

Their own prudence and industry and frugality must work out their economic salvation. They can contract with capital on equal terms, and demand and obtain their fair share of the result of their work, only when by their own prudence, and foresight, and powers of combination, they have made themselves as independent of the capitalist as the capitalist is of them. And I, who have faith in human progress, look forward hopefully to a time when capital and labour shall no longer be treated as distinct and antagonistic forces, but when the capitalist shall be a labourer, and the labourer a capitalist, and when even the hugest engines of production and exchange shall thus become compatible with the freedom and dignity of labour. Meantime, "He that believeth shall not make haste;" and let not us who believe in the future of labour, fret at the slow working of the forces that make for human progress, and resort to the ignoble expedient of snatching from others the good that can only come as the slow result of time, and toil, and patient self-conquest.

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IV.—*Some considerations on the Working of the Artizans' Dwellings Acts, as illustrated in the case of the Coombe Area, Dublin.*  
By Spencer Harty, C.E., Assistant Engineer, Corporation of Dublin, and Surveyor to the Artizans' Dwellings Committee.

[Read Tuesday, 4th March, 1884.]

THE Coombe area being the first with which the Corporation of Dublin proceeded to deal under the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Acts, 38 & 39 Vic. cap. 36 (1875), and 40 & 41 Vic. cap. 122, Local (1877); it has occurred to me that it would be interesting to give a sketch of the entire proceeding from the beginning, summarising its cost, observing on its details, noting its effect from a sanitary point of view, and submitting for consideration whether or not the public should regard it as a satisfactory speculation. I shall commence with Dr. Mapother's report of the 10th June, 1876, respecting the unhealthiness of this district. He says:—

"By your directions, and in accordance with sections 3 & 4 of the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act, 1875, I have to report certain places in the city as unhealthy areas. In some cases many, and in the others all, of the following conditions render the houses unfit for human habitation, and incapable of repair without an improvement scheme dilapidation, closeness of the passages preventing ventilation and lighting, want of decent sanitary accommodation, and the difficulty of affording it owing to absence of yards and soakage of the earth with animal refuse from ashpits, slaughter-houses, etc.

"It has been apparent for many years that such conditions have induced among the inmates of such areas, a high death rate, especially among infants; frequent admissions to the hospitals for zymotic diseases, an undue proportion of lung diseases and rheumatism; a low tone of general health, filthy habits, intemperance, and debased morals.

"No. 3.—Elbow Lane Area. The houses and yards in Great and Little Elbow Lane, and the houses 58A Coombe, and 36 Meath Street, which obstruct the entrances of these lanes."

The above report from the Medical Officer of Health was referred to Mr. Neville, City Engineer, who reported as follows:—

“The area to be cleared here is of large space and very irregular in shape; it is proposed to take down the house 58 A Coombe, corner of Little Elbow Lane, and about eight houses in the lane, and seven houses in Great Elbow Lane, and Nos 36 and 37 Meath Street, also a number of yards and sheds, and I think the house, No. 3 Pimlico, would have to be taken, to widen the approach to the west. The length of ground from Meath Street to Pimlico would be about 500 feet, the entrance at Pimlico about 35 feet, to Meath Street 45 feet, and to the Coombe 30 feet, including breadth of houses. The greatest breadth would be about 200 feet. There are good main sewers in Pimlico, Meath Street, the Coombe, and in Great and Little Elbow Lane. In dealing with this question (the several areas) it should be remembered that of any house or yard, a portion of which is wanted, the entire will have to be taken and paid for, if so required by the owner, and this he always does. This shows the necessity of careful surveys being made before any site be selected. It is almost impossible in practice to take down a house between two others, or one that is attached to another, without having claims real or alleged made by the adjoining owners or occupiers, and the more rotten the property, the more loss will be sustained by claims of this sort, as it will be attempted to be proved that buildings are good and sound which are the very reverse, and in all cases of this kind Corporations and Public Companies are generally victimized without mercy.”

The results in the purchase and taking down of the houses on this area have proved to the letter the latter observations of Mr. Neville.

Upon receipt of the above reports, the Public Health Committee of the Corporation, of which Mr. E. Dwyer Gray was chairman, promptly acted, and was without delay, constituted an Artizans' Dwellings Committee, and commenced work by taking the Elbow Lane area, calling it “Area No. 1 Coombe, Improvement Scheme.” It included all the houses and yards on south side of Cole Alley, from Nos. 19 to 32 inclusive; McDonald's Cottages, Fottrell's Square, White's Cottages, Elbow Lane Great, Elbow Lane Little, Mooney's Court, Wade's Court, Coombe Upper, from 26 to 41 inclusive; the entire east side of Pimlico from Cole Alley to Coombe Upper, and 36 and 37 Meath Street.

This is a much more extended area than that reported on by the medical officer; but the committee were more than justified in extending the boundaries (which they were empowered to do under section 5 of the act), as the extended area was required for purposes of widening roadways and for ventilation, and also included houses and yards which were in an equally insanitary state as the portion the subject of Dr. Mapother's report.

The necessary plans and schedules having been prepared and duly lodged in the Town Clerk's Office for public examination, the usual preliminary notices required by the act were served on the owners and lessees.

There were returned as dissenting from the scheme, seven, some of whom were under the impression that by “dissenting” from the proposal they would get more money for their property than if they had “assented.”

Having complied so far, the Corporation immediately lodged their petition with the Local Government Board, praying for the issuing of a provisional order authorizing the scheme, whereupon the Board directed a public inquiry, which was held in the City Hall, on 13th April, 1877.

One of the witnesses examined was Dr. Grimshaw, now Registrar-General, who was intimately acquainted with the Coombe area. He stated he at one time made a fever map of the south side of the city, and in his opinion it would be impossible to patch up Elbow Lane, Fottrell's Square, White's Cottages, and those other districts, and that the dwellings should be demolished first, and re-erected afterwards; that if the area were to become a normally healthy one, it must be through some such scheme as that proposed. He was one of the physicians of the Cork Street Hospital, and a number of patients came from this district, and he pointed out on maps of the Coombe district, places marked as indicating houses where fever prevailed, and others in which cholera had prevailed.

The Local Government Board Inspector having presented his report, the Board issued a provisional order on the 16th May, 1877. The act confirming it received the Royal Assent on 23rd July, 1877.

The ground comprised in this area forms a portion of what was formerly called "The Liberty," which prior to 1840 was not under the jurisdiction of the Corporation, and consequently did not pay city rates.

The word "Cum" (coom) means a hollow or valley, corresponding accurately with the Welsh "Cum" and English "Coomb." The Coombe in Dublin is a good illustration—being, as the name implies, a low-lying place.

The portion of ground taken was the property of the Earl of Meath, who was owner in fee, and many leases for lives renewable for ever, fee-farm grants, etc., had been made by his predecessors towards the end of the seventeenth century.

In the beginning of the present century manufacturers of cotton, linen, and starch, and many tradesmen, lived in the streets and alleys comprised in this area, and even in 1842 several were still there, and the father and grandfather of a celebrated parliamentary counsel, now living in London, lived and had large milling concerns in Cole Alley. In 1878, when the ground was purchased, there was not a single merchant, manufacturer, or trader in the entire area.

Before the arbitrator, some of the claimants asserted a right to the fee for which the Earl of Meath had been already compensated; they grounded their claims on the statute of limitations only, alleging that they had not for over fifty years, and some for over sixty years, paid rent to anyone—the present representatives of the original leases of 1691, etc., not having the remotest idea that they should have had possession of those grounds and houses, until they were so informed by the Corporation officers. Those "Statute of Limitation" claimants, some of whom lived in the best parts of the city, had weekly tenants under them who gained a livelihood by going to race courses with "Aunt Sally," etc.; others were in the "dog-fancying line;" some made their livelihood by selling pigs and

manufacturing manure, while others were engaged in more degraded occupations—what a contrast with the merchants and traders in the beginning of the century!

Out of 340 claims before the arbitrator (not including the Earl of Meath) only nine traversed the final award—viz:—(1) L. D., a dairy owner, who had been awarded by the arbitrator £164, was awarded by a jury £200, and £550 for trade disturbance, etc. (2) M. M., a green grocer, who had been awarded by the arbitrator £315, was awarded by a jury £350 for value of premises, and £250 for trade disturbance. The former has now got a very fine yard at the upper end of Blackpitts, in the immediate neighbourhood of the Coombe, and the latter opened a new shop immediately afterwards within a couple of doors of her former one—so much for the loss by trade disturbance. (3) P. T., who had been awarded by the arbitrator £7 10s., was awarded by a jury £150, and got £15 costs. (4) B. B. was awarded £4 11s. by the arbitrator, but was settled with by consent for £10 and £7 10s. costs. (5) M. G. was awarded £7 16s. but was afterwards settled with for £15 and £10 costs. (6) D. C. had been awarded £10 by the arbitrator, but a jury increased it to £90, half of which was for loss of premises and half for trade disturbance, and £15 costs. (7) P. G. had been awarded £10 by the arbitrator, but a jury increased it to £30 and £10 costs. (8) M. R. had been awarded £1 19s., which a jury increased to £40 and £10 costs; and (9) J. W. had been awarded £624 8s. 2d., which was increased to £810.

Thus these nine cases, in which the arbitrator awarded £1145 4s. 2d. were increased by juries to £2,495, not including costs, or very nearly 1120 per cent. (These figures include those settled with by consent, which are very small.) And this in a very poor locality surrounded by some of the worst habitations, some of which were in a tottering condition and inhabited by very poor people.

The original estimate of the cost of purchase of property was £8,513 15s. which was increased by Mr. Fitzgerald (who made the revised valuation for arbitration purposes) to £10,869 7s 9d., which was further increased by the arbitrator in his final award to £14,421 9s. 4d., and still further increased by the traverses before the juries to £15,983 19s. 8d., including costs. The area contains about four acres, thirty-six perches, statute measure, and the total Government valuation was £424, so that the purchase of the property cost at the rate of about £3,800 per acre, or nearly 37½ years' purchase on the Government valuation. The weekly tenants were allowed by the arbitrator six months' purchase on their weekly rents, and the Earl of Meath's title was purchased for £3,038 2s. 5d., equal to about 14 years' purchase on the rental he received out of this property.

L. D. who traversed, as before mentioned, paid £15 per year rent for his holding which was valued at £5 per year. The jury awarded him £750, which was equal to 50 years' purchase on his rent, or 150 years' on the Government valuation.

J. W.'s rent was £14 per year, and valuation, £35 10s. (he had

a lease for 100 years.) The jury awarded him £810 which was equal to 23 years' purchase on the valuation.

M. M.'s valuation was £5 10s. per year; she paid no rent (had a squatter's title). The jury awarded her £600—equal to 109 years' purchase on the annual value.

M. McD. was awarded by arbitrator £326 os. 4d. on a valuation of £16 per year, which was equal to 20 years' purchase. He did not traverse.

The representative of C. F. was awarded £542 10s. on a Government valuation of £25, or nearly 22 years' purchase on the valuation, and did not traverse.

The above figures show clearly that the Corporation paid very dearly for the property, but not more than all public bodies have to pay whenever property is required to be purchased for public purposes, so that individuals do not always suffer by measures necessary for the benefit of the public.

The area, which was an open one, contained, before being cleared, 110 dwellings, and about 300 separate tenancies, with a population of 984 persons, which was equal to about 246 per acre.

The total cost to the Corporation was £24,367 12s. 10d. This, according to the City Accountants' returns, is made up as follows:—

Stationery, printing and advertising,	£238	10	1
Expenses of loans, .. .. .	37	7	0
Salaries, .. .. .	416	0	10
Valuations, surveys, and plans, .. .. .	206	17	0
Law and parliamentary expenses, .. .. .	161	16	2
Certified costs, .. .. .	1,618	2	1
Traverses and costs thereon and compensation for interests, .. .. .	15,983	19	8
Arbitrator's expenses, .. .. .	511	10	6
Wages and expenses clearing and sewerage area, including sundry materials, horse hire, .. .. .	2,530	2	11
Asphalting streets and squares, including kerbing,	3,644	12	5
	£25,348	18	8
Less for materials sold and recouplements,	981	5	10
	£24,367	12	10

The loans taken up by the Corporation to carry the scheme into effect amounted to £24,000, £20,000 being repayable within fifty years by an annuity of £931 13s. 4d., and £4,000 repayable in fourteen half-yearly instalments with interest at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on outstanding balances.

The Corporation, having acquired and cleared the area, granted a lease of it for 10,000 years to the Artizans' Dwellings Company, at a rent of £200 per year, which is equal to about £50 per acre of the entire area; but this now includes two streets and four squares, which, if deducted from the total area, would make the present rent paid by the Company equal to about £67 per acre.

The Company have expended £27,600 in buildings. This, however, includes law costs, travelling expenses, architects and surveyors' fees, clerk of works' salary, etc. The foundation stone of the first building was laid by his Excellency Earl Cowper, Lord

Lieutenant, on 20th December, 1880. There have been built 210 houses, containing 594 rooms (exclusive of shops). There are 114 houses of two stories, built at an average cost of £165 each for four-roomed houses, and £115 each for three roomed houses; 92 houses of one story, built at an average cost of £82 10s., and four houses of three stories (used as shops). These sums include only the actual cost paid to the contractor.

There are four classes of houses built on the area, viz :—(a) One story cottages, containing one living-room and one bedroom. (b) Containing one living-room and two bedrooms. (c) Two stories, containing two living-rooms and two bedrooms; and (d), containing one large sitting-room and two bedrooms.

(a) These cottages are built of Portland cement concrete; the front walls are eight inches thick, the partition walls six inches. Each contains a living-room with cubic air-space of 2,193 feet, bedroom, with cubic air space of about 550 feet; scullery, coalhouse, privy, with yard at rear opening on to cleansing passage.

(b) Also built of concrete, same as last described, and each house consists of a living-room, containing about 1,703 cubic feet air space, two bedrooms, containing about 1,000 cubic feet air space, a scullery, coalhouse, privy, and yard.

(c) The front walls of red brick, partition and yard walls of concrete. Each house consists of a parlor, containing about 1,000 cubic feet air space, living room containing about 1,620 cubic feet, and two bedrooms, one containing about 1,340 cubic feet, and the other containing about 1,350 cubic feet, a scullery, and the usual coal accommodation, also privy and yard.

(d) Buildings of two stories, consisting of a living-room, containing about 2,040 cubic feet air space, two bedrooms, one containing 1,170 cubic feet air space, the other about 650 cubic feet, and other accommodation, same as previously described. The front and end walls are brick, the remainder concrete. (These measurements do not at all include passages, halls, or stairs.)

The dwellings are all very dry, give great satisfaction to the tenants, are eagerly sought after, and are never untenanted. Each house has its own water supply brought in from the rear by the cleansing passage. The sewers are run from the yards through the cleansing passages. The discharge pipe from the scullery trap discharges into the yard near the sink trap, and no sewers or drains pass under the houses.

The surfaces of the yards are laid in concrete, so that no foul matter can percolate into the earth.

The sanitary arrangements are thus perfect, and each tenant has the satisfaction of having his own house and yard reserved to himself and his family. The health and morals of the population are greatly benefited. In the buildings formerly existing on the area there were in some cases as many as from 35 to 40 inhabitants living in a single house, having but one necessary accommodation for the entire, and that in the most disgraceful and neglected condition; the yards also were filthy, reeking with most offensive matter. Whereas now each of the new buildings is let only to one family,

with a result of increased health and strength, and a very much improved tone of morals, which should also act indirectly on the conduct of the inhabitants of other houses in the streets adjoining.

The height of the houses being at most only two storeys (there are only four of three stories) the whole area has the advantage of the sun and air, and the classes of dwellings contrast advantageously with the huge and cheerless barracks to be seen in other places.

The Company receive 3s. 6d. and 4s. per week rent for the one storey cottages, 6s. 6d. and 7s. per week for the four-roomed two-storey houses, and 5s. 6d. for the three roomed houses. Of the 210 houses and cottages in the area, six are used as shops, two occupied by caretakers, and the remaining 202 are occupied by tenants following trades and callings as follows —Bacon curer, 1; bakers, 4; basket-maker, 1; bird-stuffer, 1, bookbinders, 2, bootmakers, 4; brick-layers, 7; brush-makers, 4; butcher, 1; cab owners, 2; carpenters, 8; clerks, 3; clogmaker, 1; coachmaker, 1; coachman, 1; collectors, 3; compositors, 4; confectioner, 1; coopers, 5; currier, 1; cutters, 6; dairyman, 1; engine drivers, 2; farmer, 1; gasfitter, 1; guards, 2; labourers, 61; millwright, 1; overseers, 6; painters, 9; plasterers, 3; police, 2; pensioners, 7; porters, 5; revenue officer, 1; saddler, 1; shoemakers, 2; soldiers, 4; smith, 1; storekeeper, 1; skinnners, 2; travellers, 3; tea-sorter, 1; tinsmith, 1; tailors, 7; vanmen, 4; widows, 14. Total, 202.

The entire rental received by the Company for these 202 houses is £2,680 *per annum*, and the bad debts are *practically nil*, as up to the present they only amount to 30s.

The population is now about 1,100, which is equal to about 275 per acre, and the deaths in this population for the half-year ending December, 1883, only amounted to eleven, of which six were infants under one year, one was between one and five, and four over twenty years of age. Of the four adult deaths one was caused by dropsy, one by heart disease, one by bursting a blood vessel, and one by congestion of the brain. *None of the deaths were from zymotic causes.* Compare this with the evidence given by Dr. Grimshaw at the inquiry, in April, 1877, and must it not prove a source of the greatest satisfaction and gratification to the promoters of this scheme to find that they have been the cause of this increased HEALTH RATE.

Now as to where the families inhabiting these 202 houses came from, it has been found that 107 came from streets within half-a-mile radius, 53 from streets immediately adjoining, 25 from north side of city, and 17 from the suburbs. It has also been found that the houses and tenements in the vicinity thus vacated have been re-occupied by the lower class of artizans, trades-people, and labourers, etc., and that a sort of levelling-up process has been quietly going on, so that no matter what way it be taken, the bulk of the classes rooted out of a condemned area are ultimately greatly improved by removing into a better class of tenements and houses, with better accommodation than those from which they had been expelled, and consequently the chances of better health and strength, for the bread-winner and the family, with the result of a less death rate, and a decrease in pauperism and crime. Thus, not only is the condition of

the tenants in the area-proper improved by the comfort and enjoyment of their good houses, but the lower strata also are benefited, and get into dwellings somewhat better than they formerly inhabited.

The former Government valuation of the Coombe area was £424, and the average total rates paid annually (taking three years, ending 1878), amounted only to £63.

The present valuation is £1,429 15s. od. and the total rates paid for 1883 amount to £611.

What an enormous gain there is here to the ratepayers, looking at it simply in a monetary point of view! Of this sum of £611, £393 3s. 7½d. actually goes to the Corporation, £178 14s. 4d. to the poor rates, and £11 18s. 2d. to the bridge tax.

The benefit to traders in the immediate neighbourhood, owing to the improved class now in the area, must be considerable. The facts relating to the change may be summarized as follows:—

Total contents in area (statute measure),	4a. or. 36p.	£	s.	d.
Present population, ...	1,100			
Population before area was cleared, ...	984			
Increase in population, ...	116			
Present density per acre, ...	275			
Government valuation in 1883, ..	..	1,429	15	0
Government valuation in 1876, 1877, ..	..	424	0	0
Showing an increase in valuation of ...	..	1,005	15	0
Total rates paid by company in 1883,		611	0	0
Total average rates paid annually for 3 years ending, 1878, ...	...	63	0	0
Total increase in rates paid in 1883 over former years, ...	..	548	0	0
Of which £393 3s. 7d. is paid directly into the funds of the Corporation (less per centage for collection).				
No. of one story houses or cottages in area,	92			
No. of two stories, ..	114			
No. of three stories, ...	4			
Making a total number of houses in the area of ...	210			
Of which 202 are occupied as artisans' dwellings, 6 as shops, and 2 by care- takers				
Total number of rooms in area exclu- sive of shops,	594			
Total sum expended by the company on the area, ..	...	27,600	0	0
Total rent per annum received by the company for the 202 houses, ...	...	2,680	0	0
No. of square feet of air space in roads and squares within the area, ...	67,000			
Square feet of air space in cleansing passages, etc. ...	18,773			
Total square feet of air space within the area, not including yards, ...	85,773			
Square feet under houses and yards, ...	98,268			
Making a total No. of square feet in the area of ...	184,041			
Deaths in area for half-year ending December, 1883,	11			
Rate per 1,000 for half-year ending December, 1883, ...	10			
Deaths from zymotic causes, ...	Nil			



Compare this death-rate with the mortality referred to in the evidence of Dr. Grimshaw at Local Government Inquiry.

	£	s.	d.
Total cost to the Corporation, ...	24,367	12	10
Rate per acre, ...	6,090	0	0
Rate per square foot (nearly), ...	...	2	8
Total amount of loan taken up by Corporation, ...	24,000	0	0

(In two loans, one of £20,000 for purchase of land, law, and arbitration expenses, and which will be paid off by annuity in 50 years; the other of £4,000 for making of roads and sewers, and which is to be paid off in 14 half-yearly payments, with interest at the rate of 3½ per cent. on outstanding balances.)

Rate of annuity on £20,000 loan, ...	4	13	2
Amount of Annuity on £20,000 loan for fifty years, ...	931	13	4
From which deduct rent received by the Corporation from the company, ...	200	0	0
And proportion of taxes paid direct to the Corporation, ...	393	3	7

Though the entire of these rates do not go to the credit of the Dwellings' House Improvement Fund, yet as the Corporation receive this sum and are directly benefited, it is here taken into account.)

Showing the actual cost to the Corporation per year until loan is paid off, to be, ...

338 9 9

This sum represents between the 1-7th and 1 8th of a penny in the £ on the present valuation of the city, which for improvement purposes this year is £638,515 2s. 9d.

If poor's rate and bridge tax were taken into account, as going directly to assist the ratepayer, the sum represented would be much less.

Against this one-seventh of a penny are to be put—reduced death-rate, increased morality, increased vitality and working power in labouring classes and tradesmen, consequent increased happiness and content, increased circulation of money amongst ratepayers and traders, reduced pauperism, reduced crime, and a largely reduced expenditure of time and money in maintenance of roads, etc., and in enforcing compliance with the sanitary laws.

Practically for a sum of one-seventh of a penny in the £, the Corporation have cleared one of the slums of Dublin of its pest houses, fever and cholera spots, filthy yards, etc., and have given the former inhabitants the chance of improved dwellings in other places in the city, showing in a monetary sense a satisfactory result, even though they paid so dearly for the purchase of the property.

In the above expenditure of one-seventh of a penny no allowance is made for the fourteen half-yearly payments until the £4,000 is paid off, but even if it were it would only make the entire cost of the scheme amount to ½d. in the £, reducing each year for 7 years, and one-seventh of a penny in the £ afterwards, as before shown.

The loan of £4,000 will be paid off in November, 1888.

The area as now laid out is intersected by two extremely good streets at right angles to each other, known as Gray Street and

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The loan is repayable out of a fund called the "Dwellings House Improvement Fund."

Reginald Street; each is forty feet wide from house to house, the carriage way being twenty-four feet, and the footways eight feet wide. There are four squares known as Gray Square, Reginald Square, Brabazon Square, and Meath Square.

Pimlico, at the extreme southern end adjoining the Coombe, has been widened ten feet, the Coombe itself from Pimlico to Meath Street being also widened ten feet.

The entire area slopes from north to south, and is well drained, the drainage from the houses being brought into the cleansing passages, and from thence into 12-inch pipes, which drain into 3 ft. 3 in. x 2 ft. 0 in. brick sewers in the adjoining streets and thoroughfares, and these sewers are all properly trapped and ventilated. The 4-inch new water mains in the new streets are connected with 2-inch cast iron pipes which pass through the cleansing passages, and so on into the yards. The cleansing passages are all kept private, even from the tenants, and are in no case open to the public.

The carriageways and footways of the streets and squares are laid with *limer* asphalt, as also the footpaths surrounding the area on the Coombe, Pimlico, and Meath Place (formerly Cole Alley), and all the yards in the entire area are laid with concrete.

The asphalt on the carriageway of the streets is two inches thick, laid on a bed of Portland cement concrete six inches, thick which is also laid on a sub-foundation of broken stones nine inches thick. The asphalt on the squares is one inch thick laid on similar foundations of proportionate thickness, and the footpaths are asphalted three-quarter inch thick on three inches of concrete.

A very beautiful drinking fountain and horse trough have been erected at a cost of £270, at the intersection of Gray Street and Reginald Street; of this £270, the Corporation subscribed £100, the Fountain Committee £50, and the Artizans' Dwellings Company £120.

The Company have planted four vacant spaces in the centre of the area. The squares and streets being asphalted form excellent recreation grounds for the children, who are daily to be seen enjoying themselves thoroughly in these spaces. The houses also show the improved tone in the people, cleanliness and neatness, windows decorated with flowers, books, neat blinds are everywhere to be seen. It is right to remark that the window gardening and cleanliness and neatness in the houses are greatly encouraged by the kindness of Lord and Lady Brabazon, who give substantial prizes for the best kept houses and best window-gardening.

The area being let to one company has, I think, also its advantages over areas being let piecemeal to several individuals, even though the Company may pay less rent. In the one case, with a company, the corporation and citizens are sure to get the rents and taxes, and there is less danger of the condition of the houses deteriorating, it being the interest of a company to maintain in repair their property in order to pay a dividend, and a better class of people are consequently kept together. In the other case where an area is let out piecemeal, some of the several individuals are liable to build inferior houses, and after building to sell again immediately, to underlet, to

rack-rent tenants, to neglect repairs, and finally the houses begin to deteriorate, to decrease in value, with the usual result of the better class of labourers and artizans vacating the property, and a worse class getting in, and then comes the loss of rates. In all cases of letting out areas, public bodies should keep these and such like matters prominently before their minds.

Under the act of 1875, it would be competent for the Corporation with the approval of the Local Government Board to rebuild on the area in which event the houses should be sold within ten years after being completed, unless the Local Government Board should otherwise determine. It was considered, however, more desirable for the Corporation to limit their efforts to such action as was unrestricted, and to proceed to carry such schemes into operation by purchasing the lands, taking down the existing buildings, laying out the streets, and selling or letting the ground under suitable conditions for the erection of workingmen's dwellings. Citizens of eminence, guided by philanthropic motives, joined in an effort to carry forward the needed reform. It was shown that under careful administration, dwellings erected on sites so cleared might be reasonably expected to yield interest at the rate of 4 per cent. on the expenditure.

The Dublin Artizans' Dwellings Company was founded, and sufficient capital was invested to commence operations. Subsequently, a lady distinguished by her benevolence, who had decided to devote a large sum of money to such measures as would permanently advance the interests of the working classes, subscribed about £25,000, and largely increased the sphere of action of the Company. The undertaking has prospered, and it is now found that without any increase of rent, and with all due provision for upholding the buildings, 5 per cent. can be realized on investments. This, though a low rate of interest on house property, should induce the subscription of considerably more capital to enable the Company to extend further their operations in their wide field of enterprise and reform.

The writer would like before concluding, to make a few observations on the working of the Artizans' Dwellings Act, 38 & 39 Vic. 1875, under which the area was cleared.

If the Local Authority decide the area to be unhealthy, consequent on the report of their medical officer, what possible object is to be gained by serving notices on owners and lessees requiring them to state whether they dissent or not in respect of taking such lands? As has been already mentioned, these notices were filled up as "dissenting" in many instances, in the Coombe area, and in the more recent case of the Plunkett Street area by lessees and others, merely with the object of trying to get more money for their property, such persons being under the impression that if they had "assented" their compensation would be in the inverse ratio.

Again, by sub-section 2 of section 19, it is enacted:—

"Whenever the compensation payable in respect of any lands, or of any interests in any lands proposed to be taken compulsorily in pursuance of this Act requires to be assessed, the estimate of the value of such lands or interest shall be based upon the fair market value as estimated at the time of the valuation being made."

The difficulty to be grappled with here is what is to be considered the "fair market value." In one of the cases traversed, the gentleman employed as valuator by the traverser, though the case was that of a small shop of one storey high and not much better than a cabin, made out his case before the jury thus:—First, he valued the ground upon which the house was built (it is to be borne in mind that the ground landlord had been already settled with) at £12 per year, as a ground rent by twenty-five years' purchase, *i.e.*, £300; next he valued the cabin at £13 per year by twelve years' purchase, *i.e.*, £156; he then added prospective improvements, £10 per year for fifteen years, *i.e.*, £150, and for compulsory purchase, £45 12s., making a total of £651 12s., from which he deducted for repairs, taxes, and insurance, £4 5s. for twelve years, *i.e.* £51, leaving a net total of £600 12s. *The jury awarded £600.* Can it be said that this was the fair market value of a tumble down old house, in a condemned area? Would anyone, in his sober senses, purchase a house to-morrow valued in such a careful and interested manner? May not further traversers thus encouraged, expect valuers to go even further, and make borings, and value the royalties, mines, minerals, and gravel, in a similar manner, to still further swell the sum total of these extravagant awards.

Again, the subsection, referred to further on, enacts that such value "is to be without any additional allowance in respect of the compulsory purchase of an area, or of any part of an area." Yet in the case before quoted, and in others, the valuer supported claims for compulsory purchase, and the juries made awards for loss by "trade disturbance," and why? Simply because it was contended before the judge that inasmuch as this area was an "extended" area, and the cases traversed were in the portion of it not within the limits specified in the report of the medical officer, the claimants were entitled to full compensation for compulsory purchase, etc. Certainly in any future legislation, this section so far as it refers to the "*fair market value*," will require effectual amendment, and further, it should be clearly defined that no portion of the lands or houses inside the limits of a condemned area should be entitled to any sum for compulsory purchase, no matter whether it were included inside the bounds of the medical officer's report or not.

It seems doubtful whether compensation for loss of trade profits was ever contemplated under the act, the probabilities are that it was not, and indeed the arbitrator when the cases were argued before him, had the advice of an assessor, Mr. Hugh Law, the late Lord Chancellor, who ruled that it could not be taken into account, and was not intended by the act. Yet in the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Artizans and Labourers' Dwellings in London, the conclusion of Sir H. Hunt and Mr. Rodwell (Arbitrators) was, that where the business is connected with any particular holding, the occupier is entitled to moderate compensation; and the Committee recommended that the arbitrator should in all such cases consider well whether the trader has not the opportunity of setting up his trade somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood without positive injury, in which case he would

clearly be entitled only to proper expenses connected with removal. In Dublin, in the instance of the Coombe area, the compensation for trade disturbance was very large, though the business was moved only a few yards away from the original locality, and was little if at all prejudiced or damaged by the removal.

In section 3 of the act of 1879, provision is made for the assessing of compensation in respect of any house or premises in an unhealthy area, and the arbitrator is to receive evidence, that at the date of the confirming act authorizing the scheme, or at some previous date not earlier than the date of the official representation, such house or premises was by reason of its unhealthy state, or by reason of overcrowding, or otherwise in such a condition as to have been a nuisance within the meaning of the acts relating to nuisances. He should also be required to take into account that by reason of such overcrowding the landlord's profits were excessive, and that in calculating his profits for compensation, he should be allowed only such as he would be entitled to receive if the house contained only its legitimate number of inhabitants, taking into account the cubic feet of air space required to each inhabitant, minus also the cost of putting the house into tenantable repair.

Sir H. Hunt, in cases where the houses were beyond repair, valued them only for what the building materials were worth, and then valued the ground afterwards for building; this should not be left to the option of an arbitrator, but should be mandatory under the act.

As to appeals to a jury in matters of compensation, when the sum awarded exceeds £500, the Select Committee recommends that this sum should be increased to £1,000, and very properly, as the great expense of traversing with increased jury awards and all the machinery of the acts make the carrying out of a scheme for artizans' dwellings by a local authority almost prohibitory, and no appeals should be allowed in cases where it has been proved before the arbitrator that the property was in an insanitary, dilapidated, dangerous, or unhealthy condition.

Another case might be mentioned (that of A. J. in the Plunket Street area), in which a traverse was successful, principally by the evidence given for the traverser that the money with which he purchased the property was got from a building society (this sum exceeded the award). The jury, therefore, came to the conclusion that if a building society lent a sum of money to purchase the property, therefore it was certainly worth at least this amount, but the jury were not made aware that all shareholders in terminable building societies have a certain amount of paid-up capital to the credit of their shares, and that when any money is borrowed it is taken into account and can be put to the credit of repayments, and at any time can be foreclosed on in case of failure. That is, A. borrows £500 on a property, but he has paid in to the credit of his shares on which he has borrowed (even before he receives any loan) £200, therefore virtually he only borrows £300.

Again, the local authority, in their improvement scheme, are under the necessity of providing accommodation for a similar

number of artizans and labourers as those displaced, either within the area or elsewhere. This clause requires undoubted modification. Take the case of an area where *overcrowding existed*, is this evil to be continued, and a hard and fast line to be drawn, or is the alternative of providing equally convenient accommodation elsewhere to be adopted, either putting the local authority to great expense, and in the event of the Local Government Board pressing the matter, placing the local authority on the horns of a dilemma. Once an area is cleared and the former inhabitants have themselves found accommodation elsewhere, ought it not to be sufficient, without compelling the local authority to find accommodation for a similar number either in the area or elsewhere.

The local authority here in Dublin have to face this difficulty in Plunkett Street, where the same number as those displaced could not be accommodated without building those immense large houses which are both unsightly and unhealthy in any area, as they prevent the free access of sunlight and air, and are very much disliked by the working classes in Dublin. Some modification is also required in the "suitable dwellings," etc., where an area has been cleared, in which several small and petty traders had their subsistence. It would be well if some saving clause were inserted that would give ample powers to the local authority to re-erect a certain number of shops without again going before the confirming authority, provided that means were taken in their erection so as not to materially interfere with the number of persons to be accommodated in the area.

A clause is also very much required protecting local authorities, when houses are being taken down, from the avariciousness of adjoining owners, who invariably prefer claims for fancied damage and destruction of their property by the removal of the houses adjoining. It may be said that the Common Law is sufficient protection, but it does not seem to be so in the cases of Corporations and public bodies, which are frequently victimized, and cannot as effectually contend against such claims as individuals generally do.

Reference has been made in the foregoing to difficulties in the working of the acts so far as they have come under the personal observation of the writer of this paper, but for further information a summary is here given of the recommendations in other instances of the Select Committee of the House of Commons.

They recommend, in order to save expenses and time, that the Arbitrator's Provisional Award be dispensed with; on the question of costs that the salary or remuneration, travelling, and other expenses of the arbitrator should be certified by the confirming authority before payment by the local authority; and that the 29th paragraph of the Schedule to the act of 1875 should be amended so as to make it quite clear that the arbitrator has the power to refuse to give costs if he thinks the case one in which no costs ought to be given, and that after the publication by the local authority of the advertisement stating the fact of a scheme having been made, no person should be entitled to recover or claim compensation for any alteration in term or tenure, or for any im-

provements in property unless made compulsorily for sanitary purposes.

Anyone thoroughly acquainted and conversant with the back slums of Dublin, with their fever nests and rack rented population, living in wretched miserable tenements not fit for human habitation, without proper accommodation, and in some instances without any sanitary accommodation at all (as has been found in the Plunkett Street area), cannot but hail such an act as the 38 and 39 Vic. chap. 36 as a great boon, even though it has its defects, and feel that the citizens of Dublin deserve praise for putting it in force.

In the working of these acts, Dublin has had to contend with difficulties similar to those met with elsewhere, and has fared no worse, if not better, than the large cities or towns in England. The Coombe area was the first in Dublin. Plunkett Street has been the second, in the purchase of which the local authority have more cautiously dealt with. Let it be hoped that before further efforts are made in this wide and beneficent sphere of reform the acts governing them will be much improved and modified, and that it will be possible to effect the purchase of lands and houses for purposes of local improvements much more cheaply and expeditiously than at present.

V.—*Notes on the Statistics of Waste Lands in Ireland.* By Thomas W. Grimshaw, M.A., M.D., Registrar-General for Ireland.

[Read Tuesday, 29th April, 1884.]

IN consequence of many published statements by public speakers, newspaper writers, essayists, and writers in reviews, with reference to the relative amount of Irish land which is out of use, I have thought it advisable to make this matter the subject of a communication to this Society. The tenor of the statements just referred to is that the land utilised in Ireland for agricultural purposes is gradually decreasing, and that waste lands are as steadily increasing; in fact that the land of Ireland is steadily going back to bog and waste, and that Irish agriculture is steadily decaying, as compared with agriculture elsewhere. As the growth of agricultural products is the principal trade of three-fourths of Ireland, the affirmation that Ireland is passing back into bog and waste, and that agriculture is decaying is tantamount to saying that this country is steadily becoming poorer, that trade is likely to become worse, and that Ireland is not likely to be a country where capital can be employed to advantage. Now nothing can be more destructive to the welfare of any country than to have the character of being in a perpetual state of decay: Such an impression drives out capital, and deters other capital from entering the country.

The statement that Irish land is steadily falling out of use, is persistently made, and the proof that such is the case is, I regret to say, drawn from the publications issued by the General Register