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LODGING HOUSES (METROPOLIS).

REPORT  
ON THE  
COMMON AND MODEL  
LODGING HOUSES OF THE  
METROPOLIS,

(WITH REFERENCE TO EPIDEMIC CHOLERA IN 1854.)

BY

GEORGE GLOVER,

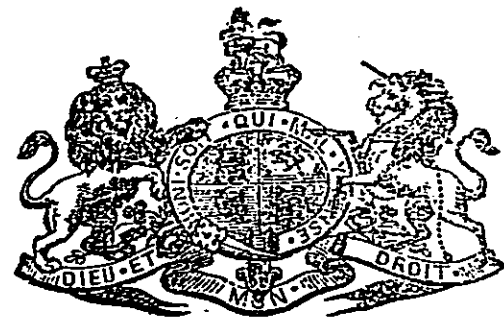
SUPERINTENDING MEDICAL INSPECTOR, GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH;  
FORMERLY VICE-PRESIDENT ROYAL SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF ARTS AND  
PRESIDENT ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY;  
LECTURER ON NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND MEDICAL PHYSICS, ROYAL COLLEGE  
OF SURGEONS, EDINBURGH.

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1855

[26]

RECEIVED  
 GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH  
 20th JANUARY 1855

General Board of Health,  
 20th January 1855.

The Right Honourable Sir Benjamin Hall, Bart., &c.,  
 President of the General Board of Health.

Sir,

In compliance with your instructions, I have made a personal inspection of the different model lodging houses in the metropolis, with the view of ascertaining how far the improved sanitary arrangements introduced in them have been successful in warding off the attack of epidemic cholera. I have also deemed it in accordance with your views to carry my inspection further, and to inquire what influence the operation of the Common Lodging Houses Acts has had upon the health of that portion of the inhabitants of the metropolis who are compelled to become inmates of these places. The statement appended will doubtless create surprise; but in order to insure accuracy I have deemed it advisable to give the returns from the Metropolitan Commissioners of Police, in the same form that I received them.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEO. GLOVER,

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## R E P O R T.

### COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

In the report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the state of large towns, especial attention was directed to the common lodging houses. Overwhelming evidence was adduced from all parties,\* showing that these houses were especially the sources of epidemic diseases. In the report of the Metropolitan Sanitary Commissioners 1847, numerous facts of a similar character and leading to the same conclusion are set forth. In 1849, the common lodging houses suffered severely from epidemic cholera. In Tindall's Buildings, Gray's Inn Lane, from fifteen to twenty cases of cholera† occurred in a single lodging house, and in another, in the same buildings, twenty cases of fever originated. In Church Lane, St. Giles', in thirty dwellings, where nightly lodgers were received, twenty-eight deaths from cholera were registered.‡ In Cooper's Court, Blue Anchor Yard, Windmill Street, Rosemary Lane, and Blue Yard, Whitechapel, almost all the houses being noxious common lodging houses, cholera was severely felt, and out of a population of 750, twenty died of cholera and diarrhoea.

In 1849, in houses in Jennings's Buildings, Kensington, used as lodging houses, and containing a population of 750, the mortality from cholera and diarrhoea alone amounted to twenty, being in the proportion of 266 to 10,000 living, while the mortality from all causes, was in the proportion of 440 to 10,000.

Among many instances that have come under my own notice during the last twenty years, I may state the following:—From a single room in a common lodging house in Aird's Close, Grass Market, Edinburgh, above forty cases of fever were removed to the hospital during the epidemic fever of 1847. The medical officer of the district, who attended them in the first instance, fell a victim to the

\* See Report of Commissioners on state of large towns and populous districts, 1845.

† Report on the present state of certain parts of the metropolis. R. Grainger, Esq., 1851.

‡ Registrar-General's Report, cholera.

disease. Many instances of a similar character have occurred in the metropolis.

So strongly were the evils of the common lodging houses impressed on the General Board of Health, by reports made to them, and by the Official Reports of previous commissions, that in the session of 1851 the Earl of Shaftesbury, then Lord Ashley, introduced a Bill for their better regulation. The Bill became law in July 1851; the carrying of it out being entrusted to the Metropolitan Commissioners of Police.

Captain Hay, the Commissioner of Police, in his first report on the Act, thus describes the character of these houses:

“With a sincere desire to ameliorate the wretched condition of the lodgings of the poorer classes, I cheerfully received directions from the Secretary of State to take under my charge the common lodging houses as a new branch of Police duties.

“I was the more readily induced to undertake this onerous duty from the strong representations made by the General Board of Health of the miserable state of these dwellings, which that board described as the great source of contagious and loathsome diseases.

“This inducement was strengthened by the report of the Constabulary Commissioners, representing these houses as the hotbeds of crime and moral depravity amongst that class of the population which is obliged to resort to them.

“In the metropolis the common lodging houses are sources of streams of mendicants to all parts of the country; they are a refuge for them, and in many cases are in fact most infamous brothels, yet in these places are to be found industrious emigrant labourers, with their wives and children, driven into them for want of other suitable shelter.”

The beneficial working of the Act was soon apparent; lodging houses were registered; the number of inmates was restricted; regulations were enforced for the separation of the sexes, for the proper cleansing of the houses, for ventilation, and for compelling the lodging house keeper to give immediate notice in writing to the Commissioners of Police of any case of fever, or any infectious or contagious disease occurring, and immediately to remove other lodgers from the room where the case occurred, and to use such disinfecting processes as might be directed by the Commissioners. Proper attention was also directed to prevent the accumulation of refuse; and provision made for proper water-closet accommodation, better drainage, and sufficient water supply.

The Act (amended by the Act of 1853) has now been in practical operation for three years, and although it was not to be expected that its working would in so short a time remedy all the evils for which it was passed, it is unquestionable that its results, especially with reference to the diminution of epidemic disease, have been far greater than even the most sanguine had anticipated.

Captain Hay, in his Second Report, states, "that in the year 1853 there were common lodging houses permanently registered accommodating about 30,000 persons. It is gratifying to observe the successful result of the operation of the Act in preventing disease. During the year only ten cases of fever have occurred in the registered houses, five of which were removed to the hospitals by direction of the Police."

Considering the class of persons inhabiting these houses, it must be acknowledged that three cases of fever to every ten thousand of such persons is an almost incredibly small amount of sickness of this character.

With the view of ascertaining whether similar results had been witnessed in relation to cholera during the recent outbreak of that disease, I have obtained from the Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police the following returns:

WEEKLY STATE OF COMMON-LODGING HOUSES WITHIN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT FOR WEEK ENDING THE 8TH DAY OF OCTOBER 1854.

Variation in the State of Common Lodging Houses within the Week.	FIRST REPORTED.			RESULT OF INSPECTION OF HOUSES.					REGISTRATION OF HOUSES.	
	Number of Houses reported.	Number of which Keepers are served with Notice.	Number of Houses not yet served.	Number of Houses not coming within the Act, and given up prior to Registration.	Number of Houses of which Notices to "register" have expired.	Number of Houses of which Notices to "register" have expired.		Number of Houses permanently registered.	Number of Houses given up.	Number of Houses remaining on the Register.
						Discontinued to take Lodgers, but "Alterations" not necessarily under Observation.	Notices of "Alterations" not compiled with.			
Total state of previous week - Operations of present week surveyed - re-opened	10,281 23	10,201 23	—	3,882 36	241 23	1,772 4	801 30 20	1,903	405	1,307 9
Permanently registered - 9 deduct Not within the Act, and given up - 50 do. Discontinued to take lodgers - 4 do. Notices to register expired - 20 do. To survey - do. Surveyed - do. Given up after Registration - do. Re-opened - do.	10,284	10,284	—	3,808	264	1,770	851 40*	1,903	405	1,316
Actual state for week ending 8th Oct. 1854	10,284	10,284	—	3,808	234	1,770	802	1,883	405	1,316

(Signed) W. HAY, Commissioner. (Signed) JAMES HURDISRENS, Registering Inspector.

From this it appears that altogether 10,284 common lodging houses are more or less under the superintendence of the police, although only 1,721 are as yet permanently registered.\*

The next return gives the amount of sickness, and the deaths from cholera, fever, and small pox, from the 1st January to 1st October of the present year.

#### METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT.

RETURN of CASES of CHOLERA, FEVER, and SMALL POX that have occurred in COMMON LODGING-HOUSES from 1st January to 1st October 1854.

CHOLERA in			
Registered Common Lodging Houses.		Not registered Common Lodging Houses.	
Cases.	Deaths.	Cases.	Deaths.
34	26	38	35
FEVER.			
3	—	5	2
SMALL POX.			
—	—	5	1

The non-registered houses are those that require certain improvements, repairs, &c. to make them into compliance with the regulations of the Secretary of State, prior to registration. A copy of these regulations is given to each keeper, and fully explained to him by the inspecting serjeant of the district, when time is given (and often extended from time to time) to enable the keeper to make such alterations as may be found necessary. Should these means not succeed, the keeper is summoned before a magistrate; and here again considerable delay often occurs, and in many cases the houses are in too ruinous a condition to be

\* The number of persons inhabiting registered common lodging houses is estimated at 32,000; the number inhabiting all these houses, registered and unregistered, at 82,000; leaving for the unregistered, 50,000.

registered without a great outlay, which the owners will not expend, and the occupiers, who are summoned from time to time until they leave the house or discontinue to receive lodgers, cannot incur, on account of their poverty.

JAMES HUMPHREYS,  
Registering Inspector.

From the above it appears that in all the lodging houses, both registered and non-registered, there have been only seventy-two cases of cholera and sixty-one deaths; an amount of sickness and mortality, considering the population, the character of the inmates of these houses, and the localities where they are situate, astonishingly small. To make this clearer, however, I have prepared the following tables:

TABLES showing the CASES and DEATHS from CHOLERA, FEVER, and SMALL POX in the REGISTERED and NON-REGISTERED COMMON LODGING HOUSES in the METROPOLIS, under the SURVEILLANCE of the Metropolitan Police, from 1st January to 1st October 1854.

#### REGISTERED HOUSES.

Number of registered Houses.	Estimated No. of Inhabitants.	CHOLERA.				FEVER.				SMALL POX.			
		Attacks.	Deaths.	Proportion per Cent. of Deaths to Attacks.	Proportion per Cent. of Deaths to Population.	Attacks.	Deaths.	Proportion per Cent. of Deaths to Attacks.	Proportion per Cent. of Deaths to Population.	Attacks.	Deaths.	Proportion per Cent. of Deaths to Attacks.	Proportion per Cent. of Deaths to Population.
1,721	32,000	34	26	76·5	·08	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

NON-REGISTERED HOUSES, but under INSPECTION, and NOTICES served upon "KEEPERS"

4,695	50,000	38	35	92·1	·07	5	2	40	·004	5	1	20	·002
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#### REGISTERED and NON-REGISTERED HOUSES.

6,416	82,000	72	61	84·7	·074	8	2	25	·002	5	1	20	·001
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TABLE showing the MORTALITY from CHOLERA in Thirteen Weeks in every 10,000 of the Population in several Superintendent Registrars' Districts of the Metropolis, and in the Common Lodging Houses under the Superintendence of the Metropolitan Police.

NAME OF DISTRICT.	Estimated Population in round Numbers.	Deaths from Cholera in 13 weeks, 1854.	Deaths to 10,000 living.
Bermondsey - - - -	50,000	810	162
St. Olave Southwark - - -	20,000	293	146
Rotherhithe - - - -	18,000	260	144
St. James Westminster - - -	37,000	483	130
St. Mary Newington - - -	65,500	660	107
St. George Southwark - - -	52,000	517	99
St. Saviour's - - - -	36,000	466	129
Whitechapel - - - -	80,500	298	37
St. Marylebone - - - -	160,000	319	19
Hampstead - - - -	12,000	14	12
Metropolis - - - -	2,500,000	10,118	44
Lodging Houses under the superintendence of the police - - - -	82,000	61	7

The above documents would seem to prove that the inmates of the lodging houses have suffered less from cholera than almost any other class in the metropolis. This result is of so startling a character that some doubts naturally arise as to whether the police return can be taken as absolutely correct, or merely as an approximation to the actual amount of mortality. Assuming that the Metropolitan Police are correct as to the actual number of deaths from cholera that occurred in the common lodging houses; it is very probable that many cases originated in the houses which ended fatally elsewhere. This may have happened without the knowledge of the police; not from any neglect on their part, but from such causes as the following: the population of these houses is migratory; they are nightly lodgers, and as a rule do not occupy the same house two nights consecutively; it is very possible that in many cases lodgers attacked with premonitory symptoms may have left such houses to suffer, and, perhaps, die, elsewhere: the keepers of these common lodging houses have a special interest in keeping the police, as far as possible,

in ignorance of the appearance of epidemic disease in them, and also in refusing admission to any one complaining of or threatened with cholera or other epidemic disease, both because of the expense of the cleansing operations which would immediately be ordered, and if a death were known to have occurred on their premises their houses would be deserted by the other inmates, and afterwards shunned: Lastly, and this is the most important reason of all,—the surveillance of these houses by the police is necessarily incomplete. Complete inspection (including daily and nightly visits) would require a much larger force than is at the disposal of the Commissioners for this purpose. Still, after making all the deductions that the operation of the above causes may render necessary, there can be little doubt that the Common Lodging House Acts have materially contributed to the preservation of that portion of the population of the metropolis who have no settled place of abode.

The comparative immunity of the lodging houses, as shown by the return above quoted, is the more extraordinary when it is borne in mind that they are situated generally in the worst and most confined localities, that they are filthy and crowded, and that the tenants belong, as a rule, to the lowest and most profligate class. That the Common Lodging House Acts would diminish the amount of epidemic disease in these abodes of wretchedness was anticipated by the nobleman who introduced and by all who promoted them, but that in so short a time such striking fruits of their operation would appear not even the most sanguine could have looked for. But the startling nature of the figures above given will in itself diminish their value in many minds. Nor can it be denied that the operation of such causes as have been above pointed out, goes far to impair confidence in the completeness of the police returns that have been quoted. No such drawback exists to our acceptance of the facts which follow with respect to the health of the inmates of the model lodging houses during the prevalence of the epidemic; and on them the advocate of sanitary improvement may rest without fear of being shaken.



## MODEL LODGING HOUSES.

HOUSES belonging to the SOCIETY FOR IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF THE LABOURING CLASSES.

This society, the first of the kind established (with the exception of the Labourers Friend Society, to which it is now united), was founded for erecting, by means of voluntary contributions, buildings and tenements which should serve as models for general use, and it was intended to apply the profits to the erection of other houses of a similar character. One of the principal objects of the society has been to show that the investment of capital in such erections is perfectly compatible with a fair mercantile return, while very much better accommodation than they now enjoy is thereby secured for the poor. The tenements are let at prices little if at all higher than those charged in the common lodging houses, which, until the introduction of the Common Lodging House Act, were a disgrace to the metropolis; and it is gratifying to find, that, with the exception of the house in Hatton Garden, originally intended for single women, but recently altered for the reception of single men, (on a similar principle to that of the Soho Chambers, belonging to the Metropolitan Association for improving the dwellings of the industrious classes,) all the tenements have been fully occupied, especially those erected for the reception of families.

The first buildings erected were the model buildings, Bagnigge Wells, capable of containing twenty-three families and thirty aged women. Out of the twenty-three houses, nine are constructed for single families, and consist respectively of a living room on the ground floor, having an enclosed recess or closet large enough to receive beds for the youths of the family, two bed-rooms on the upper floor, and a small yard at the back. These houses are let at a rental of 6s. a week, and are fully occupied. The remaining fourteen families are distributed in seven houses, each occupying a floor of two rooms, with all requisite conveniences. The apartments on the upper floor are approached through an outer door distinct from that leading to the lower floor, so that each floor constitutes an entirely separate dwelling. The rent charged is 3s. 6d. per week each per tenement. They are all fully occupied. The use of a wash-house and drying ground are also furnished at a small charge. The accommodation for single aged women consists of one room for each, with the use of a wash-house common to all. The rent per room is 2s. per week. The rooms are fully tenanted

An ample supply of water from the New River Company is laid on to all the houses, and there is good water-closet accommodation. It is gratifying to state that in these several premises, which contained a population of 170, there has not been a single case of sickness during the late epidemic, although many of the tenants were of the very age and circumstances to render them, under ordinary conditions, peculiarly susceptible of the disease.

*Renovated Lodging House, Charles Street, Drury Lane.*

The next step taken by this society was to try what could be done with some of the very bad lodging houses, and accordingly they took the premises in Charles Street, Drury Lane. This house formerly consisted of three of the worst common lodging houses in the metropolis. They are situated in a most unhealthy and confined locality, and were the general resort of prostitutes and thieves. The houses in the street at the present moment are chiefly lodging houses of the old class, and, although now under the surveillance of the police, are still tenanted by the worst characters.

The house belonging to the society is calculated to accommodate eighty-two nightly male lodgers, at a charge of 4d. per night, the sum charged in the adjoining houses; but should any one remain a week the charge is reduced to 2s. Although the sleeping accommodation afforded is far superior to that in the other houses in the neighbourhood, yet it appears to me that it would be better to restrict the lodgers to a less number. There is an ample supply of water, a good coffee and cooking room, scullery, and good water-closet accommodation. The society states that of all their houses this pays the best. The house has during the last three months been well occupied, although not always full, as in the summer and autumn a large number of the poorer classes are employed in agricultural pursuits, such as pea picking, hop picking, &c. It is however most satisfactory to be enabled to state that during the whole of the epidemic there were only five cases of very slight diarrhoea in these houses, and these were confined to men employed in the neighbourhood of the Tower and Docks, who returned unwell from their work. One case of cholera occurred which can hardly be said to have been contracted in the house, as the individual in question had suffered from diarrhoea for nine days, and was in a state of great destitution. He died in King's College Hospital. The immunity these houses have experienced shows what may be done

even by partial sanitary arrangements to improve the condition of the poorer classes, as in this establishment the large majority of tenants are nightly lodgers.

*The Model Lodging House for Working Men in George Street, St. Giles'.*

This establishment, which was opened on the 18th May 1848, is constructed to contain 104 single men. The arrangements are admirable. The dormitories are ten feet high, and are subdivided by wooden partitions six feet nine inches high. The coffee-room is thirty-three feet by twenty-three feet, and ten feet nine inches high. There is an ample supply of hot and cold water. The ventilation is secured by means of a shaft carried up at the end of every room, as well as a shaft up the staircase to supply the dormitories with fresh air, with a provision for warming, if required. In this house the tenants are weekly lodgers, and pay a rental of 2s. 4d. per week. This establishment is always full. Neither in 1849 nor during the present year has any case of cholera or diarrhoea occurred. The position of this model building is of importance as showing what may be done for preserving the health of the poor in the lowest neighbourhoods. In immediate contiguity to it is the notorious locality of Church Lane and Carrier Street, St. Giles, with its numerous courts and alleys, tenanted by the lowest of the low, and where, until the Lodging House Act came into operation, epidemic disease was always present, and which, even now, improved as it has been, is still one of the most notorious fever nests of the metropolis.

*Model Houses for Families, Streatham Street, Bloomsbury.*

The next and greatest attempt that the society made was the erection of a building to accommodate fifty-three families in such a manner that the domestic privacy and independence of each family might be preserved. The fifty-three sets of apartments, or rather distinct dwellings, consist of a living room, two bed-rooms, a lobby, scullery, water-closet, and dust-bin, bed-closet, sink, and meat-safe. In addition to this, on the basement story is a wash-house, ironing room, and bath-room, the use of which are granted at a trifling cost. The whole building is amply supplied with water. The drainage is good, and ventilation well attended to. The whole building is under the direction of a resident manager or collector, to whom is entrusted the retailing of coals at a

moderate price. The rentals of the sets of rooms vary from 4s. to 6s. per week, according to position, and in three cases the charge is 7s per set. The average number of inmates during the past three years has been 306, a very large proportion of whom were children, but altogether there have been only six cases of diarrhoea, which speedily yielded to treatment, whilst in the immediate neighbourhood (which is densely populated) there has been a large amount of the prevailing epidemic. The general state of the health of the inmates of these model houses during the last three years has been good, the total deaths being only ten, seven of which occurred among children under five years of age, three of whom died of hooping cough, one from pneumonia, one from cephalitis, one from convulsions, and the seventh from some cause not known. The other three deaths arose from consumption. The average annual mortality is therefore less than 11 in 1,000, while in the district where the houses are situated the mortality on an average of seven years has been nearly 27 in 1,000, the mortality from cholera during the past epidemic having been 71, or in the proportion of 11 in 10,000 inhabitants. The result of the sanitary experiment as made in these buildings could not be more satisfactory.

*Thanksgiving Buildings, Portpool Lane, Gray's Inn Road.*

These buildings were erected principally from the thanksgiving offerings collected on the occasion of the disappearance of cholera in 1849. They are constructed for the accommodation of twenty families and 128 single women. The tenements for the families consist of three and two rooms each, and the single women are accommodated in sixty-four rooms. In addition to these tenements, there is a spacious wash-house for poor families in the neighbourhood. To this are attached hot drying-closets, wringing apparatus, and ironing room. The wash-houses, &c. are most extensively used. The average number of inmates of the buildings during the past three months has been 166, among whom there has not been a single case of sickness during the whole period. The experience of the effects of these buildings on the immediate neighbourhood has been most gratifying. These houses were intentionally erected in what was justly considered one of the worst conditioned localities in the metropolis. The notorious Pheasant's Court, Gray's Inn Lane, immediately abutting on these premises. At first the inmates were constantly disturbed by the nocturnal uproars



in the adjoining streets, but these have gradually diminished, and the manager of the houses informed me that the locality was now the quietest in the neighbourhood.

*Model Lodging House, King Street, Drury Lane.*

This is similar to the one in use in Charles Street, Drury Lane. It is constructed to contain twenty-five male inmates. It has been almost always fully occupied. There have been no cases of diarrhoea or cholera in this house.

*Hatton Garden Chambers.*

This building, which was formerly used as a place of business, was taken on lease by the society, and converted at a considerable expense into lodging houses for women, and is capable of accommodating fifty-six inmates. The building is divided into three floors of dormitories, subdivided into separate compartments. There is a spacious kitchen, wash-house, bath, pantry, safe, &c. There is good ventilation, and an ample supply of water. This establishment did not, however, fill as was expected, and it is now let out to single men at a charge of 3s. 6d. per week each. The number of inmates at present is only twenty-eight, owing to the recent alteration in the character of the tenants. It is gratifying to find that there has not been a single case either of diarrhoea or cholera.

In addition to the different buildings thus described, the Society has lately purchased thirteen houses in Wild's Court, Drury Lane. They are at present tenanted by 1,000 persons. The inhabitants are mostly Irish labourers, costermongers, and characters of a very doubtful calling. It is impossible to convey an accurate description of the filth and wretchedness of this locality, or of the scenes enacted there. The accompanying wood cuts, taken by the society previous to their commencing operations, and the extracts from the report of the clerk of the works, &c., Mr. Baxendale, may, however, afford some slight idea of the premises which the society now propose to improve.

"Wild Court is situate on the northern side of Great Wild Street, Lincoln's Inn, and runs in a north-easterly direction into Chapel Place, which leads east into Duke Street, and west through Middle Yard into Great Queen Street.

"The court is paved throughout, and contains fourteen substantially brick-built houses. The beams, joists, and other bearing timbers are principally of English oak, and in

a sound state. Superficially, they are in a very dilapidated state, especially Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Fig. 1 is a view of the court as seen from Great Wild Street.

Fig. 2 is the front view of the house No. 2.

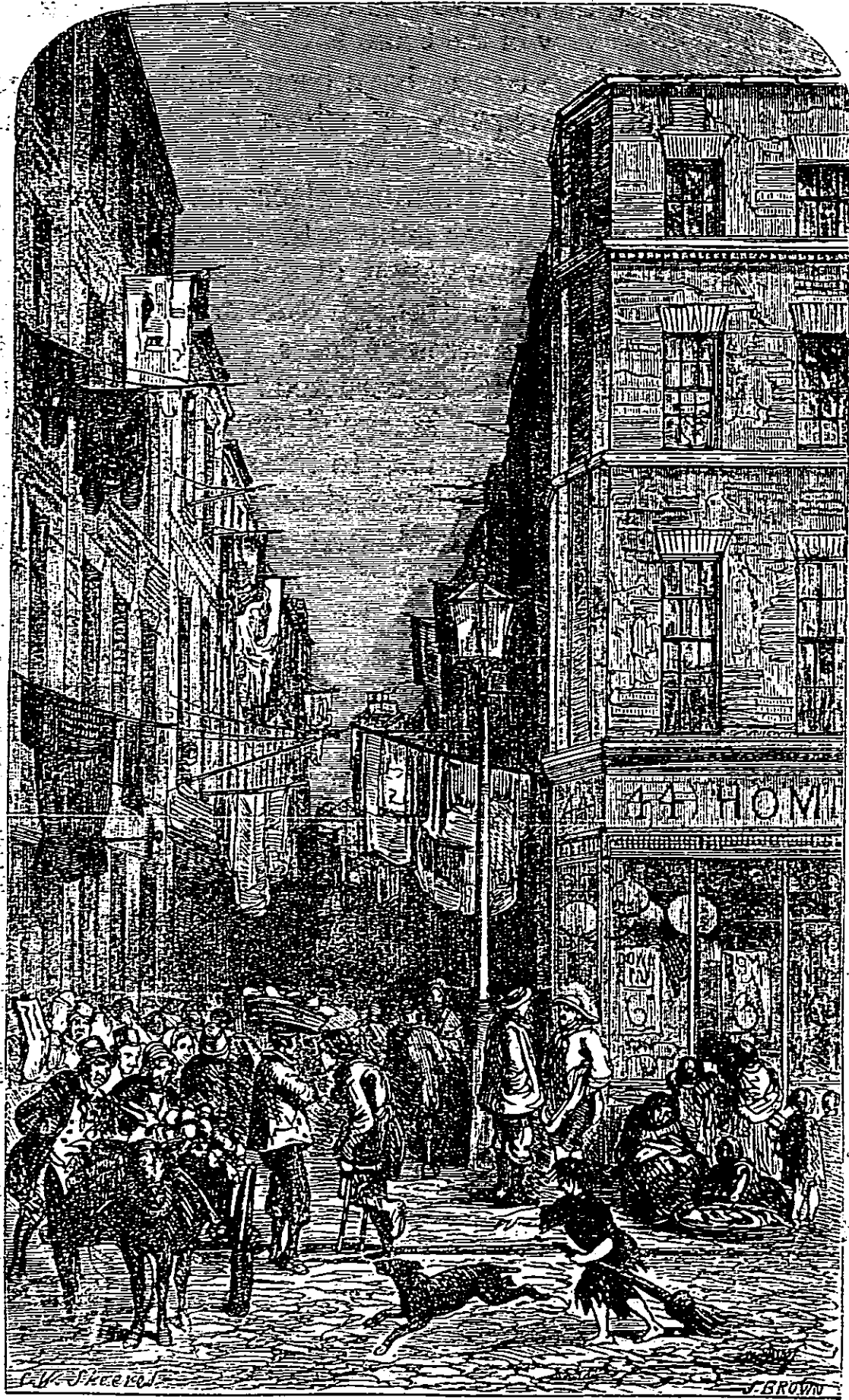
"Thirteen of these houses have been obtained, each containing eight rooms, except No. 2, which has twelve rooms, independent of the basements. None of the basements are at present occupied, only as lumber places, and are in a most filthy state, emitting at times effluvia the most foul, partly in consequence of the accumulation of animal and vegetable matter which is thrown in through the area windows, and through holes made in the ground-floors, and partly from the occasional overflow of badly constructed "dry" brick drains, which pass beneath the floor, in some instances not more than three inches. There is no paving to these floors.

"The back-yards are from five feet six inches to seven feet wide, very imperfectly drained. At one end is placed a privy without door, and quite exposed.

"In the houses 2, 3, 4, and 5, these places are large open holes, sufficiently capacious for a man to fall into. They have risers and wood rails in front, but no seats. Fortunately, the rails are fixed too high for children, or accidents must now and then occur; this is one reason the yards are constantly in such a filthy state. In the other yards, there has been some attempt to make them more private by putting doors, but in other respects they are quite as bad. Adjoining the privies, in some of the yards, stand the water-butts, so dilapidated as scarcely to hold water; and, generally, the only means the tenants have to draw the water is by a plug in the lower part of the butt. In each of the yards of Nos. 2 and 4, a cement tank is constructed, the latter for the supply of the three houses, Nos. 3, 4, and 5. Several houses are supplied by butts placed in the basement at the foot of the stairs, and quite in the dark. There are loud complaints of the want of water throughout the whole court, especially on a Sunday. This deficiency is principally owing to the means provided for drawing the water, and the rotten state of the butts into which it comes. I have been there at three o'clock in the afternoon, and there has scarcely been a drop of water in the court, and the inhabitants running about the neighbourhood begging for it.

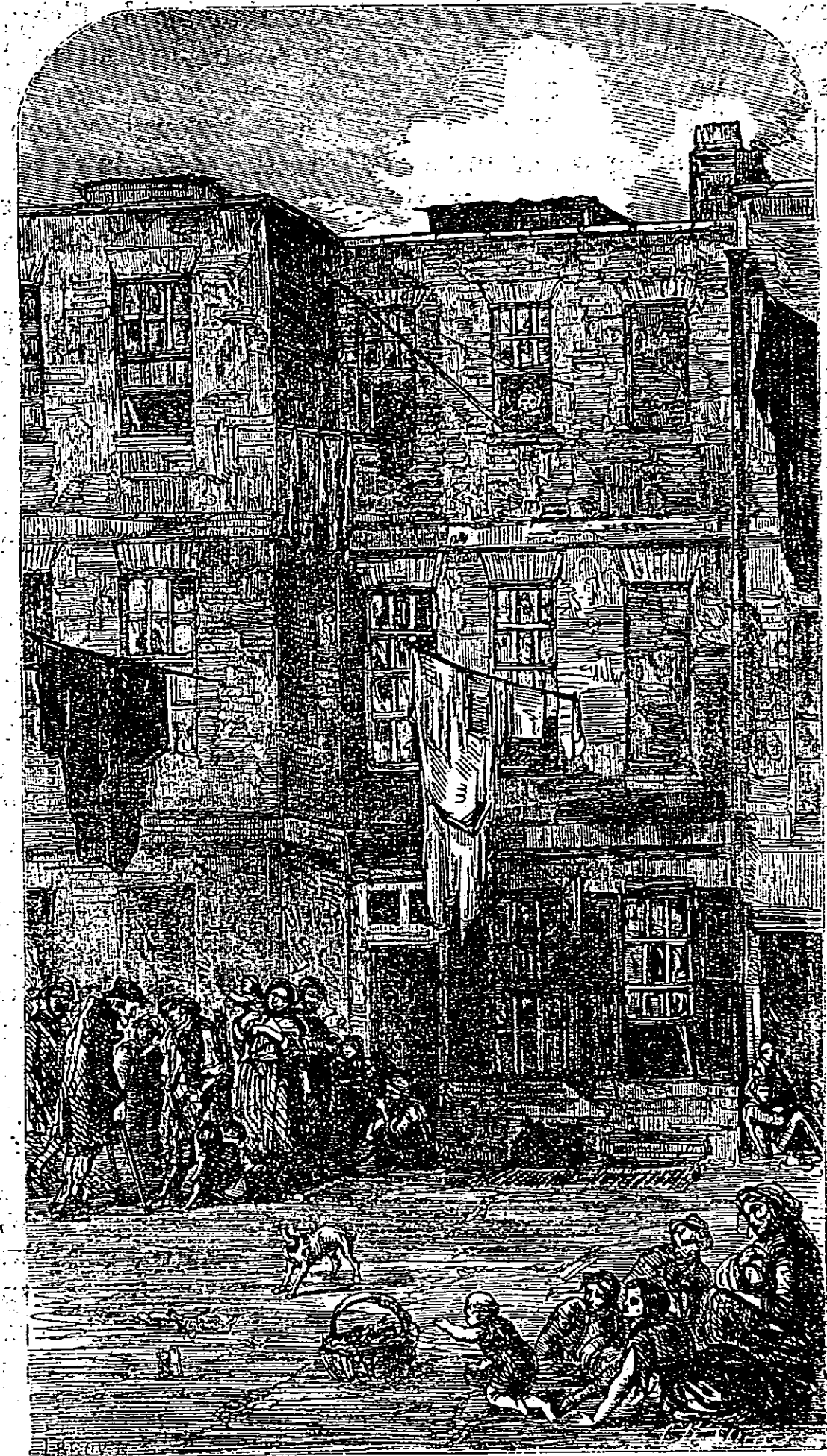
"Dust-bins are placed in one corner of the yards, and generally emptied once a week—sometimes, and I fear very frequently, once a fortnight only. Complaints have often been made of the stench arising from these places, especially

FIG. 1.



View of Wild Court, as seen from Great Wild Street.

FIG. 2.



Front view of the house No. 2.



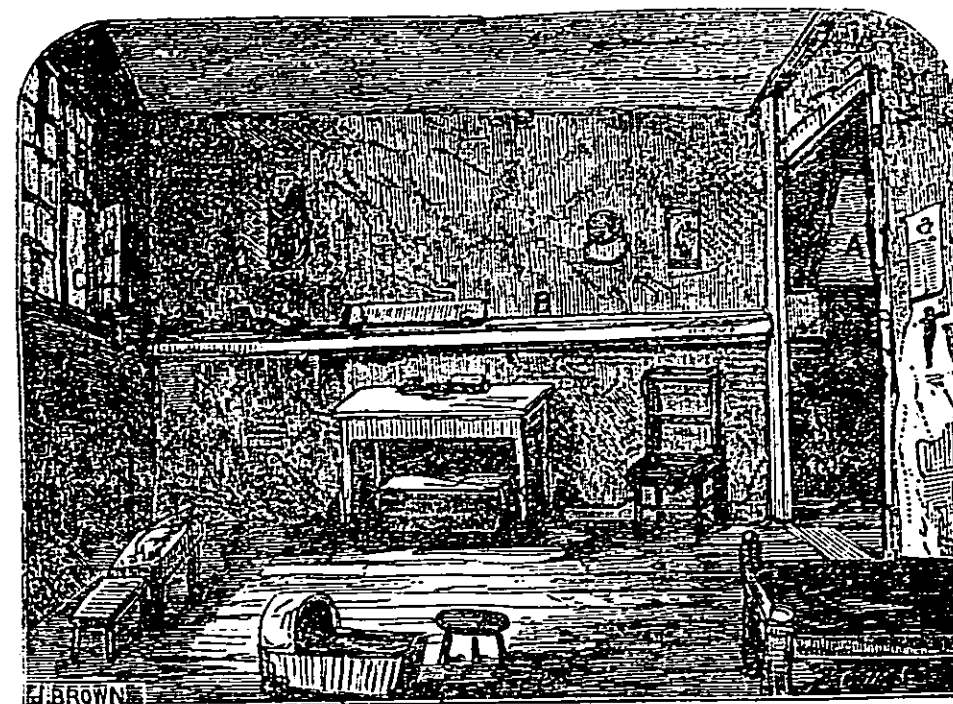
by the tenants occupying the back rooms on the ground-floor. Every morning the yards are abominably filthy, and present more the appearance of large cesspools than anything else. I have seen some of them about six inches deep in places of all manner of soil and filth, through which any person requiring water must wade to the water-butt, as well as to the privy. At times the very passages are covered to the entrance door. I have frequently been unable to get from the stairs to the yard from this disgusting practice.

"I may here observe, that it is not so much the occupants that commit this nuisance, as it is the idle fellows and women who flock to the place at night after dark, and take up their abode on the landings and stairs till the morning; some little allowance must, however, be made for the resident children, for whom not the slightest accommodation is provided. Before closing this subject, I must say a few words on the state in which the roofs and gutters are to be seen any day. It appears, from inquiry and examination, that the families occupying the upper rooms or garrets get rid of their soil and refuse by throwing it on the roofs at the back of the houses. It then passes, in some instances exposed to view in the room, along the gutters arranged on the side of each front attic, to that in front of the houses, thence by the stackpiping to the drains. See fig. 3. Some of these gutters have wood flap covers, partly hinged and partly fixed.

"This is such a striking instance of the total disregard by the occupants to common decency, as well as to their health and comfort, that I have had sketches made showing exactly the state of things. In fig. 3 A is the trap-door, or opening in the roof over the landing of the stairs, as may be seen through the door of the front room, where the occupants empty their slops, &c., which afterwards pass along the gutter B, against the wall in the front room, discharging on the tiles of the front roof, and into the gutter below, as shown in fig. 4. On looking out at the garret windows its appearance is, at times, that of an elongated cesspool, disgusting in the extreme, and the stench arising intolerable.

"The ventilation throughout is very imperfect. No provision whatever is made in the attics beyond an opening in the window, or by the side of it, about twelve or fourteen inches square, as shown at C, fig. 3. The other rooms are equally bad. The windows in most of them cannot be opened for the want of lines, weights, or beads. The larger portion of the glass in the windows is broken, and partly pasted over with paper, and partly stuffed up with old rags.

FIG. 3.



Internal view of a front garret, showing the gutter that conveys the soil and slops from this floor to gutter in front, as shown in fig. 4.

FIG. 4.



View of the front gutter, as seen from the garret windows.

Some of the windows are at least two-thirds blocked up in this manner.

“The ground-floor front room, in the house No. 5, has been untenanted between two and three years; and no application has been made for it that I can hear of, because, as I am informed, it has been the well-known haunt for all the thieves and bad characters in King Street, Parker Street, Charles Street, and all the courts and alleys in Drury Lane, as well as Church Lane, &c., who meet every night at the hour of twelve or thereabouts, and there arrange all kinds of mischief. The ingress and egress was by the cellar window, and up a hole in the floor specially made for the purpose. It has been represented to me as a regular den of thieves. I had this place well barricaded up about three weeks ago, and the good already effected can hardly be overrated.”

I have deemed it advisable to introduce this description, as it will be very instructive, at some future time, to institute a comparison between the present state of this locality and what it may become after the improvements are made.

### **Metropolitan Association for improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes.**

This Association was founded on the principle that the industrious man should pay the full value for his house, but that for the sum he pays he should possess a salubrious and commodious dwelling, instead of one in which cleanliness, comfort, and health can have no place. It was considered practicable to erect healthy and comfortable houses fit for the labourer and artisan, and to offer such improved dwellings at no higher rent than is now paid for inferior and unhealthy houses, and at the same time to obtain a profitable amount of interest for the capital invested. The Association has now been in existence upwards of thirteen years, and the principles upon which it was started are every year approaching complete practical realization.

Six buildings are now erected and occupied; and in addition to these, houses are now nearly completed for sixty families in New Street, Golden Square; other houses for the accommodation of 108 families are in course of erection in Guy Street, Snow's Fields, Bermondsey; premises to be turned into dwellings for ten families situated at Queen's Place, Dockhead, have also come into the possession of the Association.

The society was in existence for seven years before the first of its buildings were ready for the reception of tenants.

### *Metropolitan Buildings, Old Pancras Road.*

These buildings consist of 110 sets of rooms, twenty being sets of two rooms and ninety of three rooms. Attached to each set of rooms is a scullery, provided with a sink, a supply of water at high pressure at the rate of forty gallons per day, and the means of carrying off ashes and other solid refuse through a shaft accessible from the scullery. There is no cesspool on the premises. Each set of rooms is provided with a water-closet. There is a good playground for the children in the front of the buildings, and at the back there is an extensive drying-ground, as well as a commodious wash-house for the use of the families. The rents vary from 3s. 6d. to 6s. 6d. per week per set, according to position. These charges are very low, considering the accommodation, for it is not unusual in various poor districts of the metropolis, such as Drury Lane and White-chapel, to find the rent for a single room amounting to as much as from 3s. to 4s. 6d. per week. On my inspection of these buildings I was not at all surprised to find several families who had resided in the buildings since they were first opened, and in other instances I found families, who, having resided in the building for some time, and having left, were only too glad to return to them, finding they could not for the same sum obtain anything like the same accommodation elsewhere.

These buildings are always full; and the superintendent stated that he always had a list of respectable applicants waiting their turns for admission. The net profits for the year ending 31st March 1854 on the gross outlay (including every cost as for management, water, gas, &c.,) was more than 4½ per cent.

The health of the tenants of these buildings has been satisfactory in the highest degree. In the year 1850 the mortality was only 12·5 to 1,000 living; in 1851 the deaths were 15 to 1,000; and in 1852 the mortality was at the rate of 13 and a fraction to 1,000 living, the average of the three years being only 13·6 to 1,000. This death rate is remarkably low, especially when it is considered that a large proportion of the inhabitants of these buildings consist of children under fifteen years of age. The average mortality for the whole metropolis for the same period was

22 to 1,000, thus giving the buildings an advantage with respect to mortality over the metropolis of 8.4 in every 1,000. The same marked exemption from disease in these buildings has continued during the present epidemic. The total population has been 693, and of these 493 were children. There appear to have been several slight cases of diarrhœa, four of which only, according to the statements of the secretary and superintendent, required medical attendance. At the time of my inspection I could not but be struck with the healthy appearance of the children; instead of the wan pallid countenances and strumous characteristics which generally mark childhood among the lower classes of the metropolis, they wore the stamp of strong health.

*Metropolitan Buildings for Families, Albert Street, Spitalfields.*

This building is constructed on a uniform plan, allowing one sitting-room, two small bed-rooms, a scullery, water-closet, and dust-shaft to each family. The sitting-rooms are of the dimensions of 12 feet 3 inches by 13 feet 9 inches; one bed-room of the set is 8 feet 9 inches by 9 feet 11 in., and the other 6 feet 6 inches by 11 feet, sculleries 6 feet by 8 feet. The height of all the rooms is 8 feet 6 inches. The building is intended to contain sixty families. The population during the past three months has on an average been 354, of whom 217 were children. The total cost of the building was 11,068*l.*, and the net profits are nearly equal to 4½ per cent.

I visited several of the families in different parts of the buildings, and found them, with one exception, in a healthy and cleanly condition, and well satisfied with their dwellings. The exception was in the case of a young man, aged seventeen, who was dying of consumption.

Previous to the 29th August there had been no cases of cholera and very little diarrhœa in the building. On that day, however, two children of one family, aged respectively five and nine years, went to Victoria Park, being then in good health. The following morning at 7, the eldest was attacked with cholera, and died at 9 P.M. of the same day. The other child was seized at 11 A.M., and died next morning. Two hours after the death of the last child, the mother, who had diarrhœa for some days previously, was attacked, and died four days afterwards; another child died the same day as the

mother. The father, George Cartwright, with five remaining children, then removed, and I am informed are in good health. The disease did not spread to the other families in the building, and no deaths from cholera or diarrhœa have since occurred.

After making the most careful inquiries with respect to the deaths in this family, the only circumstances I can discover favourable to the production of this disease are the following:

*First*,—overcrowding. The family consisted in all of ten persons, living in three small rooms. Comparing the cubic contents of these rooms with the number of inmates, we have a result of 276½ feet per head, which is much under the allowance of space required during the prevalence of an epidemic influence.

*Next*,—probable deficiency of food. The husband earned 25*s.* per week. Out of this he had to lodge and to clothe himself and family, who were remarked as being well dressed for their station, and to provide them with food. For rent he paid 15*l.* per annum.

Now, taking into consideration the high price of provisions during the present season, it is highly probable that this family had not sufficient nourishment. But it is right to state that the whole family were apparently very healthy, and were considered by the neighbours as the least likely to be attacked. The house in which the deaths occurred is now unoccupied, and is clean. With the exception of three slight cases of diarrhœa, which easily yielded to treatment, there has been no other sickness of any moment. It is well perhaps here to observe, that, judging from the manner in which cholera in the metropolis generally spreads in the neighbourhood of a dwelling where two or three deaths have occurred, it is fair to assume that, under Providence, the non-diffusion of the disease in this case is due to the arrangements made in these houses for the health of the inmates.

*Albert Street Chambers, Spitalfields.*

These chambers are fitted up and used as a lodging house for single men, much on the same principle as the model lodging house in George Street, St. Giles, belonging to the Sister Society. Each lodger has a separate bed, so par-



tioned off as to form a distinct chamber. In this building there is a coffee-room, 45 feet by 35 feet, 21 feet 2 inches high; a lecture and school room 37 feet by 21 feet 9 inches, 12 feet high; a reading-room, 28 feet by 21 feet 9 inches, 12 feet 6 inches high. The kitchen is 46 feet by 21 feet 9 inches, 12 feet high. In fact the accommodation afforded in this establishment is of a character rather beyond what would be generally considered necessary for artisans. This building has cost the Association 13,557*l.*, and has been the least productive of all their establishments. It is true that during the year ending 31st March it produced a net profit of 1·4 per cent., but if the results of the former year are taken into calculation there would not be any return. At first this establishment was looked upon with suspicion by artisans, an impression prevailing that to become an inmate of the building was to become to a certain extent a recipient of charity. This impression is now wearing off, as is seen from the fact that the building which can accommodate 234 single men, has for the last three months had on an average 200 tenants.

With reference to the sanitary state of the building, it has been all that could be expected. During the three months that cholera was epidemic, whilst the building was more fully tenanted than at any other period, there have been but three cases of slight diarrhoea and two of cholera, one of which proved fatal. The history of the fatal case is as follows: The lodger, aged forty-five, was taken ill with cholera on Friday, August 4th, removed to the London Hospital the following morning, and died on the 8th of the same month. The pre-disposing cause in this case is obvious. The superintendent states: The man had been a tenant but a few days. On the Wednesday night previous to his being seized he partook of part of a stale crab, which was quite offensive to the person sitting at the same table, to whom he remarked that it was not quite fresh. He ate the remainder for his breakfast on the following morning. On the Thursday night he supped heartily off corned beef, the remainder of which, on its removal on Saturday morning from his safe, was found to be very offensive.

The other case of cholera was that of a man who was seized with the disease whilst he was walking through Smithfield Market on his return to dinner about 12 o'clock on the 5th August. He was removed to the London Hospital the same afternoon, and was cured on the 9th of the same month.

Looking at the fact that the inmates of this building were most of them young men engaged in various pursuits in different localities, it is very remarkable that the disease should have made such little progress.

*Soho Chambers, 36, Compton Street.*

These chambers are constructed to accommodate 128 single men, each being provided with a bed-room, partitioned off, and the use of a good coffee-room, cooking-room, lavatories, a bath, and a library. The rent varies from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* per week. During the past three months the total number of inmates has been 187, the average number sleeping there every night having been eighty-eight. The immunity from the pestilence which the inmates of these chambers have enjoyed during the late epidemic is very remarkable, especially when it is considered that in the immediate vicinity, viz., in Berwick Street, Cross Street, Broad Street, Marlborough Street, Compton Street, &c., &c., the inhabitants were dying in large numbers daily. Cholera was, for the time it lasted, more general and fatal in this locality than in any equal area of England during any visitation of the epidemic. In the district of Golden Square (in which these chambers are situated), up to October 7th, no less than 267 persons died from cholera alone, exclusive of the mortality from diarrhoea; and yet in these chambers there was not a single case of cholera, and only seven cases of diarrhoea, none of which proved fatal. This evidence of the beneficial effects of improved sanitary arrangement is the more striking, as the arrangements of the Soho Chambers are not by any means so perfect as in several of the other establishments of this association.

*Pelham Street and Pleasant Row.*

These premises consist of dwellings for twelve and nine families respectively. The average number of inhabitants is about 120. There have been no deaths from diarrhoea or cholera. Whilst, however, the tenants of these dwellings have escaped the late epidemic, they are subject to much annoyance, or perhaps it would be better to say danger, from the chemical works carried on in the immediate vicinity. At times the sulphurous gases thence arising are so powerful, that fowls, which are kept in large numbers in the neighbourhood, frequently fall down dead. One person stated that she had lost about a hundred.

The inhabitants of the houses in the vicinity complain of frequent giddiness and sickness when these works are in full operation. The proprietor of a sugar refinery and the occupier of a flour-mill adjoining expressed their willingness, on my visiting them, to subscribe even 100*l.* apiece to get the nuisance from these works abated.

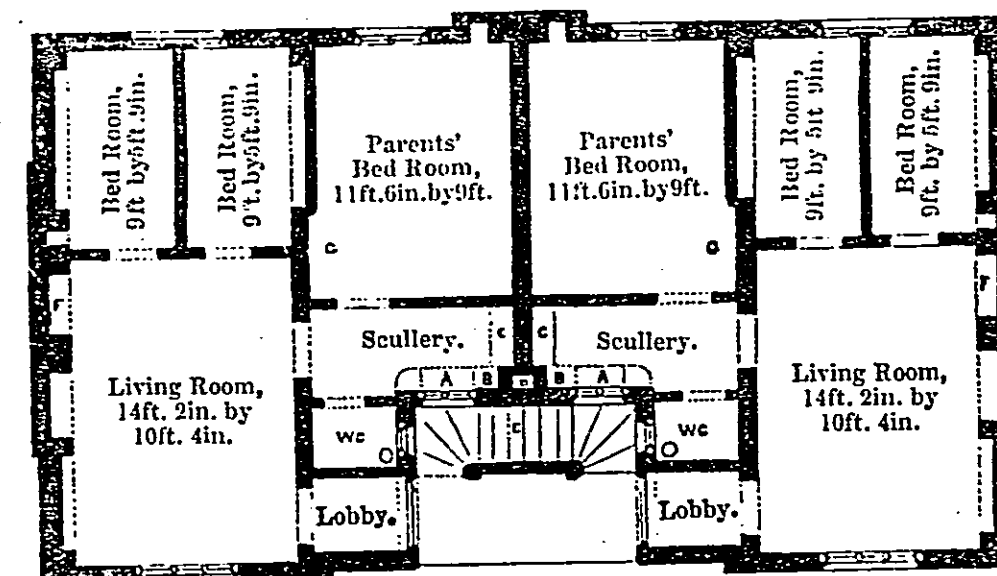
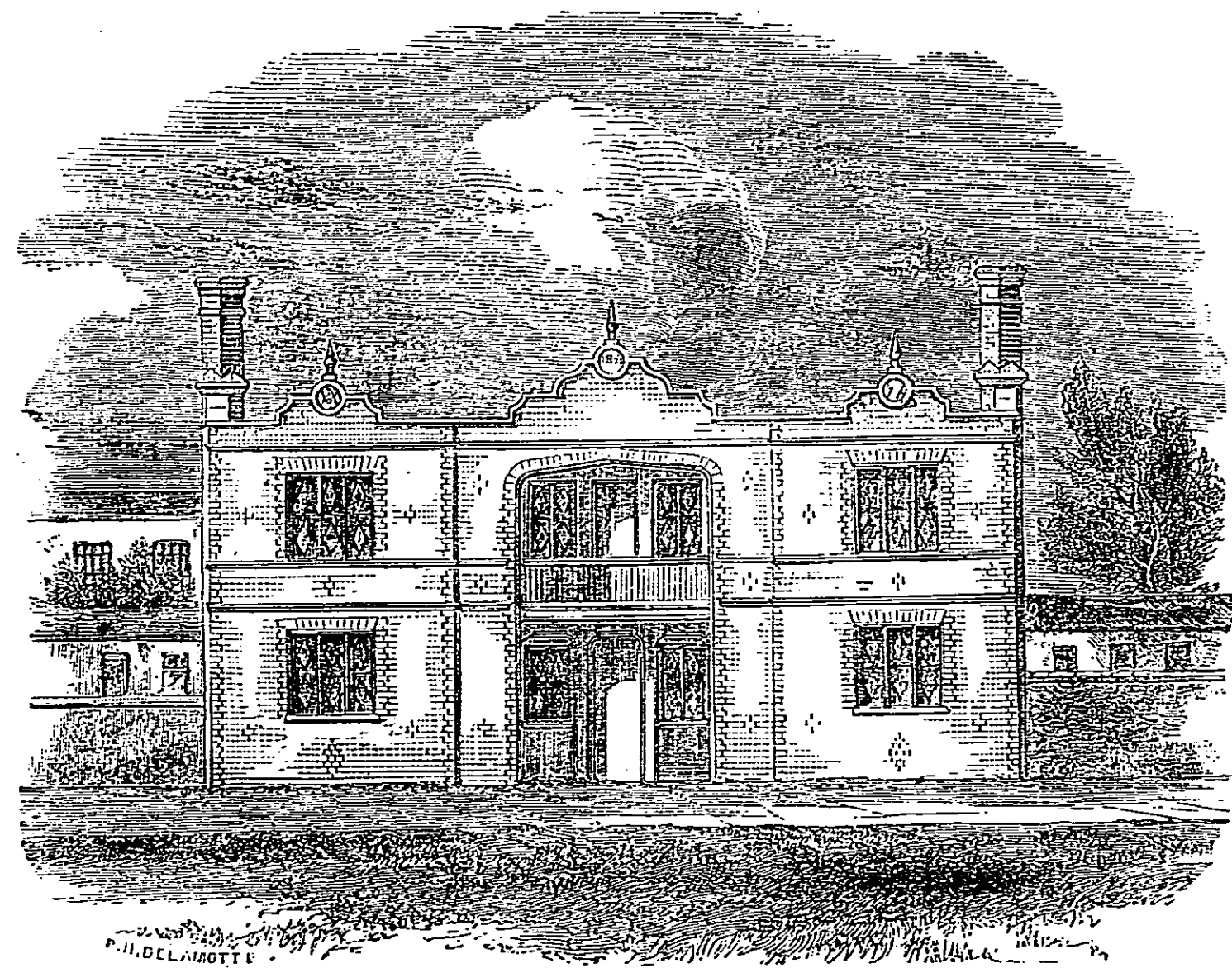
In 1851, His Royal Highness Prince Albert with a desire of conveying practical information calculated to promote the improvement of the dwellings of the working classes, and also of stimulating visitors to the Exhibition, whose position and circumstances could enable them to carry out similar undertakings, caused to be erected at his own expense a model dwelling in Hyde Park (see fig. 1.)

In its general arrangement, the building was adapted for the occupation of four families of the class of manufacturing and mechanical operatives.

Four dwellings are arranged on precisely the same plan on each floor. Each tenement consists of three bed-rooms, living-room, lobby, scullery, water-closet, sink, dust-bin, &c. The model dwellings were visited by thousands, and were afterwards removed to Kennington Common.

As far as I have able to learn, the only person who has practically adopted His Royal Highness' plan, is Mr. W. E. Hilliard of Gray's Inn. It appears this gentleman on inheriting some property in Shadwell, one of the worst districts of the metropolis, found that it consisted of small houses or huts constructed principally of wood, and in a very dilapidated condition. The ground on which they stood was seven or eight feet below the general level of the neighbouring streets, and the houses were tenanted by the lowest class of persons. As might have been expected, epidemic diseases were generally present. Actuated by the most philanthropic views, Mr. Hilliard determined to try what could be done to improve not only his own property, but, by example, the immediate neighbourhood; and his efforts have been crowned with the most signal success. His first steps were to pull down the old tenements, and then to raise the general level of the locality, and thus obtain a proper fall for drainage. On the plot of ground thus prepared, up to the 30th September 1854, he has already erected 80 tenements, according to the annexed plan. All of them were let before they were finished, and the demand continues to be very great. Some of these houses have been occupied nearly three years, and the average population during that period,

FIGURE 1.



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| A Sink, with Coal Box under.                   | E Staircase of Slate, with Dust Place under. |
| B Plate Rack over entrance to Dust Shaft, D.   | F Cupboard warmed from back of Fireplace.    |
| C Meat Safe, ventilated through hollow bricks. | G Linen Closet in this recess if required.   |

Scale of feet. 10 5 0 10 20 30 40 Feet

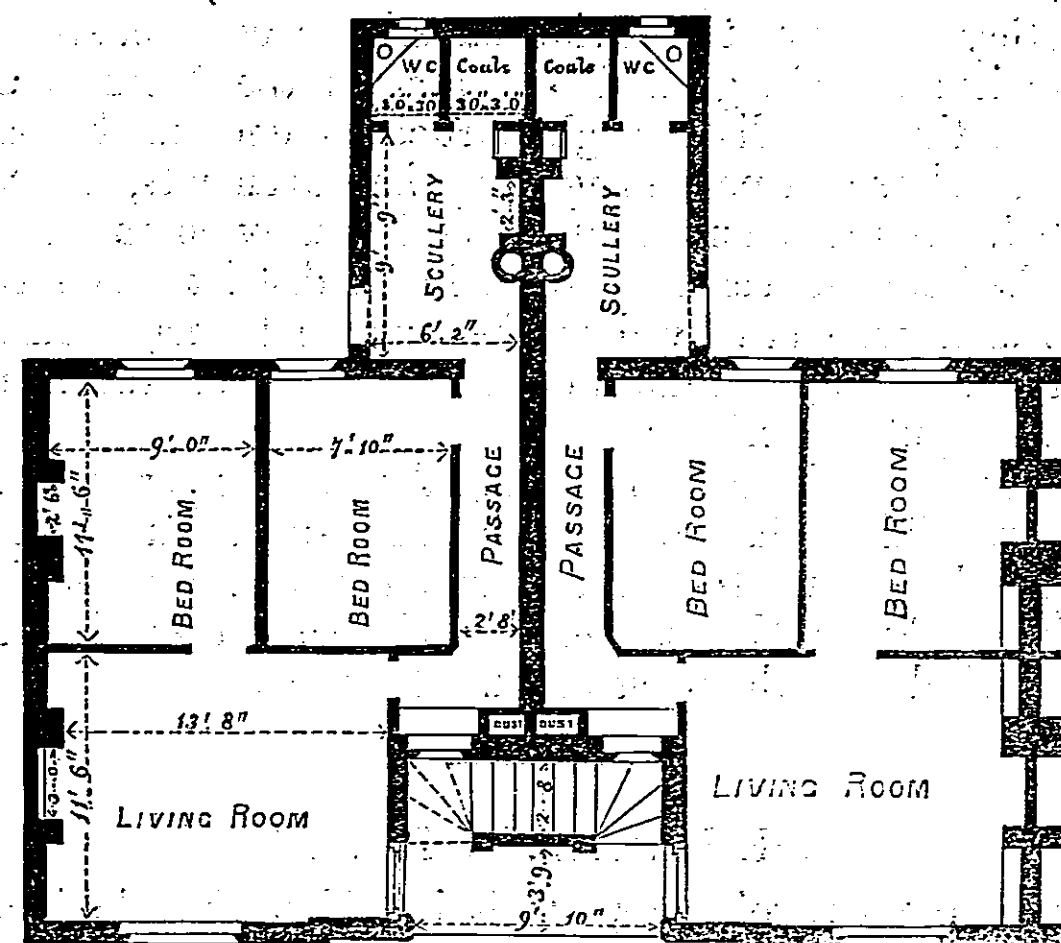
for the whole of the houses tenanted, has been about 450. Among this number of inhabitants congregated in one of the worst localities of the metropolis, a large proportion of them being children, it is gratifying to find that there has been a considerable diminution, if not an almost total absence, of epidemic disease. During the late epidemic, there has not been a single death from cholera or diarrhoea in any of the model houses erected by Mr. Hilliard.

It is also most satisfactory to be enabled to state that whilst this gentleman has done so much to improve the sanitary condition of the dwellings on his property, the money expended has yielded a profitable return. The rents of the tenements vary from 5s. to 6s. 6d. per week; all rates and taxes are paid by the landlord; water supply is on the constant system; a pipe sewer of 12-inch diameter runs in the centre of the street, and each house communicates with it by a 6-inch pipe. The tenants are also amply supplied with fixtures. Mr. Hilliard informs me that the total cost per block of four houses was 487*l.*, and that the gross return on the sum expended has been nearly 7½ per cent., and deducting 1*l.* a dwelling for ground-rent, the property being freehold, there has been a clear profit of upwards of 6 per cent. per annum. So satisfied is he with the results that he is covering some adjoining ground with the same class of houses, with some improvements, as shown in the annexed plan (see Figure 2); and when the work is completed, there will be accommodation for 108 families. The erection of those dwellings has clearly shown the want of proper accommodation for the classes immediately above the lowest class of artisans. Mr. Hilliard states that his tenants, instead of being sweeps, costermongers, &c., as formerly, now consist of a superior class of artisans and mechanics, clerks, tide-waiters, &c., some of whom have removed from considerable distances in order to enjoy the comforts these dwellings afford.

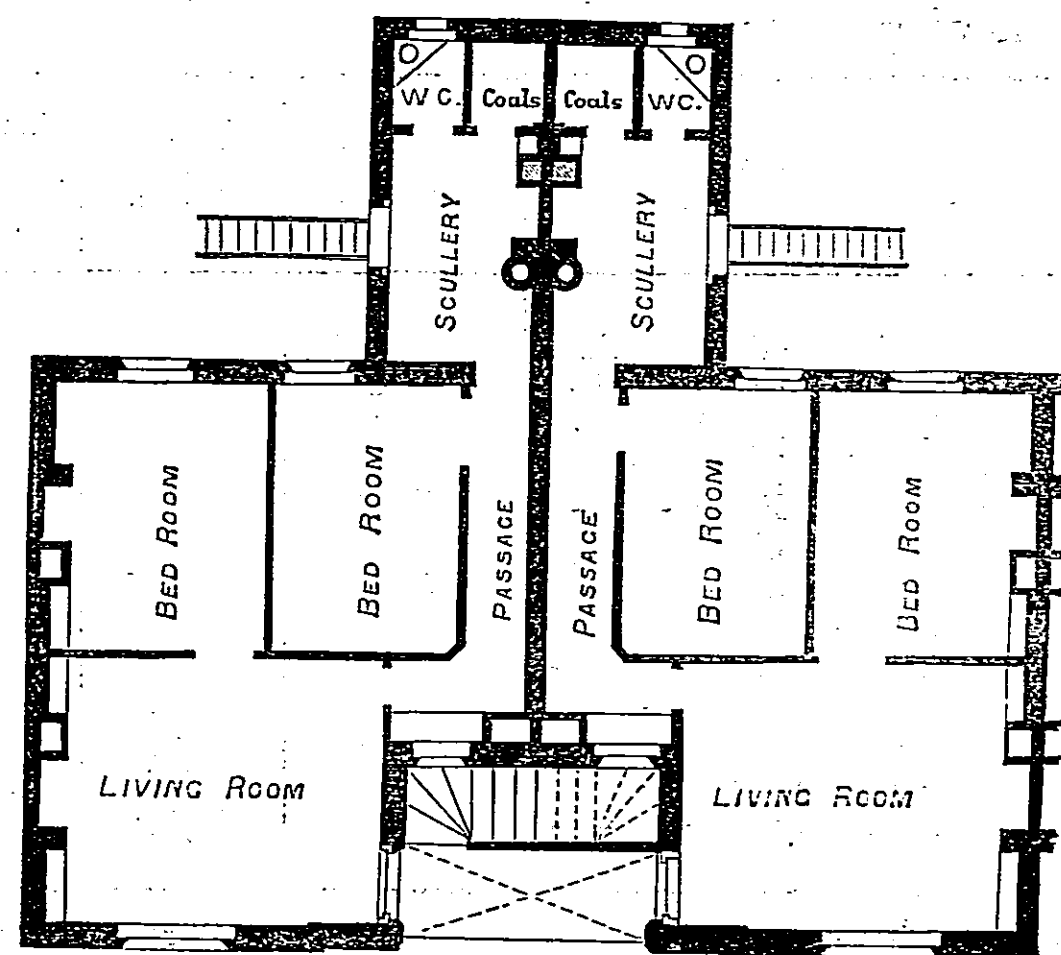
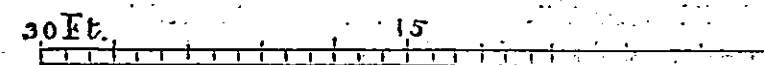
Previous to the erection of these cottages most of these persons were compelled, from the nature of their occupations, to reside in the immediate neighbourhood, where they paid as high rents for accommodation much inferior.

The erection of these Albert Cottages, provided with arrangements essential to health, comfort, and morals, is producing the happiest results in the neighbourhood. Tenants have become sensible of the discomforts and evils of their unwholesome dwellings, and will not remain in or take houses without many improvements which formerly they

Figure 2.



GROUND PLAN.



ONE-PAIR PLAN.

were content to do without, and landlords are finding it to their interest to improve their old houses, and in constructing new ones to provide superior accommodation and conveniences. On ground belonging to the Mercers' Company in the immediate neighbourhood, numerous houses of a better class and possessing many improvements, are being erected. Already an entire street is nearly completed, and a marked change has taken place in the district. A medical gentleman who has lived in the immediate neighbourhood for the last 30 years informed me that the improvement of late was quite surprising.

I cannot refrain from repeating that the experiment tried by Mr. Hilliard has been eminently successful, and has completely shown that the plan suggested by his Royal Highness Prince Albert, if extensively carried out, is sure to be attended with the most beneficial results.

#### GENERAL SUMMARY.

From the foregoing reports it is evident that the inmates of the different lodging houses, which belong to either of the two societies for improving the dwellings of the poor, to private individuals, and those under the surveillance the police, have enjoyed all but complete exemption from the epidemic. This, perhaps, will most readily appear from the following table :

Name of Society, Building, or Locality.	Estimated Population.	Deaths from Cholera.	Rate of Mortality in 10,000 living.
Metropolitan Association Buildings	1,455	5	34
Society for improving the condition of the labouring classes - }	777	1	13
Registered lodging houses under the Metropolitan Police - }	32,000	26	8
Non-registered lodging houses, but under the surveillance of the police - }	50,000	35	7
Potteries, Kensington - - -	1,270*	33	259
Bermondsey - - - -	50,000	810	162
St. Olave Southwark - - -	20,000	293	146
St. James Westminster - - -	37,000	483	130
Metropolis generally - - -	2,500,000	10,118	44

\* This number includes 8 deaths from diarrhoea, and 8 from consecutive fever following cholera.

It is thus shewn that the Metropolitan Association has lost only five of the inmates of the buildings, or in the proportion of 34 in 10,000; but if the four fatal cases which occurred in the Albert Street buildings for families, as having originated from other causes, be excluded, the mortality would only have been in the proportion of 7 in 10,000.

In the society's buildings for improving the condition of the labouring classes, there has been only one death, and that can scarcely be said to have originated in them; and if all the deaths in the buildings of the two societies are taken together, the mortality would only be in the ratio of 26 in 10,000.

Whilst the working of the Common Lodging Houses Acts has been attended with the best possible results, and has far exceeded the anticipation of their promoters, the conclusions to be drawn from these results are seriously affected by the migratory character of the population, and other causes previously stated.

Again, if either the societies' buildings or the common lodging houses are compared with the other portions of the metropolis referred to in the table, or with the metropolis as a whole, it is evident that a very great improvement in the health of the inhabitants of these tenements has been effected. Thus in "the Potteries," Kensington, which still retains its unenviable character for insalubrity, the mortality from cholera and its adjuncts in this place has been at the rate of 259 to 10,000, whilst in all the societies' buildings together it has not been above 27 to 10,000. The mortality, therefore, has been nine times greater in the Potteries than in the model lodging houses.

The facts adduced in the above report appear to me to prove, that in proportion as you improve the dwellings of the people, and secure them proper ventilation, good drainage, sufficient supply of water, and inoffensive water-closet accommodation, you advance the standard of their general health, and exempt them from cholera and other epidemic diseases. The scope of the present report confines me to this class of benefits following from these improvements. More difficult to express in figures, but not less certain, are the still greater benefits which may with confidence be anticipated from rendering homes comfortable and healthy, such as the enhancement of the



domestic affections, the correction of vicious habits, and the opening a way for the admission of the higher and holier influences of religion, to the most numerous and hitherto most neglected classes of the community.



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