

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON ALMANACK FOR 1886.

THE METROPOLITAN WATER COMPANIES.

From a report presented to the Local Government Board, 1885, by the water companies we learn the number of houses supplied in the years 1872 and 1883, respectively; and in each of these years the total amount of the rates, rentals, and other charges, the total amount of the dividend and the rate per cent, the amount of share and loan capital, the amount of bonuses to shareholders, and other financial particulars.

The following table shows, in respect of each of the companies, the maximum number of houses, or other buildings, supplied with water in the years 1872 and 1883, and the total amount of the rates, rentals, and other charges for the supply of water to houses or other buildings during the financial years 1872 and 1883:—

NUMBER OF HOUSES AND WATER RENTALS.

Name of Company.	Number of Houses or other Buildings supplied in		Increase per Cent.	Water Rentals from Houses or other Buildings in		Increase per Cent.
	1872.	1883.		1872.	1883.	
	£	£		£	£	
Chelsea	27,949	82,430	16 0	70,963	103,704	46 1
East London	104,687	141,788	35 5	152,655	238,939	56 5
Grand Junction	133,500	46,517	38 9	92,163	150,015	62 8
Kent	39,425	58,784	49 1	47,594	79,927	67 9
Lambeth	48,558	75,623	55 7	89,551	167,455	87 0
New River	120,662	149,353	16 3	274,385	412,060	50 2
Southwark and Vauxhall	79,075	100,854	27 5	103,215	179,528	73 9
West Middlesex	43,990	62,950	43 3	117,745	178,389	47 3
Totals	487,736	659,249	32 4	948,277	1,505,057	58 7

It will be observed that between 1872 and 1883 the number of houses or other buildings supplied with water by the companies rose from 497,736 to 659,249, an increase of 32 4 per cent, while the water rentals in respect of such houses or buildings rose from £948,277 to £1,505,057, or 58 7 per cent. The average rental thus increased from 11 18s. 1d. per house in 1872 to 22 5s. 8d. in 1883, or 19 9 per cent. The companies explain, in relation to this increase, that the houses newly erected are for the most part of a superior class; that those rebuilt are generally much larger than those which they replaced; that in many cases, owing to works of public or private improvement, two or three houses have been converted into one; and that thus, while the number of houses in the most densely populated parts of London has diminished, the value of the property has increased commensurately with increase in size.

AVERAGE DAILY SUPPLY OF WATER FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES TO EACH HOUSE.

Name of Company.	Number of Gallons.		Increase or Decrease in Gallons.
	In 1872.	In 1883.	
Chelsea	252	246	- 6
East London	160	205	+45
Grand Junction	279	238	-41
Kent	135	134	- 1
Lambeth	185	173	-12
New River	166	167	+ 1
Southwark and Vauxhall	171	168	- 3
West Middlesex	178	161	-17

According to the above table, the average amount of water supplied daily to each house for domestic purposes by six out of the eight companies was less in 1883 than it was in 1872.

The aggregate amount of dividends received by the shareholders during the period 1872-83 was £8,501,486, on a share capital which increased from £7,955,758 in 1872 to £10,344,313 in 1883. The rate per cent of the dividend paid by each company was higher at the end than at the commencement of the period, notwithstanding that by far the greater part of the new capital created was issued to the shareholders or their nominees at par, an arrangement by which the dividend-bearing capital was increased to a greater extent than would have been necessary if it had been raised in the open market.

TABLE SHOWING RATES PER CENT OF DIVIDENDS.

Name of Company.	Rate per Cent of Dividend in First Half-Year of 1872.		Rate per Cent of Dividend in Last Half-Year of 1883.	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Chelsea	6 0 0	7 5 0	6 0 0	7 10 0
East London	6 0 0	7 10 0	8 0 0	8 10 0
Grand Junction	8 0 0	8 10 0	6 2 0	10 10 0
Kent	6 2 0	10 10 0	6 0 0	7 10 0
Lambeth	7 8 9	11 18 8	7 10 0	7 10 0
New River	5 10 0	8 10 0	9 16 7	10 0 0
Southwark and Vauxhall	5 10 0	8 10 0	9 16 7	10 0 0
West Middlesex	9 16 7	10 0 0		

In calculating the gains of the shareholders during the above period, it is necessary to take into consideration not only the dividends which they received, but also the gains which they made by taking up share and loan capital at par, in pursuance of the powers given to them by their private Acts by the incorporation of the provisions of sections 17 to 19 of the Companies Clauses Act, 1863. The total amounts of share and loan capital thus paid up during the above period in respect of capital taken up by shareholders or their nominees were £2,202,433 and £715,117 respectively; the only company the shareholders of which did not take up share capital at par being the East London Waterworks Company.

TABLE SHOWING DIVIDENDS AND SHARE CAPITAL TAKEN UP BY SHAREHOLDERS AT PAR.

Name of Company.	Amount of Dividends.	Amount of Capital paid up during the period 1872-83, taken up by Shareholders at par.	
		Share.	Loan.
		£	£
Chelsea	618,080	341,808	53,900
East London	1,256,218*	—	150,400†
Grand Junction	793,621	213,600	36,700‡
Kent	602,170§	174,712	—
Lambeth	810,861	557,840	207,830
New River	2,356,719	366,940	225,212
Southwark and Vauxhall	852,804	251,895	41,075
West Middlesex	1,211,013	295,535	—
Totals	£8,501,486	£2,202,433	£715,117

* Including a bonus of 1 per cent per annum on ordinary stock, payable in each of the two half-years to June, 1876, and June, 1878.

† Apparently only partly by shareholders.

‡ Including £18,000 terminable bonds.

§ Including a bonus of 1 per cent per annum in the half-year to December, 1878.

|| Including £82,836 terminable debentures and bonds issued between 1872 and 1876.

On reference to the detailed statistics furnished by the several companies, it will be seen that the particulars of the amount of bonuses or other payments made to shareholders do not, as ordered, include, "in the case of the New River Company, any payments in respect of the landed estate, houses, or property of that company, not directly used for or connected with their water supply." The company have declined to furnish this information, on the ground that the estate and houses in question are private property.

TABLE SHOWING AMOUNT AND ESTIMATED VALUE OF SHARE CAPITAL.

Name of Company.	Amount of Share Capital in		Increase per Cent.	Estimated Value of Share Capital on or about		Increase per Cent.
	1872, March or June.	1883, Sept. or Dec.		Dec. 31, 1871.	Dec. 31, 1883.	
	£	£		£	£	
Chelsea	658,692	1,000,600	51 9	797,633	1,672,475	109 7
East London	1,625,560	1,695,260	4 3	1,970,991	3,212,518	63 0
Grand Junction	797,390	1,070,000	34 2	1,284,602	2,128,300	65 7
Kent	516,460	688,907*	33 4	627,690	1,665,488	165 5
Lambeth	755,817	1,325,047	75 3	867,452	2,463,616	184 0
New River	1,670,428	2,019,958	21 0	3,905,882	8,474,000	117 0
Southwark & Vauxhall	1,082,500	1,390,000	28 4	1,172,515	2,350,509	100 5
West Middlesex	848,731	1,154,541	36 0	1,704,365	2,828,625	66 0
Totals	7,955,758	10,344,313	30 0	12,330,830	24,795,531	101 1

* This is given to June 30, 1883, but the amount of share capital was the same in December, 1883.

AMOUNT AND VALUE OF LOAN CAPITAL.

Name of Company.	Amount of Loan Capital in		Increase or Decrease per Cent.	Estimated Value of Loan Capital on or about		Increase or Decrease per Cent.
	1872, March or June.	1883, Sept. or Dec.		Dec. 31, 1871.	Dec. 31, 1883.	
	£	£		£	£	
Chelsea	170,000	150,100	-11 7	170,000	183,122	+ 7 7
East London	199,600	394,440	+97 6	102,000+	481,217	+371 8
Grand Junction	208,700	265,000	+27 0	210,700	291,300	+ 38 3
Kent	42,000	42,000	—	42,000	42,000	—
Lambeth	229,650	158,925	-30 8	200,950	136,575‡	-40 7
New River	1,032,453	1,271,571	+23 2	975,347	1,406,013	+44 2
Southwark & Vauxhall	372,890	432,000	+15 9	383,269	510,425	+33 2
West Middlesex	30,000	—	—	30,000	—	—
Totals	2,285,293	2,714,036	+18 8	2,144,266	3,050,952	+42 3

* In the period of 1872-83, a portion of the loan capital has been converted into share capital, and a further portion has been raised by terminable bonds, now paid off.

† In these cases a considerable amount of loan capital was raised during the half-year following Dec. 31, 1871, which will account for the estimated value of the loan capital on that day being less than the amount of loan capital at the close of the following half-year.

‡ This is the value of £125,000 debenture stock, loan capital to the amount of £33,925 having been converted into share capital in November, 1883.

Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment (1885) declares that the words "the annual value of the tenement supplied with water" in the 68th section of the Waterworks Clauses Act, 1847, shall, within the unions and parishes to which the Valuation of Property (Metropolis) Act, 1869, extends, mean the rateable value as settled from time to time by the local (parochial) authority as duly constituted: Provided that where the water rate is chargeable on the annual value of a part only of any hereditament entered in the valuation list, such annual value shall be a fairly apportioned part of the rateable value of the whole tenement, ascertained as aforesaid, the apportionment in case of dispute to be determined in manner provided by the said section. This short but important Act, which in future will be known as Torrens' Water Clause Amendment Act, is intended to define and limit the rating powers of the Metropolitan Water Companies so that, in future, the water rate will depend on the annual value of the house as settled by the parochial authorities, and not by the companies. This Act came into operation August, 1885.