

I can see no just ground for apprehending any opposition to it on the part either of landlord or tenant.

In future tramway legislation, for I suppose we have not come to the end of it, it would be desirable that the same powers as to taking land should be granted as exists in the case of railways. At present only thirty feet from the centre of the road can be compulsorily taken, but where roads are very steep, and it would be an advantage to diverge so as to avoid hills, it would be important that the company should have power of compulsory purchase at a price not greater than the ordinary agricultural value of the land.

IX.—*Arrangements for Putting Out Fires in Dublin City and the Townships of Drumcondra, Clontarf, Kilmainham, Pembroke, Rathmines, Blackrock, and Kingstown.* By W. N. Hancock, LL.D. Q.C.

[Read Tuesday, 27th June, 1882.]

THE last great improvement in the arrangements for putting out fires in Dublin arose from the burning of Kildare-street Club in 1860; and some papers read at this Society, and the discussion thence arising, contributed to the changes then introduced.

The burning of the workshops of the Artane Industrial School, and of the boarding-house in Kingstown, where a life was lost, bring up the consideration of the question for reconsideration. Are the existing arrangements throughout the whole metropolitan area as satisfactory and complete as the latest experience and the latest legislation on the subject would suggest?

Let us for a moment consider what were the evils which existed before 1860. These were: 1st, the unequal arrangements for putting out fires in different parishes; 2ndly, the divided authority amongst the persons engaged in putting out fires. Some parishes had fire engine, like St. George's; others had not. The Corporation engine and brigade was primarily for the city alone. The limited and defective arrangements thus made by local taxation were supplemented by the Dublin Metropolitan Police brigade and engine, which included Kingstown, Blackrock, Pembroke, and Rathmines, but which did not extend to Clontarf or Drumcondra. The emulation of the different engines prevented the boundaries being adhered to: this only increased the divided authority.

The state arrangements were still so imperfect that those who were provident enough to insure against fire, were further taxed to maintain insurance companies' fire engines, like the National, Patriotic, and Royal Exchange engines.

The reform then decided on was to follow the example of Glasgow and Manchester, and have a single fire authority and a single brigade. Unfortunately this improved system was confined to the municipal boundary. Within that boundary the arrangements are perfect: we have fire escapes stationed in different parts of the city, a set of light

reel cars for carrying leather or woven hose pipes and brass nozzles for the fire jet, and stand pipes to connect them with the hydrants placed throughout the city, and so use the high pressure of the Vartry supply. We have besides steam and other fire engines to use the Liffey or other water supply in the case of large fires, where more than the Vartry supply is required, or to meet the rare case of the Vartry supply in any district being temporarily cut off through the bursting of a pipe or other accident. Then there are small hand engines which the firemen can carry into houses for putting out small fires, or fires confined to one room.

To use all these appliances there is a trained fire brigade under what is most essential in the case of fires, undivided command—a single skilled and trained superintendent, such as the late Captain Ingram, for whose widow and children there is, I am happy to say, a subscription being now raised.

Since the Dublin City Fire Brigade was established in 1862, the utility and efficiency of the system has never been called in question; it has satisfied the citizens. Those who reside within the city bounds go to bed each night with the assurance that all the latest improvements for the protection of life and property from fire have been supplied out of local rates, and are in the hands of the employees of local authority, ready for the prompt use that the suppression of fires requires.

The public subscription for Captain Ingram's widow reveals, however, one weak point in our arrangements. The local authority, which has done so much for us in giving us an ample supply of water at a high pressure, fire escapes, fire engines, hose cars, a fire brigade, is hampered in its management of that brigade by the unwise restrictions which Parliament is so constantly imposing on English, Scotch, and Irish local authorities. The fire brigade rate in Dublin was limited for ten years, ended 1872, to 1½d. in the £ of valuation, and since then to 1d. This seems an impolitic restriction.

Why, again, should the Town Council be restrained by Parliament from giving a pension to the widow and children of an officer engaged in such an anxious and precarious service as that of fire superintendent. The successful use of all our expensive appliances depends on the zeal of the brigade. To secure that zeal every man should be sure that if his health is broken down, or his life sacrificed to his duties, his wife and children shall be cared for, not by the chance result of a public subscription, but by the generosity of the public authority under which the brigade serves.

*Improvements suggested as to the Corporation Fire Brigade.*

The only improvements I have to suggest as to the Corporation Fire Brigade are:—1st, that the limit of 1d. in the £ should be abolished, and the Corporation be entrusted (without statutable restriction), with the performance of the strictly local duty of protecting our lives and property from fire, which they have so successfully discharged for the last twenty years. 2nd. That the service of the fire brigade should be organised

on the plan of services attended with special anxiety or danger, with a power in the local authority to grant pensions to widows or children.

*Arrangements for putting out Fire in the County of Dublin Townships.*

*Fire Escapes.*

Only one of the townships—Kingstown—has provided a fire escape; but it has not a fire escape man attached to it, to take it out and keep it in the street at night, like the Dublin city and London fire escapes, ready for immediate use, and giving notice to the public of its existence and its use.

The Kingstown fire escape is in the yard of police station at George's-street, a considerable distance from the Town Commissioners' yard where the other fire appliances are kept. At the Pembroke Township a fire escape has been ordered, indicating the conceded necessity of such a means of protecting life. But in the other townships I have not been able to find any fire escapes. Blackrock, Clontarf, Dalkey, Drumcondra, Kilmainham, and Rathmines are thus behind the city in the most essential means for protecting life from fire.

*Reel Cars for Hose.*

The reel cars are for facilitating the use of high pressure of water by means of hydrants in the street, stand pipes, and hose and brass nozzles. There are two reel cars at the Pembroke Township, one at Blackrock, and one at Kingstown. Dalkey and Clontarf have hose and nozzles, but no reel cars. Drumcondra and Kilmainham have not even the hose or nozzles.

It is a singular thing that a township would go to the great expense of having the township supplied with water at high pressure, and should then lose the value of the immediate use of the water in case of fire for want of the small cost of a reel car, and the small amount of business-like arrangement of having one of the township horses kept available for immediate use, and some of the men trained as fire-men and organised as a brigade.

*Fire Engines.*

Fire engines are of use in districts not supplied with high pressure, and in Rathmines Township there is an excellent steam fire engine of the latest improved pattern, besides one old hand engine. Besides this primary use of engines in low pressure districts, they have an important use in high pressure districts to meet the case of anything affecting the pressure or machinery for using it, and to meet the case where the extent of the fire make it wise to resort to the Grand Canal or Royal Canal, the Tolka, the Dodder, or other stream in the township. For this subsidiary use Kingstown alone has a fire engine, and I could not learn that there was any at Blackrock, Clontarf, Dalkey, Drumcondra, Kilmainham, or the Pembroke Township.

*Fire Brigades.*

There is a fire brigade of eight men at the Pembroke Township, under a very intelligent and efficient chief. There is a fire brigade at Rathmines; but Blackrock, Clontarf, Dalkey, Drumcondra, Kilmainham, and Kingstown have no fire brigades.

*General result as to the Dublin Townships.*

It will be apparent from what I have said that there is a greater want of system in the arrangements for protecting life and property from fire in the Dublin townships. Within the city we have for the past twenty years had fire escapes and fire brigade fire engines, and since the Vartry was introduced, reel cars and hose and nozzles.

In the suburban towns only one has a fire escape, one has both a brigade and a fire engine, one has a brigade without a fire engine, and another has a fire engine without a brigade. Three have reel cars with hose and nozzles, two have hose and nozzles without reel cars, and two have high pressure of water without hose or nozzles to use it. The suburbs are thus very much in the state the city was in before the brigade was established in 1862; some parishes having fire engines and others having none.

*Arrangements for the City Fire Brigade assisting at fires in Townships.*

The suburban arrangements being far from perfect, it naturally follows that the city fire brigade is called on to assist at fires in the suburbs, and even at fires like the late one at Artane, at places outside the townships, though two townships, Clontarf and Drumcondra, are much nearer, and the city appliances had to be brought through one of the townships to the fire.

The legislation as to this assistance is very imperfect. It is given at the cost of the individual whose premises are burned, and not at the cost of the township assisted. Then the giving of the assistance is subject to a rule of doubtful legality, that the Lord Mayor must assent to the assistance being given; this rule revives as to assisted fires the evil of the "fatal half-hour," as the delay which occurred at many fires before 1862 was called in the newspapers.

*Remedy Proposed.*

The questions that have been raised about the city fire brigade assisting in the suburbs, and the inconvenience of having two authorities at a fire, so often occurring in the city before 1862, points to a common fire committee and brigade for the whole metropolitan area of city and adjoining townships as the true remedy. When the British Association met in this city in 1878, I ventured to propose a reception committee constituted of representatives of the townships and city, and nothing could exceed the harmony with which the principle worked. So now I would suggest a common fire committee, consisting of a representative of each township, a number equal to all these, to represent the city with the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, as an *ex-officio* member. Under that

committee I would place all the existing brigades and fire appliances, and to them I would entrust expenditure of an equal fire-rate over the whole area of city and suburban townships; and I would have all the stations connected by telegraph or telephone, and have equal care and equal appliances used for protection against loss of life or property by fire over the whole of the city and suburban area that is under any form of town government.

What happened so recently at Artane Industrial School and at Clarinda-park, Kingstown, and at Roscommon, is a sufficient warning to all inhabitants of the suburban townships of the danger of postponing the adoption of the most perfect system for the whole metropolitan area.

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X.—*Proceedings of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland.*

THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION.—SECOND MEETING.

[Tuesday, 31st January, 1882.]

The Society met at the Leinster Lecture Hall, 35 Molesworth-street, W. Neilson Hancock, LL.D. Q.C., President, in the chair.

Mr. John Ferguson read a paper entitled "A few observations on the present position of the Irish National School Teachers, as regards Salaries, Pensions, and Residences."

The ballot having been examined—William F. Bailey, Esq., William Lawson, Esq. B.L., William Stanley Monk, Esq., Richard Perrin, Esq., and J. B. Swan, Esq., were declared duly elected members of the Society.

THIRD MEETING.

[Tuesday, 28th February, 1882.]

The Society met at the Leinster Lecture Hall, 35 Molesworth-street, W. Neilson Hancock, LL.D. Q.C., in the chair.

Professor Sigerson read a paper on "The Need and Use of Village Hospitals in Ireland."

Mr. A. H. Bates read a paper on "The Extent to which the Principles advocated in Bentham's *Letters on Usury* have yet to be adopted in the Laws of England and of Foreign Countries."

The ballot having been examined—C. F. Bastable, Esq., Professor of Political Economy, T.C.D., J. P. Brett, Esq. B.L., R. R. Cherry, Esq. B.L., and W. L. Micks, Esq. M.A., were declared duly elected members of the Society.

FOURTH MEETING.

[Tuesday, 25th April, 1882.]

The Society met at the Leinster Lecture Hall, 35 Molesworth-street, W. Neilson Hancock, LL.D. Q.C., President, in the chair.

The Hon. The Recorder read a paper on "Habitual Criminals."