

when there was more building going forward than on an average of years, was 479,925 $\frac{1}{2}$. I have not any returns of a later period.

Another and a serious obstacle to the extension of cottage building by the labouring classes, as well as the purchase of them out of their savings, is the cost of legal conveyance, which frequently amounts to one or two years' rent. This is often the hindering cause to many a working man's investment, even where the property is freehold or leasehold; but where copyholds prevail, the hardship becomes a very considerable evil; the transfer expenses of property in case of death often fall heavy and unexpectedly upon the owners of small copyholds.

If the Bill for the Enfranchisement of Copyholds, which was lost in the House of Lords last year, had passed, it would have been a great boon in cases where cottages are built upon copyhold: many are now abandoned rather than pay the fees of court.

I shall greatly rejoice to see anything done to improve the condition of the labouring classes, either mentally or bodily.

The man who has a well-furnished house, is a more trustworthy servant than one who lives in a cellar or single room with almost no furniture; but the workman who lives in his own house is better than either.

I remain thine respectfully,
EDMUND ASHWORTH.

SPECIFICATION of the Works in four descriptions of Cottages erected at Egerton for Messrs. Henry and Edmund Ashworth.

Masonry.—The front and back walls and the chimney shafts are set in regular courses, well hammer-dressed. The insidewalls, gables, and chimney flues are of parpoints six inches thick. The door-jambs, tops and thresholds, and the window-sills and tops, also the labels over the front doors and windows, are all hewn and tooled; there is square cornice at the back, and moulded cornice at front; both are well hewn, tooled, guttered, and the joints corked water-tight. The yard walls are of random stone, eighteen inches thick, finished with semicircular coping stones on the top. The privies are of parpoints, and the ash-pits are made off from the yards with flags set on edge. The ground floors are laid with good self-faced flags, and there are flags at the front and back doors, averaging about three yards to each house, and a hearth to each bed-room chimney-piece. The foot-path, five feet wide at front, is paved with river stones, and side stones set at the edge. There is a cellar to each of the houses No. 1 and 2 under the stairs; it goes down about four steps, and holes are formed under the ground-floor for keeping provisions in, and there is a slop-stone in each kitchen.

Slating.—The roofs are covered with Welsh slate and stone ridging.

Plastering.—All the walls are plastered two coats; and the ceilings and stoothing lathed and plastered two coats, and the slates well pointed.

Fire-fixtures.—The living-rooms have each a boiler, oven, and fire-grates, and the parlours and all other places where fire-places are shown, are fitted up with sham stove-grates.

Carpentry, Joinery, and Glazing.—The timber is American pine throughout, (except the roofs and windows of No. 1 and 2, which are of Baltic deal.) The floors have beams and joints, and are covered with inch boards. The stairs are as per plan, made of inch boards, and are two feet six inches wide. The partition at the side of the stairs is of three-quarter inch boards, and the partitions which divide the bed-rooms are of stoothing. There are ceiling joists fixed over all the bedrooms. The roofs have two ribs on each side, and spars fixed fifteen inches betwixt their centres. The outside doors, both front and back, are framed batten doors, hung to stone jambs, with bands and gudgeons, and have a Lancashire handle set on each; the front doors have each a plate lock, and back doors a flat iron bolt. The inside doors, the privy doors, and yard doors, are all batten doors with four cross bars to each. They are all hung to wood casings, (except the back yard doors, which are hung to stone,) and have each a Lancashire latch set on. The front windows, and the back bed-room windows of No. 1, are all frames and sheets single hung, and the remainder of the back windows are fast sheets with a casement in each; they are all primed and glazed with good white glass. There is about twenty feet of shelving fixed in each house, and there is skirting fixed in both rooms on the ground-story, and surbase or chair-rail round each living room, and casings and single moulds round doors and windows on ground-story. There is a wood drop-spout to each house.

ESTIMATES.

| | No. 1. | No. 2. | No. 3. | No. 4. |
|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Masonry, &c. . . . | £52 17 0 | £48 11 2 | £37 8 0 | £33 10 0 |
| Slating, &c. . . . | 8 6 0 | 7 10 0 | 6 6 9 | 5 12 0 |
| Plastering, &c. . . . | 8 17 6 | 7 12 0 | 6 2 6 | 5 10 0 |
| Fire-fixtures, &c. . . . | 5 4 10 | 4 19 3 | 2 18 9 | 2 18 9 |
| Joinery, Glazing. . . . | 37 7 8 | 34 10 4 | 27 2 6 | 24 0 0 |
| | <u>£113 13 0</u> | <u>£103 2 9</u> | <u>£79 18 6</u> | <u>£71 10 9</u> |

No. 22.

SANITARY CONDITION OF THE TOWN OF LANCASTER.

By DR. EDWARD DE VITRE'.

Lancaster, April 20, 1840.

GENTLEMEN,—In reply to a communication made to me, through your Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, Mr. Power, requesting my opinion regarding some of the physical causes of sickness and mortality to which the poor in this neighbourhood are particularly exposed, and which are capable of being removed by proper sanitary police regulations, I have great pleasure in rendering my feeble aid in furtherance of your benevolent purpose, and beg to submit for your consideration the following statement:—

Having acted as physician to the Lancaster Dispensary and Fever Hospital for nearly eight years, and having during the whole of that time been in daily communication with some portion or other of the poorer classes, I have had almost constantly to lament the difficult and untoward circumstances they have had to contend with, over many of which they had no control, and in the absence of such regulations as you now contemplate, little or no assistance could be afforded. For the sake of brevity I shall proceed to state under distinct heads such of the physical causes of sickness and mortality as have more particularly engaged my attention.

1. *Malaria*.—In placing malaria first on the list, I am not going to stop to make the inquiry whether or not contagious fever is capable of being generated by malaria alone, it is sufficient for my purpose to know that the Profession are united in opinion that vitiated and tainted air is highly favourable to the diffusion of fever. Nor am I anxious to have it believed that Lancaster is peculiarly liable to such an influence, far from it, as I strongly suspect there are not many towns in the kingdom freer from such a vitiated state of the atmosphere. When, however, I know that it does exist, and that it is capable by proper regulations of almost being entirely removed, it is clearly my duty, on such an inquiry as the present, not to shrink from so stating the fact as that the remedy may be more effectually applied.

The principal streets in Lancaster are, I believe, all well sewered and drained, but notwithstanding this, in consequence of a want of stench-traps at the surface mouths of the drains, the most foetid effluvia escapes after a continued drought, or on the recurrence of rain. The cesspools belonging to the castle or county gaol, along with all other filth generated there, are emptied into the common sewerage of the streets, which makes it still more advisable to have all such sewers provided with stench-traps. The nuisance from this source I am assured on good authority is frequently intolerable, and might be obviated altogether, either by constructing a proper cesspool or a covered drain for the exclusive use of the castle.

The average number of inmates in the gaol is from 470 to 500.

The back streets and alleys have not been so well attended to, and are chiefly dependent on surface drainage for any cleaning they may obtain; add to this the collection of stagnant water, filth, and garbage of all descriptions, and we have at once a fruitful source of malaria, more especially in hot weather. The streets of the town have been for a few years back most shamefully neglected, which is the more unpardonable as we have an ample police rate, and there is scarcely a street in the town that does not present a good fall; instead therefore of walking ankle-deep in mud and water, with very little exertion Lancaster might be rendered, as it has been, celebrated for its cleanliness: under such a system there

is little encouragement held out to the poor for any exertion on their part. In many of the narrow and close streets are to be found dunghills and privies most inconveniently placed, and on the outskirts of the town small patches of waste land contiguous to human dwellings are used as the depositories of manure, which constantly emit a most offensive odour. A large dog-kennel in the immediate neighbourhood of the town forms a nuisance of the worst description, and the decomposed animal matter scents the surrounding district the year round. In the lower part of the town flows a stream of water taken from the river, into which many drains empty themselves, and which, if kept properly open, more especially as it would then be subjected to the daily influence of the tide, might prove of great value to the town; but a dam was thrown across its mouth a few years ago for the purpose of turning some machinery, and it is in consequence rendered comparatively useless, and has become a receptacle for much vegetable and animal matter, which is constantly undergoing decomposition. It is in this part of the town that fever has been most prevalent, and it is proverbially attributed to the stream in question. I would strongly urge the necessity of erecting a general slaughtering-house, and thus for ever remove a nuisance apparent to every one where no such accommodation exists.

2. *Want of Ventilation and Cleanliness*.—The want of proper ventilation almost throughout the whole of the houses occupied by the poor, is an evil which has engaged much of my attention, and which I have been unceasing in my endeavours to remedy. In the great majority of instances, the defect undoubtedly arises from the careless way in which the houses of the poor are constructed, and from an overweening anxiety on the part of the proprietors of such property to economize both space and expense. In the best of such dwellings it is seldom that more than one pane of glass in a small sash-window is made to open, and in houses of a still worse class sometimes not that; even in alleys and courts, of themselves badly ventilated, old buildings, rendered useless for their original purpose, are frequently converted into dwellings, and then we find them with a damp sunken area, or on a ground-floor, without cellarage, with low roofs or ceilings, and with little or no attention paid to proper ventilation. The ground-floors of a very large proportion of cottage property in Lancaster are placed several feet below the surface of the ground, many of them very damp, and of course increasing the difficulty of thorough ventilation: notwithstanding all these disadvantages the poor are much to blame in this matter, and it is almost a hopeless task endeavouring to convince them of the utility of what really appears to be beyond their comprehension, as they nearly unanimously object to the admission of fresh air into a sick-room, and if convinced at all, it is always against their own judgment, and hence in ninety cases out of a hundred the poor sufferer is limited to a

mouthful of fresh air *per diem*, and that during the professional visit. With regard to cleanliness, it affords me great pleasure to testify favourably of the poor in Lancaster: there are of course many exceptions to this testimony, chiefly among the lodging-houses, where may be found a total disregard both to personal and general cleanliness. It has occurred to me that lodging-houses in towns at least might be put under some police regulations, without difficulty, and with great advantage and safety to the public. It would be well if the poor generally could be induced to whitewash the interior of their dwellings several times a-year, and this might at all events be readily effected where parties are deriving parochial aid, as an order to that effect might be issued by each Board of Guardians to their relieving officer, and a similar regulation could easily be enforced by all private charitable societies.

3. *Intemperance*.—Of the baneful effects of intemperance on the human constitution, both in a moral and physical point of view, it is quite unnecessary for me to enlarge in this place. It is sufficient to know that the evil exists and exists too to a frightful extent, to induce any one having an interest in the welfare of his fellow-creatures to use his most strenuous exertions in suggesting any plan calculated to change the habits of the intemperate. The extended system of moral and religious instruction throughout the land is, I am convinced, steadily promoting this object, but it will require no inconsiderable time before the full benefits of such a system can either be expected or realized. I am by no means disposed to undervalue the good effects of Temperance Societies, as it has frequently come within my own knowledge that the most abandoned drunkard has been effectually reclaimed through their instrumentality, and restored to a position in society his former habits totally excluded him from. How then are we to check intemperance, when all the present preventive means, including the summary punishment for detected drunkenness, fail? It is to be apprehended that an affirmative answer cannot be supplied, whilst a simple negative reply can never, in a great Christian country like this, be quietly submitted to; pains and penalties, though good as a means, have been found ineffectual in checking vice, and they ever will be so where punishment is dealt out by one hand, and the means of transgression afforded by the other. Yet such is the case with our present Beer Bill, a bill which the vulgar have themselves designated "*The Tom and Jerry Bill*," as implying everything that is vicious and profligate. The law says you are not to get drunk, but the same law licenses houses at the corner of every street for the sale of intoxicating liquors,—not as houses of general refreshment for travellers, or for the transaction of necessary business, but avowedly as an accommodation to the poorer classes of society to procure cheap ale, and which they are at liberty to drink *ad libitum* on the premises. Without going more into detail about

the demoralizing effects of these beer-shops, I verily believe that they have gone far to neutralize all the means adopted for the promotion of temperance for the last century; that they have carried ruin, disease and misery into the bosom of many a cotter's family, previously happy and prosperous (more especially in country districts where an ordinary inn was not required), and that human ingenuity could not have devised a happier mode of creating vice, crime, and poverty. Here then we have a monstrous evil striking at the very root of our social system, by debasing the moral character of man, pressing hard, through its consequences, upon the honesty and industry of the country, and yet suffered, nay, encouraged, to continue its ruinous course. It is the upas-tree of England, and till uprooted and eradicated, vice, crime, and poverty will continue to increase, and all our attempts to promote temperance will be rendered comparatively futile and nugatory. The above remarks are equally applicable to retail gin-shops, which are now very common in provincial towns.

4. *Neglect of Vaccination*.—Throughout the kingdom medical men complain of the great difficulty they have to encounter in inducing the poorer classes to have their children vaccinated, even free from any expense. The experience of many years has decided that vaccination is the very best preventive means known as a protection against the poison of small-pox. I am aware that you have already turned your attention to this subject, and that orders have been issued in many unions under your charge, to the medical officers, to vaccinate all the children in their respective districts, and I would respectfully urge the necessity of following up and enforcing such regulations. It would be well if all public dispensaries and other charities would adopt some peremptory rule to the same effect. It is unnecessary to say more on this topic, as it is not improbable that even these remarks may be anticipated by a legislative enactment.

5. *Poverty*.—The title of this section of my letter may at first strike you as supererogatory, but as I could not select a better term for the division, and as poverty does not imply destitution (which the Poor Laws of England under all circumstances relieve), and more especially as I consider it one of the most fruitful sources of disease, I think it advisable, in an inquiry like the present, not to omit anything having such a tendency, which is capable of being obviated, even however remotely, either by a sanitary police regulation, or by the due exercise of moral influence. When I say that I consider poverty as a fruitful source of disease, I do not mean to assert that even *extreme poverty* is adequate to the production of fever; yet I am nevertheless of opinion that it is one of the most predisposing causes, and that it cannot exist long without contagious fever making its appearance, more particularly in densely crowded situations. Poverty not only

indicates an inability to procure proper food in quantity and quality, but it also indicates a like inability to procure all other necessities of life; and it is universally admitted, that where circumstances combine to enervate the human constitution, contagious diseases extend with a frightful rapidity. I do not wish, however, any remarks I have made in this letter to be considered as having reference to fever alone, but as applying with almost equal force to the production of diseased action generally.

Under the head of intemperance is already detailed one of the greatest sources of poverty; and, like all other vices, originating with the head of the family, its impoverishing effects are felt by each member of the household, thus visiting the sins of the guilty upon the innocent. Having, however, already dismissed this part of my subject, I shall not enlarge upon it here.

Another grand source of poverty may be found to arise from the combinations amongst workmen, refusing to work for a less amount of wages than they themselves choose to dictate, and from the arbitrary and frequently illegal influence they often exercise over fellow-labourers who are less exacting. It is no uncommon thing at the present day to find numerous families thus suddenly reduced from comparative comfort and plenty to absolute want, whilst abundance of work might be had at a remunerating price, which they will neither execute themselves nor permit others to do. It is not for me to suggest any remedy for an evil of this character; but surely if the arm of the law is already insufficient to exercise a proper influence in such cases, no time ought to be lost in remedying the defect.

An excellent example is shown in this neighbourhood by the wealthy manufacturers and tradesmen, almost universally paying their men's weekly wages on a Friday evening (or, what is still better, early on Saturday morning), instead of Saturday, thus putting it into the power of all to spend their money to the best advantage at Saturday's market, and obviating the great temptation that formerly existed, of spending their earnings, or a large proportion of them, in the public-houses and beer-shops after the termination of the week's labour. It may be said that such parties are as likely to dissipate on a Friday as on a Saturday evening. The propensity, I grant, may be the same, but there is no intervening day of rest to shake off the effects of intemperance and indulgence; and as workmen must resume their labours on the Saturday, hence it is that such a regulation exercises not only a salutary, but a provident influence. The same considerate conduct induces many of the masters to encourage their workmen and servants to make a point of placing a small amount of their earnings periodically in the savings banks—an example worthy of all praise. I wish I could persuade the labouring poor to place more money in the savings banks and less in clubs and friendly societies, they would soon experience the beneficial effects of such a system;

they would find that in a very few years they would be entitled to a larger amount from the bank than from the club, and that in cases of sickness, or great distress, they could draw on the principal as their own individual property, which they can never do from a club. They would find that in a time of hardship they are not compelled to continue their payment to the bank, but that they might resume it, or discontinue it, according to the pressure of the times, or their own circumstances, without incurring any loss; they would find that such a system is unattended with expense, that there is no club-room to provide, no officers to maintain, and no inducements to dissipation; they would find in their old age a fund to soothe their declining years, and, it may be, a surplus to divide among their children. Moral and religious instruction is extensively afforded to large classes of the workmen and their families by voluntary teachers; a system that meets with much encouragement from the master manufacturers. Such instruction is undoubtedly the best ground-work for leading rational beings to reflect, and thus, not only to encourage habits of industry and frugality, but, by teaching them the principles of Christianity, they have the best preparation for their duties here, and for their eternal good hereafter.

In conclusion, I would beg to offer a few remarks about the neighbourhood of Lancaster. The country around is open and hilly, and in general under good cultivation, with the exception of a considerable tract of land towards the sea, which is flat and swampy, and only partially drained. Indeed, the best cultivated land in this district, from its extreme level, only permits of drainage into large open ditches, which are constantly more or less filled with water, and in hot and drougthy weather are sometimes very offensive. Intermittent fever occasionally makes its appearance in this district, and fevers of a typhoid type are not unfrequent. The villages on the sea-coast, at no great distance from this land, are frequently the seat of contagious fever; and perhaps a little investigation will suffice to account for the rapidity with which it is often diffused. The male inhabitants of these villages are almost all exclusively engaged in fishing for herrings, flat-fish, shrimps, cockles, and muscles. The nature of their occupation implies great exposure both by day and night; and whilst they are so engaged, their families at home are picking and sorting the produce of each previous catch, and are hence much exposed to damp. The refuse fish, instead of being carefully destroyed, or conveyed away, are commonly thrown down, at or near the cottage-door, there to accumulate and *decompose* along with other garbage, until wanted as manure for the land. It is almost unnecessary to say that the stench arising from this source alone is, in many seasons of the year, perfectly insufferable. With an occupation such as this, cleanliness, either in person or in their domestic arrangements, is scarcely to be expected, and if expected,

certainly does not prevail. Their cottages are in general badly lighted and ventilated, frequently damp and densely crowded. The construction of such property is, upon the whole, infinitely worse than in towns. It is not unusual to find a large family crowded into a hovel with only a small kitchen below, and a garret divided into two sleeping apartments above. Notwithstanding a very large sum of money is yearly obtained by these fishermen, yet such are their thriftless and improvident habits, that they are almost all in a state of great poverty. There are honourable exceptions to this sweeping censure; and here and there a neat cottage, with smiling contentment, is observable; and I would gladly hope that, by the laudable exertions at present making by the clergy and other benevolent persons in their neighbourhood, that these villages will shortly present a better aspect.

I am, Gentlemen,
Faithfully and respectfully yours,
EDWARD DE VITRE'.

No. 23.

ON THE STATE AND CONDITION OF THE TOWN OF LEEDS IN THE WEST RIDING OF THE COUNTY OF YORK.

By ROBERT BAKER, Esq.

THE town of Leeds, in the West Riding of the County of York, is situated on the River Aire, which runs through it, and which is navigable only hitherto. It forms by far the most important of the 11 townships of which the borough is composed, having, by the census of 1841, a population of 87,613 persons out of a parochial and total population of 150,587. The acres of the parish or borough are stated to be 21,450, but the total acreage of the township is only 2,672 A. 2 R.

By the Municipal Act of Will. IV., the borough of Leeds was divided into 12 wards, of which eight are in the township of Leeds, viz., the North, North-east, East, South, Kirkgate, Mill-hill, West, and North-west.

It is proposed to consider these wards in this Report: the inquiries instituted only having reference to the town, and not to the borough.

The following Table exhibits the present builded and blank areas of these wards, *i. e.*, the surface which is covered with buildings, including the streets, and that which still remains, either building-land, or land allotted to agriculture, gardening, or other purposes; to which is added, the number of houses of various values, and the population of them, taken on a calculation of four and a half to a house, which was the ratio in the census

of 1831, of the statistical census of 1838 and 1839, and is nearly the same in the census just completed.

It is necessary, however, to observe, that the measurements here given are the present result of an entire admeasurement ordered to be made by the Town Council of Leeds of the whole borough, with a view to an improved valuation; while the number of houses at different values, is that obtained by the statistical survey of the town in 1838 and 1839, between when and now the whole population of the township has increased from 82,120 to 87,613. But for all practical purposes it is the same, for the increase has no doubt been distributed in similar proportions as heretofore. The object of this argument is to show the proportion of the working-classes, *i. e.*, persons who live in houses under 10*l.* annual rent, to the middle and upper classes, and their number, upon given areas, with a view to exhibit congregation, amongst the other elements which affect longevity:—

| Wards. | Land. | | | Buildings. | | | Total. | | | Population of the Ward. | Dwellings under 10 <i>l.</i> Annual Rent. | Population of the Working Classes at 4½ to a House. |
|-------------|-------|----|----|------------|----|----|--------|----|----|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| | A. | R. | P. | A. | R. | P. | A. | R. | P. | | | |
| North . . | 23 | 1 | 0 | 63 | 3 | 0 | 92 | 0 | 0 | 12,506 | 2,100 | 9,450 |
| North-East | 466 | 0 | 0 | 75 | 3 | 0 | 541 | 3 | 0 | 16,269 | 3,422 | 15,399 |
| East . . | 546 | 3 | 0 | 111 | 0 | 0 | 657 | 3 | 0 | 14,271 | 2,947 | 13,261 |
| South . . | 66 | 1 | 0 | 57 | 1 | 0 | 123 | 2 | 0 | 5,630 | 943 | 4,243 |
| Kirkgate . | 4 | 0 | 0 | 27 | 2 | 0 | 31 | 2 | 0 | 3,153 | 348 | 1,233 |
| Mill-hill . | 26 | 1 | 0 | 101 | 2 | 0 | 127 | 3 | 0 | 5,167 | 274 | 1,566 |
| West . . | 334 | 0 | 0 | 176 | 0 | 0 | 560 | 0 | 0 | 15,483 | 2,104 | 9,463 |
| North-West | 456 | 0 | 0 | 82 | 1 | 0 | 533 | 1 | 0 | 9,636 | 1,465 | 6,592 |
| 8 | 1,977 | 2 | 0 | 695 | 0 | 0 | 2,672 | 2 | 0 | 82,120 | 13,603 | 61,212 |

By this Table it is seen, that upon the 92 acres of the North ward are located nearly as many persons as upon the 541 acres of the North-east, the 657 acres of the East, and the 560 acres of the West. The importance of this will be manifest when we come to consider the districts of the registrars.

The town itself stands on sloping ground, the highest part of which is on Woodhouse Moor, to the west, and which is about 232 feet above the level of the River Aire below the Hunslet Weir.

The Hunslet Weir is here mentioned, because it is only below this, a distance down the river of about two miles, that an effectual drainage can be obtained.

Within it are going on daily the processes of flax-spinning and weaving by hand; the manufacture of woollen cloths, and of some worsted goods; of various kinds of machinery, of tobacco, and pipes, dye-works, ware and saw-mills, and other processes of industry.

The higher parts of the town are ordinarily clean for so large a manufacturing location; but the lower parts, which lie contiguous to the river and the Becks or rivulets are dirty, confined, ill