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PART LXXVIII.

I.—*Greater Dublin: Extension of Municipal Boundaries.*

By CHARLES DAWSON, Esq.

(Read Tuesday, 1st February, 1898.)

DURING the last session I had the privilege of reading a paper dealing with the necessity for a general revaluation of the city, and I then intimated that closely connected with that subject was the extension of the municipal boundaries. I promised, with the permission of the society, to treat of that topic when an opportunity arose. It has been afforded me this evening, and I gladly avail of it.

I must preface my remarks by saying that the contribution is entirely of a personal character, and that all the statistics and figures of which I availed, are those that are open to all who wish to study the Blue-books or accounts of the various townships and localities referred to.

When the extension of the boundaries of many towns in England, whose circumstances were similar to those of Dublin, attracted attention, a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed in 1878 to inquire into the municipal boundaries of cities in Ireland, and it recommended strongly that those of Dublin should be extended. In consequence of this report a Royal Commission was issued to take evidence in Dublin on the subject. It sat in 1879, "to inquire into and report upon the inclusion of Rathmines, Pembroke, Kilmainham, Drumcondra, and Clontarf, within the City of Dublin, and also to report upon Kingstown, Blackrock and Dalkey."

After considering all the evidence tendered on both sides, and hearing eminent counsel, the Commissioners, Messrs. W. Exham, Q.C., and C. P. Cotton, C.E., unanimously recommended the inclusion of Rathmines, Pembroke, Kilmainham, Drumcondra, and Clontarf, and portions of the County of Dublin,

delineated on the map attached to their report, within the municipal boundary. They considered the cases of Kingstown, Blackrock, and Dalkey separately.

From the evidence and considerations which led the Commissioners to come to this conclusion, I shall quote a few extracts:

In his case for the Corporation, the late Mr. D. C. Heron, Q.C., at one time a prominent member of this Society, amongst other facts, stated that the area of Dublin was only 3,654 acres, and that such area had been almost entirely built upon, and left practically no room for extension or new buildings.

The debt then due by the Corporation, he pointed out, was alleged to be the great stumbling block to the annexation, as the opponents of the movement contended, that at that time the city was well-nigh bankrupt. However, the facts were these:—The debt then due under various headings stood, on 31st August, 1878, at £860,000. Out of this debt £508,000 was for the Vartry Waterworks, and it also included a balance of £192,276 out of the old debt of £268,035 handed over from the old Corporation.

As against this debt there remained the valuable city rental, then bringing in a revenue of £18,000 a year, a sum enormously increased at the present day, as we shall see later on. In addition to that ever-increasing asset, there was the capitalised value of the Waterworks, which, even then, was greater than the entire debt of the city, and valuable liquid assets to more than equal the entire debt.

But at the time of the inquiry, as at this moment (as I shall show later on), the comparative debt of Dublin was far lighter than that of many English cities. Mr. Joseph T. Pim stated, in a return which he submitted to the Commissioners, that “most of the towns in England have debts of from £2,000,000 to £5,000,000,” and that Dublin was then far under £1,000,000.

Regarding the injustice to the city by the existence of these artificial boundaries, the following evidence of the late City Engineer, Mr. Park Neville, is very striking. After speaking of how districts, such as Upper Leeson Street, Upper Baggot Street, Pembroke Road, use the city roads, Mr. Neville said:—“In Dublin, as in most other cities, that part which was formerly the centre of business and the residence of the wealthy has, after the lapse of years, become decayed, while the city has been extending in the eastern and southern directions, which are inhabited by the better classes. Now the entire of the former or old part is included within the municipal boundary, while a very considerable proportion of the new districts are left outside of it, as above described.”

Under a similar state of things in England, extension of the old boundaries was granted (before the Dublin Commission sat) to Blackburn, Bolton, Chester, Cardiff, Rochdale, and many

other places. There the recommendation did not lie as a dead letter for twenty years, as it has lain in Dublin. These extended districts have ever since contributed to the general inevitable expenses of the city, where the inhabitants of the suburbs transact their business, and whose thorough-fares they use to bring all their requirements out of the city.

In addition to the injustice and anomaly here demonstrated, the medical officer of health, Sir Charles Cameron, gave convincing evidence as to the injury to public health arising from the congested condition of the city.

In answer to Q. 841, as to whether a Central Sanitary Authority would be useful, he says, "Yes; because in Glasgow, with its great population, so much larger than Dublin, there is only one sanitary staff; in Liverpool, with its half-a-million of people, there is but one sanitary staff; and in Manchester the same is the case." And he added that the townships get a great advantage for most of their labouring classes who work there, live in the city, and when ill have to use the city hospitals to the support of which the townships contribute comparatively little. He also pointed out the case of domestic servants, who, when out of employment, have to seek refuge in the city, and who, when ill, have also to use the city hospitals. On this point the following facts were laid before the Commissioners. At the time of the inquiry there were only two hospitals in the townships (and, I may add, there are only two at the present day). In the townships, then as now, there was no maternity hospital, whilst there are three in the city, there is no fever hospital, no lock hospital, no ophthalmic or dental hospital; so that every case from the townships, needing such assistance, must come to the city hospitals.

It will not be surprising then, to find that the Grand Jury Cess, out of which the hospitals grants are made, is in Dublin 1s. 6½d., and in the townships an average of only 6d. in the pound.

At the time of the inquiry there was no Fire Brigade in the townships, nor was there, nor is there now, in many of them, a disinfecting chamber; there was no system of main drainage, nor a sufficient water supply. These deficiencies have been supplied; but, if so, it has been at the cost of largely increasing the rates. The following table, showing the poundage rates levied in the various townships at the time of the inquiry and in 1897 will fully bear out the foregoing statement:—

TOWNSHIP.	Municipal Rates, 1878.		Municipal Rates, 1897.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
Pembroke, ...	3	3	4	11
Rathmines, ...	2	4	4	4
Kilmainham, ...	3	6	3	6
Drumcondra, ...	3	0	4	8
Clontarf, ...	Not given		4	4½

The facts in favour of extension, deduced from the evidence of Corporate officials at that time, were supplemented by independent testimony. I shall quote from the evidence of Mr. Joseph T. Pim, our present President. It need not be said that, then as now, 'Mr. Pim was a large ratepayer, both in the city and in the townships. He says:

“I was induced to look into this matter in consequence of my objection to the Corporation Main Drainage Scheme, and, looking into the dealings that took place between Rathmines and Pembroke townships and the city in reference to that scheme, I came to the conclusion that they ought to be united to Dublin, and that this sort of struggle that goes on between the two for getting off at the cheapest rate is injurious and objectionable. What I am considering is the fact that the city and the townships are in reality one, and I am considering the interest of the whole, and not the interest of individual parties. I think the line between the townships and the city is a purely arbitrary line, as it depends on the accident of the existence of the two canals and the Circular Road. It has enclosed Dublin in a ring fence. The circumstances of Dublin are different from any other city I know as being enclosed in this way so that it cannot grow.”

Now, these words of Mr. Pim, nearly twenty years ago, are strangely borne out by the following letter to me from a most distinguished municipal officer in Belfast, who, however, does not desire to have his name publicly quoted:—

“19th October, 1897.

“DEAR SIR,—I am not aware of any public expression of the opinion you refer to, but I have, no doubt, privately expressed what I thought—that the city was strangled by the townships adjoining it.—Yours faithfully,
“_____.”

Mr. Pim was not only impressed by the physical absurdity of dividing that which was, in the main, one and the same city, but also criticised the needless multiplication of governing bodies in what is, when compared with English and foreign cities, but a small area. Having been reminded that there were 60 members of the Corporation and 58 Township Commissioners, Mr. Pim remarked, “I look upon that as a waste of strength.” He referred to several cities in England, larger than the combined area of Dublin and the townships, which had only 64 members, as compared with 118 in the latter case.

The officials, he said, owing to the many staffs, “are repeated four or five times over, and, of course, with additional expense, and the work was not so well done.”

In reply to question 1,027, he throws more light in one sentence than a page of evidence could do as to the congestion and overcrowding of Dublin:—“The number of inhabited houses is very much less in Dublin than in towns in England with even a smaller population. In fact (from a table sub-

mitted), you will see that there are about ten persons to each house in Dublin, whereas in most English towns there are only about five."

Mr. Pim further referred to the improved pavement of the streets, and named especially the one he was well acquainted with (William Street), and, he added, "It is not to be forgotten that a great deal of the traffic through William Street is traffic going to Rathmines—I mean the heavy traffic now diverted from other streets." But, he said, he looked at the question from a public health point of view rather than one of mere street improvements.

Referring to the artisan and labouring classes working in the townships, but living in the city, he says:—"I consider the artisans now living in tenement houses in the city are just as much part of the population of the townships as they are of the city, and that the townships should contribute to any extensive scheme of artisans' dwellings for Dublin."

Now, the question is, "What have they done?" The following table will show the expenditure of the Corporation and of the townships under this heading:—

MUNICIPALITY.	Expenditure in connection with Artizans' Dwellings since 1878.						
Dublin City	<table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">£</td> <td style="text-align: center;">s.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">d.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">358,000</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> </table>	£	s.	d.	358,000	0	0
£	s.	d.					
358,000	0	0					
Pembroke Townships	Not ascertained.						
Rathmines ,,	None.						
Kilmainham ,,	None.						
Drumcondra ,,	None.						
Clontarf ,,	None.						

This statement shows how far the townships have carried out their responsibility in this direction.

Nor had the townships then or since got any public markets or abattoir, but have remained content to use those provided at great expense by the city.

So much for the reasons put forward in favour of amalgamation in 1879.

The chief objection of the opponents—an objection which did not convince the Commissioners—was the increased rates to be levied on the townships. Taking the calculations of the then Town Clerk, the late Mr. John Beveridge, an officer of unques-

tioned ability and accuracy, the increase of rates consequent upon amalgamation would have been in

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Rathmines	...	1 8	Kilmainham	...	0 6
Pembroke	...	0 6	Drumcondra	...	1 0

Well, what has happened? On account of being compelled to carry out some improvements and reforms, such as Fire Brigade, Drainage, Water Supply, these respective townships have since increased their rates by the following amounts:—

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Rathmines	...	2 0	Kilmainham	...	No change.
Pembroke	...	1 8	Drumcondra	...	1 8

So that, if they had been joined to the city in 1880, their rates would now probably be under rather than in excess of the actual rates levied by these townships at the present day.

The next objection was the neglect of the Corporate duties in the bad state of the roads, scavenging, etc. Well, there is no need to argue that question now. Seeing is believing, or, rather, walking, driving, or cycling will shortly develop the superiority of the city as regards roadway and cleaning. I may mention, in the leading township (Pembroke) only every alternate pathway in the leading and fashionable roads, thickly populated, is asphalted, while the others remain covered with heaps of mud in winter and of dust in summer.

Just fancy one of the leading or even side streets of the city left in the same condition as the south side of Pembroke-road, unflagged and unspalled, and what a tumult would be raised.

The heavy debt of the city was also a cause of objection during the inquiry of 1879, but this objection was refuted. The solvency of the city is now even greater than it stood at the date of the inquiry. The entire debt stands at £1,555,106, and against this we have the following valuable assets:—The Vartry Waterworks alone represents a sum of £700,000, whilst as a going concern it would earn an income of about £45,000 a year. It would be worth in the market fully £1,000,000. Add to this the city property, including corporate buildings and property of various kinds, £270,000; and the capitalised value of the city estate, which, at its increased rental of £35,000 per annum, can be put down at £800,000, so that there remains over the debt, including the heritage of £268,000 from the old Corporation, a surplus of liquid assets of £300,000.

I doubt, then, if there is any city in the United Kingdom in such a sound financial position as the Capital of Ireland. To emphasise this statement I shall quote from "Burdett's Official Intelligence of Municipal Finance for 1898" a few startling

figures as to the financial position of some English cities for comparison with that of Dublin:—

MUNICIPALITY.	Population 1891.	Valuation. 1896-7.	Debt 1897.
Bradford, ...	216,361	£1,089,690	£5,873,662
Nottingham, ...	213,877	892,897	4,012,150
Cardiff, ...	128,915	874,612	2,150,187
Leicester, ...	177,353	698,102	2,876,347
Oldham, ...	131,463	634,496	2,379,874
Sheffield, ...	324,243	1,211,885	4,124,484
Dublin, ...	245,001	702,470	1,555,106

And to put the matter still more clearly, the debt per head outstanding is, in the above cities:—Bradford, £21; Nottingham, £16; Cardiff, £15; Leicester, £14; Oldham, £13; Sheffield, £10; and Dublin, £6; so that it must be admitted that the debt of Dublin, compared with its own assets and with the debts, valuation, and population of English cities, is conspicuous by its moderation. And in this comparison it must be borne in mind that English cities are valued to the highest point, and Dublin confessedly only half valued.

In my former paper I made a statement which was never contradicted, that this city and its suburbs are grossly undervalued. On this point Mr. Frederick Stokes, in evidence, stated in his evidence in 1878 that the valuation of the townships was one-third, and that of the city one-half, below the real value; and Mr. J. T. Pim, in answer to Q. 1,207, replied: "I think Mr. Stokes is quite right."

Now, if the valuation of the townships was, according to the law of the land, raised one-third, and that of the city, according to the same law, one-half, and if the assessment were calculated on such increased valuation, an average rate of 3s. 11½d. over the combined area would produce a sum equal to that now raised for all municipal purposes in the city and townships. This rate would be 7d. under the average township rates, and 2s. 3½d. under the present city rates.

But even if the amalgamation was effected on the present valuation of the combined area, an average rate of 5s. 8d. would suffice, being 7d. in the Pound under the present city rates, and only about 1s. over the present average township rates.

I have arrived at these figures from the following calculations:

RETURN SHOWING POUNDAGE RATES NECESSARY TO RAISING EXISTING REVENUE.
 (1) IF MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES OF DUBLIN WERE EXTENDED SO AS TO INCLUDE TOWNSHIPS.
 (2) UNDER AN INCREASED VALUATION OVER THE WHOLE NEW AREA.

ON EXISTING VALUATIONS.				ON INCREASED VALUATION { Dublin, 50 per cent. Townships, 33 1/3 per cent.				
DISTRICT.	Present Valuations (1897)	Amount of Revenue at present required for all Municipal purposes to be raised by direct taxation.	Poundage Rate on New Area necessary to raise this revenue.	DISTRICT.	Present Valuations (1897.)	Increased by	New Valuations.	Poundage on New Valuation over whole area to raise existing Revenue.
	£	£	s. d.		£			s. d.
Dublin City, ...	711,539	222,356	} 5 8½	Dublin City, ...	711,539	50%	1,067,309	} 3 11.45
Townships of Rathmines, Pembroke, Kilmainham, Drumcondra, and Clontarf, }	306,844	69,586		5 Townships, ...	306,844	33 1/3%	409,125	
Total of New Area, ..	1,018,386	291,942	5 8½	New Area, ...	1,018,383		1,476,433	3 11 ⁰ / ₂₀

EXISTING POUNDAGE RATES (1897) :—

	s. d.	
Dublin City	... 6 3	} Being an average rate of 4s. 7d. in the £
Pembroke	... 4 11	
Rathmines	... 4 4	
Kilmainham	... 3 6	
Drumcondra	... 4 8	
Clontarf	... 4 4½	

With regard to the question of area, the congested condition of Dublin as compared with that of English cities of about the same population will be borne out by the following figures:—

MUNICIPALITY.			Area.	Population.	No. of persons to the acre.
			Acres.		
Bradford,	...	...	10,776	216,361	20
Hull,	...	...	7,901	200,044	25
Nottingham,	...	...	10,935	213,877	20
Leicester,	...	...	8,534	177,353	20
Sheffield,	...	...	19,651	324,243	17
Dublin	...	...	3,807	245,001	64

The necessity for spreading this dense population of Dublin over a larger area is one of the most important reasons for the extension of the city boundaries.

There was one objection of a very strong character brought forward against amalgamation in 1879 which does not now exist, namely, the inefficient collection of the rates in the City of Dublin, which the Royal Commission reported to have then only averaged 90 per cent. Since the Corporation have undertaken the collection of their own rates this figure has been increased to 97 per cent., making upon the municipal assessment alone a gain of £14,000 per annum to the citizens, so that not only does the above objection not now exist, but a very good case for the amalgamation has been made by the efficient discharge by the Corporation of this important duty.

Though the question of the franchise and representation did not very largely occupy the attention of the Exham Commission, yet even here any objection that existed has been very much lessened. The parliamentary qualification in the city and townships is now identical, whilst the municipal one is far more accessible in the townships than in the city.

As to the representation of the townships on the new Council, it appears to me that a very equitable and desirable distribution of the wards could be made over the new area, so as to give persons of different political opinions their legitimate share in the representation.

Finally, I may quote a list of towns whose boundaries have been extended under the provisions of the Local Government (England) Act, 1888:—

1890	Canterbury.	1895	Liverpool.
"	Coventry	"	Plymouth.
"	Great Yarmouth.	"	Southampton.
"	Huddersfield.	"	Sunderland.
"	Manchester.	1896	Liverpool.
1891	Birmingham.	"	Plymouth.
1892	Halifax.	1897	Hartlepool.
1893	York.	"	Chelmsford.
		"	Hastings.

In a statistical society appeal to sentiment, of course, seems out of place, but surely we, all citizens of Dublin, only divided by artificial boundaries, should desire to see the position of the capital of our country maintained. It is rapidly drifting into a secondary position in valuation and population, while on the other hand the City of Belfast has grown in both, and, as you will see by a map which I submit, has extended its boundaries again last year by an addition of 10,000 acres, the added area alone being nearly three times the present extent of our city.

Now is the time for the Society and the people of Dublin to call on the Government to carry into effect the report of a Commission appointed by a Conservative Government, and thus raise the Capital of Ireland to its due position, bring new blood and fresh intelligence into its great civic council, combine its scattered and expensive governing bodies, and bind us all inside and outside the present boundaries in one strong and united body to forward the material interests and happiness of GREATER DUBLIN.

II.—*Neglected Children and Neglectful Parents.*

By E. D. DALY, Esq.

(Read Tuesday, 22nd February, 1898.)

I.

It seems to me quite impossible for those who do not, or who cannot, keep out of sight of the poorer classes, to resist the sad importunity with which the facts of life in our back streets and tenements for ever plead for the waif and stray, the homeless orphan, or, what is perhaps worse, the child whose only home is a den of drunkenness or vice.

It is equally impossible to deny the difficulty of knowing how to interfere wisely to any greater extent than is done at present.

I need not dwell on those difficulties in appealing to this Society, whose volumes are full of essays discussing them.

The problem is to avoid demoralising kindness on the one hand, and doctrinaire inaction on the other.

My purpose is to remind the public of one line of effort which avoids either of those extremes—a line of effort which is not merely consistent with, but essential to, any attempt whatsoever to deal with this subject—a line of effort at present almost wholly neglected in the United Kingdom, and especially in Ireland. Although in our own City of Dublin there is reason to believe that the evil of child neglect is more acute than in any other quarter of Ireland.