scarcely requisite for me to impress upon you the immense importance of the subject, when you reflect that it shows the variation of health in different towns and districts, the annual mortality in some being uncommonly small, while that in others is fearfully large; it also points out the causes of these variations, and shows how they may be partially removed, which is obviously very important; to prevent unnecessary deaths, to mitigate vice, misery and wretchedness, to prevent enormous expenditure produced by disease, in the shape of medical attendance upon Fever, or Cholera, arising out of a state of things extremely painful to contemplate, are points equally essential. Besides

the expense incurred for attendance upon disease, there is another evil resulting from shattered constitutions likely to affect future generations. Then the expense occurring from widowhood and orphanage are to be taken into the account; so that when I tell you that the last invasion of Cholera cost this parish £1500 in six months, being at the rate of £3000 a year, we must not forget the debility, the widowhood, and orphanage, results all likely to add to the expense already incurred for mere professional attendance and comforts for the sick; to these we may add unnecessary funerals and diminished value of property. The widow's cry still assails us while attending the poor, she still pleads her husband's sudden death from Cholera, leaving her with several children to provide for. It became a duty then to proclaim these things abroad, line upon line, and precept upon precept, until a revolution was produced in sanitary law, in order to improve the physical, social, and moral conduct of the labouring classes. Hence we may hail with pleasure the recent sanitary Acts of different governments, which will lead the people to know cleanliness from dirt, and proper conduct from brutish self-abandonment; which will teach them to appreciate the comforts of home, instead of wandering to the public house; and should the children be sent to school, the good effects are not so likely to be neutralized by wretched habitations, which generally produce the greatest amount of disease combined with crime.

It is a curious circumstance, that, although sanitary law is blended with the highest interests of nations, and although so many have suffered the inevitable consequences of its neglect—a life of misery from prolonged

suffering, with the frequent recurrence of fatal epidemics—some are absolutely careless about it, and that we ourselves have delayed carrying out those sanitary reforms which the people so much needed, until the middle of the 19th century; and it is still more remarkable, after the strong evidence already adduced, that many should deny the most obvious nuisance to be such, but “eyes have they and see not, ears have they and hear not.”

We read that a primitive people of antiquity did not exhibit such indifference,—the Jews associated the question of health with religion. The Levitical Law contains a great many hygienic precepts; in fact the 13th chap. of Leviticus, which is the most ancient medical treatise in the world, refers to the symptoms of infectious disorders and sanitary precautions for the public health, without any allusion to medical treatment. There is a minute regulation of the animal food of the Israelites, with a table of birds declared unclean; it appears also from the book of Exodus, that the bad qualities of water were corrected by the use of certain plants; every city had a public cemetery for those who possessed no private sepulchres; like other orientals they had a very proper objection to cemeteries in towns, and therefore there was a strict regulation that they should not be less than 2000 cubits distant from a Levitical city; the sepulchres of all kinds were whitewashed every year, in the month of February, for fear of defilement; they also made use of the house-top to enjoy the air,—this plan is adopted at the present time, in some instances, for the same purpose or for drying clothes.

Many other instances might be adduced to show that the Hebrews endeavoured to preserve themselves from contagious maladies, that houses were purified, ablutions frequent, and impure garments were burnt.

In Greece, a heathen goddess, Sanitas or Health, was very commonly worshipped; she had likewise a temple at Rome, in the sixth ward of the city; and Domitian also built a little temple for her, with this inscription, "Saluti Augusti," to the health of Augustus. Statues were also erected to Hygeia, derived from a Greek word, signifying health, or soundness of body. The common seal of the Medical and Chirurgical Society, taken from a rare medal of Caracalla, represents the goddess Salus raising a sick person, with an appropriate motto in Latin which may be interpreted, "life does not consist in living, but in being well."

Skill and wisdom, no doubt, are required to found and build a city, but they are equally required to preserve it in a proper condition, when constructed and enlarged. Like the human body, it may commence with small and fragile rudiments to expand, after due care has been bestowed upon it, into a large mass.

The origin of the largest cities has been so vile as to be esteemed contemptible. Rome itself, "the goddess of the earth and nations, to which nothing was equal, nothing second," and originating from the smallest beginnings, became the admiration of the whole world. The Romans highly estimated their venerable monuments, and the residence of their king, the founder; hence they expressed themselves with sincerity when "they swore by the cabin of Romulus, and by the lowly roofs of

the ancient capitol." They excelled in public ways—their aqueducts; canals by which water was conveyed to the city from very distant sources; and sewers carrying the filth to the Tiber; they permitted no person to be buried within the city; and they appointed ædiles, whose especial care was to look after its sanitary condition.

Having now made a few observations upon public health among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, it will be proper to advert to modern legislation upon the subject. Recent legislation has produced real and efficient action. No doubt that the older system of law is in conformity with the Nuisances Removal Act, the former having been kept in abeyance, but now practical remedies are easily applied for public wrongs; and it is surprising how much good has been effected in a short space of time.

Many who could even afford to go to law disliked incurring the expense; others, who could not afford it, were afraid of becoming liable to abuse and odium if they complained.

For many years past persons have spoken privately to me of dreadful nuisances, which they dared not avow openly; but now every parish and town in Wales and England have the means of protecting the inhabitants from exposure to physical causes, operating injuriously upon the public health, the neglect of which occasioned the black death in the 14th, the sweating sickness in the 16th, and the plague in the 17th centuries; carrying off hundreds of thousands in their respective periods.

It is well known, says the Registrar-General, that the decaying matters of marshes give rise to agues, dysenteries, and fevers; and it is satisfactorily proved by the facts collected under the Registration Act, that the ex-

cessive mortality from diseases of the zymotic and other classes, observed in towns, is occasioned by animal or vegetable poisons with which the atmosphere is charged, in different degrees of concentration, depending on accumulated filth, crowding in dwellings and workshops, the closeness of courts, imperfect supplies of water, and the want of efficient sewers.¹ We add to these, the neglect of children, doses of opium, slaughter-houses, filthy cow-yards, and pestilential churchyards. However persons may differ in opinion as to the causes of diseases, still the great fact remains that the deaths were nearly twice as numerous in ill-constructed towns, where the poison is concentrated, as in the country, where it is diluted and destroyed by the fresh air.

When I was an undergraduate at Cambridge, cases of ague were frequently admitted into Addenbrook's Hospital, from the county; but one of the physicians recently told me, that now scarcely any patients suffering from the same disease presented themselves there, attributable, no doubt, to an improved system of drainage.

On the great importance of sanitary measures to the navy the Registrar-General says, down to the end of the last century the loss of life in our shipping was immense. The first fleet of the East India Company, out of 528, lost 100 men before, and 5 after landing, in the voyage of seven months to the Cape of Good Hope. Anson, in

¹ Three drops of fresh hydrosulphate of ammonia put into a glass with a live mouse, and covered over, will destroy its life in two or three minutes, and the same result will happen if hydrosulphurous acid be used. Both these powerful agents are emitted from sewers in a gaseous form.

three ships, lost 626 men out of 961 in ten months after leaving England. The men had scurvy, dysenteries, putrid fevers; their limbs dropped off, they swooned, and died. In the year 1780, the channel fleet sent 11,732 sick to Haslar Hospital; 1,457 had scurvy, 240 dysentery, 5,539 fever. Sir James Saumarez said, "neither the ships nor men could keep the sea more than two months."

Captain Cook left Deptford in 1772 with 112 men, sailed round the world, and returned in three years with the loss only of four men by accidents, and one by disease. Cook, in a paper read before the Royal Society, described the means which he employed to secure the health of his crew; the care which was taken in the selection of a vessel, in drying and ventilating, in providing good provisions, antiscorbutics, and an abundant supply of fresh water; after which the health of the navy was raised to a satisfactory standard.

It has long been known that where a number of persons have been collected together in a narrow space, as in populous towns, the mortality among them considerably exceeds that occurring among an equal amount of population, scattered over an extended surface, as in country districts. But it was not until the Registration Act for England and Wales, passed in 1837, that precise knowledge was obtained by an appeal to facts on a large scale, and of undoubted authority, by means of which the causes were also ascertained. Hence, data, for determining the law of mortality, and calculations for materially affecting the interests of millions, were derived. Many tables of use in Life Insurance, and an English Life table, were constructed, taking into consideration the

rules of Friendly Societies, established for the use of the poorer classes, and previously founded on a very uncertain basis.

It should be impressed upon you, that neither hard labour, low wages, stinted food, nor even poverty, occasion such a result, for in Wiltshire, the poorest county in England, the mortality is only one in forty-nine. It is notorious that mechanics in large towns are better fed than labourers in rural districts.

A good many facts have already been enumerated, but I am sure that you will bear with me, if a few more are introduced to your notice. Englishmen like facts—they like to arrive at a result, and there is one upon which they are very sensitive, viz.:—a financial view of the matter. Now sanitary improvement is far cheaper than disease; hence it becomes a great question of national economy. But it is fortunate that so many not only look upon it in this light, but as one of solemn obligation, being anxious to mitigate suffering and to prolong human life. Health and life are not to be compared with gold and silver, for they cannot be purchased.

It was estimated a few years ago, that the deaths occurring yearly in a million of inhabitants of large towns, exceed the deaths occurring in the same number of inhabitants of rural districts, by nearly 8,000. Now, it has been proposed to estimate the population of our large towns at 4,000,000, which is certainly very much below the mark; but even this estimate will give an annual excess of deaths in our large towns of upwards of 30,000.

It has also been urged that this number of 30,000 deaths, large as it may appear, is, really, less than the annual waste occurring in England and Wales; for sup-

pose only one in fifty died, instead of one in forty-five, there would be an annual saving of no less than 35,000 lives; and in the United Kingdom, on the supposition that the mortality in Scotland and Ireland is only equal to that of England and Wales (but it is much greater), there would be an annual saving of upwards of 60,000 lives.

It has also been generally believed that the lives annually sacrificed by neglecting sanitary measures, amounted to the appalling number of 35,000 in England and Wales, and 60,000 in the United Kingdom.

Dr. Lyon Playfair believed that for every unnecessary death, there are twenty-eight cases of unnecessary sickness, producing annually in England and Wales one million of cases, and in the United Kingdom one million and three-quarters of cases of unnecessary sickness, upon which Dr. Guy observes: We should think it a very dreadful thing, if a town consisting of 35,000, or 60,000 inhabitants, was destroyed every year, in excess of those who would die naturally, if sanitary measures were universally adopted.

Then again, to form a vivid idea of the amount of unnecessary sickness in the United Kingdom, it has been said, you must imagine that in a city of the size of this metropolis, every man, woman, and child, which it contains, is the subject of one attack of sickness every year, over and above the sickness which would occur in the course of nature under a wise system of preventive measures. Let us then after considering the sacrifice of health which annually took place under a system of neglect, reckon the cost of disease traced to the filthy state of our towns.

Dr. Lyon Playfair has estimated the loss and cost of all the preventable sickness and death occurring annually at Manchester, at very nearly 1,000,000 of money; and Mr. Hawksley states the loss for Nottingham at 300,000.

The first official movement in sanitary reform originated with the Poor Law Commissioners in 1838, which was followed up by Supplementary Reports, by Dr. Neil Arnott and Dr. Southwood Smith. In 1842, Mr. Chadwick published an excellent report on the sanitary condition of the laborious population, succeeded by another voluminous report from the Health of Towns Commissioners, in 1844, to which I had the honour of contributing, all resulting in the Public Health Act of 1848. Then the General Board of Health was constituted, whose distinct function is to inquire into the sanitary condition of populous towns, and to originate and advise local boards as to the best means of promoting the public health in their respective districts.

Then Her Most Gracious Majesty urged upon Parliament, in three speeches from the throne, the necessity of considering the sanitary state of her people. I need scarcely remind you of the activity evinced by Parliament on the question, or of the way in which our present noble Chairman exerted himself, both in and out of the House, in the cause, having obtained his knowledge from actual observation of the worst localities in London. His Lordship might be seen traversing at night, when it was very dangerous to do so, some of the worst lanes and streets in Westminster, although under the shadow of a venerable Abbey, and we may add, also, the Houses of Parliament. He there joined our Sanitary Association, attended its meetings, and by his presence stimulated many such

societies, until a better state of things was realized. Most of you, no doubt, are aware of the disgraceful picture of wretchedness and sanitary neglect which a few years ago appeared in Westminster. What could be worse than the Almonry, and some other places that could be named?

From the preceding statement we find, that crowded districts diminish the chance of life; and it is lessened also in those towns, and parts of the same town, which are defective in drainage, cleansing, and ventilation.

We must not fail to mention, the fearful mortality among the young. How many children have prematurely died from being employed in manufactories? A sickly offspring was produced—one in seventy did not attain to the fifth year of its miserable existence, and above one half of those who attained to that age perished before they arrived at maturity.

It has been calculated that the mean duration of life in the rural districts of England is 45 years; and that the average duration in town is 32 years; that in special towns, such as London, it is 37 years; but in different parts, viz., St. George, Hanover Square, it is 45 years; while in St. George in the East, it is only 27 years; Edinburgh 36 years; in the well-drained districts, 47 years; in the badly-drained, 25 years; York 30 years; good districts, 39 years; bad, 22 years; Nottingham, 30 years; Liverpool, 26 years; upper, 32 years; lower, 17 years. Consider then the awful contrast between the mean age at death in Edinburgh and Liverpool; the inhabitants of the former place having had the prospect of living twice as long as those of the latter.

Since these calculations were made, no doubt great

improvements have been effected in Liverpool, for I allude to its condition before the passing of the Health of Towns Bill.

Having ascertained the mean duration of life in town and country, the next question will refer to the relative number of deaths at stated periods of life in the different localities.

It has been estimated that in every 10,000 children of all England, under five years of age, the deaths amounted to 131, or 1 in 76. In every 10,000 adults of all England, above sixty years of age, the deaths amounted to 71, or 1 in 140. Now, the average deaths in 10,000 at stated periods

	Under 5 years.	Above 60 years.
were, in town, .	1 in 85	1 in 416
in country .	1 in 435	1 in 263
Special towns—		
London .	1 in 84	1 in 166
Liverpool	1 in 77	1 in 333

so that in Liverpool it has been calculated that not above 1 in 300 lived beyond the age of 60, whereas, in London the proportion was 1 in 166.

I would also submit to your notice, tables, evidently showing that consumption, zymotic, and infantile diseases were more numerous in towns, occasioning a mortality one-third greater than that of the country.

BELGRAVIA.

It will be now time to allude to the sanitary condition of the Sub-district in which we are at the present moment, viz., the Belgrave Sub-district, situated in the Parish of

St. George, Hanover Square, commonly called Pimlico, or the out-wards of the Parish, the Knightsbridge-ward and the out-ward being in the Belgrave Sub-district. In a Report to the Vestry, recently printed and circulated by their order, I have brought before their notice, as soon as possible, information upon the mortality, topography, and geological features, elevation, sewerage, baths and wash-houses, St. George's workhouse, Little Chelsea, model lodging-houses, sanitary observations, sources of disease and their removal, water supply with a tabular statement of the quality of the water.

As many of you are residents in this locality, no doubt you may feel interested in some remarks upon its sanitary condition; and allow me to observe that, individually, you may do much in the good cause, for if there should be any nuisance in your own premises, have it at once remedied, or should your neighbours be troubled with any, urge its removal. No doubt many of you may have it in your own power to carry out such necessary reform. And be not offended if I have found some fault with Belgravia—let me remind you, that there are spots in the sun, and that I could not remedy existing evils without candidly bringing the facts first before the Vestry, who have placed me in a very honourable and responsible position as an Officer of Health. I must first probe the sore before healing it, otherwise it would burst out again with four-fold malignancy, and I should deservedly lose that confidence which it has hitherto been my privilege to enjoy. But remember, that I have found fault with a view to help you to a better state of things.

After the cholera had appeared three times in Bel-

gravia, it was found absolutely necessary to investigate its sanitary condition, and committees were accordingly formed by the Incumbents of St. Michael's, and St. Paul's, and St. Barnabas' Districts, on which I acted in connexion with several medical practitioners; and although much good was effected, nevertheless, without a thorough sanitary organization it appeared to be utterly impossible to eradicate the noxious agencies which existed in some parts of the district. Much information had been circulated by the Registrar-General relative to the mortality of the whole district, still none could be obtained on that subject from Somerset House in reference to the Sub-districts, excepting in the case of epidemic disease. Since, however, the appointment of Medical Officers of Health, a great deal of additional intelligence concerning the locality of disease has been acquired.

But some of you may say that the mortality of St. George's, Hanover Square, is only 18 per 1000 annually, and is, therefore, the healthiest district in London, and as healthy as Hampstead; and this may be true for the whole area of the district, but, nevertheless, it is very fallacious as regards certain parts of it. If Belgravia alone produced 341 fatal cases of cholera at the last invasion of that malady, surely you will agree with me, that some spots must have been very favourable to its production, in fact, they must have been perfect hot-beds for the disease. Then again, it has been very prolific in nearly every kind of epidemic complaint, as proved in my general Report, rendering it perfectly evident, that a great amount of sanitary work must be carried into effect; and from what has already been done, a manifest improvement can be de-

tected in the locality. Nuisances, however, still abound, in, or near some parts, viz. — piggeries, overflowing cess-pools, dirt, filthy cow-yards, untrapped gullies, dirty-water receptacles, night-soil shot over a large space of waste ground at the southern extremity, sale of unwholesome meat, and other articles for food,¹ the Grosvenor Canal,² the King's Scholars' Pond sewer, which is uncovered near Lupus Street, places without sewers, or drains, or accommodation of any kind; in a word, everything calculated, in some places, to degrade man, the noblest work of God, to the condition of an animal: although Belgravia, generally, is splendid, nevertheless, magnificence and rags, cleanliness and filth, are in close proximity.

In my general Report, printed by order of the Vestry, there is an analysis of the water supplied to the district. It is curious to read of the supply of water to the metropolis,³—first by running brooks and springs, previous to A.D. 1236, such as the river well, and Oldbourne, &c., also, Holy-well, and Clerk's-well, near Clerkenwell; but subsequently to 1236, London was supplied by conduits. The Tybourne rivulet ran through Tothill Fields to

¹ I once asked a milkman if he put water into the milk; he frankly replied, yes, for it could do no harm. But when I told him that dairymen were reported to do the same, he said, that was too bad, for it would be a robbery!

² The water of this canal often emits an offensive smell with gaseous bubbles, and at this time, July, presents a red appearance in many parts from shoals of the *Daphnia pulex*, becoming intolerably foetid on the second day.

³ Mr. Thomas Wicksteed's Observations—*Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal*, vol. iii. p. 10.

Scholars' Pond, and thence into the Thames; the King's Scholars' Pond sewer forms a boundary to this parish, and is still open near Lupus Street, where at the outlet it emits an intolerable stench. The water from Tybourne was conveyed to Charing Cross, and from thence to the several conduits in the city. Jack Cade says, in the Second Part of Shakespeare's King Henry VI., "Now is Mortimer lord of this city, and here sitting upon London-stone, I charge and command that, of the city's cost, the conduit run nothing but claret wine the first year of our reign." I am not aware whether these conduits ever ran with wine, but there is a curious pump represented in Matthews's *Hydraulia*, as belonging to Leathersellers' Hall, Bishopsgate, supposed to be constructed in the time of Queen Elizabeth, or James 1st. The mermaid figure at the top was used on festal days as a fountain for discharging wine or other liquors from the breasts. I am enabled, through the kindness of Mr. Alfred Thompson, Engineer, to exhibit a portion of a lead water pipe dug up in Old Broad Street, City, in 1854. I can also show you a delineation of it at page 73 of the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*. It was used for conveying water to some conduit, and probably came from the "Tunne," in Cornhill. It is three inches in bore, has the sectional form and make of the Roman "Fistula," and is strongly soldered. Henry III. permitted Edward Fitz-Odo to have a PIPE from his *aqueduct*, of the size of a *goose-quill*.¹ Various facts indicate the anxiety of the Common Council, as well as private persons, to benefit

¹ Brayley's and Britton's *History of Westminster*, p. 51.

their fellow-citizens. Here is a representation of Lambe's conduit, as re-built in the year 1667, Sir Thomas Davis, knight, Lord Mayor. The name is derived from Mr. William Lambe, who is stated to have been a gentleman belonging to the Chapel Royal of Henry VIII. He was buried in St. Faith's Church, and the following is the conclusion of his punning epitaph.¹

“ O Lambe of God
Which since didst take away
And (as a Lambe)
Was offered up for sinne;
Where I (poor Lambe)
Went from thy flocke astray.
Yet thou (good Lord)
Vouchsafe thy Lambe to winne
Home to thy fold,
And hold thy Lambe therein!
That at the day, when
Lambes and Goats shall sever,
Of thy choice Lambe's
Lambe may be one for ever.”

Permit me now to call your attention to Lodging Houses for the Poor, and I should much like to see proper ones established in Belgravia. Unfortunately, there are many persons in London who scarcely ever sleep in bed. Then where do they sleep? In all manner of places; under arches and viaducts, under porticoes, sheds, carts, in out-houses, saw-pits, or staircases; two boys have passed the night in an iron roller, in the Regent's Park. What a sink of pollution the common lodging houses have been in some parts of town! when the poor are obliged to inhabit such places, how difficult it must have been to deal with them in any way.

¹ Matthews's *Hydraulia*.

The Earl of Shaftesbury has quoted the following description of one of these places in his celebrated speech on juvenile destitution.

“The parlour measures 18 feet by 10. Beds are arranged on each side of it, composed of straw, rags, and shavings. Here are twenty-seven male and female adults, and thirty-one children with several dogs; in all fifty-eight human beings in a contracted den, from which light and air are systematically excluded. It is impossible to convey a just idea of their state. The quantities of vermin are amazing. ‘I have visited a room,’ the Missionary says, ‘and in a few minutes I have felt them dropping on my hat from the ceiling, like peas.’ ‘They may be gathered by handfuls’ say the inmates. ‘I could fill a pail full in a few minutes. I have been so tormented with the itch, that on two occasions I filled my pockets with stones and waited till a policeman came up and then broke a lamp that I might be sent to prison, and there be cleansed.’ ‘Ah!’ said another standing by, ‘you can get a comfortable snooze and scrub there!’” I am glad to say that the above description is far beyond the evils experienced in Belgravia, still I found it requisite to interfere, and succeeded a fortnight ago, through the Common Lodging House Act, in clearing out a room, which had almost become pestilential, from over crowding, eight persons of different sexes, and not of the same family, slept in one small front parlour; the persons living up stairs, were already in bad health; the feelings of the more respectable inhabitants were outraged by the bad example to their children residing in the same court, and by the vile language employed, and felt highly delighted when they had been compelled to leave the room, and take a house elsewhere.

Much has already been done in order to improve the physical condition of the people in respect to improved lodging houses, which are likely to increase their self-respect and prevent their resorting to the gin palace so constantly. This effort to improve the habitations of the poor was their just due ; being obliged to live near their work, they cannot choose their places of abode ; the sturdy mountaineer from Wales is often compelled to seek a wretched lodging in the narrowest court, where he is soon prostrated by fever ; so that it is a matter of congratulation that the upper and educated classes, armed with legislative powers, have taken this matter in hand, and have erected various establishments of the kind, and which I hope to see adopted in Belgravia, for I feel convinced that sanitary improvement is the foundation upon which to build the moral, the physical, and intellectual condition of the people.

[The Lecture was illustrated by numerous diagrams, some of which were kindly supplied by Mr. R. D. Grainger.]

The Earl of Shaftesbury, after having proposed a vote of thanks to Dr. Aldis for his instructive and valuable Lecture, said, it would be impossible to over-rate the value of proper dwellings for the poor, by which so much good would be brought about in their physical, moral, and he might say, religious condition. The inhabitants of Belgravia could little imagine the state of these places in the eastern metropolitan districts. The picture they had heard of them was not over-coloured. Since he had given his attention to the subject two Acts of Parliament had been

passed, one of which was called the "Common Lodging House Act." Previously to these legislative enactments, these places were favorable to every form of crime and disease. The rate of mortality from fever was fearful. Habits of intoxication might be traced to the depressing influence of such places, their bad air and filthy condition, and those who suffered from these evils were tempted to resort to an artificial stimulant. After the passing of the "Common Lodging House Act," these dwellings had been placed under the superintendence of the police, who had acted with great zeal. They had the power to remove nuisances, and fevers were almost unknown. His lordship mentioned a house in the Minories, commonly known as "Jack Sheppard's House," which formerly few policemen could be induced to enter. The last time his lordship had gone there, he found 70 persons among whom the greatest order, decency, and comfort prevailed. When the vast number of labouring men were taken into account who must live near to their work, such a measure ought to be carried out on a large scale. But when he referred to the better part of man, his moral and religious condition, it would be impossible to estimate too highly improved dwellings for the poor. To touch upon families huddled together in one room—mother, father, and grown up boys and girls, would be almost to overstep the bounds of decency. He was glad this great question had been brought before the people of Belgravia. Confine your efforts at first to your own immediate vicinity, and then look abroad and assist your neighbours. Make a Local Association for the good of the people, and he felt convinced, under God's blessing, they must succeed.

NOTES AND TOPOGRAPHICAL MEMORANDA RELATING TO THE OUT-WARDS OF ST. GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE.

The earliest mention of Pimlico in St. Martin's Books, is in 1626, according to Cunningham. Regarding the origin of the name, it is evident from the quotation by Isaac Reed, that there was a vendor of a famous ale, one "Ben Pimlico," who resided at Hoxton, and a thoroughfare there is still called Pimlico Walk. Ben Jonson in his *Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair*, alludes to it; the former play, however, contains an allusion, which seems like a reference to a by-gone place.

"Gallants, men and women,
And of all sorts, tag-rag, been seen to flock here;
In threaves, these ten weeks, *as to a second Hogsdon,*
In days of Pimlico and Eyebright."

Pimlico. — The derivation of this word is explained from the following passage in a rare (if not unique) tract, entitled, *Newes from Hogsdon*, 1598.—"Have at thee, then, my merrie boyes, and hey for Old Ben Pimlico's nutbrowne." Pimlico kept a place of entertainment in or near Hoxton, and was celebrated for his nutbrown ale. The place seems afterwards to have been called by his name, and is constantly mentioned by our early dramatists. In 1669 a tract was printed, entitled, *Pimlyco, or Runne Red Cap, 'tis a Mad World at Hogsdon*. Isaac Reed (Dodsley's *Old Plays*, ed. Collier, vii. 51) says:—"A place near Chelsea is still called Pimlico, and was resorted to within these few years on the same account as the former at Hogsdon." — *Notes and Queries*.

The out-wards of St. George's parish consist of Pimlico and partly of the Hamlet of Knightsbridge. From a very early period portions of them have belonged to the Abbey of

Westminster, and when the boundaries of the parish of St. Margaret were defined in 1222, both were declared to belong to such parish. Afterwards, when the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields was formed, these distant parts of the parish were assigned to it, and continued attached thereto, till the formation of St. George's parish in 1725. The Manor of Knightsbridge still belongs to the Dean and Chapter; while that portion on which Pimlico now stands has undergone many changes.

Two Manors were gradually formed by the Abbey out of this land, "Neate," or "Neyte," and "Eye," afterwards "Ebury." The former comprised lands on the banks of the Thames, and near to the present Vauxhall Road, while the latter included the lands where now stands Ebury Square and the adjoining streets. The Manor House of Neate is said to have been a stately erection, and the celebrated Abbot Lillington died there; some of our Princes too, in the time of the "Roses," occasionally lodged there at the assemblage of the Parliament. After the Reformation, Edward VI. gave the Manor to Sir Anthony Brown, and a great portion of it afterwards came into the Davis family, Lords of the Manor of Ebury, the last of which family was a female, who marrying Sir Richard Grosvenor, ancestor of the present Marquis of Westminster, the Manors of Neate, Ebury, and the adjoining lands came into his hands. The tomb of the Davis's may still be seen near the south entrance to the tower of St. Margaret's Church.

These lands, just noticed, were very frequently inundated by the Thames, and by the stream which flowed on their bounds, westward, now degenerated into the common sewer. They were, therefore, almost uninhabited; the few persons who did dwell therein, being gardeners, and they residing near to the river's bank, for the better conveyance, it may be presumed, of their commodities into the city for sale. For, until the reign of Elizabeth, the citizens ventured no further than Tothill-fields in this direction; but about this time, the sports they came to witness were moved further westward, and then no more so than the neighbourhood of the present Arabella Row, where still is the "Bacchanal's Inn," which, traditionally, is said to date its foundation from those sportive times. Part of these lands were "Lammas Lands," *i. e.* lands given up to the poor for their cattle to graze on for a certain period of the year, and Queen

Elizabeth's Ministry issued injunctions against the Londoners disturbing her game at Ebury. In Charles the Second's time a road from the palace at Whitehall across these fields to Chelsea was formed and named after him, and this opened the field, as it were, to the knowledge of the Londoners: a village then began to be formed, but very slowly, for even in 1687, only four persons are rated to the relief of the poor of St. Martin's in this district.

The King's Road having been formed, others for the convenience of the gardeners were cut out, and thus the fields were divided into five large portions, hence the name they retained till our own time. They became much resorted to by pleasure seekers; the Mulberry Garden, on the site of the present Buckingham Palace, had existed since 1609, and now gradually similar places were started elsewhere. Pepys, in 1667, mentions going to one at the Neate Houses, and his wife out of humour all the day because he took an actress with him, he garrulously tells us. And the number increased, so that in the last century "to drink tea at Pimlico" became proverbial.

Nor were these the only motives for resort here. Duellists by day, and robbers by night, alike sought these fields. Aubrey relates a duel here between Lord Moline and a foreign nobleman; while in both the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, Addison and Steele have left undying evidence of the infamous crimes here committed, a character they unfortunately bore until the commencement of the present century. The old herbalists too sought their simples here, and one of them has told us that in these fields the wild clary grows "plentifully."

When George III. took up his residence at Buckingham House, he was exceedingly anxious to purchase the most northern of the fields. A common lane had existed previously, from the Park Corner to the King's Road, but the Lock Hospital having been built in 1746-7, a broad road had been formed, and the King saw that his presence at Buckingham House would cause the line of buildings to be continued. He therefore entered into a negotiation for the purchase of the field, and the engagement went so far as to an agreement of the price, when the Ministry of the day disapproving the expenditure of public money for such an object, the King's wishes were not realised, and Grosvenor Place, to his annoyance, as he had predicted, was speedily in course of erection. For many years it reached

no further than Chapel Street, and it was not until after 1789 that the intermediate space between this spot, and the low houses at the bottom, was covered. Near the south end was a small hospital for the foot-guards, and a narrow court, called Osna-burgh Row, after the Duke of York. The "Feathers" public house is said also to have been occasionally patronised by George IV. in his youthful days; while somewhere behind the houses in 1784, Mr. Harris, lessee of the Haymarket Theatre, erected a theatre here, but it did not answer his anticipations, and its career was a short one. Gradually, and at various times, Grosvenor Place was completed, but many years elapsed ere any building operations of importance were carried on; but in 1825, Belgravia, as the space between the King's Road and Wilton Crescent is now called, was commenced. The ground was laid out by Mr. Cubitt, and the chief buildings designed by Basevi.

Beyond "Belgravia" the main thoroughfare is Belgrave Place, which was rendered fit for carriage traffic in 1768. This road was soon very considerably used, and Pimlico might have risen into the importance it now claims, at a much earlier period than it did, but for the opposition of the Government to the gentry inhabiting the district using the park in their way to the city or to Parliament. The only way to the former was round by Piccadilly, and to the latter through York Street, Westminster. Horace Walpole tells a story of a baronet, one of the very few gentry who till of late years resided here, who was desirous of coming and going to Parliament by way of the Mall, requesting this privilege of the Ministry of Lord North. The Minister was polite, declined the request, but offered an Irish Peerage as an equivalent for the refusal!! It will be remembered that Birdcage Walk existed then only as a foot-path.

This mention of the gentry in Belgravia, may be appropriately followed by a notice of a few of the most prominent residences. Tart Hall was the chief mansion anciently in the locality, excepting Buckingham House. It was built by the celebrated Earl of Arundel, early in the reign of Charles I., and was afterwards the residence of the unfortunate Viscount Stafford, whose execution during the fearful excitement of the "Popish Plot" forms so vivid a scene in the brilliant pages of Macaulay. The mansion stood until the reign of George I.,

when it went piecemeal; the gateway, not pulled down until 1737, is said never to have been opened after its unfortunate owner passed through it to the Tower. It occupied the site of the present Stafford Place, which was named after him.

Hobart House, which occupied the site of Mr. Salter's stables, by St. Peter's Church, was built about fifty years ago for Lady Hobart, afterwards Countess of Buckinghamshire. Her ladyship was a leader of fashion in her day, and a great patron of masquerades, ridottoes, &c., and the mansion was built on a plan the most suitable for a perfect enjoyment of these amusements. Her ball-room is said to have been of immense size, and the frequency and magnitude of her assemblies brought on her the sarcasm and wit of the playhouses, who fancied themselves injured by her doings. Lord Hobart was an Officer of Volunteers, and their presence was often had to afford my Lady the pleasure of a field-day, and she, in return, would be among the foremost to present them colours at Ranelagh. Her property all fell into the hands of Chancery, and the mansion was bought and pulled down by Mr. Salter.

When, in 1645, the Metropolis was surrounded by fortifications to keep out the Royal Army, a bastion was erected on Constitution Hill, and another or two between that and the Thames. One of these small forts stood near to where, afterwards, were some dwellings known as the "Five Chimneys." These dwellings covered, it is affirmed, a "Plague pit," and in the adjoining fields were said to be others. Human bones have been frequently discovered in the "Five Fields," though they were doubtless the remnants of some of the slain in the great Civil War. Such have been discovered in Grosvenor Place, and near the "Monster," in St. George's Row.

The soil of the southern parts of Pimlico is a "made" one. It was raised to its present level by the excavations of St. Katherine's docks being brought here. Underneath the native earth, the stratification consisted first of gravel, next of loose kind of sand, then a kind of blue clayey earth. Underneath this, a layer of sediment, consisting chiefly of cockle and oyster shell, which beautifully retain their appearance, and finally sand and gravel. When St. Barnabas was built, some excellent fossil specimens were brought up.

The climate is soft and sheltered. Formerly, in winter,

wild fowl have sought it in numbers, and the snipe has been, occasionally, brought down by the fowling piece. Within ten years, starlings have been known to seek warmth here, and to stay far into the spring time.

Chelsea Bun House was situated in Grosvenor Row, and established early in the last century. It is alluded to by Swift in his "Journal to Stella." It was a very curious building, and its interior, full of incongruous ornaments and curiosities, presented a very grotesque appearance. For years it was in possession of a family named Hands, whom George III. and Queen Charlotte were partial to, and frequently visited. Ultimately it became an impediment to the thoroughfare, from its projecting over the pathway, and for the widening thereof, was pulled down in 1839. Opposite to it stood—

Stromboli House, which was formerly a place of resort for tea parties.

The Orange Tavern and Tea Gardens stood on the site of St. Barnabas' Church. Here was a private Theatre, at which the local genii of the sock and buskin played to their admiring neighbours. Near it, but over the wooden, or as it is now called, Ebury Bridge, stood

Jenny's Whim, the favourite of all places of entertainment in Pimlico. It is mentioned with satisfaction by Walpole and Angelo. Besides the tea-alcoves, here they boasted of a fountain, and a pond of gold fish, highly thought of a century ago. A pool for duck hunting, a most brutal sport, and a pit for cock fighting, ranked high among the attractions.

The "Dwarf Tavern" occupied the site of the factory in Elizabeth Street, South, and the adjoining court called "Spring Gardens." Its name was derived from a celebrity of unusually small stature, named "Coad," being exhibited there; and here, likewise, were to be seen the celebrated "Cherokee Chiefs" alluded to by Goldsmith in his *Citizen of the World*.

The "Star and Garter"—a Tavern and Pleasure Garden of similar nature to the "Dwarf." The "Cherokees" were here also; and horsemanship was to be seen. These two places were at their greatest height about 1758.

When "Ranelagh" closed, "New Ranelagh," as the proprietor termed it, was opened near the Distillery at Thames Bank. It was its prototype in name alone, while its prices

were almost equally high. It lasted but a short time, failing altogether to obtain public support.

The "Bacchanals," and a place of resort at the "Neate Houses," probably complete the list of Places of Amusement in Pimlico.

Other objects of interest in Pimlico may now be noticed.

Charlotte Street, so called after the Queen of that name. St. Peter's Chapel, had for its first minister and founder, the celebrated Dr. Dodd, executed for forgery in 1777; Weeden Butler, his amanuensis and friend, succeeded him. In our own day Dr. Dillon, almost equally the subject of notoriety, was minister here.

Lower Belgrave Place.—Here, at the corner of Eccleston Street, Chantrey lived and died; Allan Cunningham was his secretary and foreman; and here his son Peter was born; Chantrey died in the drawing-room.

Upper Eaton Street.—Thomas Campbell resided here after his marriage; Mrs. Abington, the actress, also in 1807.

King's Row.—Here stood an old-fashioned turnpike till 1827; the Magdalen also, an old inn, the sign of which was removed in 1827 or 28 to a house opposite, now called "the George the Fourth."

Warwick Street occupies the site of Willow Walk, an old pathway with deep cuttings on each side; at the east end stood a lonely detached house, for many years tenanted by the notorious Jerry Abershaw. He was executed in 1797 on Kennington Common.

Victoria Square.—Here was the last London residence of the poet Campbell.

Chester Square.—Dr. Mantell, the eminent geologist, resided here, as also the widow of the poet Shelley.

Chester Place.—Sheil, the Irish orator, lived here.

Ebury Square.—The "Flask," a low tavern, is said to have been such a century ago; the resort of toppers now, it was then of those who came out "duck-hunting," a sport much followed in the ponds about.

Grosvenor Row, of which Royal Hospital Row, in the parish of Chelsea, is a continuation, is perhaps the most curious Street in the locality; the numerous public houses here attest in a peculiar way to the military character of the inhabitants; the

signs are, however, no certain monument of a hero's fame, for they have been frequently changed; Wolfe displaced Marlborough, and he in turn was ousted by Elliott, who made way to the Duke of York. Elliott and York still flourish, and the "Snow Shoes" is a recollection of Wolfe's and other early campaigns in Canada. The "Nell Gwynne" is in honour of the celebrated actress and courtesan, to whom the foundation of the Hospital has been often attributed, although it is now known Sir Stephen Fox has best claims on the pensioner's gratitude; the sign-board formerly had Nell's portrait painted and the legend inscribed underneath, but it has now disappeared, and her very residence in Chelsea has been denied by her latest biographer.

Just within the Green Park, as you enter from Knightsbridge, is a stone marking a well, and inscribed "*Man Hole*;" there was a similar one in Hyde Park, where the roadway leads to the iron gate, a little to the west of the lodge at Hyde Park Corner; it was inscribed "*Woman Hole*;" it is now removed, but a flat stone still marks (or did till lately) the spot. What could be the meaning of such strange expressions cannot be ascertained.

King's Scholars' Pond Sewer commences in the Finchley Road, at about 1500 feet above Junction Road Toll Gate, and discharges into the river Thames at the Equitable Gas Works, about 700 feet above Vauxhall Bridge.

King's Scholars' Pond Sewer (Pall Mall Branch) commences at Waterloo Place, and joins the main line opposite the entrance of Buckingham Palace.

Ranelagh Sewer.—The branch sewers from Edgware Road, Finchley Road, and Kilburn Vale, unite at Kilburn Bridge, and form the main line, which, running in a southerly direction, discharges into the river Thames on the south-east side of Chelsea Royal Hospital.

These Notes have been derived from Cunningham, Hone, various Biographies, &c., and I feel greatly obliged by the assistance of Mr. H. G. Davis, who applied to me respecting my General Report on the Belgrave sub-district, having taken much interest in the locality during bodily affliction.

The following is a list of streets in which the first 173 fatal cases of Cholera happened in Belgravia, and it exhibits the order of their occurrence, with a view of giving an idea of the Cholera Field in that locality during its last invasion. The two first deaths happened on July 25th, 1854.

Stromboli Cottages, (Grosvenor Row.)	Elizabeth Street.
Brewer Street.	Lupus Street.
Robert's Buildings.	Union Place.
Upper Ebury Street.	Warrad's Court.
St. George's Terrace.	Graham Street.
Lower Belgrave Place.	Wilton Road.
Ranelagh Grove.	Whittaker Street.
Grosvenor Canal.	King's Head Court.
Grosvenor Row.	Hindon Place.
Moreton Terrace.	Eccleston Street East.
Eccleston Place South.	Ranelagh Road.
St. George's Row.	St. George's Place.
Caroline Street.	Moreton Street West.
Queen Street.	Pulford Street.
Denbigh Street.	Brewer Street Place.
Robert Street.	New Street.
Belgrave Square.	Commercial Road.
Pulford Street.	Upper Ebury Street.
Gillingham Street.	Spring Cottage and Gardens.
Boyd's Gardens.	Ranelagh Street.
Lower Belgrave Place.	Cutmore's Buildings.
Moreton Place.	Stanley Street.
Eccleston Street South.	Tachbrook Street.
Westbourne Street.	Bloomfield Terrace.
Pulford Terrace.	Flask Lane.
Westbourne Street.	Bridge Row.
Middleton's Cottages.	Leonard Street.
Robert Street.	Hugh Street Mews.
Coleshill Street.	West Street.
Cambridge Street.	Skinner Street.
Grosvenor Cottages.	Elizabeth Street South.
Spring Gardens.	Little Ebury Street.
Allington Street.	Eaton Place.
Charlwood Street.	Ebury Square.
Newland Street.	Gregory Street.
	Belgrave Cottages.

Eaton Cottages.
 Upper Belgrave Terrace.
 Kinnerton Street.
 Belgrave Square.
 Chester Terrace, Eaton
 Square.
 Hanover Street.
 Avery Farm Row.
 Eccleston Street East.
 Spring Gardens.
 Ranelagh Place.
 St. George's Terrace.
 Eccleston Street South.
 Belgrave Street South.
 Boyd's Gardens.
 Ranelagh Road.
 Warwick Row.
 Westbourne Place.

Eaton Square.
 Ely Cottages.
 Victoria Square.
 Gray's Inn Place.
 Upper Eccleston Place.
 Ebury Street.
 York Place.
 New Grosvenor Place.
 Clifford's Row.
 Graham Street.
 Spring Gardens.
 Queen's Row.
 Barrack Yard, Knightsbridge.
 Eaton Lane North.
 St. George's Row.
 Pembroke Mews.
 Coleshill Street.
 Erin Place.

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