

The public health a public question. First report of the Metropolitan Sanitary Association on the chief evils affecting the sanitary condition of the metropolis, with suggestions for their removal; and containing the proceedings of the public meeting held at Freemason's Hall, Feb. 6th, 1850.

Contributors

Metropolitan Sanitary Association (London, England)

Publication/Creation

London : The Association, 1850.

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THE *S. W. J. Merriam & Co.*
PUBLIC HEALTH A PUBLIC QUESTION.

FIRST REPORT
OF THE
METROPOLITAN SANITARY
ASSOCIATION

ON THE
CHIEF EVILS AFFECTING THE SANITARY CONDITION
OF THE METROPOLIS,

WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR REMOVAL;

AND CONTAINING THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Held at Freemasons' Hall, Feb. 6th, 1850,

AND OF THE

DEPUTATIONS TO THE PREMIER, THE GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH,
AND THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

"He who raises the industrious population of this many-citied kingdom to the natural standard of health, will indeed be *parens ac deus salutis nostræ*; if, according to Pliny, *Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, et hæc ad æternam gloriam via.*" — REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S *Ninth Annual Report.*

Published by the Association,
10, CRAIG'S COURT, CHARING CROSS.
1850.

PUBLIC HEALTH A PUBLIC QUESTION

FIRST REPORT

METROPOLITAN SANITARY

ASSOCIATION

CHIEF HAVING ATTENDED THE SANITARY CONGRESS
OF THE METROPOLIS

WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR REMOVAL

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC MEETING



REPORT TO THE BOARD OF HEALTH
AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION

THE ASSOCIATION OF THE METROPOLIS
HAS THE HONOR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF
THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF HAVING ATTENDED THE
SANITARY CONGRESS OF THE METROPOLIS

Submitted by the Association,
IN CHARGE OF THE CHIEF HAVING ATTENDED THE
SANITARY CONGRESS

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OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

To obtain through legislative enactments remedies for the evils which result from the present imperfect sanitary condition of the Metropolis, more particularly those arising from the condition of the dwellings of the labouring population, the non-removal of refuse, the prevalence of public and private nuisances, the unrestricted toleration of noxious trades and manufactures, the defective water supply, the surcharged state of the grave-yards, and from other deleterious agencies.

Aid may be rendered to the Association:—

1. By promoting the formation of Branch Associations in the various Parishes and Districts of the Metropolis.
2. By petitioning the Legislature.
3. By spreading abroad, by Lectures and otherwise, a knowledge of the advantages which will be conferred on society through efficient Health Laws.
4. By Donations and Subscriptions.

An Annual Subscription of 1*l.* 1*s.* and upwards, or a Donation of 5*l.* 5*s.* constitutes a Member.

FIRST REPORT

OF THE

METROPOLITAN SANITARY ASSOCIATION.

THE HEALTH OF TOWNS' ASSOCIATION was considered by the great majority of its supporters to have fulfilled its mission when the Public Health Act, which is applicable to all the towns in England, received the sanction of the legislature in 1848. By the termination of 1849, it was painfully evident that the great majority of its best and most earnest supporters had been compelled to abandon the arduous and protracted struggle for sanitary reform. In the metropolis there existed no local Associations fitted by their organization to aspire to the high place in public estimation enjoyed by the Health of Towns Association, or adapted to effect, in regard to the metropolis, the same great results as were achieved, for the country at large, by the honourable labours of that body. Under these circumstances, it became the duty of those more earnest and enduring supporters of the cause, who considered it essential to persevere in the work of sanitary reform, until the metropolis should be embraced in a sound and comprehensive measure of improvement, (so unjustly denied to it in the Public Health Act,) to take upon themselves the burden of instituting a new sanitary Association.

Accordingly an application was made to the Bishop of London to place himself at the head, and to take an active part in the formation, of the proposed new association, and in the introduction of the desired measures for the improvement of the physical welfare of the people. This application was made, not only because that eminent prelate was among the earliest of the sanitary reformers, (having moved in the

House of Lords for an inquiry into the present state of large towns and populous districts, which motion led to the invaluable Reports of the Health of Towns' Commission,) but in consideration of the close and essential connexion which exists between the physical state and the moral and religious conditions of men. It was also considered that an advocacy of the social improvement of society would prove a fitting corollary to his Lordship's successful achievements in preparing the way for religious improvement. The Bishop of London entered warmly into the proposal, and the co-operation of several distinguished noblemen and gentlemen was speedily secured. The clergy in and around the metropolis, and all persons known, or presumed, to be sufficiently interested in the cause to take a part in the proposed proceedings of the Association, were solicited to become members. If any friends of sanitary and social improvement have been accidentally omitted in the general invitation to join the Association, the Association would take this opportunity of soliciting their aid and co-operation in a work which knows no distinction in its votaries, either of political or of religious opinion.

The Association having been successfully organized, a public meeting was held at Freemasons' Hall, on the 6th of February, the Bishop of London presiding. This important meeting was very numerously attended by the clergy and by the sanitary reformers of the metropolis.

The following were the resolutions which were passed :—

“First. THAT, with the exception of the City of London, containing only 125,000 inhabitants, this metropolis, with more than 2,000,000 of souls, forming a large proportion of the town population of England, is destitute of any adequate provision or effective organization whereby the comfort, health, and lives of the people can be watched over and preserved. That although the strenuous efforts made in the metropolitan districts to procure a sanitary enactment mainly contributed to the passing of the Public Health Act; yet these districts were the only parts excluded from the benefits of that enactment. This exclusion has led to much misery and a great sacrifice of life. In the opinion of this meeting, therefore, it is expedient that a comprehensive Bill be forthwith introduced into Parliament, to remedy the grievous evils which afflict and oppress the inhabitants generally, but more particularly the working classes, of this vast Metropolis.

“Second. That the Reports of the medical superintending inspectors

employed during the late visitation, have brought to light evils which fall most heavily on the labouring population, who are least able to sustain, and totally unable to remove them; evils calling for the deepest sympathy, and at the same time demanding the most prompt, energetic, and carefully-devised means of relief.

“ *Third.* That in the metropolis the late epidemic destroyed 18,423 persons, of which number it is estimated not one-half would have perished had the measures of prevention finally adopted been timely resorted to; and that more than 13,000 persons annually perish from disease, whose lives might, under the Divine blessing, be saved by efficient sanitary precautions. That this great sacrifice of human life is accompanied by an amount of physical degradation and mental depravity, which act as effective barriers to the inculcation either of social obligations or of Christian virtues.

“ *Fourth.* That the total want of efficient machinery wherewith to meet the recurrent ravages of cholera and the constant devastations of typhus, and other epidemic diseases, induced by the state of the dwellings of the poor, and of the grave-yards, by the defective water-supply and drainage, and by the overcrowding of houses, by the imperfect paving and cleansing of the streets and the non-removal of refuse, and by the prevalence of nuisances and of offensive and noxious trades and manufactures,—imperatively calls for legislative interference. This Meeting therefore, considering the vastness of the evils sought to be remedied, the importance of the remedial measures contemplated, and the influence which the improvement of the metropolis would exert throughout the British empire, resolves that a Memorial be addressed to the General Board of Health, praying for its support and co-operation; and adopts the following Petition to Parliament:—

“ ‘ *The humble Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the
Metropolitan Districts,*

“ ‘ *HUMBLY SHEWETH,*

“ ‘ That the metropolis, with more than 2,000,000 of souls, forming a large proportion of the town population of England, is destitute of any adequate provision or effective organization, whereby the comfort, health, and lives of the people can be watched over and preserved.

“ ‘ That the condition of the dwellings of hundreds of thou-

sands of families was shown, during the prevalence of the late epidemic, to be incompatible either with a healthy physical existence, or with the cultivation and exercise of morality and religion. That it has been further shown, that a large number of such dwellings could have been placed in a condition compatible with healthy existence, at a charge not exceeding 3*d.* per week per house.

“ ‘ That, according to the reports of the medical inspectors engaged during the late visitation, a large proportion of the many thousands who died of cholera, might, under the Divine blessing, have been saved, had timely measures of prevention been employed, and had the General Board of Health been armed, under the Nuisances Removal and Contagious Diseases Prevention Act, with sufficient power to enforce its wise and humane regulations ; and that the loss of life from preventible disease has been estimated to amount to more than 13,000 persons annually, and the preventible cases of sickness to more than a quarter of a million. That it is expedient that the dwellings of the poor should be placed under the protection of a general board, and that where permanent improvements can be economically effected, such general board should have power to direct the same to be executed.

“ ‘ That the precautionary measures adopted by the General Board of Health for the mitigation and prevention of the spread of cholera, and carried into execution, so far as the imperfections of the Nuisances Removal and Contagious Diseases Prevention Act would admit of, were hailed with delight and gratitude by the mass of the people ; and that they earnestly desire such measures to be efficiently and permanently carried out.

“ ‘ That under the Metropolitan Sewers Act, the subject of water-supply has been separated from the subject of sewage and drainage ; whereas, in the opinion of your petitioners, both are so intimately connected that they cannot be disjoined without injury to the public.

“ ‘ That the cleansing of the streets, the removal of refuse and of public and private nuisances, are most inefficiently provided for and imperfectly performed ; and that the surcharged state of the graveyards, and the unrestricted toleration of trades and employments

dealing in decomposing animal and vegetable matters, operate most injuriously on the public health.

“ ‘That the want of regulations for improving the condition of the present dwellings of the labouring classes, so as to adapt them for habitations where health can be preserved, and the total want of an adequate machinery whereby to carry such regulations into effect, are felt to be grievous and oppressive evils, the cause of much misery, destitution, and loss of life.

“ ‘Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that your Honourable House will take immediate steps in the passing of an efficient and comprehensive Health Act, in the amendment of the Nuisances Removal and Contagious Diseases Prevention Act, and in the adoption of such other measures as may appear expedient to your Honourable House, to meet the urgent requirements of 2,000,000 of people.

“ ‘And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.’

“ *Fifth.* That an Association, termed ‘THE METROPOLITAN SANITARY ASSOCIATION,’ having been formed for the purpose of obtaining a Sanitary Act for the Metropolis adequate to its requirements, and for the adoption of such other measures as may be deemed advisable to improve the social condition of the labouring classes, the following noblemen and gentlemen be appointed to act as officers of this Association.” The names being already prefixed, it is unnecessary to repeat them.

It is impossible in this statement to record minutely the points adverted to by the Right Honourable and Right Reverend chairman, and by the distinguished noblemen and gentlemen who addressed the meeting; yet attention is solicited to the following extracts from the addresses of the Bishop of London and the other speakers. His Lordship stated, that he had consented to take the chair without any reluctance, under a strong conviction that the object in view was an object of charity, and therefore he acceded to the proposal that he should preside, feeling that he should not be out of his place. The business of the day concerned all classes, for the safety and comfort of all were materially involved in the settlement of the question. The main object was to remove as far as possible the evils which afflict the poorer classes, render them

the ready victims of disease and untimely death, and keep them in an almost helpless state of moral and social degradation. Moral and social degradation and extreme filth and wretchedness were intimately connected, and something must be done to mitigate the intensity of the latter before they could attempt, with any hope of success, to remove the former. His Lordship further stated, he was convinced, that if they devoted exclusively all the resources of their charity to evils which afflicted the mind, whilst they neglected those affecting the body, the task of improving the condition of the poor would be very difficult, if not quite hopeless. It was admitted on all hands that if we desired to raise the poorer classes in the scale of social order, civilization, and moral dignity—to elevate them to that state which becomes reasonable beings, accountable agents, and servants of God,—we must begin by removing those causes which kept them in the very depths of poverty and misery. We must do something to remedy those evils which were caused by the present unnatural state of society, and by the crowding together of a rapidly increasing population in cities and towns. Now, amidst much that was dark and discouraging in the times, there was much to cheer and animate in this cause. The attention of the public mind was at last energetically, if not quite systematically, directed to the duty of improving the condition of the poorest classes, and of raising them from the depths of degradation, into which for many years past they had been gradually sinking lower and lower. The effect of this public feeling, if carried out to the extent that he hoped to see, would be to lessen the fearful chasm in respect of worldly comforts, which, in this land of social contrasts, of extreme wealth on the one side and extreme poverty on the other, separated the highest from the lowest classes. A sense of this great duty acting in the first instance upon a few individuals, and afterwards pressing upon a large body of associated persons, had at length reached the legislature, and the legislature, awakened to a sense of its duty, was prepared to give the force of law to this work of Christian charity. And it was to encourage and animate, if he might so speak, the legislature to a further prosecution of its duty in this respect, that that meeting had been called—to manifest to parliament the sense of the public upon these questions, and to urge the legislature to arm with still greater powers those whose office it was to carry into effect the excellent suggestions of the Sanitary Commissioners, the General

Board of Health, and many private individuals. But the meeting had special reference to the sanitary wants of the Metropolis. There was reason to lament that the provisions made for improving the sanitary state of London had, up to this time, proved by no means satisfactory; and it was in the earnest hope that the legislature might be induced to give effect to some stronger measures that that meeting had been convened. His Lordship then adverted to that part of the speech of Her Majesty in opening Parliament, in which the following words occur, "Her Majesty is persuaded that we shall best evince our gratitude (for the stay of the fearful pestilence, cholera) by vigilant precautions against the more obvious causes of sickness, and an enlightened consideration for those who are most exposed to its attacks." The paragraph contained the true principles of charity, and a devout acknowledgment of the mercy of Divine Providence in arresting the progress of that fearful pestilence, and it suggested that our gratitude would best be shown by simply using the methods, which, to a certain extent, must be effectual in preventing a recurrence of the calamity, because the use of those methods would secure, as far as human wisdom and skill could secure them, their poorer brethren from the attacks of disease and the probability of untimely death. . . . It was a fearful reflection, that in the metropolis alone more than 18,000 persons had fallen victims to that terrible malady; and if a judgment might be formed from the reports of the medical men who had visited the sick in their several districts, at least one-half that number might, by God's blessing, have been spared to their families and to society, if timely sanitary precautions had been resorted to. The single fact, then, of 9000 souls having been hurried into eternity—too many he feared without preparation, and all certainly without sufficient time for that purpose—who might have been saved if this branch of charity had been attended to, was sufficient to stimulate every energy to the work of improvement. The evils of this neglect were not, however, confined to the loss of the individual victims. A large amount of misery and suffering must necessarily have been inflicted on many private families, and upon the community, by so great an aggregate of deaths. How many widows and children had been deprived of their natural protectors, and thus become a permanent charge upon the public! The meeting must be familiar with the statements, published from time to time, of the fearful amount of filth and wretchedness which existed in this great

city, even in the immediate neighbourhood of the magnificent streets and squares, which were the chosen abodes of wealth and luxury; but the enormous evils produced by a want of sanitary precautions had not been forced, as it were, upon the public mind, previously to the visitation of the cholera. And the peculiar fearfulness of that disease had had the effect of blinding the eyes of some to the actual state of things as constantly existing—to the continual existence of typhus and epidemical diseases, and particularly diseases of that class which medical men called zymotic, which were peculiarly aggravated by circumstances which sanitary measures were calculated to remove. Where typhus, scarlet fever, and other diseases held undisputed sway, in dark, miserable and filthy courts, where there was a want of water and sewage, with over-crowded apartments, there death erected its throne and destroyed its victims. The last topic to which his Lordship adverted was the economy of the measures proposed. He observed that he had already touched upon the burden brought upon the poor-rates by disease, and the saving that might be effected by proper sanitary precautions. But there were other considerations beyond these. One was, that the tenements and houses occupied by the poor would have an increased value, which would be cheerfully paid. He would quote one instance which had not yet appeared in print, and he had the less scruple in bringing it forward because it was really important. "A survey had been made of one group of houses, (including what is called Jacob's Island,) which was most severely ravaged by cholera; 1,300 houses densely packed on about 40 acres. The surveyor suggests that each house may be supplied with—1. Constant supply of water. 2. A sink. 3. A water-closet. 4. A drain with impermeable tiles. 5. The foundation drained with permeable tiles. 6. The use of a dust-bin." And all these, which comprised the most important sanitary improvements, might be obtained for an average rate of 3*d.* per week for each house. If that statement were true, of which there could not be the least doubt, there was an end to the question of economy in making sanitary improvements; for the mere cleansing of one cesspool, if properly done, would cost double that sum. On behalf of himself, and of his brethren who were engaged in attending to the spiritual interests of the people, he advocated this improvement in the physical condition of the poor, as a necessary preliminary to their moral and social elevation; and he called on the meeting, therefore, to unite all their energies in pressing the govern-

ment, first, for enlarged powers to deal with this vast question ; and, secondly, that these powers might be entrusted to discreet and practical men. There would in any case be considerable difficulties to overcome, and therefore the necessity for these powers being wisely and discreetly exercised. But if they attained these two objects, they would do great and important services to religion, as well as to all the best interests of humanity.

THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER in moving the first resolution observed, —The present meeting was not called for the mere purpose of expressing sympathy for the poor alone, but to contribute in every possible way towards the amelioration of their condition, and to protect the health of other classes also. Where human beings were oppressed by physical wants and disease, and compelled to take up their abode in low and miserable dwellings, the decay of virtue and morality was inevitable. They were deprived too of receiving any benefit from the advanced social condition of society at large. He was to ask the meeting to affirm the simple fact, that with the exception of the city of London, with a population of 125,000 persons, that great metropolis, with more than 2,000,000 of human beings, was totally destitute of any adequate provision or effective plan whereby the comforts, health, or lives of the people could be watched over and preserved. The exertions of individuals to remedy such an evil, unless otherwise assisted, would, in his opinion, be nugatory. His Lordship in the chair had observed that with respect to a bill on sanitary improvements, great care and discretion would be necessary, inasmuch as private property and vested interests were concerned. They knew it was quite impossible to bring the owners of even one small court or alley, much less the owners or occupiers of any large district, to concur in any measure for the general good of their particular locality. It was therefore not only desirable, but absolutely necessary, that the aid of the legislature should be sought. Why that large metropolis was not included in the late act he could not say ; but after the experience of the year through which they had gone, and the knowledge since acquired, he thought many of the difficulties in the way of such a measure would be removed. It was now impossible not to feel that all the objections made to sanitary arrangements must give way before the overwhelming proof of the existence of a necessity which demanded remedial measures for the preservation of the public health. That the exclusion of the metropolis from the general

bill of last year led to great loss of life was now known by the testimony of competent authorities, and the conclusion to be drawn from the whole case was, that a legislative enactment on the subject was imperatively necessary.

LORD ASHLEY, in seconding the resolution proposed by the Bishop of Chichester, stated his satisfaction at hearing the Bishop of London giving the sanction of his high character and sacred office to the truth, that the meeting was promoting the moral as well as the temporal improvement of many thousands of poor within the metropolis. Those who had long laboured in the cause had had great difficulties to contend with in establishing that truth ; he would not say in “establishing” it, for it had always been clear and undeniable, but in bringing a conviction of it to bear upon the hearts and understandings of others. They had had to contend with ignorance, indifference, selfishness, and interest ; and he really believed that nothing but the fearful prevalence of the late epidemic had brought many persons to a more humane course of thought and action. The condition of the metropolis, in a sanitary point of view, was not only perilous to those who resided in it, but it was an absolute disgrace to the century in which they lived. It was a disgrace to their high sounding professions of civilization and morality. They were surrounded by every noxious influence ; they were exposed to every deadly pestilence. It was a wonder the plague had not decimated the people repeatedly during the last century. That it had not, was owing to the mercy of Almighty God having stepped in and saved them from the just consequences of their neglect, folly and iniquity. The water they drank, the air they breathed, the surface they walked upon, and the ground below the surface—all were tainted and rife with the seeds of disease and death. If any doubted this description he referred them to the many noxious processes daily in operation in the midst of this dense population. He called their attention to the mortality that had prevailed in the parish of Lambeth, and to the loud and angry complaints, day by day reiterated at the Board of Health, which had no power to interfere, of the noxious processes of flesh-boiling and bone-crushing, which contaminated the air, making it impossible to live within the reach of their influence with comfort or safety. Let them go to the other end of the town, and there they would see the existence of another great nuisance—the market of Smithfield. Let them look at the various processes invariably carried

on in the neighbourhood of a market of that description. They shocked not only every sense, but every feeling. . . . The market was a nuisance and a plague spot that must not be allowed to exist in the midst of a dense population. Some apologists would no doubt be found for the continuance of the nuisance ; for there were apologists to be found for every evil that afflicted mankind, and every abuse, no matter how prejudicial. But modern science had shown the miserable arguments and facts, on which they supported a continuance of the evil, to be utterly fallacious Let them look again, at another abomination—an abomination discountenanced by all the civilization of modern days, as it was discountenanced by that of ancient days—the practice of intramural interments. Could anything be worse than the graveyards of the metropolis ? Under a surface of ground not amounting to 250 acres, there had been interred, within thirty years, in the metropolis, far more than 1,500,000 human beings. What must be the condition of the atmosphere affected by the exhalations from that surface ? He left the meeting to draw their own conclusions from the state of the atmosphere during the late epidemic. Let them look, in the next place, at the condition of the poor, crammed into courts and alleys and miserable domiciles. Is it possible for any creature to breathe pure air in such localities—nay, is it possible for any being living there to avoid drinking in every day that which, if it did not end in death, certainly led to premature decay ? Let them look, next, at the state of the sewerage. In many parts it was in such a condition as to be the seed-plot of disease and death. In some districts there was neither sewerage nor drainage. Many hundreds of houses in the neighbourhood of Bethnal-green had actually been built upon the naked soil, without even so much as cutting the green sward. Then, to crown all, that which should be the source of health, refreshment, and salubrity, the river Thames itself, was polluted by everything foul and pestilential. . . . In what state, then, was London as to an adequate supply of water ? It was not necessary to demonstrate the value of water for every purpose ; but it was no exaggeration to say, that in many parts of the town the people, if they would, could not be clean. In many instances it was absolutely beyond their reach, and during the prevalence of the epidemic the greatest amount of suffering had been endured in consequence of the want of water for the ordinary purposes of life. And

when they obtained it, it was often of a most noxious quality, arising from the intermittent and infrequent supply. It was not necessary to enter at any length upon that subject, because many present well knew the distress to which the working classes were subjected, in many parts of the metropolis, for want of a due supply. It was no exaggeration to say, that it was impossible the people could keep themselves clean ; and that the late epidemic had been greatest in its ravages in those places where the supply of water was deficient, intermittent, and often of the most noxious quality. When it was supplied three or four times a week in these narrow courts, it gave rise to scenes which none possessed the power to describe so graphically as his friend Charles Dickens—who had done more to advance the interests of the working classes than any other writer of the age. If they went into one of these courts on the day that the water was supplied, they would find around the stand pipe a crowd of all ages and both sexes, waiting with every kind of vessel, from a tub down to a gallipot—while one woman would be set on the top of a wall, like a rook on a tree, to give notice when the water was likely to be shut off. There was then a rush to the pipe of all who were unserved, and woe to the unlucky competitor, he had to go without until the next time the water was allowed to flow again. The water which was thus collected in the vessel was then kept in the same room where sleeping, eating, and, in fact, all ordinary domestic operations went on, exposed to and imbibing the noxious gases and the foul atmosphere, and thus became impregnated with deleterious matter, which all medical men united in describing as in the highest degree injurious to health. Dr. Gavin related an instance of the deadly effects of polluted water in Windmill-square, Shoreditch. The water supplied to twenty-two inhabitants was drawn from a well contaminated by cesspool matter. The consequence was that eleven out of the twenty-two persons died of cholera. Another case :—“Silkmill-row, Hackney, had sixty-five inhabitants. Their supply of water was derived from a well situate two feet from a cesspool. Two of the inhabitants alone had a well of their own. All the other sixty-three inhabitants were or had been ill with choleraic diarrhoea. The inhabitants were compelled to use the well water for cooking, but they sought their drinking water in the kennel.” Such was the condition of the supply ; though for decency, cleanliness, and health, it was of importance that the people should be provided with as much water as

they required, at the smallest possible rate of cost. He would state a most remarkable proof in corroboration of the fact, stated by the Right Rev. Chairman, of the gratitude with which the people received advantages of this nature. It was communicated to him a few days ago, by Mr. Lindley, an eminent English engineer, who was employed upon the rebuilding of the city of Hamburg, after it had been destroyed by the late fire. That gentleman carried out in that great work the sanitary principles laid down in this city; he provided Hamburg with a due supply of water to every house and in every room. However poor the party might be, he had a perpetual supply to any extent he pleased, and at any moment. There was no stint, no limit. He might have 2000 gallons or 10,000, and all he had to pay was just 1s. 2d. for the twelve months. Were the people indifferent to this great boon? No. Two days before Mr. Lindley left Hamburg, not a fortnight ago, he went to the hospital, and the physicians there told him he had worked a complete reform in Hamburg, because, since there had been this abundant supply there had not been a single case of itch; and, so far as they knew, there had been scarcely any cutaneous disease in that city. It would be admitted, he thought, to be a disgrace that this prodigious capital, the centre of civilization, art, industry, and wealth, should be thus thrown into the background, as regarded the greatest means of sanitary improvement, by the small and comparatively insignificant city of Hamburg. Such being the state of the case, what were the financial and social consequences of allowing it to exist? At least one-third of the pauperism of the country arose from the defective sanitary condition of large multitudes of the people; and he had no hesitation in saying, upon the authority of experienced persons, that if the population of their great towns were placed under proper sanitary regulations, in less than ten years the poor rates would be reduced 2,000,000*l.* annually. What had been the effect produced upon the parish of Lambeth by the ravages of the cholera, a large proportion of which might have been prevented by suitable sanitary measures? He had the official return of the number of persons becoming chargeable to the parish, in consequence of deaths from cholera, between the 16th of June and the 16th of October, 1849. There were—orphans 310, widows 74, total 384 persons. . . . If the cholera had sent 1000 orphans and widows to the poor house in a few weeks, typhus was permanently sending hundreds and thousands there to become chargeable upon the rates payable by those parties, who, if

they had been wise and humane in time, might have obviated all fatal consequences, and been the means of preserving the existence of many worthy and honourable citizens. Take an instance of a working man who comes up to town in the prime of health, able to earn his 30*s.* a week: he lodges, of necessity, near his work, in some ill-drained, pestilential locality: sickness comes, and oftentimes death: his wife and children are pauperized, and thus become permanently chargeable. Of all the agencies which predisposed the human body to disease, none were so fatal as over-crowding in small dwellings. There had been remarkable instances where localities, although ill-drained, badly ventilated, and exposed to noxious influences, had continued without a visitation from cholera, whilst a building where the inmates were well fed, well clothed, and had every appliance to keep them in health, with the single drawback of over-crowding, presented a mortality greater in proportion than the awful mortality among the pauper children at Tooting. The deaths from cholera and diarrhoea in London amounted to 18,423. Of these 72 per cent. occurred among the poorer classes, 16 per cent. among the middle, and 3 per cent. among the upper classes; but he reminded the middle and the upper classes that the expenses inflicted upon the community in the metropolis, during the late epidemic, amounted to no less than 1,060,096*l.*, including the cost of funerals, medical attendance, and the loss of reproductive labour. It might be asked, was this instructing the people? He did not say it was; but what they were proposing to do was an indispensable preliminary to their moral and spiritual welfare. He appealed to the clergy, and to all engaged in the ministrations of religion, of what use were their schools and their preaching, if the scholar and the hearer were to go back, after hearing their teaching, to their abodes of filth, misery, and vice? How was it possible for men in such circumstances to practise any part of the duties which had been inculcated upon their consideration? The efforts, therefore, of the meeting were to be directed to a removal of the obstructions that stood in the way of the minister of religion, of the scripture reader, of the city missionary. He called upon all who were interested in the welfare of the people, to make the improvement of their sanitary condition their great and leading object. This was something more than an act of charity, it was an act of justice; and the working people had a right to call upon the legislature to assist in this great

work ; a work which they could not undertake alone, but which was essential to the development of their moral and physical energies. With perseverance and energy it would be crowned with success. When this had been done, the soil would have been prepared, and then, by Divine grace, the word of God would have free course and be glorified.

LORD ROBERT GROSVENOR, in proposing the second resolution, expressed an earnest hope that the Association would meet with public support. He stated, all they had to do was to keep the evils of which the public complained under the eyes of parliament and the country until the whole had been remedied, and adverted to the fact that the rich man could not be safe while the poor suffered. He should be prepared at all times to do all in his power for the promotion of sanitary measures, he should be ready to devote his physical and intellectual powers in furtherance of an object so dear to every friend of humanity. Lord Ashley had alluded to the reports of the medical inspectors, employed during the cholera epidemic, with great effect, and he should therefore, in addition, only join his thanks with his noble friend to that eminent body of men for the extreme skill, time, and attention they bestowed on these papers. He would most cordially recommend them to the perusal of all.* In bestowing that panegyric on them, he could not help noticing a Report, which was a model of medical independence and ability. He alluded to the Report of Mr. Simon, the City Inspector. He ventured to tell his employers, who had asserted that nothing could be more satisfactory than the sanitary condition of the City of London, that they were never more mistaken in their lives. With regard to what had been said by the Bishop of Chichester, regarding the omission of the metropolis from the Bill of last year, and respecting which his Lordship said he could not tell what influenced the Legislature, he (Lord Robert Grosvenor) well knew what weighed with Parliament and the metropolitan members ; the agency at work there was that of vested interests in filth and dirt. Those interests were so exceedingly strong, that the Government, in bringing in the Bill, left out the metropolis, hoping at some future day to be able to include also the City. On the present occasion,

* Extracts from these Reports will appear in the Report on Cholera by the General Board of Health.

their resolutions pointed to that omission, and he would tell them that *that point could not be carried by men merely speaking; they must work energetically, and support with their money the Association.* There should also be branch associations formed in all parts of the metropolis.

J. WYLD, Esq., M.P., in seconding this resolution, denounced the window-tax as a main obstacle to sanitary improvement. He dwelt upon the evils of overcrowding, and said that the able and intelligent letters published by the *Morning Chronicle*, showed that if the poor suffered from one cause more than another, it was from a want of proper house accommodation.

The Rev. Dr. CUMMING in proposing the next resolution said, he was sure that all who had heard the preceding speakers, would be convinced that it was their duty to aid this movement. He could personally and feelingly appreciate its value, because he could contrast the pure air, blue sky, and bright sun of Braemar, and Dee side, with the close and fetid air of London. The effect of this, the growing deterioration of the physical condition of the poor, was seen by the progressive and regular increase of the number of deaths from zymotic diseases. In 1846 the number of these deaths was 9000; in 1847, 14,000; in 1848, 18,000; and in 1849, 28,000; all leading to the belief that zymotic diseases, as medical men now called cholera, typhus, &c., were on the increase, and, as an inference, that the necessity for vigorous exertion on their part was increasing also. He believed the sanitary condition of the poor, while it did not create, certainly localised and rendered more intense those formidable diseases. The rev. gentleman proceeded to enlarge on the Christian nature of the object—on the impossibility of education being conveyed, either by clergymen or teachers, while so large a portion of the time of the people was passed amidst the present debasing influences—and on the inseparable link which in this matter connected the rich and poor. Bethnal-green and Belgrave-square, the open sewer of St. Giles' and the mansions around St. James's-park, were indissolubly bound together by the natural laws of the universe, and thus the highest dictates of religion and morality concurred with those of self-interest to urge to earnest and practical action in this important question. The rev. gentleman said he believed this was a great question of humanity, and that wherever men suffered, there should men sympathise. The electric chain of humanity extended

from the cellar to the throne, and the shock which was felt at one end would, he had no doubt, be felt and nobly responded to at the other. He had some acquaintance with the poor, and he firmly believed that unless something were done to improve their present depraved sanitary, as well as moral, condition, the members of the other classes of the community, their children, and their children's children, would have reason to deplore their inhumanity or their apathy. In a Christian point of view he looked upon this subject as one of paramount importance; for he believed that one of the primary duties of all true Christians was to mitigate the distress, to alleviate the sufferings, and to elevate the condition of the humbler classes of the community. For his part, if he were asked for one of the most popular and the most expressive credentials of the divine origin of Christianity, he would point to Lord Ashley visiting the wretched tenements of the poor, devising means for the redress of their grievances, and using for that purpose the influence which he possessed in the House of Commons. He believed that the right reverend prelate in the chair was placing himself as a bulwark, not only of the Church of England but of Christianity in general, when he came forward to preside over such a meeting. He rejoiced to see many clergymen present on this occasion; and he should take this opportunity of observing that the clergy of the metropolis had, during the recent visitation of the cholera, been distinguished for their zeal in visiting the sick and the afflicted. Nor was this peculiar to any one section of the Christian church. It was the fruit of living Christianity, not the distinction merely of a party. Everything that tended to promote the welfare of the poorer classes tended to the stability of the noble institutions of this country. If they could give to the poor happy homes, they would do more, perhaps, than they were aware of, to prevent another 1848 in England; for he believed that the man who loved his home was generally a man who loved his country; and that it was not from a religious and happy home that revolutions came to overturn the altar and the throne. That was a question in which the members of every class—in which the inhabitants both of St. Giles's and St. James's were alike deeply interested. It was a beautiful law which the Almighty had woven into the texture of his providence, that the man who lived for himself only, lived to injure and destroy himself. He who ventures to twist a chain round the limb of a brother, must learn that the other

end has twined around his own. He that ventures to curse a fellow creature will receive the curse back again in its echo; and by the same analogy, he that connives at, and disregards the suffering, misery, and degradation of his neighbour, will not escape with impunity, for what he leaves to breed pestilence in the dark alley, will rise and reach him in the grand square, and show the rich that they are never safe as long as they neglect their duties to the poor. Such effects as those contemplated by the Association, do more to commend Christianity to a class to whom it appears, at present unjustly he knew, but actually, in an unprepossessing form, than any other known. They will see Christianity in this movement diffusing its beneficent results, caring for the physical degradation of the poor, which they can understand as the outward sign of the sympathy with their spiritual state, and forcing on their attention the obvious fact that a system of temporal, and presumptively of eternal, beneficence, is that which knocks at their doors, and speaks to them of present and perpetual joy. In evangelizing the great masses of this metropolis, it has been irresistibly shown that we must go to them with the Bible, and that they never will spontaneously come to us for it. But when we have acted on this great principle, there remains an obstruction still to the entrance of religion into the human heart, the utter degradation and deep and horrible prostration of all that is human in the very lowest of the habitations of the poor. The lesson of the minister, or city missionary, or Bible reader, is lost amid the hostile circumstances of the hearers, and wholly neutralized. The seeds of Christianity cannot germinate in such a soil, or issue in fruit in such an atmosphere. Some such movement as this was urgently demanded as a pioneer and preparation for the spread of religion throughout our city. He had large schools, and took a deep interest in their prosperity; but if education be, as it is, a ceaseless, not an occasional influence—an effect that falls from every sight, and hour, and circumstance—not an hour's teaching only, he was persuaded that six hours' lessons a-day, in the best of schools, would be very much destroyed by the remaining eighteen hours spent in circumstances, in their mechanical arrangements, hostile to every holy, and pure, and just principle. The sanitary question was only second to the educational; air, water, and cleanliness have much to do with the moral condition of our country. The reform this Association contemplated would at least open a passage for the lessons of

the schoolmaster, and the mission of the clergyman, and the spread of the Bible ; it would give a clear field, an open arena, for truth and error, piety and sin, to come into collision, and win or give way—we know which must conquer. To the medical man the system of prevention must, in a pecuniary point of view, be less profitable were it universal. Prevention of disease must be less work for the physician. But, as a man, he must hail the improvement of man—as a physician, he must at present feel there are patients whose circumstances render medicine all but helpless. He supposed too, that air and cleanliness were as necessary to the action of the medicines he prescribed, as sunshine and showers to the seed which the husbandman sows. Of all the *pathies*, he was sure the preventive *pathy* was the best. *Were half of what is given to those useful institutions the dispensaries, subscribed to this Association, he believed far more substantial benefit would be done to the poor.* The secret of temperance is, not a pledge, but air, water, and cleanliness also ; and till the poor man's home can be made comfortable and clean, the temptation to go to the gin-shop for the momentary and pernicious stimulus of alcohol will exist. There is no preparation in our present sanitary condition for meeting the pestilence if it be let loose again—and perhaps it is only suspended—not withdrawn. And if it come, as it has done before, but with tenfold fury, not 18,000 deaths will measure its catastrophe ; panic, cessation of trade, flight, ay, and civil war, are not improbable effects. We must meet it in the way which the last visitation has indicated—by preventive beneficence—by wielding our utmost influence to secure efficient sanitary laws and measures. We must abjure that selfishness which cares for our own wants, however trifling, and nothing for our neighbour's, however heavy. We owe every good to the poor that is not impossible. We are more dependent on them than they are on us. But do all on philanthropic and Christian, not on selfish grounds. “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Why has God made us to differ ? Why was Solomon wiser, and Job richer than others ? Why are we better off than thousands in Drury Lane ? Not that we may exact more, but do more good. London palaces and mansions would not be less splendid if they did not cast their shadows over such dismal and degraded dens, called, by the courtesy of their landlords, houses for the poor ; and the health of the West end would be more effectually improved by airing and cleansing the East end of London,

than by running after the various "pathies" of the nineteenth century ; and the ventilation of the Houses of Parliament would render Dr. Reid's and other improvements superfluous, were peers and senators to bestow a little more attention on the ventilation of Bermondsey and Lambeth. The recent epidemic was a judgment—but a judgment with blessings in its train. The paternal as well as penal was in it. Even as a judgment, man's foul hand as well as God's holy hand was visible in it. As a chastisement it has pointed out neglected duties — instant and urgent responsibilities, and if we do our duty, 1850 may pronounce benedictions on 1849.

C. DICKENS, Esq., in seconding the resolution, said the object was to bring the metropolis within the provisions of the Public Health Act, most absurdly and monstrously excluded from its operation. The object was to diminish an amount of suffering and waste of life which would be a disgrace to a heathen land, to atone for long years of neglect, of which they had all, to a greater or less extent, been guilty, and to redress a most grievous and cruel injustice. It was a common figure of speech, whenever anything important was left out of any great scheme, to say it was the tragedy of *Hamlet* with the part of Hamlet left out ; but the existence of a Public Health Act, with the metropolis excluded from its operation, suggested to him something even more sad, and that was a representation of the tragedy of *Hamlet* with nothing in it but the gravedigger. This was a state of things which must not last. Every year more than 13,000 unfortunate persons died unnaturally and prematurely around us.* Infancy was made stunted, ugly, and full of pain—maturity made old—and old age imbecile ; and pauperism made hopeless every day. They claimed for the metropolis of a Christian country that this should be remedied, and that the capital should set an example of humanity and justice to the whole empire. Of the sanitary condition of London at present, he believed it would be almost impossible to speak too ill. He knew of many places in it unsurpassed in the accumulated horrors of their long neglect by the dirtiest old spots in the dirtiest old towns, under the worst old governments in Europe. Among persons living in such a state of civilized society as that in which they lived, there must be contrasts of rank and intelligence, and greater

* Taking the last four years, more than 15,000 persons have, on an average, died prematurely in the metropolis, i.e., the mortality has exceeded 2 per cent. of the population (corrected for increase) by that amount.

contrasts in reference to wealth and comfort ; but he believed that no greater contrasts between wealth and poverty existed in any part of the world than in this metropolis. The principal objectors to the improvements proposed were divided into two classes. The first consisted of the owners of small tenements, men who pushed themselves to the front of boards of guardians and parish vestries, and were clamorous about the rating of their property ; the other class was composed of gentlemen more independent and less selfish, who had a very weak leaning to the words self-government. The first class generally proceeded upon the supposition that the compulsory improvement of their property, when exceedingly defective, would be very expensive. This was a great mistake, for nothing was cheaper than good sanitary improvement, as had been shown in the case of "Jacob's Island," which he had described in a work of fiction, and where the improvements could be made at a cost of less than the price of a pint of porter, or two glasses of gin a week, to each inhabitant. With regard to the principle of self-government, and that what was done in the next parish was no business of theirs, he should begin to think there was something in it when he found any court or street able to keep its diseases within its own bounds, or any parish able to make out the bounds of its own diseases, keeping exclusively to itself its own fever, small-pox, consumption, and pestilence, just as it maintained its own beadles and its fire-engines. Until that time arrived, and so long as he breathed the same air, lived upon the same soil, and under the same sun, he should consider the health and sickness of that parish as being most decidedly his business, and he would endeavour to force it to be cleanly, and would place it under the control of a general board for the general good. The right rev. chairman had referred to the charge made by thoughtless and inconsiderate people, that the poor liked to be dirty and to lead degraded lives. If this charge were true, it would only present another proof that we were living in a most unnatural state of society ; but it was no more true than it was true that when they first had baths they would not bathe, and when they first had washhouses they would not wash. We could not expect "to gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles." We could not be surprised if the poor did not very highly estimate the decencies of life when they had no opportunity of being made acquainted with them. The main wonder in connexion with the poor was, that they did so soon esteem that which

was really for their good, when they had any fair experience of it. No one who had any knowledge of the poor could fail to be deeply affected by their patience and their sympathy with one another—by the beautiful alacrity with which they helped each other in toil, in the day of suffering, and in the hour of death. It hardly ever happened that any case of extreme protracted destitution found its way into the public prints, without our reading at the same time of some ragged Samaritan sharing his last loaf, or spending his last penny to relieve the poor miserable in the room upstairs, or in the cellar underground. It was to develope in these people the virtue which nothing could eradicate, to raise them in the social scale as they should be raised, to lift them from a condition into which they did not allow their beasts to sink, and to cleanse the foul air for the passage of Christianity and education throughout the land that the meeting was assembled. He could not lay it to his heart, nor could he flatter any of those present with the idea that they were met to praise themselves, for they could claim little merit for each other in such a cause. The object of their assembling, as he regarded it, was simply to help to set that right which was very wrong before God and before man.

The fourth resolution was moved by R. A. SLANEY, Esq., M.P., and seconded by HENRY POWNALL, Esq., Chairman of the Bench of Magistrates for the county of Middlesex.

The fifth resolution was moved by W. ROGERS, Esq., and seconded by the Rev. Dr. WORTHINGTON.

The petitions to the legislature and the memorial to the General Board of Health were most numerous signed by the noblemen, the clergy, and gentry present.

The Bishop of London presented the petition to the House of Lords, and Lord Robert Grosvenor that to the House of Commons.

Public opinion, by the large and influential assemblage collected at that meeting, having been emphatically expressed in favour of the new Association, no time was lost in soliciting interviews with the General Board of Health and with the Premier, in order that the objects of the Association might be explained, and the views of the Board, and of the Noble Lord at the head of the Government, ascertained.

On the 15th Feb., a numerous deputation, consisting of Lord Robert Grosvenor, M.P., Lord Moreton, R. A. Slaney, Esq., M.P., Sir W. Clay,

M.P., J. Wyld, Esq., M.P., Sir E. Pearson, Sir E. Belcher, C.B., the Rev. Dr. Worthington, the Rev. H. Mackenzie, M.A., the Rev. Dr. Cumming, George Godwin, Esq., and many other members of the Association, including the Hon. Secretaries, Hector Gavin, M.D., Adolphus Barnett, M.B., and the Rev. M. W. Lusignan, waited on the Earl of Carlisle, (the then President of the General Board of Health,) and the other members of the Board, for the purpose of presenting the resolutions and the memorial agreed to at the public meeting.

At this deputation, R. A. SLANEY, Esq., M.P., in adverting to the Public Health Act, stated that, while it was hailed as a great boon and blessing by the people in almost every crowded place in this great country, it made a singular exception of the metropolis, the very "head and front of all offending," and where one should more earnestly have desired its operation than in any other part of the country. He assured the Board, from his own personal examination, that there were portions of the metropolis which required a Health Act more than any other portion of Her Majesty's dominions. The visitation, which had swept away so many thousands, had rendered the necessity for the application of the Act to the metropolis much more apparent. When the bill was introduced into parliament there were difficulties to be overcome, but since that time there could be no doubt whatever that the public mind, both in and out of parliament, had become more and more convinced of the necessity for the extension of the measure. Mr. Slaney further stated that the Association were persuaded that, in the lines where the sewage was already laid down, there might be great permanent improvements carried out, more especially in all those places where the humbler classes reside. He stated that when he was a commissioner of sewers, it was found quite practicable to carry out for the humbler classes an improved species of sewage, because they only required small branch pipes to the larger sewers. Not only was this improvement economical and practicable, but it was productive of the greatest possible benefit in many of the close courts and cellars inhabited by the poor.

J. WYLD, Esq., M.P., impressed upon the Board the utility of a constant supply of water at high pressure and at the lowest price. He stated that there were 80,000 houses in the metropolis unsupplied, inhabited by 640,000 persons, and that 40,000 of these houses had, under present circumstances, no right to a supply. In those localities where the

water supply has been either inefficient or of very bad quality, there disease and pestilence raged with the greatest virulence. This question does not concern the lower classes alone, it concerns the whole community: every class has a direct interest in it. It is found, that in proportion as the houses and dwellings of the poor are insufficiently supplied with water, in the same proportion are there found large additions to the rates; in every case, too, where districts have either a bad supply of water, or no supply, there is found not only a great amount of disease but of crime. Mr. Wyld urged that whatever measures might be adopted for the sanitary improvement of the metropolis, a pure and continuous supply of water must always hold a very prominent position.

Dr. GAVIN referred to the increasing mortality of the metropolis during the last four years, as a proof of the necessity for placing it under the operation of the Health Act. It was an appalling fact that the number of persons dying of the class of diseases called preventible, had been steadily increasing; and Mr. Farr, of the registrar-general's office, declared there could be no question that the health of London was becoming worse every year. In 1846, the number of persons dying of zymotic diseases was about 19 per cent of the total mortality; in 1847, it was 28 per cent; in 1847, 34 per cent; and last year it increased to 41 per cent; thus showing that nearly one-half of the mortality of London was more or less owing to preventible causes. There could be no doubt that, if the densely populated parts of the metropolis were left in their present condition, there would be an increased and a permanently high mortality. . . . He referred to the necessity of improving the habitations of the poor, and mentioned the fact that for the small charge of 3d. per week they might be rendered healthy and comfortable. . . . In addition to seeking to place London within the operation of the Health Act, the Association was exceedingly impressed with a conviction of the necessity for an amendment of the Nuisances Removal Act. All who had had anything to do with the operation of that act, had experienced the difficulties under which local bodies laboured in putting it into execution. He adverted at length to the violations of the act. Under the directions and instructions of the General Board of Health there were means of preventing contagious diseases; but, their regulations being constantly disobeyed, it was thought by the Association that an amendment to the act ought to be passed, to enable the Board to carry out its beneficent and humane intentions. The Association

thought that wherever improvements in the condition of the dwellings of the poor were absolutely necessary, the Board of Health should have full power to require such improvements to be executed.

C. F. J. LORD, Esq., called particular attention to the imperfections of the Nuisances Removal and Contagious Diseases Prevention Act, and adverted to the total want of anything like a machinery whereby its benign and comprehensive intentions could be brought into operation. It did not contain those provisions for personal visitation and immediate superintendence and control, whereby alone the public mind could be directed to the consideration of what diseases are, and might be, preventible, and how they might be prevented. That diseases of a contagious character might be prevented by proper sanitary regulations was certain; and he need only refer, in proof, to the remarkable case stated by the noble lord (Lord Ashley) at the public meeting in Freemasons' Hall, of a city on the continent where, since the people had a plentiful supply of water and better houses and streets, the itch was no longer seen in the hospitals. If, therefore, so prevalent a disease had been prevented by the simple application of water, how much might be done, through a bold application of sanitary measures, for the prevention of other diseases, more fatal in their consequences, as scrofula, consumption, typhus fever, and the like? It had constantly appeared to physicians and other practical men, and results had proved it, that, unless an amendment was made in the Act calculated to assist in this great object, its grand and humane purposes could not be accomplished. The deputation particularly wished to press this point upon the attention of the Board, because they considered nothing to be more humiliating to medical practitioners, than to spend the chief portion of their lives in the miserable work of attempting to cure again and again those diseases which again return—diseases which were not inflicted by Providence, but which arose from man's ignorance and neglect—diseases which, when rightly understood, man might prevent. Medical men alone were the class of men—he spoke now with all deference and humility—who, studying the laws of nature which regulated health and disease, most desired, and could best carry into practice, measures of *prevention*. By their agency, acting through a permanent staff or body, it was not too much to expect that a most salutary influence might be exercised over all classes, so that there might be no doubt existing in the public mind and the executive government, as to the propriety of a comprehensive legislative enactment, whereby

all agencies inimical to the well-being of men might be removed. He spoke only of their physical state. It could not be too powerfully brought to mind, nor too often impressed upon all public bodies, that everything like withholding light, water, air, or ventilation, was so seriously subversive of the health of mankind, that, to pass an act to promote their health, yet leaving restrictions on these, was little less than absurd. A life spent in attempting to check disease so engendered was comparatively useless. It was almost as hopeless as the attempt to keep a cullender filled with water. There was a numerous staff of medical officers employed under the Poor Law for the mitigation of the physical ailments under which the poor suffered, and Government had with considerable liberality proposed to contribute one half the amount of the salaries paid for that purpose, in order to secure increased and efficient regard to the welfare of the poor. Mr. Lord contended, on behalf of the Association, that in the metropolis the money thus contributed by Government had not been applied to the purposes for which it was intended, namely, an increase in the salaries, and greater efficiency of, the medical officers ;—that the Government would do well to consider how far the public interests required that the sum thus advanced (amounting for the metropolis to £5000) should be withdrawn from the boards of guardians, and the comparatively useless work of *curative* medicine, and be transferred to the General Board of Health, to be expended by them on the same men, or in a similar way, but in the work of *preventive* medicine. Mr. Lord illustrated how much benefit could be conferred on society by the work of prevention, which would year by year lighten the labours of curative medicine ; while curative appliances, without measures of prevention, were interminable in their operation, and comparatively hopeless in their results.

The EARL of CARLISLE then said,—I am sure I need not inform you that all the members of the General Board of Health have listened with great attention and great interest to the statements they have had brought before them. With regard to myself individually, as I bear rather a triple character with reference to these matters—being a member of your own Association, a member of the General Board of Health, and also a member of the Government, I find my own discretion somewhat fettered, and that it is my business more to receive and listen to your statements and suggestions, than at the present moment to give any myself. However, I please myself with thinking that the

objects, which all the bodies to which I have referred have before them, are common to them all, and that they are all actuated in their various spheres by the same desire to promote the public health generally, and that which largely calls for interference—the public health of the metropolis in particular. I do not think it is any part of my duty now, or that it would be advantageous, to allude to the difficulties which attended the including of London in the Public Health Act, when it was brought forward, and which I still fear must attend such a proposition whenever it be made ; but as those difficulties exist, they must be met in the best way we can, and surmounted as we are best able, because I quite agree with you, that *it would be very disastrous if no further attempt were made to remedy the sanitary condition of London.* All I can assure you is, that the time of the Board of Health—and I must say I speak now rather for my colleagues than myself—has been given most repeatedly and incessantly to the objects they have had before them during the past year, and it is now specially devoted to matters connected with the improvement of the sanitary condition of London. It is not in my power now, as a member of the Government, to state the exact time or order in which it may be found possible to submit legislative proceedings to the cognizance of parliament ; but *I trust that very little time will be lost before a beginning in that course is made.* As I have said, this Board has adopted measures which they are prepared to submit to the Government ; and I feel confident the Government will, as soon as they have given the requisite attention to them, lose no time in bringing them before the legislature. In the meantime, we must all of us, I am sure, rejoice, from the evidence afforded by your attendance here to-day, an attendance of so numerous and so respectable a character, that we are likely to receive so much encouragement and support from our fellow-citizens.

Next day, another very numerous deputation, consisting of the under-mentioned noblemen and gentlemen,* waited upon Lord John Russell.

* The Right Hon. and Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of London, President ; Lord Moreton ; Thomas Abraham, Esq. ; C. J. B. Aldis, Esq., M.D. ; Rev. J. W. Buckley, M.A. ; Rev. R. Burgess, B.D. ; Charles Salisbury Butler, Esq. ; Carleton Baynes, Esq. ; Sir William Clay, Bart., M.P. ; Rev. J. Cumming, D.D. ; H. C. Edwards, Esq. ; Robert Fox, Esq. ; R. Grantham, Esq. ; Waller Lewis, Esq., M.B. ; C. F. J. Lord, Esq. ; Rev. T. D. Lamb ; G. Milroy, Esq., M.D. ; Rev. Henry

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said he had the honour to appear as President of the Metropolitan Sanitary Association, and also as having been in the chair at a large public meeting recently held, at which certain resolutions had been passed, which he should have the satisfaction of submitting to the noble lord's consideration. Before doing so, however, he would take the liberty of stating in a few words, the objects of the Association, and of expressing the earnest hope entertained by the deputation, and the association in general, that his lordship might be disposed to give favourable consideration to those objects. The Metropolitan Sanitary Association had succeeded some other associations which had corresponding objects—The Health of Towns' Association, the Health of London Association, and the Westminster Sanitary Association, which, having done their work, had handed down their task to the present body, whose object was, to endeavour, by all proper means, to procure the passing of some legislative enactment, under the sanction of her Majesty's Government, which should confer upon this vast metropolis the benefits which other less important parts of the kingdom enjoyed, a comprehensive and efficient act for carrying into effect sound sanitary improvements. The noble lord was no doubt aware that the city of London, which comprised a very small population—less than 150,000 inhabitants—had practically the advantages of such an act, owing to the provisions contained in its Sewers' Act; but all other places within the Bills of Mortality, were totally without any of the benefits arising from the operation of that act. Nor need he remind the noble lord that the sanitary condition of this great metropolis, instead of improving, as it might be expected to improve, with the advancing progress of medical science, and the awakened feelings of humanity and charity of the great mass of the people, had, to say the least, stood still; but he spoke under the correction of the medical gentlemen who were present when he expressed his belief that he was correct in saying that it had retrograded. The melancholy experience

ackenzie, M.A. ; Rev. C. Marshall, M.A. ; T. Marsh Nelson, Esq. ; Rev. J. R. Nicholl ; Sir Edwin Pearson, F.R.S. ; Rev. J. H. Randolph, M.A. ; W. Rogers, Esq. ; Rev. F. F. Statham ; R. A. Slaney, Esq., M.P. ; Rev. B. C. Sangar, M.A. ; Ven. Archdeacon Sinclair, M.A. ; J. Sutherland, Esq., M.D. ; Joseph Stansbury, Esq., A.A. ; Rev. T. P. Wright, M.A. ; Rev. D. Wilson, M.A. ; J. Wyld, Esq., M.P. ; Rev. J. W. Worthington, D.D. ; Rev. R. Dear, M.A. ; Rev. Thomas Ward ; Hon. F. Byng and George Godwin, Esq., F.R.S. ; and Rev. M. W. Lusignan, M.A. ; Hector Gavin, Esq., M.D. ; Adolphus Barnett, Esq., M.B. ;—Hon. Secs.

of last year, and the vast number of victims to that fatal malady—the cholera—no less than 18,423 in the metropolis alone, were lamentable proofs of the truth of this proposition.* The association were greatly encouraged by the gracious expressions used in the royal speech as delivered to Parliament by her Majesty's commissioners. In that speech her Majesty was pleased to express her deep concern at the melancholy events of the past year, her anxious hopes that some measures might be devised which, under the blessing of God, might have the effect of preventing a recurrence of that awful malady, and her confidence that the wisdom of the legislature would second her Majesty's gracious intentions, by giving effect to some comprehensive and efficient measures. The Association therefore trusted they did not presume too much when they took it for granted, that such also were the sentiments of the noble lord. There was one point—a point of considerable difficulty and delicacy, but one most essentially connected with the great object the Association had in view, to which he particularly wished to draw the noble lord's attention. It was to *the improvement of the dwellings of the poor*. The external improvement of their dwellings by means of sewerage and drainage, and their internal improvement to a certain extent by giving them a more copious supply of water upon the very lowest terms, might, perhaps, be effected without any great difficulty; but improvement in the construction of those dwellings, connected as the question was with local and individual interests, and with various rights of property, was full of difficulty. The Association, nevertheless, hoped that the legislature would deal with this question, and in its wisdom provide such remedies for the enormous evils that were existing as might have the effect of removing some, at least, of them. He trusted the noble lord would also excuse the liberty he took in expressing the deep regret which the members of the Association felt at learning that orders had just been issued by the Excise to impose an additional duty of 10s. per thousand upon that very important improvement in the construction of houses—*hollow bricks*. He very much feared, from the information he had received, that the result of this order would be, that the active and most beneficial efforts of the Society for improving the Dwellings of the Poor would be brought to a close, or that they would be encumbered with so much difficulty that the chances of success in

* Including 4298 deaths from diarrhoea.

this benevolent undertaking would be very much lessened. He hoped, therefore, that this subject might receive the serious consideration of her Majesty's Government. He trusted they would not for the sake of a very small addition to the revenue, jeopardize an object of such paramount importance, for he did not hesitate to call this an object of paramount importance, because all the efforts to improve the moral and social condition of the poor would be, if not abortive, at least, comparatively inefficacious, unless something could be done to remedy the physical evils under which they laboured. It was, therefore, justly an object of paramount importance; and he again trusted that for the sake of a small fiscal advantage a great moral and social benefit might not be withheld from our "poorer brethren." Another object which, on behalf of the Association, he ventured to press upon the noble lord's attention—one perhaps less difficult than the last—was *the necessity for an amendment of the Nuisances Act*. The greater part of that Act, particularly that which related to the prevention of contagious diseases, had not in practice been found to give all the powers which were necessary for its efficient working. As this proposition involved no new principle, but only an amendment of that which had already received the sanction of the legislature, it was probable no difficulty would be found in sanctioning whatever improvements might be suggested. Upon the whole, then, the deputation respectfully asked the noble lord to have the goodness to inform them, if he thought fit to give an answer to the question, whether, in consequence of the gracious expressions in her Majesty's speech at the opening of Parliament, they might hope that a bill would be introduced, under the sanction of her Majesty's Government, for the sanitary improvement of the metropolis? And next, if no such intention should be entertained by her Majesty's Government, whether, if a bill for the improvement of the sanitary condition of the metropolis should be introduced by some member of either House of Parliament, such a measure would be favourably considered by her Majesty's Government; also whether their assistance would be given to those who might wish to carry such a bill into law? The Association, however, earnestly and anxiously hoped that the first branch of this alternative might be calculated upon; and that her Majesty's Government would see the importance—permit him to add the duty—of bringing in some effective measure for improving the sanitary condition of the metropolis.

R. A. SLANEY, Esq., M.P., stated, for his own part, as one of the commissioners for inquiring into the health of towns, and also as one of the commissioners for inquiring into the sewage of the metropolis, he had had many opportunities of making himself acquainted with that subject, and every inquiry he had made, in connexion with those commissions, and subsequently, had confirmed his previous deep conviction that what was now asked for was of the first importance, not only to the temporal welfare of the great body of the humbler classes, but to the improvement of their moral and religious habits.

J. WYLD, Esq., M.P., again called attention to the defective supply of Water.

The Rev. HENRY MACKENZIE, Vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, in adverting to the absolute necessity of improving the miserable condition of the great majority of the dwellings of the poor, described in feeling terms the wretched condition of the houses of the poor in Jacob's sland; and he added that, in the parish of which he had the honour to be the vicar there were five small houses in one locality which contained one hundred and fifty-three inhabitants of both sexes and all ages. These people paid a weekly rent of between 4*l.* and 5*l.* or about 225*l.* a year, for living in a condition not so good as a stable in which a gentleman kept his horses. In some cases it was worse than that of pigs in a sty. The condition to which they were reduced was painful to behold; but he believed that it might be materially improved, without entailing any greater expense than the country or the parish might be willing to bear, under proper legislative enactments.

The Rev. RICHARD BURGESS spoke in confirmation of what had been said touching lodging-houses and the dwellings of the poor. He thought that a remedy might be applied at once to the first and greatest evil, he meant the crowded state of those lodging-houses within not more than 300 yards of his lordship's private residence. There was a house in a district connected with the rev. gentleman's parish, where as many as eighty or 100 persons were lodged in the course of one night. It was almost needless to say that the vicious and depraved habits which this revolting system produced, cried aloud for some remedy. This, it appeared, might be found at once in the simple expedient of bringing all such houses under magisterial or other kind of licence. In putting all such lodging-houses under the superintendence of the police, there would be nothing in this measure more

arbitrary than in licensing public carriages to convey a certain number of passengers and no more. There might be some difficulty in drawing the line between the lower and better class of lodgings, but upon the whole, the community at large would be benefited by the removal or modification of a great social evil.

Another point to which he called his lordship's attention, had reference to the state of the dwellings of the poor, which were greatly defective in ventilation. In the course of the epidemic last summer, he attempted, in vain, to procure improvement in this particular. He applied twice to the Board of Guardians to get ventilation into twenty-eight houses situated in the parish under his pastoral care, and which were so constructed as to prevent all circulation of air. The backs of those houses were a continuous dead wall ; all the conveniences, such as the ashpits, cesspools, and things of a more offensive description, were in front, so that the air which did find its way into the dwellings, must first have passed through the medium of all the effluvia, before it entered the room, called the "front-room," and before it could penetrate into the place where the beds are situate, there being no recess at the end or side of the room, nor opening for light. The Board of Guardians were ready to attend to his application, but they did not find that the orders of the General Board of Health gave them authority to enforce ventilation. They did procure the removal of the most offensive nuisances ; the cesspools were cleansed, and the walls of the areas white-washed, which served for a time ; but the dwellings remain as they were, *generally unhealthy, and scarcely ever altogether free from typhoid or typhus fever.* All are aware of the difficulty of legislation in these matters, so as to hit the medium between the rights of property and the rights of humanity ; but still as it regards the three essential elements of animal life, light, air, and water, he thought they may fairly be made the subject of legislation, and that our fellow-creatures may not be excluded from the use of those elements, which Providence has given to all alike. To place them under circumstances which render it impossible for the poor to obtain these blessings, is virtually to exclude these blessings.

The Rev. Dr. CUMMING said he had found, upon visiting the poor at their own homes, that one of the greatest causes of their filth and intemperance was the fact of their houses being without pure air and water ; and he was convinced that the sanitary improvement of their

dwellings would be productive of moral and religious effects of the most valuable character. One of the most painful obstructions to the usefulness of the labours of ministers of all denominations was caused by the sanitary condition of the humbler classes of their fellow subjects. He had a daily school of six hundred children, and a ragged school with some seventy or eighty; and he had found, not from theory, but from personal experience, that the lessons given to those children during six hours of the day were neutralized by the social and demoralizing circumstances in which they were placed at home, not voluntarily, but by compulsion, in the present state of matters. With great respect, therefore, he pressed upon the attention of the noble lord the necessity of something being done to mitigate this condition of things; for he was persuaded that whatever drove the Englishman or the Scotchman from his home into the ginshop or into the streets was calculated to damage the stability of the institutions of the country.

T. MARSH NELSON, Esq., adverted at length to the evil influence of the window duties, and other legislative enactments and regulations, on the health and welfare of the people.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL then said: I have listened with great attention to what your lordship has said upon this subject; and I am sure your lordship, and the deputation, will see that it is impossible for me to enter here into the particular views of the Government, or into a discussion upon any general measure. I can only state to you that I consider the object no less important than it has been described to me by the members of the deputation who have just spoken. It has constantly engaged the attention of the Government, and my noble friend *Lord Carlisle* has been in constant communication with me upon it. I know that, with regard to the metropolis, he has felt the difficulties of the subject very greatly; and certainly *he does not think that there can be any general measure which can comprehend all the subjects which comprise sanitary regulation; but he thinks it is more feasible to attempt by separate measures to meet the various evils that have occurred.* With regard to a general measure, I should also say we must consider that in this country there is very naturally and properly great jealousy of any interference either with local rights or individual will and freedom from control, and that when you bring in a bill of 350 clauses, you find very great difficulty in contending for each of those clauses against the separate opposition that may be made to them.

But I will only say this, with regard to the difficulties of the subject, that we will give our best attention to them ; and I can assure your lordship and the deputation that her Majesty is deeply interested in this subject. Lord J. Russell added, *that the opinion of the Government was in favour of separate measures rather than of one general measure.*

In consequence of the reply thus made by the Premier to the President of the Association, at the interview just recorded, it became evident to the Association, that the difficulty of passing a great and comprehensive scheme for the sanitary improvement of the metropolis was deemed insurmountable by the Government. It became necessary, therefore, to consider what measures it was most important to urge upon the attention of the Legislature, with a view to the procuring some speedy improvement in its sanitary condition.

The *chief evils* affecting the sanitary condition of the metropolis are—

I. The want of efficient sewerage to remove surface water and house drainage.

The want of drains communicating with sewers already existing.

The imperfect construction and filthy state of the sewers, and their want of systematic cleansing and ventilation.

The filthy and imperfect state of the drains connected with the sewers.

The numerous untrapped gully-holes in the streets.

The impurity of the Thames and its banks.

The foregoing have reference to the removal of fluid refuse, the next to the removal of solid refuse.

II. The neglecting to remove a large portion of animal and vegetable matters until the destructive stage of decomposition has nearly, or entirely, passed away. The insufficient removal of house refuse, and the general neglect of proper street cleansing.

III. The want of paving.

IV. The existence of numerous nuisances, trades, manufactures, and operations destructive to the lives of the inhabitants of towns.

- V. The existence of putrefying corpses in grave-yards and in vaults, amidst the habitations of the living.
- VI. The impure condition, and the irregular distribution, rather than the deficient supply, of water.
- VII. The state of the dwellings, and of the lodging-houses, of the poor.
- VIII. The want of efficient machinery and regulations to prevent the spread of epidemic diseases, and to secure a more natural condition of health.
- IX. The existence of legislative enactments which actually interfere with the public health,—*e. g.*, the duty on bricks and windows, the Metropolitan Buildings Act, and the laws relating to the transfer of real property.

With reference to the first subject, namely, that of improved sewerage and drainage, it was hoped it would have been disposed of by the consolidation of the Commissions of Sewers, and by the passing of the Metropolitan Sewers Act. Experience has shown this not to be the case; to this subject, therefore, and to the imperfections of the Act, reference will be made at a future period.

The Association were made aware that the General Board of Health had under their consideration the subjects of intramural burial and water supply, and that Bills on these subjects would shortly be brought before Parliament. Reserving, therefore, their energies on these latter subjects, till such time as the Bills should be before the Legislature, the Association resolved to address themselves to a consideration of the evils at present existing in consequence of faulty legislation, and the simplest and most efficient means of at once effecting the greatest amount of improvement in the sanitary condition of the people. Sub-Committees were immediately formed, to consider and report on these subjects, and the results of their labours, up to the present time, having been duly submitted to and canvassed by the Acting Committee, are now presented as the First Report of the Metropolitan Sanitary Association.

In consequence of the duty on bricks having been repealed since the origin of the Association, it is right now to advert to the part taken in reference to this tax.

The Board of Inland Revenue determined, only a few days before the interview of the Association with the Premier, to charge hollow bricks 10s. per 1000 more than ordinary bricks. This at once would have greatly damaged the efforts made by the Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes, and the Society for the Improvement of the Condition of these Classes. These societies had introduced the practice of building parts of houses with hollow bricks, so as to ensure dryness and free ventilation of air, cheapness of construction, and safety from fire by means of brick-arched roofs. All these great advantages to society, the public were about to be deprived of, by the officers of inland revenue declaring that hollow bricks were manufactured bricks, and therefore liable to an additional tax.

The duty on bricks previous to this decision had operated injuriously in relation to the welfare of the community, but the injustice and impolicy of this additional tax on hollow bricks effected its abolition.

The Bishop of London, in addressing the Premier, forcibly referred to this tax, and his Lordship's observations, already detailed, appeared to have great weight with the Minister. (See page 33.)

The Association, at a meeting, held on the 7th of March, passed the following resolution :—

“That the brick and timber duties have caused the dwellings of the poor to be constructed of bad materials, the tax payable on bricks having compelled the makers to bring into use those which would otherwise have been thrown aside as useless, and the duty on timber having favoured the use of that kind most subject to decay.”

A copy was forwarded to the Home Secretary and to the General Board of Health. It is to be presumed that the forcible expression of the opinion of the Association, through the Bishop of London, to the Prime Minister, and the resolution of the Association in favour of the abolition of this tax were not without influence. For we find the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in proposing the repeal of the tax, thus expressing himself: “There is an item in which I think we may contribute in no small degree to improve the condition and comfort of the labouring population, and that is in the character of their dwellings. I would refer to the Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the law of settlement, as to the deteriorating effect of the state of his (the

labourer's) dwelling, in too many instances, upon his morals and those of his family.

"The evils to which I have now been referring are really serious, with regard to the general health of the country. I find that the Lords' Committee upon the burdens on land, state their opinion, 'that the removal of the duty on bricks would not only tend to the more rapid improvement of real property in towns and their vicinity, but what is still more important, add to the comfort of the poorer classes, and improve the character of their habitations.' The tax is one which is most unjust in its operation, because it is not at all of universal application."

It is extremely satisfactory to find the minister, in so straightforward a manner, acknowledging the injustice of a tax on the means of health and comfort to the people. It affords an additional reason for pressing on his attention the numerous legislative enactments which still painfully oppress them, and prevent their obtaining the free and unrestricted use of even God's own gifts.

It is not intended in the present Report to advert to all the circumstances which render the inhabitants of a town unhealthy, which depress them in the social, as well as degrade them in the physical scale, and which tend to destroy the foundations upon which religious sentiments are built. Reference can merely be made to some of the more important of those circumstances.

The necessity for dealing with each question in detail, and of separating it from its correlatives, entails, at present, much needless difficulty in the construction of Acts of Parliament, but will create more difficulty and much confusion when the many different legislative enactments come to be embraced in one comprehensive Act, as, ultimately, they necessarily must be. Nevertheless, such a course permits us to set aside for a time the less prominent questions, and to address ourselves presently to the more crying and obvious evils.

Before, however, adverting to these, it is necessary briefly to capitulate the present machinery and enactments prominently bearing on the sanitary condition of the metropolis. Much confusion prevails on this subject, not only in the public mind, but among our legislators. So many

conflicting statements have been made in Parliament, in the public prints, and at parish boards, that the public in general are very ill informed as to their actual position in regard to sanitary appliances and regulations.

1. The Metropolitan Sanitary Commission.—This Commission was issued on the 24th September, 1847, to Lord Robert Grosvenor, Edwin Chadwick, Esq., Thomas Southwood Smith, M.D., Richard Owen, Esq., and Richard Lambert Jones, Esq., to inquire whether any and what special means are requisite to improve the health of the metropolis. On the 19th November, 1847, this Commission issued a most able report, partly in reference to the conditions favouring the spread of cholera, but chiefly on the state and management of the sewerage of the metropolis. This Report was immediately followed by a consolidation of the various Commissions of sewers.—On the 19th February following, a shorter report on the spread of cholera, its non-contagious nature, and means of prevention, appeared.—On the 13th July, 1848, a short report was made on the prevalence of fever in Westminster.

These constitute the whole published results of the labours of this Commission. Delay and neglect in executing the duties imposed on the Commission by her gracious Majesty, cannot be imputed to the majority of the Commissioners, seeing that two very active members were shortly after called upon to give their whole time to most arduous and important duties, namely, the administrative arrangements connected with the operation of the Public Health Act and the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act, both of which passed in August, 1848. Lord Robert Grosvenor likewise was compelled to absent himself from the commission, and to winter in Madeira. It is a lamentable truth, however, which the Association feel called upon prominently to bring before the public, that a delay of more than two years has already been the result of thus heaping the whole sanitary labour of the country on a few individuals.

This delay, attended as it necessarily is by a great loss of life, cannot be viewed but as a grievous, because avoidable, calamity. It appears evident, that had the design of her Majesty been carried out to its full extent, something more than a mere consolidation of the Commissions of Sewers and the passing of the Metropolitan Sewers Act would, by this time, have been accomplished.

No further report of the Metropolitan Sanitary Commission appeared after the 13th of July, 1848, and its powers were transferred to

the General Board of Health by a Treasury Minute, on the 22nd of January, 1850. But since that date a most able report on the Supply of Water to the Metropolis, commenced by the Commission and concluded by the General Board of Health, was presented to Parliament on the 28th of May.

2. The Metropolitan Sewers Act.—This act has proved, in the highest degree, unsatisfactory in its working, and has caused universal discontent at the imperfections of its machinery. The present Commission has not gained the confidence of the public. The impolicy of entrusting works of so gigantic a character to an unpaid Commission, most of the members of which are already engaged in highly responsible public situations, and whose time therefore cannot be sufficiently devoted to this branch of the public service, has been fully exemplified in the protracted preliminary investigations and procedures; in the still remote prospect of any efficient operations by the commission; in the frequent difficulty of forming a quorum; and in the resulting injury to the public.

It is reported in the public prints, that lately a court, appointed to be held at twelve o'clock, could not meet till half past one, and the chairman then regretted the public should have been obliged to wait so very long for the commission, and urged in extenuation the onerous *private* duties of the Commissioners, the large number necessary to form a quorum, and the fact that *their services were gratuitous*.

It is not a matter of surprise to this Association, under such circumstances, that an outfall for London has not yet been determined—that house and street drainage is not proceeded with—and that even new houses are rotting and becoming most unhealthy, in consequence of the want of communications with sewers within a short distance. The neglect of the Commission to see to the providing of a sufficient current of water to cleanse the sewers is a subject of no little surprise, but the neglect to trap the gullies already existing is calculated seriously to endanger the health of every person who passes by. The greater prevalence of epidemic disease, of late years, taken in connexion with the increasing foulness of the gases escaping from the gully-holes, is not an *accidental* coincidence.

Previous to the practice of conveying house refuse into the sewers, the danger arising from the malarious exhalations of gully-holes was much less than now, when much house refuse is introduced, through the

numerous legal and illegal communications which have been recently made.

The number of unauthorized and illegal private drains communicating with the sewers is very great. In the Tower Hamlets division there are upwards of 3000 of such private drains. Such drains, made by stealth, are nearly always imperfectly constructed and scarcely ever trapped. There is always in them a large quantity of the most noxious kind of house refuse. A run of water seldom takes place through them, and when it does, it is just sufficient to stir up, but not to wash away, the filth.

It is to the state of such drains that we are referred for an explanation of the occasional excessive foulness of the gases escaping from the sewers. It is unquestionable that their condition is a subject of much public importance: gusts of most concentrated and poisonous matter escape into the street by every open gulley to the danger of every passer-by, and to the greater danger of those who have the misfortune to reside near them.

Sometimes, when the gulleys are trapped to keep the foul air in, ventilation holes are constructed to let it out; and these, instead of being so arranged as to convey the foul air above the level of the houses, let it escape into the streets, and so are scarcely less injurious than the gulleys would be if untrapped.

Without specifying any distinct plan to remedy this evil, it is enough to indicate its existence, and to suggest the propriety of adopting corrective measures, even at a considerable cost.

In certain cases, the number of house communications with existing sewers is small. Where such sewers are likely to form a part of any future arrangement, all houses in their immediate vicinity might, with propriety, be drained into them. So likewise, even in the immediate vicinity of efficient sewers, there are many new streets, and even old ones, which have no drainage, except into cesspools. In both these cases, it would be very beneficial if the Commission would promptly exercise for the public welfare the powers with which it has been entrusted.

As the whole subject of sewerage and drainage will necessarily engage the attention of the Association at a future period, they forbear further observation at the present time.

The Association trust, however, that the present Commission will

either conclude the labours, for which it was appointed, at as early a period as possible, or hand over the task, acknowledged to be a great and a difficult one, to others who can bestow upon it *all their time* for its accomplishment.

3. The Nuisances Removal and Contagious Diseases Prevention Act.—This Act came into operation in August, 1848. It is divisible into two portions. The first or ordinary portion is applicable to all places in Great Britain and Ireland, except where the Public Health Act is in operation, by which Act it is superseded. The second is extraordinary, and is only applicable by an Order in Council. Its administrative arrangements are intrusted to the General Board of Health, and an additional member may, for the purposes of the Act, be temporarily appointed. This portion of the Act was put in force on the 28th of September, 1848, and was continued till the 27th of February, 1850. During its continuance, the Board of Health produced its valuable Report on Quarantine. An amendment of this Act was passed in 1849, by which the duty of providing schemes for extra-mural burial in the metropolis, and in the country, was imposed on the Board of Health. In compliance with this duty, the "Report on a General Scheme for Extra-Mural Sepulture" was produced, on which was founded the Government Metropolitan Interment Bill.

4. The City of London Sewers Act.—This Act is applicable only to the City of London; it contains many provisions of a sanitary character, altogether omitted from the Metropolitan Sewers' Act, but is most imperfect in reference to many important sanitary arrangements. The imperfections, though pointed out at the time of the passing of the Act, were unheeded: experience has since proved to the City Commissioners of Sewers how essential it is for the public welfare that these imperfections should be remedied, and they have declared their intention of applying to Parliament for an amended Act.

It is thus evident, that, with the exception of the Metropolitan and City Commissions of Sewers Acts and the Metropolitan Interments Act, there exists no provision for securing an improvement in the sanitary condition of the metropolis. Sanitary Legislation is as much a dead letter in the metropolis, as if an exposition of its defective sanitary state had never been made—as if the words Sanitary Reform had never been

spoken—as if there never had been earnest and persevering labourers in the cause—as if the whole of the promises held out by Government had been merely “*plaisanteries*.”

Among the causes at present in operation which most conduce to the evils afflicting the people of this great metropolis, and which are of legislative origin, may be enumerated the tax upon windows.

The propriety of engaging in an attempt to obtain a repeal of the Window Duties very early attracted the attention of the Association. It was thought, however, that the subject having already received the consideration of the General Board of Health, and a document having been presented by that Board to Government, advocating the repeal of the tax, it was not of so pressing an urgency, as some other matters already before the Association. The Association, however, though unwilling to undertake an agitation for the abolition of a tax, which it was their conviction could not at most be tolerated longer than another year, nevertheless, on the 7th of March, adopted the following resolution, and caused copies of the same to be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and all the parochial authorities of the metropolis:—

“That, the health of the people is greatly dependent on an ample supply of light and air, and that the Window Tax has had a tendency to diminish that supply, and to cause the erection of badly lighted and imperfectly ventilated houses.”

The notice of the Association was solicited to a memorial from the Medical Officers of the West London, City of London, and East London Poor Law Unions, to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council, objecting to this tax on sanitary grounds.

This document, embodying the sentiments of the Union Medical Officers of the City of London, was carefully considered in Committee, and the opinion of the Association was emphatically expressed by a resolution in concurrence with the tenor of the memorial.

Although the subject of free light and air thus early occupied the attention of the Association, their greater attention to other practical measures, bearing on the welfare of the community, led to the improper inference that they were indifferent to the repeal of the tax on windows.

The Association had presumed the objects published in their Prospectus would have prevented an inference so unfair—(see Prospectus)—and would have shown that their desire was to remove *all* the sanitary evils which afflict the people, commencing with those which were most oppressive. In this course they intend to persevere. It is true, they had hoped to have been able to gain, in one comprehensive measure, remedies for most of the evils now in operation, but the decision of the Government to proceed piecemeal, left no choice to the Association, but to address themselves to the chief evils, seriatim.

The Association, believing that a public expression of their sentiments was demanded, requested their President, the Bishop of London, and the Chairman of their Acting-Committee, Lord Robert Grosvenor, to present the following petition to Parliament :

“ TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS, ETC.

“ *The humble Petition of the Metropolitan Sanitary Association.*

“ SHOWETH,

“ That the Metropolitan Sanitary Association was instituted with a view to obtain, through legislative enactments, remedies for the evils which result from the present imperfect sanitary condition of the metropolis.

“ That the tax on windows has been proved to affect most injuriously the poor dwelling in towns, by its encouraging the construction of houses devoid of all efficient means of securing a sufficient supply of light and air.

“ That the healthful construction of the dwellings of the poor has already, this session, engaged the attention of your Honourable House, and received the enlightened consideration of the Government.

“ That light and air are elements absolutely essential to healthy human organization, and that an imperfect supply of either of these elements produces disease.

“ That the diseased conditions which are the more prominent results of a deficient supply of light and air, are tubercular diseases, including scrofula, consumption, water in the head, tabes mesenterica or wasting, and zymotic or epidemic diseases.

“ That such diseases prevail to an alarming extent in London, cause an excessive mortality, and render the population stunted in growth and feeble in power.

“ That about 9500 persons annually perish in London from tubercular or scrofulous diseases, and about the same number, in ordinary times, from zymotic or epidemic diseases, and that all physicians and surgeons, who have more especially studied the subject of the causes of disease and applied themselves to the discovery of means of prevention, unite in the opinion, that any diminution in the mortality which will be effected by sanitary improvements will chiefly be found to take place in these classes of disease.

“ That tubercular diseases are of long continuance, and waste the means of life before death results, that they may therefore be characterised as pauperising diseases, and that the experience of medical men connected with the orphan charities of this metropolis, proves a very large proportion of the parents of such children to have perished of consumption.

“ That such sacrifice, and prodigal waste of health and strength, and of life itself, falls much more heavily on the poor, than the mere fiscal burden, imposed by the tax, on the richer classes.

“ That health is the capital of the working man, and that, whatever be the necessities of the state, nothing can justify a tax affecting the health of the people, and especially the health of the labouring community, whose bodily health and strength constitute their wealth, and oftentimes their only possession.

“ That no modification of the tax on windows can free it from the calamitous results of which it is the cause.

“ Your petitioners therefore humbly pray, that your Honourable House will pass a law for the *total repeal* of the Window Duties, and your petitioners,” &c. &c.

In the foregoing petition are embodied the main arguments upon which the Association have rested their claims for the repeal of the tax.

The Metropolitan Sanitary Association, considering themselves the successors of other sanitary associations in the metropolis, and being identified in views with those which preceded them, deem it unnecessary to reprint the evidence they have, as members of preceding associations, laid before the public. These reports are still extant, and the Association take this opportunity of referring to them: Health of Towns Association—Report of the Committee to the Members of the Association on Lord Lincoln's Sewerage, Drainage, &c., of Towns Bill.

Report of the Health of London Association on the Sanitary Condition of the Metropolis. Published by the Association, and prepared by Hector Gavin, M.D., Adolphus Barnett, M.B., Thomas Abraham, Esq., and John Liddle, Esq.

The injustice and impolicy of the tax on windows have been so fully explained in the able Report of the Health of Towns Association above referred to, (pp. 109—116,) that the Metropolitan Sanitary Association are desirous to refer to that Report, and to state their entire adhesion to the views and arguments propounded in clauses 151—164.

They, at the same time, however, wish it to be understood, that they do not believe any mere modification of the tax on windows can effect the removal of the great evils consequent on its operation, and that nothing but a complete repeal will prove of any real benefit.

In the Report of the Health of London Association, p. 53, it is stated, "That an abundant supply of solar light is so essential, that health and organization are never perfect without it." It is further stated that, "in the construction of dwellings for the poor, its admission should be insisted on, as conducive to health and cleanliness, and that it should form part of the duty of an officer of health to *enforce* provisions made for that purpose."

That Association emphatically protested against the tax on windows, in the following sentence:—"The window tax, by impeding ventilation and the free admission of light, is productive of disease, *and consequently becomes a tax on health.*"

In the Health of Towns Report, the Window Duties are stated to be "a tax upon light and air,—a tax more vicious in principle, and more injurious in its practical consequences, than a tax upon food."

It is almost superfluous to insist on the paramount necessity of a free supply of light and air, thus stated to be so essential to human existence. That this statement is perfectly correct, all the experience of sanitary reformers proves. Even with a scanty supply of food, the agricultural labourer, having an abundant supply of light and air, will live longer, and enjoy better health, than the metropolitan working man, more amply fed, but robbed of air and sun; nay, the metropolitan out-door labourer will live longer, and more healthily, than the better fed and clothed tradesman who spends the greater part of his life in close, dark shops and dwellings.

From a careful analysis of the 60,000 deaths from consumption which annually take place in England and Wales, the conclusion has been arrived

at that tradesmen are nearly twice as liable to consumption as the gentry, owing chiefly to the hot, close, ill-ventilated workshops, in which the former pass so many hours of the day ; that in-door labourers are more subject to consumption than those who follow their employments out of doors, though exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, and earning less wages, and having, consequently, worse food, clothing, and lodging : and that of in-door labourers, those engaged in workshops are more subject to consumption than those employed at home. The poor man's room, small and mean as it is, is better ventilated than the greater portion of workshops, or even shops.

It is difficult to estimate the expense arising from the diseases of which the Window Duties are the cause ; that it is very considerable, every inquirer knows full well. Like Typhus, aptly termed "the great pauperiser," which leaves a large number of helpless orphans to be reared by the state, or to be abandoned to the casual charity of strangers, Consumption contributes, in an incredible manner, to fill our charitable institutions. In the middle class of life the large proportion of orphan children, whose parents have died of consumption, or other tubercular disease, is most striking. Dr. Gavin, who has examined more than 1300 orphan children, candidates for admission into the London Orphan Asylum, has found, during an experience of thirteen years, that about one-half of the parents had died of consumption. Accidents, fever, and other diseases, made up the other half. Now the mortality from consumption forms only one-eighth, on an average, of the total annual mortality in England for the last twelve years, while, in the class of persons who suffer most from the exclusion of light and air, the ratio of the mortality from this disease amounts to nearly one half.

In an economical point of view, the Window Duties are most objectionable : the nation suffers more pecuniary loss from them, than the Chancellor of the Exchequer derives revenue.

If any further facts be necessary to prove the close connexion between the prevalence of consumption and the habitual respiration of an impure atmosphere, a sufficient number will be found in the evidence in the first Report of the Health of Towns Commission. It is scarcely necessary to point out the intimate relation between an impure atmosphere and a tax which operates as a premium to shut up every window which can possibly be spared, and prevents the opening of any aperture under a penalty. Nevertheless, the following observations,

taken from the Health of Towns Report, are sufficiently important to merit insertion:—

“ If the young of some of the lower tribes of creatures are supplied with their proper food, and if all the other conditions necessary for their nourishment are maintained, while at the same time light is wholly excluded from them, their development is stopped ; they no longer undergo the metamorphosis through which they pass from imperfect into perfect beings ; the tadpole, for example, is unable to change its water-breathing apparatus, fitted for its first stage of existence, into the air-breathing apparatus, with the rudiment of which it is furnished, and which is intended to adapt it for a higher life, namely, for respiration in air. In this imperfect state it continues to live ; it even attains an enormous bulk, for such a creature in its state of transition, but it is unable to pass out of its transitional state ; it remains permanently an imperfect being, and is doomed to pass a perpetual life in water, instead of attaining maturity and passing its mature life in air. The same cause produces the very same effect upon human beings ; upon human mothers, and upon human children. Human mothers living in dark cellars produce an unusual proportion of defective children. Go into the narrow streets and the dark lanes, courts, and alleys of our splendid cities, there you will see an unusual number of deformed people, men, women, and children, but particularly children. In some cells under the fortifications of Lisle, a number of poor people took up their abode ; the proportion of defective infants produced by them became so great that it was deemed necessary to issue an order commanding these cells to be shut up. The window duties multiply these cells of the fortifications of Lisle in London, in Liverpool, in Manchester, in Bristol, and in every city and town in England by hundreds and by thousands, and with the same result ; but the cells here are not shut up, nor is the cause that produces them removed.

“ Even in cases in which the absence of light is not so complete as to produce a result thus definite and striking, the effects of the privation are still abundantly manifest in the pale and sickly complexion, and the enfeebled and stunted frame ; nor can it be otherwise, since, from the essential constitution of organized beings, light is as necessary to the development of the animal as it is to the growth of the plant.

“ In proportion then as the window duties exclude light from human dwellings, they tend to deteriorate the population ; they interpose a positive and definite obstacle to the full development of the physical constitution, and consequently of the physical strength and vigour of the people.”

The Association do not consider themselves bound to point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a suitable substitute for any deficiency in the revenue, which would be the result of the repeal of taxes pressing on the sanitary condition of the people. Nevertheless, they do not think they are departing from their object in suggesting, in the present instance, a remedy. These duties were first imposed in 1696, as a property tax, and were then thought to form a satisfactory indication of the value of house property. The Association consider that a tax on houses would not be open to the serious sanitary objections which

have been urged against the tax on windows. One of the advantages which would result from such a mode of taxation would be the government registration of houses—a registration which this Association consider essential for the introducing and carrying out efficient sanitary improvements to the dwellings of the people.

Holding these views, the Association deemed it expedient to solicit the Chancellor of the Exchequer to receive a deputation, to present the following resolutions :—

“That it has been abundantly proved that the tax on windows has operated materially in the production of evils which could scarcely have been anticipated by the legislature when the tax was first imposed; and that the evils themselves are of distressing magnitude, and produce much disease, not only through the shutting up of windows already in existence, and the building of houses without a sufficient supply of light, (an element necessary to healthy organization,) but by the great obstruction to ventilation, which is the practical result of taxing all apertures, which, while admitting air, also admit light ;—

“And, further. That it is the belief of this Association that no government could be found to support the continuance of a tax so clearly and demonstrably proved to operate most injuriously on the welfare of the people, (a primary object with all good government,) unless the revenue thereby derived was essential to the wants of the nation ; it is expedient, therefore, that another source whence to derive the necessary sum be indicated.

“That policy and equity point to the imposition of a tax on houses.

“That all houses should be included, with such exceptions as may be deemed expedient by parliament.

“That a Government Registration of all houses is fundamentally necessary, for the bringing home to the dwellings of all classes of the community efficient sanitary measures, and that the data, which would be furnished through such a tax, would prove the groundwork for, and greatly facilitate the introduction of, those measures.

“That, by the operation of such a tax, parishes would be greatly protected through the check which would be afforded, against untrue returns of unoccupied houses.

“That, as it is the object of this Association to obtain, through legislative enactments, remedies for the evils which result from the present imperfect sanitary condition of the metropolis, it is expedient that this Association represent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the foregoing means of obtaining the revenue necessary for the purposes of the State, and that he be requested to bring in a bill for the total abolition of the tax on windows, and for the imposition of a tax on houses in its place.”*

On the 29th of May, a deputation consisting of Sir Edward Pearson, the Rev. Dr. Worthington, the Rev. C. Hume, W. Rogers, Esq., George Godwin, Esq., T. M. Nelson, Esq., C. Baynes, Esq., C. F. J. Lord, Esq., Dr. Aldis, and other members, including the Honorary Secretaries, attended the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It is to be regretted that, notwithstanding a forcible exposition by Dr. Gavin, Dr. Worthington, the Rev. C. Hume, and Mr. Lord, of the sanitary evils inflicted by the operation of the window duties, no hope was held out by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of any remission or modification of the tax during the present session.

On the subject of the state of the law with regard to the transfer of land, the Association can merely, at the present time, place on record the resolution adopted by them, on the Report of the Sub-Committee on the Dwellings of the Poor.

“That the present state of the law, with reference to the transfer of land and buildings, has encouraged the practice of land being let on building leases, instead of being sold, which, in addition to other inconveniences, has caused the erection of houses defective in construction, and therefore prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants.”

* It is worthy of notice that the very same substitute in lieu of the Window Tax has been proposed by the author (an officer of the Tax Department of the Board of Inland Revenue) of the recent “Letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Assessed Taxes, with Suggestions for a General Revision of the Duties. 1850.”

One great impediment to a more rapid improvement in the sanitary condition of the metropolis consists in the number of the different local boards—their difference of constitution—their irregular jurisdiction—their various and conflicting powers; the numerous parliamentary enactments under which these powers are exercised; and the jealousies of control and supervision on the part of the present holders of office, not in reference to government alone, but to other boards in their own parishes, and even to the inhabitants whom they profess to represent. In numerous instances, elected for life, or holding office in virtue of possessing a certain amount of freehold property, members of the local boards in the metropolis are beyond all responsibility to the inhabitants.

In some large parishes, indeed, to so great an extent has this vicious monopoly of the privileges of the inhabitants been carried, that the inhabitants may be considered under the complete control of a self-elected and irresponsible fraction of the community.

It is also a general truth, that the great mass of the inhabitants of parishes, in consequence of their affairs being virtually managed by a small fraction, are entirely ignorant either of the local acts under which they are governed, or of the officers who administer these laws.

While all matters affecting the economical interests of the parishes, (except the administration of the poor-laws,) are thus left to be administered by bodies so essentially vicious in their organization, and so practically opposed to the theoretically representative constitution of this kingdom, matters affecting the health and lives of 2,000,000 of people are likewise confided to them. It is not then to be wondered at that the agents which raise men from degradation, which promote their physical and moral welfare, that the laws of health and disease, with their economical bearings on the welfare of the community, should have been misapprehended by the ratepayers, and set at nought by bodies composed on such a principle. Neither can it be a matter of surprise, that the knowledge, judgment, and scientific and practical appliances for the government and administrative arrangements originally requisite for a small parish, are found totally unadapted to the wants of enormous parishes, themselves towns of no mean magnitude—the rapid growth of later years.

There are no less than eighty-four different paving boards in the metropolis, nineteen of which are in the parish of St. Pancras. On

the constitution of these local boards, and their administration of the powers and privileges conferred, the Association have already commenced an inquiry; but, until it be completed, they will only advert to the propriety of all the powers now given to several boards in one parish, union, or borough, being conferred upon a new local board, to be composed of persons duly qualified by £—— freehold, or £—— tenancy; the members of the board to be in the proportion of one person for every —— inhabitants, such persons to be elected by the rate-payers, by voting papers, for five years, and one-fifth to retire annually, but to be eligible for re-election.

This concentration of power in the hands of a lesser number of individuals would increase their efficiency and responsibility, diminish the expense, and prevent much jobbery and corruption.

It appears quite practicable to effect this change without disturbing the powers contained in the present acts of parliament, all of which must necessarily form the subject of consideration in the ensuing session.

The machinery for carrying into execution the improvements of a sanitary character which are so imperiously demanded, and for taking precautionary preventive measures against the spread of contagious and epidemic diseases, is so important a preliminary part of the inquiry, that the Association have felt called on thus early to indicate a mode of promptly effecting much good.

The powers to be given to, and the responsibilities to be imposed on, the local boards will form subjects for future consideration. But the Association, considering the necessity for uniformity of action, simplicity, and economy, have resolved—

“That the supplying of water, the cleansing, lighting, and paving of the streets and highways, and street improvement, have so intimate a connexion with each other, that it is desirable to have the whole under the superintendence of the same board of management.”

In the event of a local board for the whole metropolis being determined on as the most advisable machinery, they have resolved—

“That to insure an efficient local knowledge on the part of such board, it is desirable that the metropolis should be divided into districts, and that one or more persons should be appointed to such board from each district.”

Passing from this suggested legislation, and considering the sanitary evils now in operation in the order in which they are likely to be taken up by Government, the subject of intramural burial presents itself as the most prominent.

On this subject, the following are the views of the Association, founded on a careful consideration of a report from a special Subcommittee :—

From the evidence contained in the valuable writings of Mr. George Alfred Walker, and in the Parliamentary Report of 1842, from Mr. Chadwick's Report on Interments in Towns, and from other sources, the Association are convinced that the present system of burial in London is prejudicial to health, incompatible with decency and solemnity, demoralizing in its tendency, and unnecessarily expensive, and they have had those views confirmed and strengthened by the recent Report of the Board of Health.

Bodies interred in wood coffins at any practicable depth, during decomposition give out deleterious gases and liquids, which mix with, and often saturate, the earth around them. The gases, holding in suspension putrescent matter, pass upwards, mix with, and poison the surrounding atmosphere,—in some instances occasion sudden death, in others produce fatal fevers, and in every case render persons who inhale them more susceptible of epidemic and other diseases. The liquids percolate the soil and contaminate the wells and springs of water in the neighbourhood, or find their way into drains and sewers, and pollute the air with noxious and destructive exhalations.

The great number of interments occurring together; the practice of burying many corpses in one grave, which is very general; the necessity of disturbing bodies not yet dissolved, to make room for fresh inhabitants of the tomb; the filthy appearance of the grave-diggers; and the neglected state of the burial grounds;—are incompatible with the solemnity suitable to the decent interment of the dead. Frequently the circumstances are so revolting as to outrage common decency, distress the feelings of relatives, and to exercise a demoralizing influence on all who witness the interment.

It is a well known fact, that frequently where death occurs in a family inhabiting only one room, the dead body is of necessity kept for many days before interment, in the apartment where the rest of the family live, cook, eat, and sleep. This is a practice which must

obviously be most pernicious to health, while it cannot fail to harden the feelings against the solemnizing effects of bereavement.

The extravagant amount of funeral charges is felt by all classes, and more especially by the poor, to be most oppressive and unjust.

The complication of shocking circumstances, above alluded to, connected with the burial of the dead in crowded neighbourhoods, convince the Association, that for the improvement of the sanitary condition of London, and also for the interests of religion and morality, it is indispensable that intramural sepulture should be by law interdicted, and that the decent and solemn burial of the dead should be conducted at a considerable distance from the metropolis.

They also think it necessary that houses for the reception of the dead, until they are taken to the burial ground, should be provided.

The Association have carefully weighed the scheme for Extramural Interment, proposed to Parliament by the Board of Health, and believing it will remedy the existing evils, hope that its essential provisions contained in the Bill now before Parliament may soon pass into a law.

The leading features of the SCHEME are—

First. That all burials, and the whole arrangements for burials, be entrusted by commission to a small body.

Second. That public burial grounds be provided at a suitable distance from London, and that it be unlawful to inter in any other place than the public burial grounds.

Third. That after passing an act on this subject, all interments in churches, and within the precincts of the metropolis, with a few exceptions, be strictly prohibited.

Fourth. That receiving houses, with suitable attendants, where the dead may be kept until buried, shall be prepared.

Fifth. That Officers of Health be appointed, to inquire into the circumstances connected with the cause of death in each instance, and to advise with the friends of the deceased respecting the funeral.

In reference to the first proposition of the proposed scheme, the Association think it indispensable for its success, that one authority should exercise control over the whole of the interments.

As to the second: All the evils complained of having arisen, and been continued, under parochial control, and in private burial grounds,

and trading companies (that is, existing cemeteries) having failed to remedy them, they think that sufficiently extensive public burial grounds are imperatively required.

As to the third proposition: They consider that no interment or burial should be allowed in the metropolis after the passing of the act, except under circumstances of a national character.

As to the fourth: They are of opinion that the proposed plan will in every way meet the necessities of the case.

As to the fifth: They expect many advantages from its adoption. It will be the means of verifying the fact of death. It will often bring to light unsuspected causes of disease, and will afford a new obstacle to the concealment and perpetration of crime. To a bereaved family, the visit of a public officer, appointed to direct and counsel them as to the appropriate funeral arrangements in their case, will, it is believed, be both acceptable and useful. The family will have the satisfaction of knowing, that while the obsequies of the deceased will be conducted with becoming solemnity and respect, all unnecessary and extortionate expense will be avoided.

As the medical profession, with rare exceptions, are in the habit of giving a certificate of the *fact* and *cause* of death in every fatal case they attend, but a few instances will arise where the Officer of Health will *necessarily* be called on to testify as to the *fact* and *cause* of death. Thus, of the mortality in 1849, in the metropolis, stated to be 68,432, only 306 cases are returned in the summary as due to causes *not specified*. It is undeniable, however, that many of these certificates as to the *cause of death* are received from illegal practitioners, druggists, quacks, &c. Experience, therefore, and a more strict registration, can alone determine the number of cases in which it would be *necessary* to inquire into the fact and cause of death. But of the cases *certified* by competent medical authority, it is evident from the enormous number of deaths arising from what are commonly termed in sanitary language "preventible diseases," that it would frequently be necessary to inquire as to the *local or general causes* which have led to such excessive mortality. Thus, wherever certificates shall indicate an excessive mortality from typhus, cholera, small-pox, &c., it is clear an inquiry into the removable causes of death might indicate remedial measures, which would be productive of a saving of life, and, in numerous instances, actually extinguish the disease in the particular locality.

A most extensive experience, acquired previous to and during the prevalence of the late epidemic, demonstrated, in thousands of instances, that the people hailed with gratitude such beneficent inquiries.

Besides cases such as these, there are others in which the services of an Officer of Health would prove of the highest advantage to the welfare of society. In England there are annually not less than 40,000 children who are stated to be *still-born*, and of the *fact and cause* of whose death no certificate whatever is required; an investigation is never, or but rarely, made as to the circumstances; neither is the burial ever registered. Great facilities are thus afforded for the concealment of birth, and also for the commission of the crime of infanticide. Children who have been born alive are frequently interred as still-born in order to avoid the burial fees, while still-born children are frequently represented to have been born alive, in order to obtain money from burial clubs.

The lamentable examples, more particularly in the adjacent rural districts, of long-continued practices of poisoning and murder, such as the "Essex Poisonings;" the extent to which criminal abortion is believed to prevail; the more brutal practices frequently disclosed of the murder of children by their own parents, and especially by their mothers, for the sake of small sums secured by burial clubs on their decease; the disastrous results prevalent in certain districts, more especially the manufacturing districts, where a mortality among children takes place twice as great as that which occurs in other towns, (not country places,) from the lethal practice of administering opiates, all point to the advantages which would result from inquiries into the *cause* of death.

The criminal in intention will pause on the threshold of his crime when he sees inevitable detection staring him in the face.

It might be urged, that there is no necessary connexion between sanitary evils and the crimes above indicated as possible to be prevented. Such an objection would only betray the ignorance of the objector. Facts of the most comprehensive character demonstrate that where sanitary evils abound, vice, like disease, is engendered and propagated.

The Association entertaining these views, requested the Bishop of London and Lord Robert Grosvenor to present the following Petition to Parliament on the introduction of the Interment Bill:—

“ TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS, ETC.

“ *The humble Petition of the Metropolitan Sanitary Association,*

“ HUMBLY SHOWETH,

“ That your petitioners have formed themselves into an association for the purpose of inquiry into the causes by which the public health is injuriously affected, and to point out the means whereby those causes may be most effectually removed.

“ That your petitioners have carefully considered the effects of the grave yards in the metropolis upon the public health, and also the provisions of the Metropolitan Interment Bill now before Parliament.

“ That your petitioners participate in the general conviction, that the system of burial in London is prejudicial to health, incompatible with decency and solemnity, demoralising in its tendency, and unnecessarily expensive.

“ That it has been distinctly proved, that the bodies of the dead give off, during decay, deleterious gases and vapours, which, holding in suspension putrescent matter, mix with and poison the surrounding atmosphere, have in some cases caused sudden death, in others produced fatal illness, and in all, rendered those exposed to their influence more susceptible of disease.

“ That the existing extent of the grave-yards is quite insufficient for the number of bodies to be interred, and that, consequently, many bodies are frequently buried in one grave, and those previously interred are sometimes disturbed to make room for fresh occupants of the tomb,—practices which are incompatible with the solemnities of burial, and gross outrages to that respectful reverence for the dead which it is the part of a good government to foster and promote.

“ That much injury, both to the health and morals of the poor, is now occasioned by the necessity under which many of them labour of retaining the dead bodies of their friends in the only room they have, in which the family live, cook, eat and sleep.

“ That the charges for funerals are generally excessive, and in many cases most oppressive and unjust: the friends of the deceased cannot protect themselves from extortionate charges while suffering from recent bereavement.

“ That your petitioners are convinced, that the adoption of the provisions of the Metropolitan Interment Bill, by which all interments

within the metropolis will, with few exceptions, be prohibited, will, to a great extent, remedy these most serious evils.

“That your petitioners especially approve of the provision, by which the control of all interments in London is to be entrusted to one board, responsible to Government and Parliament, inasmuch as there now exists no authority representing, and competent to act for, the whole metropolis, and as it would be a waste of time, and difficult to contrive any machinery by which the interests of all would be more securely protected than by such a board.

“That your petitioners express their decided approval of the principle to establish one large cemetery, at a distance from London, but accessible from it both by water and land, and they anticipate both economical and other more important advantages, from the proposal of conducting a number of funerals at one time,—by which arrangement greatly increased impressiveness may be given to the religious rites.

“That your petitioners also express their cordial approval of the proposal to establish places for the reception of the dead, previous to interment, and of the appointment of officers to give information and aid to the survivors, in relation to the care and interment of the deceased, as they are of opinion that such officers will be of essential public service in verifying the fact of death, and by their inquiries will often bring to light unsuspected causes of diseases and afford a new obstacle to the concealment, and therefore to the perpetration, of crime.

“Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray your Honourable House to pass the Metropolitan Interments Bill, now before Parliament, and your petitioners,” &c. &c.

The Association, impressed with a deep conviction of the importance of providing for the abolition of interments in the metropolis, have used their untiring exertions to promote the passing of the Bill, in such a form as would secure the great object which they have in view. A vast number of petitions, received by them, have been placed in the hands of members of parliament. A public meeting was held on the 13th May, 1850, at the Whittington Club, (late Crown and Anchor,) at which Lord Robert Grosvenor, M.P., presided. This meeting was very numerously attended, and a petition in favour of the Bill to both houses of parliament was signed by more than 800 of the persons who

were present. After the first resolution, affirming the principle of the Bill, had been carried by an overwhelming majority, its opponents, despairing of success by fair argument and a free expression of opinion, disgracefully interrupted the proceedings of the meeting in a manner already known to the public.

The Association have received many assurances that their labours in relation to this measure have been productive of great public benefit.

On the subject of the Supply of Water to this vast metropolis the Association consider it necessary again to call attention to the valuable labours of the Health of Towns and Health of London Associations.

The Report of the Health of Towns Association contains an elaborate disquisition on the evils of the present system, pp. 35—66; a corroboration of which remarks is to be found in the Report of the Health of London Association, pp. 43—49.

A supply of water at high pressure, (even as an experiment only,) cannot be obtained. The cost of tanks and cisterns, to retain the water now periodically doled out to the inhabitants, amounts to not less than £2,000,000, and the keeping of water in such receptacles is a great cause of its impurity.

80,000 houses in London, inhabited by 640,000 persons, are unsupplied with water, 40,000 of which houses have no right to a supply.

Sewers without a constant supply of water are worse than useless. They are mere elongated cesspools, and receptacles of putrid filth, the more dangerous because erroneously believed to be safeguards and sanitary appliances.

The hardness of the water supplied causes destruction of fabrics and great waste of soap, soda, and labour in washing. It is also injurious in various manufactories and in cooking, and causes both risk and injury to steam-engine boilers. The want of cleanliness which results from the present system is a serious obstacle to the moral and physical improvement of the people, and tends to the production of much disease.

In consequence of the appearance of a report by the General Board of Health on the subject of the water supply of the metropolis, it is

unnecessary, to do more than state the following principles which have been laid down by the Association—

- “That, inasmuch as water is a prime necessary of life, attainable in large cities by combined effort only, and not to be denied to any without injury to all, its supply should not be dependent on commercial enterprise, but be provided at the expense of the community for the common benefit.
- “That the supply should be constant, at high pressure, unlimited in quantity, and universal in its distribution.
- “That, in order to secure economy and efficiency of works, and uniformity and simplicity of action and co-operation, it is essential that the administrative arrangements for the supply of water, and for the main and house drainage, should be in one and the same body.
- “That, whether the powers be vested in a representative, commissioned, or mixed representative body, they should be exercised only under supervision or control.
- “That the water, from whatever source or sources it be derived, should be supplied as soft as possible, and free from all contamination with mineral or organic matters.”

The evil which next most prominently bears on the welfare of the public, and which is most easy of relief, is the prevalence of nuisances, and the toleration of noxious trades and manufactures. Closely connected with this evil are the causes which tend to the spread of epidemic diseases; the two subjects form parts of one Act of Parliament. It is necessary, however, to bear in mind this important distinction—that the Act as it relates to nuisances is at all times applicable; while that part by which measures *may* be taken to prevent the spread of contagious and epidemic diseases, is only operative when called into force (for six months at a time) by a proclamation of the Privy Council.

At the present time, the provisions for the prevention of contagious diseases are not in force, the Privy Council having read the act as merely authorizing them to put them in force by proclamation when the country appeared threatened by some formidable epidemic, or contagious disease. It is remarkable that, while the Privy Council in

England could see no necessity for measures of prevention, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland deemed it expedient to renew his proclamation, putting the Act in force.

As the constitution of the General Board of Health is necessarily connected with the consideration of the amendment of the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act, it is expedient here to introduce certain resolutions, passed April 12th, expressive of the sentiments of the Association in reference to the constitution of the General Board of Health, and the efficiency of the Act.

1st. "That the result of the labours of the Metropolitan Sanitary Commission, as well as the experience of the General Board of Health, manifested in their public reports, have shown that by the application of medical science to the detection of the removable causes which act injuriously on the public health, and the carrying into effect the means of prevention, life has in numerous instances been saved, and the spread of disease arrested; further, that as such preventive measures in the degree in which they have been efficient, have operated to diminish orphanage, widowhood, and pauperism, that no inconsiderable amount of public money has been saved, which must otherwise have been expended in measures of alleviation.

2nd. "That in the administration of the Public Health Act, from the very nature and objects of that Act, questions in preventive medicine constantly arise, which can only be satisfactorily dealt with under the guidance of competent medical authority.

3rd. "That the Registrar-General's returns for the Metropolis show that the pestilence of cholera has not entirely passed away. That from the non-renewal of the proclamation of the Privy Council, under the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act, there is no longer a Medical Commissioner attached to the General Board of Health. This Association cannot but regret that the order in Council for continuing in force the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act has not been renewed, and are of opinion that the public welfare essentially requires that

that Act should be amended, and rendered a *permanent*, and not a *provisional*, measure, so as to be effectually operative against ordinary and domestic, as well as against extraordinary and foreign pestilences.

- 4th. "That the Local Boards throughout the country have no longer any authority to expend the parochial funds on special preventive measures, and are at the same time deprived of all power to require that such measures be carried into effect by other bodies, entrusted by law with their execution. That this Association would therefore call the attention of the public to the urgent necessity of their exercising all practical vigilance by putting in force every legal provision available, for the common protection against a pestilence which may be still impending, and the outbreak of which is often as sudden as it is mortal."

In reference to the second of these resolutions, the Association would remark, as a very serious blemish of this Act, that no provision is made for the appointment of medical inspectors to examine into and report on the state of health in a town, and on the character of its prevailing diseases previously to the examination and survey by a civil engineer or in concurrence with him, according to circumstances. It is manifestly absurd to expect that gentlemen of the civil engineering profession, however eminently qualified in their own special vocation, should be able to duly appreciate all questions of medical evidence, or to accurately sift the many difficult problems respecting the development and extension of diseases, nor is it unreasonable to suppose that medical men will always be more ready to communicate the results of their local experience to members of their own profession than to strangers.

The Association have taken considerable pains to arrive at a just conclusion as to the actual state of the public health, and to form an opinion as to whether there is evidence to the effect that a return of the dreaded epidemic pestilence may be anticipated.

The following table exhibits the deaths from cholera and diarrhoea in the eighteen weeks ending June 29th, and those which occurred in the same weeks of the last ten years, distinguishing the first eight and the last two years ; the first eight years being ordinary years—the two last, years of epidemic pestilence:—

DEATHS IN LONDON FROM CHOLERA AND DIARRHŒA.			Average of 1840 to 1847: 8 years.	1848.	1849.	1850.
Week ending March 2	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	.25 8.25	... 15	35 20	1 18
Week ending March 9	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	.12 7.25	1 14	15 18	... 9
Week ending March 16	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	... 5.50	1 19	9 20	3 17
Week ending March 23	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	0.12 5.25	... 15	10 15	1 20
Week ending March 30	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	.25 6.75	1 15	4 19	... 12
Week ending April 6	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	.37 5.62	0 10	5 8	2 15
Week ending April 13	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	... 5.00	1 20	2 14	... 13
Week ending April 20	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	... 6.75	... 13	1 18	... 19
Week ending April 27	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	.25 7.12	2 9	1 16	1 11
Week ending May 4	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	.62 5.75	1 10	3 11	... 8
Week ending May 11	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	... 6.12	2 19	4 20	... 10
Week ending May 18	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	0.50 4.62	... 4	1 15	1 11
Week ending May 25	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	.50 7.85	... 14	5 19	... 11
Week ending June 1	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	0.50 7.50	1 15	9 16	... 15
Week ending June 8	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	0.37 6.25	2 17	22 20	2 19
Week ending June 15	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	0.62 8.50	5 21	42 36	1 17
Week ending June 22	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	0.62 10.62	... 35	49 17	... 18
Week ending June 29	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	0.87 13.00	3 42	124 30	2 33
Total	{	Cholera—deaths Diarrhœa—deaths	5.96 127.70			14 276

It thus appears, that during the 18 weeks ending June 29, 1850, cholera was fatal as compared with the corresponding weeks in the eight first of the last ten years, in the proportion of 2.35 to 1, and diarrhœa in the proportion of 216 to 100. It is thus proved that a tendency

to cholera and diarrhoea has prevailed to an unusual degree ; it would therefore be presumptuous to conclude that cholera and diarrhoea may not again become fatally epidemic during the present season.

In reference to the evils which result from the existence of Nuisances and Noxious Trades and Manufactures, and the most effective means for their prevention, and to the circumstances which favour the spread of contagious diseases, the Association would offer the following remarks :—

A very large proportion of the mortality which takes place in the world arises from zymotic or, as they are sometimes not quite correctly termed, epidemic diseases. In our own country, the average mortality for the five years 1838—1842,* from this class of disease has been 67,545. This mortality is in proportion of 19·4 per cent. to the total mortality 1,734,435. In London the average for the same five years has been 9493. This mortality is in the higher proportion of 22 per cent. to the total mortality 215,016. The proportion of deaths from zymotic diseases to the total deaths in the metropolis, was raised last year to the fearful amount of 41·3 per cent. It is evident, therefore, that a very large proportion of the mortality of the kingdom, and more especially of the metropolis, is due to a class of diseases, which are with much reason considered to be *preventible diseases*.

Among the impediments to the removal of the causes of such disorders is the opinion, which has been more or less prevalent in all ages, that the visitations of pestilence or epidemic disease are always the direct infliction of Divine Providence ; that they are, therefore, beyond human control, and exempted from the operation of those ordinary precautions for prevention or removal which are wisely adopted against other evils afflicting the human race. Nevertheless, it is a fact, which cannot be too widely known, that, while on the one hand epidemic diseases are precisely those over which curative medicine has the least control, they are specially distinguished as being amenable to enlightened and efficient measures of prevention. It is clearly, therefore, a religious duty, as well as a wise act of social policy, to adopt every available precaution against this class of evils.

So long ago as 1797, Dr. Currie, of Liverpool, boldly declared that

* The only years during which the causes of mortality throughout the kingdom have been classified.

“a vigilant exercise of all the means of prevention and of cure might in a short period supersede the necessity for fever-hospitals, by extinguishing the disease—a prospect in which the philanthropist might indulge with more safety if he could calculate with equal confidence on the *wisdom* as on the *power* of his species.”

In many cases it is clearly ascertained, and in others strongly suspected, that epidemic diseases arise from causes which man has power to mitigate or remove, such as malaria and impure water, or food; also that many of these diseases are apt, under favouring circumstances, by their poisonous exhalations to produce similar diseases in persons exposed to their influence—in other words, to become contagious. It is a matter of the first importance, in furtherance of the spirit of the Act for the prevention of such diseases, to be familiar with the laws which regulate their origin and extension. It must be self-evident that this work can only be satisfactorily carried out by persons acquainted with the complicated operations of nature in relation to the human body in health and sickness.

Diseases of an epidemic character are in general most rife and fatal in the abodes of the poor, generally from mere defective sanitary arrangements. Such ailments are very liable to assume a malignant type.

To guard against the occurrence and return of such diseases—to prevent their continuance—to mitigate their force, to prohibit by judicious regulations, their spreading by contagion, is the province and privilege of the medical philosopher alone. The beneficial results of the exercise of such knowledge and control, under a uniform system, throughout the kingdom, would be great beyond calculation. The moral and social advantages which would be secured by such intelligent and humane medical supervision would, it is firmly believed, greatly aid the sacred mission of the clergy.

The chief defect of the Act 11 & 12 Vic. c. 123, is that it has no provision to secure the constant services and vigilance of those who can alone realize the great desiderata expressed in the very title of the enactment—‘The Prevention of Contagious and Epidemic Diseases.’ The latter clauses will remain as dead letters so long as there are no officers qualified by requisite knowledge, and armed with the necessary authority, to carry out the wise and benign intentions of the law.

That diseases of the kind now under consideration may be prevented by the scrutinizing research of the medical naturalist, combined with the strong arm of wise legislation, is shown by the triumph of vaccination, and by the vast saving of human life effected by the late (though imperfect) preventive measures of house to house visitation during the prevalence of cholera.

The absence of the plague from London since 1665, under a system of cleaner and wider streets, and consequent improved ventilation, is an evidence that much may be done by growing civilization and its attendant police regulations. The immunity, too, from that pestilence, secured by poor families (consisting of 10,000 persons), who left their close abodes and tainted alleys, and 'lived in barges moored down the Thames,' shows how much common sense and common observation may do to escape or avert an impending danger.

Certain telluric or electric influences connected with meteorological laws, and other atmospheric agencies, which at present we do not fully understand, play an important part in the rise and progress of all epidemics. But although this be admitted, and may at first sight appear discouraging, there are causes of which the conjoint operation is indispensable for developing pestilence. These superadded causes are under man's control. Even diseases, the origin of which cannot be attributed to causes within our direct control, are rendered much more severe and deadly by such superadded causes: their removal would consequently not only prevent the spread of epidemic, but also materially diminish the mortality from all, diseases.

The history of past visitations, the experience of our own times, especially of the late epidemic cholera, prove that where no local causes are in action, corrupting the air or vitiating the blood and nervous system, *there pestilence cometh not.*

Whatever the peculiar electric or meteorological agents may be, they are by themselves unable to produce any pestilential condition of the atmosphere, which can, *per se*, engender plague, sweating sickness, or any other fearful epidemic.

Illustrative of the truth of the broad assertion made in the foregoing statement, it may be well to pass in brief review some facts which have become history, and others of recent date. 'Jungle fever has attacked *eight out of ten* mariners, who have gone ashore *before sunrise or after*

sunset, while *not one* from another division of the same men, at the same place and season, has suffered who has *frequented the same spots in the middle of the day?*

Cordons of troops have been cut off with yellow fever when exposed to currents of air charged with malaria, and facing a given direction, while their comrades, quartered in the same field or barracks, but exposed to different currents, have escaped. A whole ship's crew have been sickly, or dying, from the effects of putrid bilge water and damp between decks. In the close ship, the fever was supposed to be contagious, but on arrival at a healthy island, no instances were known of the disease spreading by contagion from men landed out of the sickly crew and surrounded by pure fresh air.

Tribes among the Hindoos worshipped the small-pox as a goddess, whose malignity might be appeased by sacrifices and fêtes. 'Whole clans were swept away by her fury, and travellers repassing have found no traces of village population but whitened bones.' In Russia, previous to the introduction of vaccination, one-seventh of the population died of the small pox. In Denmark, the laws relating to vaccination are very strict. Priests are forbidden to marry those who are not safe through vaccination from small-pox. Since 1800, mortality from small pox is there scarcely known. In Prussia, edicts of a stringent character were early declared. In Berlin, the 14th of May is an annual festival in honour of Jenner. In Bavaria, as long ago as 1820, a work was published proclaiming to all the world the great event of the complete extermination of the small-pox. Under Maximilian's bold regulations, only five deaths happened in eleven years, and these from the casual introduction of the disease. But in England, where Government has too often failed to protect the sanitary welfare of the subject, and where merely permissive instead of compulsory measures are for the most part introduced, during the three years ending 1840, the annual average deaths from small-pox was *twelve thousand*.

The charming valley of the Loire is scarcely visited by disease during the vintage—all around are said to be "cured by eating grapes." The old city of Blois, and the towns about, pour forth their pent-up population: for weeks the people pass the days in fresh air, and some the nights. The children become free from their scrofulous swellings; the chronic cough, or bronchitis, gives way; cases of typhus are for a season unheard of; simple change of diet, pure air, and consequent

purification of the blood, give new life, and check, if not cure, disease. But the population, returning to the dark, damp, ill-drained, unventilated lanes and abodes, soon relapse into their former diseased condition: those who linger through winter and spring, still hope to be cured by the magic heal-all—the next vintage. It is not generally known that pure air, exercise, and cheerfulness, are playing the greatest part in the curative virtue of the grape season.

The two following cases furnish good illustrations of the power of sanitary regulations in checking contagious disease, and at the same time of the defective provisions of the present law.

In the immediate neighbourhood of one of the most beautiful parts of the metropolis, a neighbourhood studded thickly with elegant villas and mansions—namely, Bayswater and Notting Hill, in the parish of Kensington—is a plague spot scarcely equalled for its insalubrity by any other in London; it is called the Potteries. It comprises some seven or eight acres, with about 260 houses, (if the term can be applied to such hovels,) and a population of 900 or 1000. The occupation of the inhabitants is principally pig-fattening; many hundreds of pigs, ducks, and fowls are kept in an incredible state of filth. Dogs abound for the purpose of guarding the swine. The atmosphere is still further polluted by the process of fat-boiling. In these hovels discontent, dirt, filth, and misery, are unsurpassed by anything known even in Ireland. Water is supplied to but a small proportion of the houses. There are foul ditches, open sewers, and defective drains, smelling most offensively, and generating large quantities of poisonous gases; stagnant water is found at every turn, not a drop of *clean* water can be obtained,—all is charged to saturation with putrescent matter. Wells have been sunk on some of the premises, but they have become, in many instances, useless from organic matter soaking into them; in some of the wells the water is perfectly black and fetid. The paint on the window frames has become black from the action of sulphuretted hydrogen gas. Nearly all the inhabitants look unhealthy, the women especially complain of sickness, and want of appetite; their eyes are sunken, and their skin shrivelled.

It is difficult to state the amount of disease produced by so much organic matter decomposing in the locality, and saturating the atmosphere and water used by the inhabitants. But during three years ending

December 1848, there were seventy-eight deaths; of these, sixty-one were under fifteen years of age, fifty-five under five years. The average duration of life in the three years was only eleven years and seven months. In the first four months there occurred twenty-eight cases of small-pox, or *one* to every *thirty-six* of the inhabitants, while throughout the other part of the parish of Kensington, with a population of 97,000, only fourteen cases occurred, or *one* to *seven thousand*—showing that the Potteries district is one hundred and ninety-four times more liable to small pox than the remaining portion of the parish. The same may be said of typhus fever and some other zymotic diseases.

With regard to cholera, it may be remarked, that the disease occurred not only in the same streets and houses, but in the same rooms that had been visited over and over again by typhus. Rooms were pointed out by the medical officer, where three or four persons had recovered from fever in the spring to fall victims to cholera in the summer.

The poisonous influence of this pestilential locality extends far and wide. Some twelve or thirteen hundred feet off there is a row of clean houses, called Crafter Terrace; the situation, though rather low, is open and airy. On Saturday and Sunday, the eighth and ninth of September, 1849, the inhabitants complained of an intolerable stench, the wind then blowing directly upon the Terrace from the Potteries. Up to this time, there had been no case of cholera among the inhabitants; but the next day the disease broke out virulently, and on the following day, the 11th of September, a child died of cholera at No. 1. By the 22nd of the same month, no less than seven persons in the terrace lost their lives by this fatal malady.

The facts connected with the foregoing case surely illustrate the necessity for supervision over local authorities in matters connected with the public health.

It would be thought, that such a state of things could not have been permitted to remain undisturbed, but merely required to be brought to light to be remedied. The medical officers have time after time reported the condition of the place to the Board of Guardians. Fifteen medical men have testified to the unhealthy state of the Potteries. The inspector of nuisances has done the same. The Magistrates have

repeatedly granted orders for the removal of the pigs. The General Board of Health have given directions that all the nuisances should be removed, yet nothing, or next to nothing, has been done. The inspector of nuisances has been dismissed, the Guardians have signified their intention to inspect the district themselves, yet things remain in *statu quo*.

Is there then no possibility of cleansing this more than Augean stable? The *only difficulty* lies in the fact that some of the worst parts of the district are the property of one of the guardians.

As an instance of the effects which may be obtained by proper measures, and an efficient application of the powers conferred by the law, Camden Place may be quoted. This place is situated in a district, for its size, as bad as the Potteries, in the same parish, and under the same board of guardians; moreover it is removed but a short distance from the Potteries.

During the year 1848, it was occupied by a similar class of pig-fatteners, and orders were obtained from the magistrate for their removal. These were acted on so effectually, that in November of that year, the whole of the people, thirty-two in number, with their animals quitted the place. During the first ten months of the same year, in a population of 508, there were eight deaths; after their removal, and the consequent cleansing of the street, with a population increased to 532, in the corresponding ten months of 1849 there was but one death, although a most fatal epidemic had been superadded to the other ordinary causes of mortality. In comparing, therefore, the mortality of Camden-place cleansed, and uncleansed, with the Potteries, the account stands thus—

Camden-place, clean, 532 inhabitants, 1 death in ten months.

„	dirty, 508	„	8 deaths	„
The Potteries,	1000	„	50	„

The CONCLUSION at which the Association have arrived from their extended investigations, is, that epidemic and contagious diseases are capable of prevention by human means to a degree far beyond what has hitherto been deemed practicable. It is certain that the art of preventive, will prove of greater public utility than even that of curative medicine, while curative medicine itself would make rapid advances in

its means of alleviating human sufferings, if assisted by the opportunities of observation and comparison, afforded by proper machinery for prevention.

Many of the necessary measures of prevention cannot be adopted by individuals, especially by the poor.

Experience has proved that Boards of Guardians, and similar Local Boards, have not the knowledge necessary to carry out a comprehensive system of prevention, even when the desire on their part is most strong. The most earnest efforts of such bodies lose much of their value for the public good, unless they form part of a general system under direction and responsibility, such as can only be secured by Government.

Emanations from decomposing animal and vegetable matter, bad drains, malaria from marshes, stagnant water, and cesspools, an atmosphere poisoned by over-crowding, an impure and insufficient supply of water, food of bad quality, intramural sepulture, faultily constructed dwellings, and the general want of ventilation, are agents in the production and diffusion of the ordinary epidemic and contagious fevers of our country. To these, at a period of extreme pestilence, as in cholera seasons, is added a certain peculiarity in the atmosphere, depending on meteorological or other agencies not yet discovered; and then the effects become devastating.

Malaria may be rendered comparatively harmless by dilution. To improve the dwellings of the poor by securing light and ventilation, warmth and dryness, appropriate drainage, and a constant supply of pure water, is therefore the imperative duty of a government solicitous of a Nation's Health.

The proximate and predisposing causes of epidemic and contagious diseases are for the most part not only in immediate connexion with special localities, but extend over all the circumstances which connect men in the social state, and moreover constitute a most difficult subject of inquiry. It is therefore absolutely necessary in framing an Act for the prevention of contagious diseases, to provide that its execution should be entrusted to those persons alone, who are specially qualified, by their education and experience, to carry out its enactments.

The law in providing medical aid for paupers contemplated only the *relief* of disease,—in future, the law's energies, and the nation's wealth,

should be dedicated also to the more worthy, humane, and economical object—PREVENTION.

As a good police force, though costly, is really an economical engine, so an efficient staff of medical police,—ever vigilant over the public health, keeping the sanitary machinery in full efficiency, and informing and directing the public mind,—would be a national saving, as well as an object of the highest practical humanity. From the want of such a force, with unity of operation, many disastrous and lamentable errors have arisen in disjointed attempts at sanitary improvements.

The people do not know of the existence of many of the dangers which surround them; and even when keenly alive to the miseries of their position, and most anxious for the removal of the evils, too often dare not take any means to bring them into notice. Landlords have, in general, a dislike to any interference with their property for sanitary purposes, but it is forcibly shown in the following case that the most liberal are unable to effect much good, without the assistance of persons qualified by special knowledge to form a correct judgment as to the best means for effecting the benefits contemplated:—

A benevolent landlord set about improving his poor tenants' dwellings. House-drains were made, and were well trapped, and connected with the common sewer; privies were erected, and water supplied; yet, out of forty-two houses so provided, thirty-three were the sites of cholera. From each privy an open retort neck went as a conduit pipe to the common sewer, and, through these, poisonous effluvia were always arising. This error, causing so much sickness and death, might have been prevented through an inspection by a competent officer, before the houses were allowed to be tenanted.

The necessity of the Contagious Diseases Prevention Act being made applicable to the ordinary emergencies of society, and the gross fallacy of its beneficent powers being reserved for extraordinary pestilences, have been abundantly proved. In the *Journal of Public Health* for November, 1848, and August, 1849, it is shown by elaborate tables, that the direct cost of, and estimated money loss through, typhus fever alone in the metropolis, amounted during the five years, 1843—1847, to 1,328,000*l.*, or 265,600*l.* annually. This sum is exclusive of the amounts contributed for the purchase and maintenance of fever hospitals. For 1848, when the mortality from typhus had increased to 3569, the direct cost and money loss was estimated at 440,000*l.*

If such enormous losses are sustained, in consequence of the ravages of one only of the many forms of zymotic disease, surely the cruelty, injustice, and impolicy, of restricting adequate measures of *prevention* to foreign pestilences, and wholly neglecting means of preventing all kinds of domestic pestilence, must be evident.

The Association, therefore, feel themselves urgently called upon to express a hope,

That the public will aid them to secure the introduction of an Amended Bill, for the Prevention of Contagious Diseases, —permanent in operation, effective in its machinery, and adequate to contend against *ordinary*, as well as against *extraordinary*, pestilence.

The Association have earnestly directed their attention to that part of the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act, which simply treats of the Removal of Nuisances.

The Removal of Nuisances, including all kinds of solid refuse, and of all matters evolved in the operations connected with trades and manufactures which are of a nature to injure public health, claims most serious and attentive consideration.

On the passing of the Act, attempts were made to bring it at once to bear on some of the more prominent nuisances which abound in the metropolis. During the period of the cholera much hope was rested in its efficiency, and it received a full and complete trial. If nuisances, then, still abound, as they do to an incredible extent, their prevalence must be due either to the imperfections of the Act itself, or to the want of an adequate machinery wherewith to carry its wise provisions into execution.

Both causes of failure exist. Some of these causes were foreseen and pointed out to the framers of the bill. Some have been developed in its application. The public welfare is so essentially dependent on a more stringent law and its systematic execution, that a somewhat lengthened statement becomes necessary.

The whole experience of the Association proves that, on the part of the public, a deep feeling of dissatisfaction exists at the state of the law which permits nuisances of every description to continue unremedied. Individuals, finding no redress, impute to Government either a perfect

indifference as to the miseries entailed on them by the existence of such evils, or carelessness in the construction of the Acts of Parliament by which their wrongs are to be redressed.

The Legislature is not aware of the great extent to which the public feeling is engaged on this subject. There is scarcely a member of the Association, who has ever taken an active part in the Health Cause, who has not been repeatedly applied to for aid and assistance to relieve parties from the annoyance, expense, and disease induced by obvious and gross nuisances, but for the removal of which no obvious means presented themselves.

The great experience which many members of the Association had during the prevalence of cholera, not only of the existence of nuisances, but of the small extent to which the law has been *successfully* applied for their removal, enables them to speak with some authority on this head.

There is daily brought into London an enormous quantity of animal and vegetable matter for food, and for various processes of manufacture; the refuse of the matters thus used is not removed, but is scattered, and left on the surface of the soil, in the streets and by-ways, is stored in the gardens and yards attached to dwellings, and is even hid away in the cellars and close rooms of the dwellings themselves.

The accumulations are not removed by any parochial arrangements, except in the most inefficient manner. In some parishes no arrangements whatever exist for the removal of house-refuse, and, in nearly all, the refuse is not removed except at the entire convenience of the contractor. It is illegal for persons to remove their own house-refuse. The contractor, who engages to remove it, by neglecting his duty, compels parties to retain the refuse on their premises. Moreover, the poor are unable to get their refuse removed, in consequence of the (to them) heavy demand of beer-money for each removal. The dustmen also find it convenient to allow a considerable mass of refuse to accumulate, in order that they may be saved the trouble of repeated visits to the same locality.

In some places the house-refuse is only removed at long intervals, it is allowed to accumulate in cellars and basement stories, until at length it forms an immense heap. For instance:—at Mr. Biddle's, No. 13, Albion Terrace, Wandsworth-road, where three deaths occurred from cholera, in August, 1849, the refuse had been allowed to accu-

mulate for two years in one of the vaults of the house, and when removed, it filled ten or twelve carts; the stench was almost intolerable. The putrid mass was filled with maggots. It is in reference to this house that the Registrar-General remarked—

“The effects of decomposing refuse and water on health are well known—their fatal subsidies to cholera (such as stated above), were, during the late epidemic, heard of every day. No medical police had interfered to disturb the contents of Mr. Biddle’s cellars, and now when the nineteen—masters, servants, parents, and children (the total number)—who perished during the late epidemic, at Albion Terrace, Wandsworth Road, rest in their graves—it appears to be taken for granted, that blame attaches to nobody, to nothing—not to the householders themselves—to the guardians of the district—to the institutions of the country. Such mean inanimate instruments of death can be invested with no dramatic interest; but, fixing our eyes on the victims, it is well worth considering whether, substantially, it is not as much a part of the sound policy of the country that lives like those in Albion Terrace should be saved as that the murderers of the man in Bermondsey should be hanged.”

The pestilence continued its ravages in this terrace after the date of the Registrar’s remark. The entire number of deaths amounted to not less than thirty.

In other places the surface of the back-yards attached to houses has been raised two yards by the accumulation of house refuse. Instances of this latter kind occurred in Old Nichol Street, Bethnal Green.

It is most important to observe that, if rain falls on a surface thus loaded with decomposing organic matter, when warmed by the sun, it readily yields to the atmosphere vapours charged with the seeds of disease and death.

The sources of the evils resulting from this retention of house refuse are to be found in the want of an efficient arrangement for its *daily removal*, and the ordinary custom of parochial authorities seeking to save money by contracting for its disposal and removal—not in the most efficient manner, but at the lowest tender. The contractors, moreover, after removing the refuse of whole parishes, oftentimes deposit the same in yards in the middle of densely populated localities. A case of this description has been mentioned by Dr. Barnett in a paper on “The Present Condition of the Labouring Classes,”—the following

extract from which will give some idea as to the frightful amount of contagious disease induced thereby :—

“ A large depôt for the reception of night soil and other refuse is situate in the eastern portion of the parish of Limehouse, within a few yards of a row of houses termed ‘the Tile Yard.’ In that row, consisting only of *seven* houses, there were, within six months, no fewer than *twenty-eight* cases of typhus, *three* of scarlet fever, and *five* of diarrhœa, being at the rate of *ten* cases of *preventible disease* per house per annum.

“ If we reflect for a moment on the number of CHILDREN who, from this cause, may have become ORPHANS,—WIVES who may have become WIDOWS,—we shall be enabled to form some estimate as to the expense entailed on the ratepayers in consequence of defective local administration.”

Similar yards abound in certain districts, containing mountains of all kinds of filth, from night-soil and the refuse of the markets, to common house-dust. In such neighbourhoods, disease has been found to prevail, epidemics to be particularly rife, and property in the immediate neighbourhood to be seriously depreciated.

The enormous accumulation of refuse in the yard of a contractor, situate in Anne’s Place, Hackney Road, has proved not only injurious to the health of the surrounding inhabitants, but has operated so as nearly to destroy the value of the houses in its more immediate vicinity. Rows of houses bounding this enormous nuisance are almost tenantless, and one proprietor alone has houses, which would otherwise produce a rental of £300 per annum, with scarcely a single tenant.

As the wealthier classes do not themselves, in general, experience any inconvenience from the non-removal of house refuse, it is necessary to call attention to the general discomfort and wretchedness inflicted on the poor by such accumulation of refuse matter in and around their dwellings.

STABLES from being ill kept, and having refuse in their immediate neighbourhood, are productive of annoyance and injury. The dwellings over such stables have been found to be the frequent seats of typhus, and other epidemic diseases. Six cases of cholera occurred last autumn in rooms over a stable, well situated in an open, healthy district in

Hampstead, while no other cases occurred in the neighbouring houses.* Immediately beneath the window of one room there were pigsties, and a privy in a most neglected state, and in the stable, under the rooms, was a large cesspool, with an open grating made to receive the liquid soil; from the "economy" of the proprietor this was made large, so that the soil could be dipped out with a pail.

In the opinion of the Association, provision should be made for the *daily* removal of all house-refuse and collections of manure, and fit localities should be selected for their reception, under public control.

COW-SHEDS are generally most offensive nuisances. Their filthy condition and want of ventilation induce disease in the animals themselves, and cause them to furnish milk most injurious to health, especially to the health of children. When cows are kept together in any considerable number in London, it is impossible by legislative enactments, however stringent, to prevent consequences injurious to the public health. The quantity of excrementitious matter is, in such cases, so great, that even if carted away once in every twenty-four hours, sufficient would still remain to poison the surrounding atmosphere.

It is scarcely necessary to adduce any evidence of the sanitary evils which result from cow-sheds in crowded districts: instances are sufficiently abundant of the prevalence of typhus, and other forms of zymotic disease, in their immediate vicinity. Even though the district be open, still, if the cows are in great number, and closely packed, the quantity of refuse scattered over the soil is so great, that foul and noxious exhalations arise.

As an instance, reference may be made to a case related by the medical officer to one of the largest charities in London, where more than 400 children are kept:—"For years there has been in this institution, at certain times and under certain states of the atmosphere, a great prevalence of one or other form of zymotic disease,—sometimes fever, sometimes measles, at other times influenza. At these periods, the exhalations, arising from a large adjoining cow-yard saturated with putrefying soil, have been most offensive to the senses.

"When the state of the cow-yard and of the atmosphere rendered such

* The total number of deaths from cholera registered in this parish was only nine.

exhalations most powerful, the type of disease became malignant, and some of the worst forms of typhus fever then presented themselves.

“ It was distressing to see the young and tender orphans thus made a prey to a *preventible* poison, while under the care of those who, with practical humanity, had undertaken to rear and nurture them, and act as their PROTECTORS and parents.”

Over the nuisance which exerted its fatal influence on the orphans the public had no control ; the law afforded no remedy by which their lives might be protected ; yet, had a tithe of the injury inflicted on these children been inflicted on animals, compensation would have been demanded, and the law would have granted it.

The experience of Liverpool has proved that the inhabitants of a great city can be daily supplied with fresh milk, from the country, at a cheaper rate than the present mode of town supply.

From information obtained, it appears that the town of Liverpool is supplied with milk from the country, which is transmitted into the town by the different lines of railway—viz. by the London and North-Western Railway, about 20,000 gallons of milk are supplied weekly, from various places along the line for a distance of fifty miles. By the Birkenhead, Chester, and Shrewsbury Railway an average of from 900 to 1000 gallons are supplied weekly, from different stations, for a distance of thirty miles. By the Liverpool and Bury Railway Company, an average of from 900 to 1000 gallons are supplied weekly, from different stations, for a distance of twenty-one miles. By the East Lancashire Railway, an average of from 2000 to 2100 gallons weekly, are supplied from several stations, for a distance of thirty-five miles. The general average quantity supplied by the several railways to Liverpool, during the summer months, is about 23,950 gallons weekly. In winter the supply is somewhat less. It has been found that no injury whatever is done to the milk by the carriage, and that milk brought into Liverpool on one morning, is quite sweet and fit for use the following day. The Corporation of Liverpool have opened a market for the sale of the milk thus imported, in the centre of the town, whence it can be obtained in any quantities, at a cost of from 8*d.* to 9*d.* per gallon. There is also a temporary place for its sale on the east side of the Liverpool and Bury Railway Station, where it may be obtained in the same way as at the corporation market. From about 900 to 1000 gallons are supplied weekly, on the market-days,

by farmers who reside within a few miles. Since the transit of milk into Liverpool by railway, the cow-houses in Liverpool are few in number—the farmers in the country being enabled to dispose of their milk at a less price than that taken from the cows kept in the town can be disposed of. Since the railways have been opened, the practice of keeping cows in Liverpool has materially lessened, and is still rapidly diminishing.

That it is practicable to supply London with pure milk from the country by railway, at as cheap a rate as is now paid for adulterated and inferior milk, is manifest. At the present time, milk is imported by the Eastern Railway Company into London twice every day—viz. by the mail train, which comes into London at half-past four A.M., and again by the day mail train, which arrives about one P.M. The quantity thus imported is about 6090 gallons weekly, it comes chiefly from Romford, Ingatestone, and other stations on the line, varying in distance; the greatest distance, at present, on this line is about twenty-four miles. This milk, so imported, is sold to dealers, and contracted for at various Poor-law Unions, at the rate of from 9*d.* to 10*d.* per gallon. By the South-Eastern Railway, from the neighbourhood of Reigate, about 1120 gallons are supplied weekly. On the South-Western Railway milk is daily imported from Farnborough, thirty miles; Winchfield, forty miles; Weybridge, twenty miles, and other places along the line, nearer London. The quantity imported is not exactly known, but, at the least, the average quantity is 6000 gallons weekly.

It is also well known, that, even if the milk taken from the cows that are kept in London was supplied in its genuine state, it is not, by any means, so good or nutritious as that taken from the cows kept in the country. The cowkeepers in London are in the habit of feeding their cows upon a species of small potato, called “chats,” and upon grains and other wash obtained from brewers and distillers. This food causes the cows to yield a more plentiful supply of milk, but of a very inferior quality compared with that produced when cows are fed upon grass, hay, and other natural food.

If cows were kept in the country, instead of in the metropolis, and the milk transmitted to London for consumption, either better or cheaper milk would be supplied, as the expense of conveying the proper food for the cows to the metropolis, and the manure back into the country,

must greatly exceed that of conveying the milk only into the metropolis. Such strange waste of time, labour, and money, is a reproach to the civilization of the nineteenth century.

The Association, viewing the evidence adduced, have arrived at the conclusion, that the practice of keeping cows in the metropolis is unnecessary, and most injurious to the public health; directly, through the decomposition of the refuse matter which necessarily accompanies the practice, and indirectly, through the supply of milk afforded by cows thus kept being unfit for healthy nourishment, especially of the young. They are likewise satisfied that no inconvenience would arise from its suppression. They therefore recommend that in any law for the suppression of nuisances in the metropolis, the practice of cow-keeping should be prohibited.

In a Report on the more serious sanitary evils which afflict the inhabitants of the metropolis, the existence of Smithfield Cattle Market must necessarily occupy a place. It is not requisite to bring forward any additional evidence in proof of the many most pernicious results of this huge nuisance in the heart of a great city. They are now admitted by all, without exception, and it is only surprising that they have been allowed to withstand the force of public opinion so long. For the last fifty years, the subject has been repeatedly canvassed. Between 1802 and 1835, the corporation of London made eleven applications to Parliament for powers to enlarge and improve the market, and they *twice in that time endeavoured to obtain the sanction of Parliament to its removal.*

In 1809, the Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council for Trade refused to grant to the City facilities for its enlargement, on the express ground that the evils of its present locality could not be prevented by any enlargement, and they recommended that it should be placed outside of the metropolis.

In 1828, the butchers, by a deputation from their trade, complained to the corporation of the very great loss and inconvenience they were suffering, from want of sufficient room to transact their business, and of the consequent cruelty and deterioration the animals underwent from this cause.

In the same year (1828) a committee of the House of Commons, after full inquiry, reported their opinion, that the situation of a live-stock market in a thickly inhabited part of the metropolis is highly objectionable. The committee of the House, appointed last year, came to the resolution, that in their opinion "the continuance of a market for the sale of live stock in Smithfield, is proved by experience to be attended with serious inconveniences and objections, and that it ought to be removed."

Lastly, the Royal Commission, after mature deliberation, have, in their recent Report, given it as their opinion, that "it would be advisable to remove the market for live stock from its present site, not to some other site immediately adjoining, but to a site detached from the central portion of the metropolis."

When it is remembered that 2,000,000 of animals—oxen, calves, sheep, and pigs, are annually brought to this market, which is held on only two days a week, besides upwards of 13,000 horses on other days, it is obvious that, besides the dangers arising from driving them through the crowded streets, the vast amount of excrementitious matter that is necessarily deposited, and left on the surface for a considerable time, even under the best management, must serve to contaminate the purity of the atmosphere, and thereby promote the generation and spread of zymotic diseases.

The existence of slaughter-houses, and of other associated and dependent trades, such as tripe-dressing, bone-boiling, &c., also of knackers' yards, has been shown by indisputable evidence to be most pernicious to public health, and tends to give encouragement to the most depraved and criminal pursuits among the population in their neighbourhood.

It is a most significant fact, vouched for on the authority of the Registrar-General, that of the thirty-nine districts of the metropolis, that of the West London, in which Smithfield-market is situated, is the most unhealthy, and stands pre-eminent for the rate of its mortality; nor can this be wondered at when the causes just mentioned are taken into account. Wherever filth and decaying refuse, whether on or under the surface, abound, vice and low dissipation prevail, and there inevitably disease and death are unusually rife. Were there no other source of injury to health in such localities, the condition of the sewers in the neighbourhood of the large slaughter-houses would lead to these

results. The evidence on this subject in the recent report of the Royal Commission is most conclusive.

The recent proposal of the Corporation to enlarge and improve the condition of the market, while it is conceived in a spirit of liberality and a laudable deference to the urgent demand of public opinion,* would, if adopted, only lessen, but not cure the evil. No merely remedial measures, it is obvious, can get rid of the monstrous nuisance of a large cattle-market, and the accompaniments of huge abattoirs, &c., in the midst of a crowded neighbourhood, and in the heart of a great city.

The Association would, therefore, express their hope, that the announced intention of the Government to bring in a Bill, founded on the recent report of the Royal Commission, may be speedily carried into effect.

In reference to the defects of the Nuisances Removal Act, the Association have to observe—

First. The construction of the Act is faulty, in creating so many executive bodies, by which it is to be enforced. In the metropolis these executive bodies consist of the boards of guardians of the various Poor Law Unions and other local boards.

It is manifest that a body of persons, like boards of guardians, subject to annual election, and consisting, as they do in many cases, of owners or persons much interested in small house property, (where nuisances of all kinds mostly abound,) are not fitted, either from independence of position, or by education or experience, efficiently to carry out the provisions of an Act, having for its object the removal and prevention of nuisances pressing most severely upon the poor and the non-rate-paying classes. Indeed, past experience has fully shown that boards of guardians rather seek to be guardians of the rates, than prove to be guardians of the poor. Without entering into the important subject of the constitution of the local executive bodies, the Association are earnest in the expression of their opinion, that to one body or class of officers alone should be committed the execution of the Act in each district, so that the responsibility should be *real*, and not merely

* It is a significant and most gratifying evidence of the progress of sanitary knowledge, that the corporation have not overlooked the welfare of the poorer classes in their projected scheme for the improvement of Smithfield-market. Public baths and washhouses, and extensive model lodging-houses, occupy a place in the plan that has been made public.

apparent, as at present. The sanitary duties now imposed on numerous executive bodies should devolve on competent Officers of Health. Ireland already enjoys the advantages of such a system.

Secondly. The Act is defective, owing to the ambiguity and uncertainty of many of the clauses. It has been decided by some of the judicial authorities, that nuisances which cannot be entirely removed within forty-eight hours do not fall within the scope of the Act; and doubts have arisen whether nuisances, which are varying, by daily being taken from and added to, however great the accumulation, can practically be operated upon under the Act.

The Association, therefore, consider that the Act for the Removal of Nuisances should be amended—1st, In the machinery, by which the Act should be carried into execution; and, 2ndly, In defining the various nuisances to be operated upon by the Act, and the powers for removing them. The clauses should be general, and comprehensive, to embrace all the evils before enumerated, and worded in such precise terms as to compel the removal of all nuisances prejudicial to health.

In regard to Noxious Trades and Manufactures, the following examples of their influence on the health of surrounding neighbourhoods may be stated.

Christchurch Workhouse belongs to the Whitechapel Union, and at the time to which reference is about to be made, contained about 400 children and a few adult paupers. Immediately opposite the workhouse, and only separated from it by a lane, a few feet wide, was a manufactory of artificial manure, conducted by a Frenchman, in which bullock's blood and night-soil were desiccated by dry heat on a kiln, or sometimes by mere exposure of the compost to the action of the air and sun, causing a most powerful stench. The surgeon of the workhouse, who is an experienced practitioner, having distinct evidence of the injury it inflicted upon the health of nearly all the children, attempted to have this great nuisance removed. He states that—

“The obvious injury produced by the disgusting effluvium to the inmates of the workhouse, especially the children, induced me at various times to array against the proprietor the imperfect powers which the

law afforded, and whenever the manufacture was stopped, *pro tempore*, an improved condition of the health of the children was perceptible. Distinct from the production of diarrhœa, other prejudicial effects were noticed when the works were at all actively carried on—particularly when the wind blew in the direction of the house—*e. g.*, prevalent fever of an intractable and typhoid form, and typhoid tendency in measles, small-pox, and other infantile diseases, and for some time a most unmanageable and fatal form of aphthæ of the mouth and genitals, running rapidly into gangrene. From this last cause alone, there were twelve deaths among infants in one quarter.”

In the month of December, 1848, when cholera had already occurred in the Whitechapel Union, sixty of the children in this workhouse were suddenly seized with violent diarrhœa in the early morning, but by prompt and efficient treatment all recovered. This attack was attributed by the medical gentleman to the same cause as the evils above narrated, and in consequence, legal steps were adopted, by which, though not until many lives had been sacrificed, the proprietor was induced to close his establishment. Five months afterwards—viz., in April, 1849—a new proprietor having taken the premises, the works were resumed. A day or two subsequently, the wind changing and blowing from the manufactory, a most noisome stench pervaded the workhouse, and on the night following, or rather in the early morning, forty-five of the boys, whose dormitories directly faced the manufactory, were again suddenly seized with severe diarrhœa; whilst the girls, whose dormitories were most distant, and faced in another direction, escaped, with the exception of two or three, who were attacked on the following Sunday. This second outbreak, occurring immediately upon the resumption of the works, was attributed by the medical officer to the same cause as the first attack; and on subsequent inquiry it was ascertained that the new proprietor, who himself was a manufacturer of disinfected night-soil, had found on the premises barrels filled with the putrid matter used by the former occupant, and that in the attempt to remove them some of the barrels broke, and produced a most offensive effluvium. The circumstances of this remarkable case leave no doubt but that the diarrhœa was directly caused by the effluvium proceeding from the putrid blood and other animal substances used, and that all the other evils were mainly dependent upon the same cause. This conclusion is much strengthened by the fact that, during the ensuing

nine months, according to the medical attendant, "There has not been a single death in the workhouse except from chronic maladies, or in the case of children brought in with mortal diseases upon them."

This nuisance has existed for many years, with a few intermissions only, when, after much toil and expense on the part of individuals or of the public, the proprietor deemed it expedient to suspend the operations for a time. Since the period referred to in the foregoing statements, the disgusting processes are again in extensive operation, requiring renewed efforts, toil, and expense, for their suppression.

The offensiveness of this intolerable nuisance has been urgently complained of by the neighbourhood, but the experience of the Board of Guardians as to the difficulties met with in attempting to suppress the nuisance, forbids any hope of their incurring heavy expenses in any future attempt.

In the summer of 1847, a similar manufactory for preparing artificial manure from putrid blood, &c., was established in the heart of a populous district in the parish of St. George, Southwark. On its commencement, a most powerful stench pervaded the neighbourhood, so as to attract general notice, and in a short time afterwards a large number of persons living around were seized with diarrhœa.

It having been ascertained that the diarrhœal attack depended on the poisonous animal effluvia, the necessary steps were immediately taken by the parochial authorities: the nuisance was at once suppressed, and the diarrhœa directly subsided.

In reference to these two cases, it is not superfluous to remark that, in both instances, the parties offending were foreigners—a class of persons who are somewhat extensively engaged in the manufacture in question, and who are attracted to London by the existence of facilities denied them by the laws of their own country.

Surely that, which is so decidedly condemned by the laws of France as prejudicial to the public welfare, should not be left unaffected by the laws of this country, or only provided for by a measure imposing much loss of time and expense on individuals. We might with infinite advantage take a lesson from our French neighbours in this respect. By their laws they provide for the regulating of trades and occupations which are injurious to health. They divide them into three classes—namely, 1. Those which ought not to be carried on near private houses. 2. Those which are prohibited near human habitations, except after

leave granted. 3. Those works which may be carried on near habitations, but only under surveillance.

The Association would therefore recommend, that all trades of a noxious tendency should be classified and licensed, under regulations,—that provision should be made, for the employment of all known and practicable means for rendering such trades innoxious;—and that where trades cannot be regulated so as to be carried on without injury to the public health, such trades should be prohibited within a certain distance of habitations.

It is necessary here to advert to the fact, that, in the great majority of cases, the offensiveness and deleterious influences arising from Noxious Trades and Manufactures could, by simple and comparatively inexpensive arrangements, be avoided. The duty of thus determining as to the noxiousness of certain trades, and of advising suitable means of correction, falls peculiarly within the province of a duly qualified Officer of Health. In the City of London Sewers Act an advance has been made in legislation on this point, but it falls short of the objects aimed at, and additional powers will be required.

The Association, therefore, recommend, that in the amendment of the Act for the Removal of Nuisances, clauses should be inserted—for classifying, licensing, and regulating Noxious Trades—for the prohibition of such Noxious Trades as cannot be regulated so as to be uninjurious to health, within certain distances of habitations,—and for the appointment of a competent Officer of Health to carry out such regulations.

Although the previous reports and subjects have had precedence over the evils connected with the sanitary condition of the Dwellings of the Poor, this latter subject engaged the first and most anxious consideration of the Association. They felt, that whatever amount of good was to be effected by sewerage and drainage, by extramural burial, by better constructed houses and streets, by an abundant supply of pure water, and other sanitary improvements, there was an urgent necessity for bringing directly home, in a prompt and efficacious manner, to the existing dwellings of the poor those sanitary improve-

ments which increased knowledge, ability, and appliances have placed within our reach.

The condition of the dwellings of the poor and of the industrial classes is a chief cause of the excess of deaths and of the prevalence of disease, poverty, immorality, and crime in the metropolis.

The thousands of facts which came to light during the house visitation carried on all over the metropolis during the late epidemic, confirmed the opinion formed from previous experience: that, in a large proportion of instances, a very few inexpensive structural changes would suffice to produce great and permanent benefits.

The physical circumstances in and around a dwelling are a measure of the health and comfort of the tenants. Where there is manifest unfitness for healthy existence there can be no home—no permanent happiness—no self-respect, or moral elevation of character. Disease *must* come, and with it a whole train of depressing, vitiating, and pauperizing influences.

Some of the elements, which render the dwellings of the poor utterly unfit for continued healthy existence, are, others are not, susceptible of *immediate* relief. It is to the former class this Association would at present address itself.

Most of the dwellings thus unfitted for healthy existence entail most grievous and oppressive burdens on the public in the shape of charities—especially fever and small-pox hospitals, and workhouse establishments—besides charges for widowhood, orphanage, and poor-rates. These charges together are, in many cases, much greater than the actual value of the property which has produced such results. Whole rows and blocks of houses, courts and alleys, are so notorious for producing disease and pauperism, that the overseers and parochial medical officers are never absent from them, and some of the inhabitants, or their widows or orphans, are always to be found in the workhouse, burdening the rates. Dr. Gavin states, at No. —, New Tyssen Street, “I found a new family entering upon their tenancy. Three previous families had been successively removed to the workhouse in consequence of typhus fever. The landlord at the time of my visit had commenced some inadequate changes in his premises; but these changes, it is to be noticed, were not commenced till three families had been successively stricken down by fever, and had become burdens on the parish.

“Mount Square, Bethnal Green, five and twenty years ago was known

as a fever haunt; eleven years ago Dr. Southwood Smith recorded, on the evidence of the then parochial medical officer, that it was a pest den; three years ago, it was proved that it had continued so ever since, and even then was a fever haunt. The continuance of disease in this spot, and the prevalence of cholera when the epidemic should have arrived, were predicted. Since then, typhus and cholera have taken off many victims from that Square, and lamentably verified the prediction.

“ — Square has ever been a constant fever haunt. The well, which supplies water to twenty houses, is within two feet of a large cesspool.

“ Windmill Square, Shoreditch. The inhabitants are always ill from the same cause; eleven out of twenty-two inhabitants died of cholera.

“ Silkmill Row, Hackney. Sixty-one out of sixty-three inhabitants were ill from a similar cause. They were glad to drink water from the kennel.

“ Beckford Row, Bethnal Green. A narrow row of sixteen two-roomed houses, one above the other; each room occupied by a separate family. The place is a concentration of abominations. Three shillings and sixpence and three shillings a-week are paid for these miserable habitations. In one house alone, eight cases of fever occurred; in fourteen weeks, thirteen cases had taken place. The other face of this row, called Alfred Row, was similar. In the last house the atmosphere could scarcely be breathed in consequence of its impurity. In one of the rooms were three cases of small-pox; one had just proved fatal. In the lower room of the next house, four persons were recovering from, or were afflicted with, confluent small-pox. It was in these houses that the chief outbreak of cholera took place, in that registration district. *The cost in poor-law relief, in consequence of disease induced by the state of these houses, would have bought up the whole property.* Forty-eight rooms, nearly all containing a separate family, were supplied with water from one open barrel, twenty-one inches in diameter and twelve inches deep, situate under the same roof as the privy: the water was let on only two hours thrice a week.”

In all these instances, and a thousand others might be given, the expenses necessary to remedy the chief evils, and to render the habitations comparatively healthy, would in each case amount to only a few pounds.

It has been most satisfactorily demonstrated that, for a sum not exceeding threepence per week per house, those simple yet important

structural changes necessary to render a house compatible with healthy existence could easily be effected.

At the present time no powers exist, except those contained in the Sewers' Act (and these are only partial, referring simply to the substitution of water-closets for cesspools) to remedy this lamentable state of things. Security is given to the public, under the Building Act, that houses shall not, through want of repair or of proper construction, tumble down, and thus endanger the lives of the public, whether passengers, tenants, or neighbours; security is given in the provision for party-walls, that they shall not be so constructed as readily to endanger by fire the safety of the adjoining houses and their inhabitants. A surveyor is appointed, whose duty it is to guard the public interests in these points. Yet there is no provision whatever, at the present time, that the health, lives, and fortunes of hundreds of thousands of families shall not be sacrificed to the ignorance, indifference, or wilful neglect of parties dealing in low house-property.

The poor have no power whatever to alter or amend the construction of the dwellings in which they are compelled to reside. Any improvement in the condition of their dwellings must be the result either of a voluntary effort on the part of the landlords, or of interference by Government to compel that measure of justice to the poor, and of economy to the rate-payers.

The Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes, and the Society for the Improvement of the Condition of the Labouring Classes, have set a noble example of what can be achieved by philanthropic and enlightened self-interest. It has been shown that it is possible to build "homes" in which health and comfort can be preserved, and also to derive a fair and legitimate return for the money thus benevolently and beneficently invested. But the sum total of accommodation which these and other kindred associations, following their example, have been able to provide for the industrial classes, amounts to a provision for, at most, two or three thousand persons.

This must not be imputed as matter of blame. These Associations have always endeavoured to make it known that they never intended that they should do more than set an example to those, who, while investing and deriving a fair return from their capital, were inclined to do good to their fellow-men.

It might be contended that any means which would improve the dwellings of the poor would interfere with, or endanger the success of, the model lodging-house movement. Such interference would, it is trusted, be hailed as the full accomplishment of the objects of the Societies interested in this movement. To quote the words of that distinguished nobleman and eminent philanthropist, the Earl of Carlisle, on a late occasion, when inaugurating one of these buildings,—“their toil would be finished, and their object accomplished. Their copyists, they should look upon as their children; they should wish to be like the tree, after it had undergone the process of grafting,—*miraturque novas frondes, et non sua poma.*”

The example set by those interested in improving the dwellings of the poor, has hitherto been followed, in various parts of the metropolis, by few individuals only; the total result, up to the present time, is that which has been just stated. The public, therefore, for many years—perhaps for a century—cannot look for a sufficiency of healthy dwellings, if they are to trust to the operations and influence of voluntary associations alone. The force of example operates but slowly; the knowledge of economical sanitary arrangements does not rapidly spread; the customs and prejudices of society are stubborn and unchangeable;—while disease is persistent; the sacrifice of life constant; the evil great; the remedy by voluntary changes remote; and the necessity for immediate changes all-powerful.

The Association contend that it is the bounden duty of Government to step in and afford to the public that security, which it is utterly out of their own power, by any knowledge, ability, or forethought of their own, to obtain for themselves.

The ancient Roman law by the institution of *Ædiles* fully recognised this principle, in the construction and regulation of dwellings; and in countries where the laws have been chiefly founded on the ancient Roman law, as in Belgium, powers exist, the want of which has produced so much unnecessary misery and wretchedness in this land.

If it be necessary that a house should be examined as to its construction—so that it shall not endanger the lives of the tenants, neighbours, or passengers, by tumbling down and burying them in its ruins—it is infinitely more necessary that it should be examined as to its sanitary condition, so that it shall not breed and nourish pestilence, and destroy the unfortunate tenants, who, in seeking protection from the inclemency

of the seasons, unavoidably involve themselves in the perils of contaminating impurities.

The calamity provided against by the Building Act is comparatively unheard-of, while the sanitary evils referred to are ever in operation. In the one case, the disaster is isolated and individual; in the other, the diseases engendered are self-multiplying and diffusive, and may embrace a whole community.

The rapidity with which the population increases, and the great demand for small houses in the metropolis, lead to the construction of houses as a mere mercantile speculation—a speculation encouraged by the lamentable fact, that “the worse the property, the higher comparatively are the rents derived.” The industrious artisan, deprived of choice, must, in seeking for a livelihood, shelter himself and his family in such houses as he can find. He finds a house—and too often a grave for himself or some of his family. Increase of population, with inefficient provisions for preserving health, necessarily leads to increasing sickness and mortality.

The tribe of epidemic diseases,—those diseases which are engendered, fostered, and spread abroad by filth, and the neglect of sanitary appliances,—is yearly augmenting the number of its victims, and robbing society of its most valuable members—fathers and mothers—the protectors and monitors of youth.

The records of the Registrar-General tell a tale of progressively increasing woe and wretchedness for this metropolis.

In 1846, zymotic or epidemic diseases killed in London about the usual average number—9596 persons died; but in 1847, 14,039 persons died of these diseases; and in 1848, 18,113 died; while in 1849, no less than 28,313 persons died; the cholera epidemic alone destroying no less than 18,423. In 1846, the deaths from zymotic or epidemic diseases were to the total deaths in the ratio of 19·5 per cent.; in 1847, they were 23·2 per cent.; in 1848, they were 31·4 per cent.; in 1849, they were 41·3 per cent. This last year showed a total mortality of 68,432—the highest mortality, in proportion to the population, which has been exhibited since the days of the Great Plague of London.

These facts are very discouraging. Great works of sewage and drainage, and changes in the quality and mode of supplying water—structural changes on a large scale—cannot possibly be speedily accomplished.

Years must necessarily pass away before such works can be completed, and with them tens of thousands of persons, whose lives, under the Divine blessing, might have been saved. But in the systematic Inspection and Regulation of the Dwellings of the Poor and Industrial Classes, will be found, it is confidently believed, a simple, prompt, and efficient means of relieving much misery, of preserving the lives of many human beings, of preventing much waste, and of avoiding excessive and unnecessary general and local burdens.

The Association took into their repeated consideration a plan suggested by Dr. Gavin, with a view to carry out this great and important sanitary measure. After mature deliberation, the plan was adopted by the Association, and is now presented to the public, in the hope that it will meet with their approbation and support, and that it will ere long be submitted to the Legislature, and its principles embodied in an enactment.

The suggestions which the Association have to offer are :—

That each tenement, on or before being let or relet—and each tenement that is let from year to year, or for any lesser period, or occupied by parties carrying on trades and occupations which are of a nature to render such premises unwholesome, on certain periodic occasions—and any tenement at any time, on complaint by the landlord or tenant, (or adjoining inhabitant, or others,) should be examined as to its fitness for human habitation, and for preserving without injury the health of the tenants.

When, on inspection of any tenement, its condition is found to be such, that it may be inhabited without injury to the health of the occupants, a certificate to that effect should be given to the landlord. But when its condition is such that there is reasonable ground to believe it cannot be inhabited without necessarily subjecting the occupants to the risk of disease, especially of epidemic disease, the certificate should be delayed until the cleansings or alterations required to adapt the house or premises for habitation shall have been effected. Further, whenever a tenement is proved to have been let to a tenant without such certificate, the power to recover rent should be withheld. It might, perhaps, be advisable to add a clause empowering the magistrate to fine a landlord who lets his property without such certificate, or neglects to execute the necessary repairs. This would provide against the injury likely to arise from property unfit for habitation being let at a nominal

rent merely as a shelter; a kind of property and condition of things attended with many evil consequences.

With regard to these suggestions, there are three points to be considered:—

First, the class of men who should be appointed as Inspectors—by whom they should be appointed—and the basis of the certificate.

It is proposed that the duty of inspecting private houses and premises should devolve upon a qualified Inspector, who should at the same time hold the office of Inspector of Nuisances; but that the duty of inspecting all public establishments and buildings, common lodging-houses, &c., should devolve on the Officer of Health, as already laid down in the various public health bills and acts.

The appointment of Inspector should be invested in the local authorities, subject to the approval of the Board of Health, on the report of the Officer of Health.

The basis of the certificate should be settled by the General Board of Health, in the shape of instructions for the guidance of the Officer of Health, and these instructions should not be departed from except under special circumstances, and on the responsibility of the Officer of Health.

The certificate of the Inspector should be signed by him, and issue from the office of the Officer of Health.

A power of appeal should be given to either landlord, tenant, or complainant, from the decision of the Inspector, to the Officer of Health, who, in case of such appeal, should personally examine the house and premises, and adjudicate upon the matter in dispute; and, in the event of such adjudication being unsatisfactory to either party, appeal might be made to a magistrate, who should finally decide thereon.

Secondly:—The means of payment for the expense of the staff.

The number of Inspectors would be determined by the number of houses to be inspected, and the average number one Inspector could examine.

It is proposed that the payment should be effected by charging a small fee, varying from 1s. to 5s., according to the rental of the premises, for each examination by the Inspector,

and a larger fee for each examination by the Officer of Health; for the formation of a fund out of which a fixed salary should be paid to those officers.

Thirdly:—The means whereby the changes and alterations demanded by the Inspector and Officer of Health should be effected.

It frequently happens that property is so subdivided that it is difficult to determine who is the party really the landlord; and further, the interest of the landlord is oftentimes so short-lived that it would be manifestly unfair to compel the present and temporary landlord to execute permanent works. This difficulty is met fairly by the fact that the circumstances which chiefly render houses and premises unfit for human habitation are easily removable, at a small expense, and are frequently recurring, and consequently would fall equally on each successive landlord. More permanent works should form a charge on the property, and be distributed over a term of years: very few such works would occur which are not provided for under the Sewers Act.

Houses which are utterly unfit for human habitation, and when the landlord within a certain time does not execute the repairs and alterations required by the Inspector or the Officer of Health, should by order of the Magistrate, on the certificate and evidence of the Officer of Health, be condemned and pulled down under the direction of the District Surveyor.

In certain cases where the unfitness for healthy existence arises from causes due to trades or occupations carried on by the tenants, the Inspector, or the Officer of Health should be empowered, and the landlord, at his own expense, should be entitled to call upon the Inspector, or the Officer of Health to inspect the premises so occupied, either immediately on complaint, or once in every ————. And in those cases where the Inspector, or the Officer of Health shall have certified that the trade or occupation carried on by occupants had rendered the premises unfit for healthy existence, the landlord should have power, on the certificate of the Officer of Health being countersigned by the Magistrate, to recover by distraint as for rent, or in other legal manner, all expenses accruing from repairs and cleansing operations (fair wear and tear

excepted) rendered necessary by the injury to, or defilement of, the premises.

Having thus detailed the various sanitary evils existing in the metropolis which this Association have as yet been able to consider, they would before concluding their Report submit the following recapitulation of recommendations and suggestions :

1. The removal of all legislative and other impediments to the most approved construction of wholesome dwellings, and to the unlimited enjoyment of light and air.

The Window Tax should, of course, be repealed without delay, and the Timber Duties altered, if not repealed. The Building Acts and the Acts relating to the transfer of property require revision.

2. An abundant and constant supply, at high pressure, of pure soft water to every dwelling, without exception.

This should be made compulsory on owners and landlords of all houses.

3. A comprehensive and well-considered scheme for house and street drainage.

Past experience leads to the belief that this great work will never be efficiently and speedily executed by other than paid and responsible commissioners, men of experience, able to devote their whole time to the work.

4. The daily scavenging of every street, lane, alley, and court, and the daily removal of all house refuse.

An immense amount of good might be *at once* effected by parochial authorities adopting this simple expedient. The system of contracting with dustmen at present followed in every district is most faulty and defective.

5. The immediate paving of all lanes, alleys, and courts.

It is obvious that, unless this be done, no efficient surface drainage can be effected, nor due cleanliness be maintained. All courts and alleys, when paved, should be repeatedly sluiced with water. Wide streets and open squares are watered to allay the dust ; the close courts and alleys should be watered to refresh the air.

6. The immediate substitution of water-closets for privies and cess-pools, wherever practicable.

To this point the attention of the Commissioners of Sewers is urgently called. Public baths and wash-houses should be provided with public water-closets and urinals.

7. The suppression of all nuisances, especially those which are matters of profit; the compulsory cleansing of canals and large ditches at stated and proper times; and the regulation and classification of some noxious or offensive trades, and the prohibition of others, under a competent and responsible public authority.

Under this head is included the important question of the suppression of the Smoke Nuisance.

8. The amendment of the Nuisances Removal and Contagious Diseases Prevention Act, so that the humane and beneficent intentions of the Act may be carried out, not only in reference to foreign and occasional pestilences, but also to the ordinary plagues, such as typhus, &c., which devastate this country.

The large proportion of twenty per cent. which this class of preventible diseases bears to the total mortality of the country, shows the importance of applying remedial measures to common exigencies, and of not reserving them for extraordinary occasions.

9. The immediate prohibition of intra-mural interment.

10. The periodic inspection of the dwellings of the labouring classes, and especially of the nightly lodging-houses.

These lodging-houses are fearful nurseries of disease and crime; it is absolutely necessary that they be placed under efficient regulations.

11. The institution of a well devised plan for the discovery and registration of disease in every district.

At present, there is merely a registration of *fatal* diseases, but there are no authentic means of knowing the amount of *sickness* as well as of mortality. This very important duty should be required of the Officers of Health.

12. The allocation of the money now granted by the State for the *medical relief* of the poor, to the establishment and support of measures of *disease-prevention*.

Motives of economy as well as of humanity dictate the adoption of this suggestion.

For the efficient carrying out of these and other sanitary measures, the Association consider it imperative that there should be a consolidation or fusion of the numerous separate and disconnected Parochial Boards, such as Vestries, Trusts, and Commissions for Paving, Lighting, and Cleansing, &c., into one united Board in each parish or district, and that such united Boards should be placed in connexion, and be enabled to co-operate, with the Central or Government Board of Health, in all matters affecting the sanitary welfare of the people. The Central Board should of necessity be composed of men who are intimately acquainted with the scientific and practical details of medicine, of civil engineering, and of the laws relating to municipal and parochial duties, and to it should be entrusted the important duty of supervising and directing all Local Boards in the necessary arrangements for the maintenance of the public health, and of instituting and carrying out all such measures as experience has shown to be successful for the prevention or mitigation of indigenous and persistent, as well as of foreign and occasional, contagious and epidemic diseases. To legislate merely for the latter, while the former are unprovided against, is manifestly insufficient.

In drawing this Report to a close, the Association have the satisfaction of knowing that their labours have been already productive of some useful results. They have been assured that their active exertions in favour of the Extramural Interment Bill materially aided in enabling the Government to carry that most important measure through the House of Commons. There is also good reason to believe that the expression of the opinion of the Association by their president, at the interview with the Prime Minister, was not without its effect on the subsequent repeal of the duty upon bricks. Although the Window Tax is still unrepealed, it is gratifying to know that the question of its abrogation, and the substitution of an adjusted House Tax, as proposed by the Association, is under the consideration of Government.

The Association feel that there is much ground for encouragement

and persevering exertion at the present time. The deep interest taken by many of the highest in the land in the welfare of the working classes, promises well for the cause of sanitary reform. Moreover, its influence has begun to be felt in the deliberations of the Legislature, and its importance and necessity to be recognised by parties who never thought of it a few years ago. The subject, indeed, only needs to be better known to awaken a more general and heartfelt interest. If the wealthy and influential in this great metropolis could but be induced to ascertain for themselves, and by personal inspection, the magnitude of those evils—evils which are capable of such easy correction—under which so many of their poorer fellow-citizens labour, it is confidently believed that not a session of Parliament would pass over without some large and efficient scheme of sanitary improvement being adopted.

In conclusion, the Association earnestly appeal to the public to aid them in their efforts to advance the beneficent cause which they have taken in hand. The welfare of thousands is intimately involved in its success. A vast amount of disease, suffering, and death may be prevented every year by the adoption of simple and inexpensive measures. What has been done for our army and navy requires but to be done for our towns and villages; and the same happy results will follow. Let it be remembered, too, that a sickly population is one of the most costly burdens of a state. Health is the poor man's capital in trade; and whatever deteriorates that, entails a direct loss, and eventually a heavy money charge, upon the community. The enormous amount of poverty and destitution in this country, and the consequent necessity for an impost of nearly £8,000,000 sterling annually for its relief, are in a great measure due to the pauperizing effects of preventible disease. But these are not the only social evils involved in this important inquiry. The localities, that are the nurseries of sickness and death, are almost invariably found to be the haunts of immorality and crime. Filth and squalor are as productive of moral debasement as of physical depravation; the two natures of man are so intimately connected, that the defilement of the one is generally associated with pollution of the other.

The truth of this important principle is beginning to be appreciated by all who take an active interest in the education of the poor. The words of the Bishop of London, in his admirable speech at the opening meeting of this Association, cannot be too strongly impressed on the

public mind :—" On behalf of himself," his lordship remarked, " and of his brethren who were engaged in attending to the spiritual interests of the people, he advocated this improvement in the physical condition of the poor as a *necessary preliminary* to their moral and social elevation."

Upon all these grounds, the Association venture to express an earnest hope that they may be enabled, by the cordial aid of their fellow-citizens, to persevere in the good work which they have undertaken to promote. They have already incurred very heavy expenses in the prosecution of their labours, and they now look to a generous public to assist and encourage them. Much yet remains to be done, and no little amount of labour will be required for its achievement. But the issue, if attained, will more than compensate for the greatest toil in such a cause; for what reward or recompence can be so grateful to all who have the truest prosperity of their native land at heart as the assurance that, by their exertions, much sickness and suffering have been prevented, that human life has been largely preserved, that temptations to crime have been withdrawn, that impediments to education have been removed, and, in fine, that the poor and working classes have been placed in such a position as to best enable them to fulfil their duties to their country and to their God?

Salus Populi Suprema Lex.

10, Craig's-court, Charing-cross,

July, 1850.