

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON ALMANACK FOR 1886.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

The Metropolitan Board of Works was constituted by the Metropolitan Management Act of 1855. Under this and subsequent Acts it has carried out several special works, such as the Main Drainage of London, the construction of the Victoria, Albert, and Chelsea Embankments on the Thames, the formation of Queen Victoria-street, and Northumberland-avenue, the freeing of the Thames bridges in the Metropolitan area, the clearance of sites for Artisans' Dwellings in Drury-lane, Bedfordbury, &c. It has formed Finsbury and Southwark Parks, and preserved open spaces, such as Hampstead Heath, Blackheath, Shepherd's Bush, Hackney Downs, Clapham Common, &c. Among the works now proceeding are a new street from Piccadilly to Hart-street, Bloomsbury, further clearances of sites for Artisans' Dwellings, new bridges at Battersea and Putney, and improvements in Deptford Creek, Hammersmith, and Vauxhall Bridges. Its principal general duties comprise the control over the formation of streets and the line of buildings therein, the testing of gas and of gas-meters, the maintenance of the Fire Brigade (a force of upwards of 500), the maintenance of the Main Drainage system, and of parks and commons. It is the "Metropolitan Authority" under the Water, Tramways, Petroleum, Artisans' Dwellings, Contagious Diseases (Animals), Slaughter-houses, Explosive Substances, and other Acts, and regulates the construction of theatres and music-halls for the protection of persons from fire. It raises money (in Metropolitan Consolidated Stock) not only for its own works, but for advances to the School Board for London, the Vestries, the District Boards, and other corporations within the metropolis. Members of the Board are elected by the respective Vestries and District Boards in the metropolis. The Corporation of the City of London elects three members. Office, Spring-gardens.—Hours, nine to four; Saturdays, nine to two.

CHAIRMAN :

Lieut.-Colonel Sir James M. M. Garel Hogg, Bart., K.C.B., M.P.	£2500
Engineer, Sir Joseph William Bazalgette, C.B.	2200
Superintending Architect, George Vulliamy	1750
Solicitor, Reginald Ward	2000
Clerk of the Board, J. E. Wakefield	1000
Accountant, Arthur Gunn	1000
Chief of Fire Brigade, Captain Eyre M. Shaw, C.B.	1350

ACTS OF PARLIAMENT PASSED AND ADMINISTERED BY AND UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS FOR IMPROVING AND PROVIDING BETTER HABITATION FOR THE WORKING CLASSES.

An Act of Parliament was passed in August, 1855. "An Act to Consolidate and Amend the Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Acts, 1848 and 1849." Eleven years later this Act was extended and amended by the Sanitary Act of 1866. By this legislation, in addition to provisions as to foul and defective drains, cesspools, accumulations, &c., any house or part of a house so overcrowded as to be prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants is deemed to be a nuisance, notice of which may be given to the local authority by any person aggrieved, by the sanitary inspector, or any paid officer under the local authority, by two inhabitant householders of the parish, by the relieving officer, by any police constable or inspector of common lodging-houses. The local authority, moreover, is bound to ascertain by inspection, by themselves or their officers, the existence of nuisances.

The law also deals with the maintenance of existing dwellings in a proper condition. Sec. 35 of Sanitary Act, 1866, empowers the Secretary of State to declare, on application of the local authority in the metropolis, an enactment to be in force authorising the local authority to make regulations for houses let in lodgings or occupied by members of more than one family; and by Sec. 47 of the Sanitary Law Amendment Act of 1874, the Local Government Board may declare the enactment to be in force in any part of the metropolis.

For the demolition of unhealthy houses and the construction of improved dwellings, as far back as 1851, Lord Shaftesbury conducted through both Houses the Labouring Classes Lodging Houses Act. This provides, as regards the metropolis, that the Act may be adopted in any parish of not less than 10,000 population, at a meeting specially convened for the purpose on the requisition of ratepayers. The resolution must be passed by at least two thirds in value. When the Act has been adopted, the vestry may appoint commissioners to borrow money on the mortgage of the rates for the erection, purchase, or lease of lodging-houses for the working classes, to be managed under by-laws made and enforced by the Commissioners. This Act seems to have been a dead-letter, for reasons to which the Commissioners refer when they proceed to make suggestions for the amendment of the law.

In 1868 Mr. Torrens's Act was passed, and, with amending Acts of 1879 and of 1882, provides for the gradual improvement or demolition of dwellings of the working classes, and for the building and maintenance of improved dwellings. These Acts apply to single tenements, or comparatively small groups of houses, and in the metropolis are administered by the vestries and district boards. They affect houses unfit for human habitation and obstructive buildings which stop ventilation or conduce to make neighbouring buildings unfit for habitation. If the local authority make default in their duty under the Acts, the board of guardians in whose union the property is, or the owner of any neighbouring property, may appeal to the Metropolitan Board of Works, which may take the work in their own hands and make the local authority pay the expense. This latter provision has, it is understood, never been put in force by the Metropolitan Board of Works.

The Artisan's Dwellings Improvement Acts, commonly known as Sir Richard Cross's Acts, were passed in 1875, 1879, and 1882. The operation of the two first of these Acts was fully inquired into by the Select Committees of the House of Commons in 1881 and 1882, and the Commissioners have taken the report and evidence of those Committees as being before them. The object of Sir Richard Cross's Acts may be described as the doing on a large scale of that which Mr. Torrens's Acts are intended to do for smaller areas. Mr. Torrens's Acts proceed upon the principle that the responsibility of maintaining his houses in proper condition falls upon the owner; and that if he fail in his duty the law is justified in stepping in and compelling him to perform it. They further assume that houses unfit for human habitation ought not to be used as dwellings, but ought, in the interests of the public, to be closed, demolished, and rebuilt. Sir Richard Cross's Acts proceed upon a different principle. They contemplate dealing with areas where the houses are so structurally defective as to be incapable of repair, and so ill-placed with reference to each other as to require, to bring them up to a proper sanitary standard, nothing short of demolition and reconstruction. Accordingly, in this case, the local authority, armed with compulsory powers, at once enters as a purchaser, and on completion of the purchase proceeds forthwith to a scheme of reconstruction.

COMPARATIVE RETURN OF RATES LEVIED IN THE METROPOLIS IN THE YEARS 1882-3 AND 1883-4 (Ending March 25). VESTRIES.

District of the Metropolis.	Total Amount of the Rate in the £ in 1882-3.	Total Amount of the Rate in the £ in 1883-4.	District of the Metropolis.	Total Amount of the Rate in the £ in 1882-3.	Total Amount of the Rate in the £ in 1883-4.
Marylebone ...	s. d. 4 9½	s. d. 4 9½	Clerkenwell ...	s. d. 5 4	s. d. 5 7
St. Pancras ...	4 6	4 6½	Chelsea ...	4 7	5 6
Lambeth ...	5 0	5 8	Kensington ...	4 2	4 4½
St. George, Hanover-square ...	3 6½	3 8	St. Luke ...	6 0	6 1
St. Mary, Islington ...	4 2	4 8½	St. George, South-wark ...	5 9	6 0
St. Leonard, Shore-ditch ...	5 0	5 0	Bermondsey ...	5 10	5 6
Paddington ...	3 10	4 0	St. George-in-the-East ...	5 11	6 1½
Bethnal-green ...	6 6	6 3	St. Martin ...	3 4	3 8
St. Mary, Newington ...	6 0	5 5	Mill-end Old Town ...	5 5	5 9
St. Giles, Camberwell ...	4 11	5 2	Woolwich ...	6 0	5 9
St. James, Westminster ...	3 9	3 10	Rotherhithe ...	5 5	5 6
			Hampstead ...	4 4	4 7

DISTRICT BOARDS.

District of the Metropolis.	Total Amount of the Rate in the £ in 1882-3.	Total Amount of the Rate in the £ in 1883-4.	District of the Metropolis.	Total Amount of the Rate in the £ in 1882-3.	Total Amount of the Rate in the £ in 1883-4.
WHITECHAPEL.	s. d.	s. d.	HOLBORN (Cont.)	s. d.	s. d.
St. Mary's ...	5 1	5 6	Liberty of Glass-house-yard (part of) ...	4 7	4 2
Christchurch ...	5 3	5 8	STRAND.		
St. Botolph's ...	5 1	4 3½	St. Anne, Soho ...	3 11	3 9
Holy Trinity ...	5 4	5 0	St. Paul, Covent-garden ...	3 11½	4 8½
St. Katherine's ...	5 0	4 0	Precinct of the Savoy ...	3 11	4 3
Hamlet of Mile-end ...	5 8	5 10	St. Mary-le-Strand ...	3 9½	4 3
Norton Folgate ...	5 1	5 4	St. Clement Danes ...	3 11	4 0
Old Artillery Ground ...	5 4	5 4	Liberty of the Rolls ...	3 7	4 7
Tower Without ...	6 10	5 6	FULHAM.		
WESTMINSTER.			Hammersmith ...	5 10½	5 10
St. Margaret and St. John ...	3 11½	3 8	Fulham ...	5 7	5 4
GREENWICH.			LIMINGHOUSE.		
St. Paul's, Deptford and Hatcham ...	5 4	5 3	St. Anne, Linthouse ...	5 10	5 8
St. Nicholas, Deptford ...	6 4	4 0	St. John, Wapping ...	4 3	4 3½
Greenwich ...	6 1	5 10	St. Paul, Shadwell ...	5 6½	5 8½
WANDSWORTH.			Ratcliffe, Hamlet of ...	5 7	5 2
Clapham ...	5 1	5 6	POPULAR.		
Tooting Graveny ...	5 5	6 2	All Saints', Poplar ...	5 0½	5 5½
Streatham ...	4 9	4 11	St. Mary, Stratford, Bow ...	5 6	6 0
St. Mary, Battersea ...	4 10½	4 8	Bromley, St. Leonard ...	6 1	6 1
Wandsworth ...	5 5½	5 4½	ST. SAVIOUR.		
Putney ...	5 3½	6 5	Christ Church ...	4 10½	5 0
HACKNEY.			St. Saviour ...	3 8½	3 9
St. John at Hackney ...	4 8	5 1	PLENSTEAD.		
St. Mary, Stoke-Newington ...	4 7	5 4	Charlton ...	7 4	6 10
ST. GILES.			Pimsted ...	5 4	5 8
St. Giles-in-the-Fields and St. George's, Bloomsbury ...	5 3	5 5	Eltham ...	5 8	5 7
HOLBORN.			Lee ...	5 7	5 6
Saffron-hill, Liberty of ...	5 8	5 11	Kidbrook ...	4 8	5 6
St. Andrew-above-Bars and St. George-the-Martyr ...	4 11	5 1½	LEWISHAM.		
St. Sepulchre ...	6 2½	6 0	Lewisham ...	4 10	5 1
St. Botolph Without, Aldersgate ...	—	—	ST. OLAVE.		
			St. Olave, Southwark ...	4 5	4 9
			St. Thomas, Southwark ...	4 6	4 7
			St. John, Horselydown ...	4 6	4 8
			CITY OF LONDON.		
			(Average of the 112 parishes) ...	4 1	4 4½

EMPERORS OF RUSSIA.

1659 Peter I.	died 28 Jan. 1725
1725 Catherine I., Mistress of Peter ...	died 17 May 1727
1727 Peter II.	died 29 Jan. 1730
1730 Ann ...	died 29 Oct. 1740
1740 Ivan IV., imprisoned 1741 ...	assassinated 1764
1741 Elizabeth ...	died 5 Jan. 1762
1762 Peter III.	assassinated 14 July 1762
Catherine II., Wife of Peter III.	died 17 Nov. 1796
1796 Paul ...	assassinated 24 March 1801
1801 Alexander I.	died 1 Dec. 1825
1825 Nicholas ...	died 2 March 1855
1855 Alexander II.	assassinated 13 March 1881
1881 Alexander III.	1881