

above fourteen, connected with each agricultural holding, were employed, and whether there was any difference in their employment this year than what was in 1876—the last year of ascertained prosperity.

This slight extension of the duties of the constabulary in collecting this additional information, would train them to do it perfectly at the census in April, 1881, and so save cost of checking and revising. The statistics would in the meantime be extremely valuable in judging of measures or demands for relief next winter, and if collected along with the agricultural statistics, would be collected without attracting the attention that an entirely independent inquiry would produce.

The Council strongly recommend Mr. Jephson's suggestions to the consideration of His Grace the Lord Lieutenant.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN K. INGRAM, *President.*

Right Hon. the Chief Secretary  
for Ireland.

VIII.—*A Common Poor Fund for the Metropolis.* By W. H. Dodd, Esq., Barrister-at-Law.

[Read 20th April, 1880.]

THE Charity Organisation Committee of this Society, in their report in 1876, drew attention to the London system of having a common poor fund for the metropolitan unions, and suggested the desirability of extending this system to the Dublin unions. A reform which was commenced under Lord Palmerston's administration, and carried into effect under Lord Derby's administration, and extended by Mr. Goschen under Mr. Gladstone's administration, by the Metropolitan Poor Amendment Act, 1870, is one deserving consideration; and I propose to inquire if the principle on which it proceeded can be applied to the Dublin unions with advantage to the community.

There are within the metropolis of London at present thirty unions. The population may be taken roughly at about 3,000,000. In 1867 (by the Act 30 & 31 Vic. c. 6, sec. 61-72) there was established for the entire of the metropolitan unions a Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, and to this fund each of the unions contributed its fair proportion. The principle at the root of this reform was that the relief of the poor in the metropolis was a matter of equal interest to all portions of the entire metropolis. Huge as it is, London is one single community. The west cannot say to the east, "I have no need of thee;" nor ought the east to be compelled to say to the west, "We get no aid from thee." The value of the property inside the area of the metropolis is greater because it is inside that area, and as the entire property of the community is made more valuable by

causes which have as their necessary accompaniment a large amount of pauperism, the entire property of the community ought to contribute equally to the relief of the pauperism. It was a sound economic principle therefore which was adopted. Let us see what the results of its adoption have been.

The entire of the rate called the poor-rate is not devoted to the actual relief of the poor. Many things have been from time to time thrown upon that rate which do not, properly speaking, tend to the relief of the poor; and there are in each union of course special union charges, which prevent the rating throughout London being exactly uniform even yet. It is only so far as the portion of the poor-rate which is devoted to the actual *indoor* relief of the poor is concerned, that there has been established an equality of rating. Thus, of the £1,757,183 collected in 1868, about £700,000 were distributed amongst the unions through the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

In 1867, the year before the fund was first established, Kensington union contributed 11d. in the £1 to the relief of the poor; Paddington union, 7d.; and St. George's, Hanover-square, 8d. The average of the eight unions in the West End was 12d. in the £1. On the other hand, the rating in the Bethnal Green union was 3s. 11d.; in St. George's-in-the-East, 3s. 6d.; and the average for the seven unions in the east end was 3s. The unions in the Central District, again, were heavily taxed, though not to such an extent as the East District unions. The South District unions came next in order, the North next; while the West, as I have said, were very lightly taxed. I give in detail the rating for the various unions in 1867.—*See opposite page.*

One of the results of a well-conceived reform is that it brings others in its train. In 1867 there were thirty-nine unions in London. Nine of these have since that been dissolved and the parishes taken into adjoining unions, so that I cannot accurately compare the unions now one by one; but a comparison of the average of the unions in each district will serve to show the result.

In the eight unions of the West District the average for 1878 was 2s. 4d. in the £1. Over the same area in 1867, in which there were then thirteen unions, the average was only 12d.

In the five unions of the North District in 1878 the average was 2s. 11d. In the same union in 1867 the average was 1s. 4d.

In the five unions of the Central District in 1878 the average was 2s. 2d. Over the same area in 1867, there being then nine unions, the average was only 1s. 6d.

In the unions of the East District, on the other hand, the average of 3s. in 1867 in the £1 had increased only to 3s. 2d., and that increase occurred by reason of greater expenditure in Poplar union. The unions in the heart of the East District, such as St. George's-in-the-East and Stepney, were much more lightly taxed in 1878 than in 1867—St. George's-in-the-East being rated to the amount of £38,886 for the year ending Lady-day, 1867, and being rated to £27,264 for the year ending Lady-day, 1878, and Stepney being rated to the amount of £49,928 in 1867, against £38,263 in 1878. While the falling off took place in the East unions, the West unions

## LONDON UNIONS RATING FOR 1867.

Union.	Total Relief to the Poor.	Rate in the £ for Relief.
<i>West District:—</i>	£	s. d.
Kensington, ... ..	32,643	0 11
Fulham, ... ..	20,310	1 7
Paddington, ... ..	20,928	0 7
Chelsea, ... ..	24,565	1 9
St. George's, Hanover-square, ... ..	30,104	0 8
St. Margaret and St. John, ... ..	35,769	1 6½
St. Martin-in-the-Fields, ... ..	15,041	1 0¼
St. James, Westminster, ... ..	26,227	1 2
<i>North District:—</i>		
St. Marylebone, ... ..	80,236	1 7
Hampstead, ... ..	6,610	0 7½
St. Pancras, ... ..	80,715	1 6½
Islington, ... ..	45,082	1 0½
Hackney, ... ..	34,661	1 4½
<i>Central District:—</i>		
St. Giles and St. George, Bloomsbury, ... ..	24,386	1 11
Strand, ... ..	34,368	2 7½
Holborn, ... ..	19,443	2 1¼
Clerkenwell, ... ..	24,675	2 1¾
St. Luke's, ... ..	28,531	2 6½
East London, ... ..	29,635	3 1½
West London, ... ..	25,196	2 11½
City of London, ... ..	52,962	0 7
<i>East District:—</i>		
Shoreditch, ... ..	51,589	2 9¾
Bethnal Green, ... ..	43,356	3 11
Whitechapel, ... ..	44,492	3 4
St. George-in-the-East, ... ..	31,463	3 5¾
Stepney, ... ..	44,223	3 7
Mile End Town, ... ..	24,065	2 0
Poplar, ... ..	58,949	2 6
<i>South District:—</i>		
St. Saviour's, Southwark, ... ..	22,490	2 1
St. Olave's, Southwark, ... ..	11,200	1 9¼
Bermondsey, ... ..	18,943	1 9
St. George's, Southwark, ... ..	24,461	2 11
Newington, ... ..	30,941	2 8
Lambeth, ... ..	64,403	1 8½
Wandsworth and Clapham, ... ..	34,569	1 1¼
Camberwell, ... ..	32,727	1 7
Rotherhithe, ... ..	12,531	2 1¾
Greenwich, ... ..	55,182	2 2½
Lewisham, ... ..	19,089	0 11

were more than doubled—the total relief in 1878 in those unions being £583,341, against £205,597 in 1867, and that though the general expenditure was diminished, owing to a consolidation of unions.

The result of the change has been to tend to equality of rating; but in addition to that it has given a common interest in the poor of London to the entire metropolis; it has promoted other reforms, by drawing attention to the existing anomalies, and I find from recent reports of the Charity Organisation Committee that is likely to be adopted as a means and aid to private charity in London.

Turn now to the Irish metropolis. The population may be said roughly to be about 300,000. The Poor-law unions in the area are three—the North Dublin union, the South Dublin union, and the Rathdown union. I append the rating of the Dublin unions for 1867 and 1879.

THE RATING OF THE DUBLIN UNIONS FOR 1867 AND 1879-'80.

Electoral Division.	Rating in the £r.	
	1867	1879-'80
<i>*South Dublin Union:—</i>		
Clondalkin, ... ..	s. d. 1 8	s. d. 2 0
Donnybrook, ... ..	1 6	1 8
Palmerstown, ... ..	1 10	2 2
Rathfarnham, ... ..	1 6	2 2
Rathmines, ... ..	1 2	1 6
Tallaght, ... ..	1 4	2 0
Whitechurch, ... ..	1 4	2 0
South City, ... ..	2 10	2 2
<i>Rathdown Union:—</i>		
Blackrock, ... ..	0 11	1 0
Bray, ... ..	1 4	0 11
Delgany, ... ..	1 2	1 7
Dundrum, ... ..	1 0	1 3
Glencullen, ... ..	1 3	1 4
Killiney, ... ..	0 9	1 0
Kingstown, ... ..	1 1	1 3
Powerscourt, ... ..	1 2	1 5
Rathmichael, ... ..	1 3	2 1
Stillorgan, ... ..	0 11	1 2
<i>†North Dublin Union:—</i>		
Blanchardstown, ... ..	1 0	1 8
Castleknock, ... ..	1 2	1 4
Clontarf, ... ..	1 2	2 0
Coolock, ... ..	1 0	2 0
Drumcondra, ... ..	1 0	2 0
Finglas, ... ..	1 0	1 8
Glasnevin, ... ..	1 0	1 8
Howth, ... ..	1 2	2 0
North City, ... ..	2 6	2 2

\* The figures for 1879 are, except South City, for December; South City is for January, 1880.

† The figures for 1879 are, except North City, for March; North City, is for January, 1879.

An examination of this table will show, as might have been anticipated, less glaring inequalities in the rate than existed in London; and yet they are great enough to demand attention. Rathmines and Donnybrook are uniformly less than other districts, and yet these districts are surely integral portions of the city, and equally bound to contribute to the poor of the city with Eccles-street or Baggot-street. I don't wish in this paper to discuss the wide question of union as opposed to electoral rating; but the North City and South City are practically made into sub-unions for rating purposes, and why might one of the wards not as well have independent rating as the electoral divisions of Rathmines and Donnybrook? Those wards, into which by the course of the development of the city the poor have been driven, would be more heavily taxed, while the wards that have been growing in wealth, and keeping out the poor, would benefit.

Dublin has found it expedient to have a metropolitan police force, and its area includes some of the more favoured electoral divisions of the metropolis. This is not a bad indication that the interests of the community, as far as person and property are concerned, in those divisions are identical in kind and degree with the interests of the other divisions in similar matters; and as the poor-rate is a tax paid for the preservation of property, there seems no good reason why it should not be uniform over the entire area of the metropolis. The economic test would seem to be—has the property an enhanced value by reason of its being within the area of the metropolis? If it has, it should be subject to a metropolitan rating.

But, apart from the mere rating point of view, there is a great social gain in having a common interest among the inhabitants of the metropolis, in the poor of all districts of the metropolis. It was feared by one school of political economists that the poor-house would become too popular—that it would be a refuge and a haven for the idle and the lazy. It was feared still more that if out-door relief were given, laziness and idleness would be still more increased. The poor-house has not, strange to say, that all-attractiveness. There are some apparently who would rather starve than go there; and whether out-door relief can be so prejudicial or not, we are not in Ireland in a position to say, for we have not been suffered to make the experiment. Admitting, however, the truth which lies at the root of such fears, and granting the advisability of having a strict poor-law system, does it follow that because it must be strict it should therefore be inelastic? Our streets are full of beggars. Can we follow Archbishop Whately's plan, and refuse to give one a penny? And if we do yield to impulse and give an alms, what appreciable effect does that make on the pauperism around us?

One of the objects of the London Charity Organisation Society, is the bringing about co-operation among the charities and the Poor-law. If there be a strict Poor-law system, there is all the more need for outside charity organisation, and to have a common poor-fund throughout the metropolis would give facilities for the operation of private charity. The Poor-law system, if strict, should be capable of being complemented and supplemented by private energy. Very

slight relaxations have been frequently followed by great results. The power of contributing to the deaf and dumb outside the poor-house, helped to promote the establishment of such places as Cabra and Merrion. At present, if one wants to contribute something to relieve the want and misery he cannot but see around him, how can he do it? What society or societies will undertake it? and through the Poor-law system there is no means of accomplishing it. Charity is accordingly often found wedded to proselytism, and is often wayward and partial.

It is in the hope of contributing something to the discussion of such a subject that I have ventured to bring forward this paper, the materials for which have been kindly furnished to me by Dr. Hancock.

IX.—*On the Economic Theory of Rent.* By Murrrough O'Brien, Esq.

[Read 20th April, 1880.]

IN a recent number of the *Contemporary Review*, Professor Bonamy Price, under the title of "What is Rent?" gave an explanation of rent, its "nature" and "character." He limited his explanation to agricultural rent, which he maintains is different from rent used as a legal word connected with the hire of land, or forms of real property connected with land, as houses, rooms, and the like.

Professor Price, in his excellent treatise *Practical Political Economy*, has demolished many baseless theories of economists; but in this essay he seems to me to build again the things he destroyed, and to revert in substance to the Ricardian theory of rent which he nominally condemns. It is with diffidence that I venture to controvert such an eminent economist as Professor Bonamy Price. His explanation of rent, however, if generally accepted, would go far to justify the anti-rent agitation which he condemns (and in passing, it may be remarked, that the agitation is not directed against rent, but against excessive rents and insecurity of tenure), by making persons think that there is a natural, definite, and ascertainable quantity which is all that should be demanded or that can be paid as rent for any particular farm of land. I question whether there is any such clearly marked distinction as he asserts, between the two different uses of the word rent, and whether this economic rent can be said to exist as a reality, or otherwise than an imaginary, unascertainable, and valueless quantity.

According to both legal and common use rent is said to be paid for many other things than land and houses—as for example, rights of shooting and fishing, for rights of way, for water-power, for the right to carry wires and pipes above and below ground, for the right of collecting tithes, which is often included in leases of land. Any controversy as to this would be a mere battle of words, and I wish to confine myself to the question of agricultural rent, which Professor Price says exists "because a selling price is found which yields a surplus, an excess of profit *beyond what the tenant requires.* The