

THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD AND ELEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS.

The School Board (Victoria Embankment) consists of fifty members, elected in numbers varying from four to seven from the ten boroughs of the City, Chelsea, Finsbury, Greenwich, Hackney, Lambeth, Marylebone, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Westminster. The local work is intrusted to Divisional and Sub-Divisional Committees, under whom serve paid superintendents of visitors. The school fees vary from 1d. in some parts of London to 6d. per week. About half the children pay 2d.

MEMBERS ELECTED, NOV. 24, 1882.

Offices—Victoria Embankment. Hours, 10 to 5 (Saturday 10 to 2). Board Meetings every Thursday, at 3 p.m.

Chairman, Edward North Buxton, *Chairman Indus. Schools*, Henry Spicer, B.A.  
*Private Sec. to Chairman*, A. Spalding, LL.B.  
 Vice-Chairman, Robert Freeman.

- City of London.—\*Ald. Sir Reginald Hanson, \*H. C. Richards, Henry Spicer, Miss Rosamond Davenport-Hill.  
 Chelsea.—Dr. J. H. Gladstone, Robert Freeman, \*William Bousfield, \*George Mitchell, \*Richard Denny Urrin.  
 Finsbury.—Mark Wilks, Mr. B. Luerast, Rev. S. Wainwright, D.D., \*W. R. Bourke, Thos. L. Roberts, \*Rev. W. T. T. Webber.  
 Greenwich.—\*E. Hughes, J. E. Saunders, Henry Gover, Rev. T. D. C. Morse.  
 Hackney.—\*T. J. Even, \*J. Lobb, Rev. H. D. Pearson, B. S. Odling, Mrs. F. Fenwick Miller.  
 Lambeth.—\*Rev. C. E. Brooke, G. C. Whiteley, Miss Hen. Müller, Rev. G. M. Murphy, T. E. Heller, Charles R. White, \*Hon. C. A. Dillon, \*E. B. Gudgeon.  
 Marylebone.—Arthur Mills, Rev. J. R. Diggle, \*Rev. W. Barker, Mrs. A. Westlake, Hon. E. Lvulph Stanley, M.P., \*G. B. Bruce, E. Bond.  
 Southwark.—Miss Helen Taylor, \*Rev. C. D. Lawrence, Alex. Hawkins, Miss Mary E. Richardson.  
 Tower Hamlets.—\*Sir Edmund Hay Currie, Lieut.-Col. L. Prendergast, \*Miss Hastings, E. N. Buxton, William Pearce.  
 Westminster.—Jas. Ross, Rev. B. Belcher, M.A., \*J. S. Burroughes, \*Dr. E. B. Aveling, the Right Hon. Sir Arthur Hobhouse, K.C.S.I.  
 \*Elected for the first time.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS.

The Education Act of 1876 declares that—"It shall be the duty of the parent of every child (between the ages of five and fourteen) to cause such child to receive efficient elementary instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic."

From the establishment of the School Board, in November, 1870, up to Oct. 12, 1882, accommodation in schools had been provided for 256,360 children. At Lady Day there were upon the rolls of the board schools (including certain schools transferred and temporary schools) 276,849 children. The staff of teachers comprised 3685 adult teachers, and 1546 pupil-teachers and candidates. The fees charged by the board range from 1d. to 6d.; the number of school places provided at 1d. being, according to a recent return, 55,677; 1s1,862 at 2d.; 58,854 at 3d.; 12,949 at 4d.; and 6003 at 6d. The charges are determined solely by what is believed to be the ability of the parents, and to avoid needless class distinctions they are made uniform in each school. When the census of all the schools in London was taken, in 1871, whether efficient or non-efficient, the total number of children on the roll was 320,143. The number of children now upon the roll of efficient schools alone is 525,999; in other words, the roll of efficient schools alone is greater by 205,856 than the total roll of all schools whatever in the beginning of 1871.

Increased accommodation being required, eleven new schools are (1883) in course of construction, at a cost to the ratepayers of £89,405; twenty-two schools are also in progress of enlargement, at a total outlay, for new and old, of £126,462.

The general lines upon which it has been found practicable to carry on elementary education in Great Britain may be said to have been laid down in the English Act above referred to (1870) and in the Scotch Act of 1872. But two subsequent Acts in England (1876 and 1880) and one in Scotland (1878), and incidentally the Factory Acts in both countries, have done much to add to the efficiency of the compulsory powers; and the ultimate result in England has been to increase the average attendance from less than one and a quarter million in 1870 to over three millions in 1882. The limits of variation in the percentage of the average attendance, nowhere falling below 67 (which is the percentage for Monmouth, Notts, York, Cornwall, and Wales), or rising above 76, the percentage for the metropolitan district, the only remarkable circumstance being that in the 20 counties where over half the population are under School Boards there are ten instances of the percentage falling decidedly below the average. In the remaining 20 counties, where the dominant local authority is the School Attendance Committee of the Board of Guardians, there are only two such instances—Northampton, with 70 per cent, and Lincoln with 68.

Owing to the want of efficient means for enforcing school attendances under the Scotch Act, the percentage of children on the school register was not so high as it should have been; indeed, it fell below the English percentage by 1.20, per cent for Scotland being in exact figures 74.37, against 80.67 for England. To redress this evil, children between 13 and 14 years old are no longer to be exempted from compulsory school attendance. As to the aptitude of Scotch children, the following table affords the clearest evidence of recent educational progress. The number of children presented in the higher standards in Scotland was as follows:—

Year.	No. in Average Attendance.	No. Examined in the Higher Standards.	Percentage in Higher Standards.
1875	303,536	33,538	18.77
1876	329,083	43,650	20.57
1877	360,413	57,427	22.96
1878	377,257	71,831	25.95
1879	385,109	85,890	29.95
1880	404,618	102,259	33.61
1881	409,968	112,462	36.13
1882	421,265	117,677	36.69

THE WATER SUPPLY OF THE METROPOLIS.

The bulk of the London water supply is, according to skilled and constituted authorities, impure, and the supply is for the most part intermittent instead of constant. It is almost needless to say that water is one of the most essential and important elements of human and animal life. Throughout the metropolis this necessity of life is stored in cisterns, which add a quota of impurity to the river defilements and currents of poisonous sewer gas.

In 1606 the Corporation of London was empowered by Act of Parliament to bring water to the City from the neighbourhood of Ware. The New River Company, the richest of the water corporations, owes its origin to this measure; but its founder was not the municipality, but Sir Hugh Myddelton, to whom it assigned its rights. The venture, however, fared so badly, it was only by the special intervention and assistance of the Crown that it was rescued from utter failure. It is a more pertinent complaint that when, in the early part of this century, company after company obtained powers of water supply, the Corporation, then the only public body of note in London, made no attempt to control their proceedings in the interests of the consumers. In 1821 a Committee of the House of Commons considered the subject, and from that time to the present the question of London water supply has been constantly before Parliament, with the result of lavish expenditure in legal contests, and with only a slight mitigation of evils to the ratepayer. The Metropolitan Board of Works has on two occasions approached Parliament on the question. In 1871 it asked for power to buy up the undertakings of the water companies, and in 1878 to provide an independent supply. On each occasion Parliament was indisposed to look favourably on the scheme, and there can be little doubt—certainly it was so in the second case—that the principal objection, expressed or felt, was that the constitution, history, and character of the Board were not such as to warrant the bestowal upon it of such large powers. The Board was, however, by an Act passed in 1871, clothed with powers which enabled it to compel the substitution of a constant supply for the system of storage in cisterns. Singularly enough, it has never moved hand or foot to secure this benefit to the ratepayers; on the contrary, it has used its influence, on the whole, to retard the change. So far as a constant supply has been introduced it has been the voluntary work of the companies. But whilst the water companies have during the last decade done little towards giving water consumers "pure and wholesome water," they have very materially increased the price of their commodity. They have insisted upon charging by rates on the annual value; and if water is used for purposes they consider not included in the domestic supply, they make extra charges as they think fit for that use. If the amount of extra charge is objected to, they then offer to supply by meter, putting on the full percentage and an extra charge for the meter supply; and as there is a fixed minimum charge made wherever a meter is used, this renders the offer practically useless in most private houses. As to business premises and warehouses, the grievance is even worse, for in most cases they claim to charge on the annual value of the premises with certain additional fixed charges. Thus the whole question of the London water supply has become wellnigh intolerable, and hence it has come to be believed that either competition, a deep-well water supply, or the extension of the Corporation of London to the metropolis at large, will alone afford a remedy for the dilemma in which London finds itself on the question of a pure and wholesome water supply.

A Parliamentary paper gives the results of the working of the metropolitan water companies for the past year—in the case of the Chelsea, Grand Junction, Lambeth, Southwark and Vauxhall, and West Middlesex Companies to September last, and to December in the case of the East London, the Kent, and the New River Companies. The total capital raised by the Chelsea Company stands at £1,150,700, the East London at £2,098,700, the Grand Junction at £1,310,000, the Kent at £720,564, the Lambeth at £1,444,317, the New River at £3,228,104, the Southwark and Vauxhall at £1,822,000, and the West Middlesex at £1,153,740. The whole of the last-mentioned company's capital is in ordinary stock. The total capital expended by the companies was as follows:—Chelsea, £1,152,177; East London, £2,146,126; Grand Junction, £1,346,939; Kent, £650,517; Lambeth, £1,485,043; New River, £3,256,078; Southwark and Vauxhall, £1,798,809; West Middlesex, £1,130,180. It will be noticed that the Chelsea, the East London, the Grand Junction, and the Lambeth Companies had an excess of expenditure over receipts. The water rental for the year of the various companies (deducting empty houses) was as follows:—Chelsea, £100,361; East London, £231,978; Grand Junction, £155,251; Kent, £100,463; Lambeth, £170,368; New River, £427,723; Southwark and Vauxhall, £184,918; and West Middlesex, £176,612. From rent of lands, &c., the companies generally received only small sums; but in the case of the New River Company, which possesses a considerable amount of landed property, the amount received was £8744, while the East London Company derived from a similar source £2303. The total expenditure on maintenance and management, respectively, was as follows:—Chelsea, £26,141 and £7905; East London, £73,997 and £17,395; Grand Junction, £46,830 and £12,967; Kent, £21,386 and £7303; Lambeth, £58,606 and £11,418; New River, £119,146 and £41,166; Southwark and Vauxhall, £58,632 and £13,759; and West Middlesex, £46,305 and £12,559. The item of taxes, which is included under maintenance, is a large one with all the companies. The amount paid by the Chelsea Company was £7055; East London, £22,096; Grand Junction, £10,739; Kent, £5019; Lambeth, £10,232; New River, £36,586; Southwark and Vauxhall, £18,167; and West Middlesex, £12,681. Under the heading of management, the amounts paid to directors stand as follows:—Chelsea, £1825; East London, £2156; Grand Junction, £1633; Kent, £2000; Lambeth, £1843; New River, £2282; Southwark and Vauxhall, £2047; and West Middlesex, £2451. The profit on trading and the net profits, respectively, were as follows:—Chelsea, £66,887 and £43,405; East London, £142,414 and £124,708; Grand Junction, £95,507 and £85,633; Kent, £72,009 and £71,192; Lambeth, £100,448 and £92,268; New River, £276,306 and £20,693; Southwark and Vauxhall, £112,741 and £69,512; and West Middlesex, £118,143 and £119,407. The dividends paid for the whole year ended last December by the Kent Company was 10 per cent, and by the East London Company 7 per cent. For the first half of the year ended June last the dividend of the New River Company was at the rate of 11 1/8. 1/8d. per cent per annum; while for the six months ended March, 1882, the dividend paid by the Chelsea, the Lambeth, and the Southwark and Vauxhall Companies was at the rate of 7 per cent per annum, the distribution for the same period by the West Middlesex Company and the Grand Junction Company being, respectively, at the rates of 10 per cent and 8 per cent per annum. The amount of capital raised by the companies amounted to £12,919,125, and the total expenditure had been £12,965,869.