

It Houses Its Poor

The City of Glasgow's Very Successful Scheme—The Scotch City Turns Plague Spots Into Comfortable and Cheap Dwelling Places for Workingmen—Good Work for an Improvement Association.

While so many problems of city government engage attention it might be profitable to turn attention to the workings of the City of Glasgow, one of the few novel cities of the world.

The City of Glasgow is run for the benefit of the people in strictly business principles. The municipal corporation is a body of trustees, elected by the people, who are responsible to the electors for the management of the city. The corporation is a body of trustees, elected by the people, who are responsible to the electors for the management of the city.

Eighteen years ago the town council leased the street railway system to a company, and the lease expires this year. The contract stipulated that the lease should be for the term of years, and that the lease should be for the term of years, and that the lease should be for the term of years.

men who operate the line. The council said to the company: "You must give better service, employ a better class of men, pay them better wages and work them shorter hours," but negotiations fell through, and the City of Glasgow now begins the operation of her own street cars.

Glasgow seeks the welfare of all its people, rich and poor alike. It is the only city in the world to own lodging-houses. Some may say that in acquiring these it made a virtue of necessity, but, be that as it may, virtue remains.

The municipal tenements consist of blocks of flats on either side of the Salt market. The buildings are four stories in height; the ground floors are occupied by shops. The houses are usually arranged so that on two floors there are three tenements, a tenement of two rooms being on each side of the staircase and a tenement of one room between them. There are also several flats of three rooms each. The tenement of one room is fourteen by thirteen feet. It is fitted with a bed closet (which is expected to answer the purpose of a second room), a scullery, a large press or cupboard, a commodious dresser and a kitchen range. Such an apartment rents for \$40 a year. The two-roomed flats have a lobby fitted with a press or closet. On one side of the lobby is the living room, which is completely furnished as a kitchen. A scullery adjoins. There is also a bed alcove in the room. On the other side of the lobby is the sitting room, to which is attached a bed closet. Such a flat rents for \$49.50 a year. The three-roomed flats rent for \$50 a year. Gas is supplied by the city at the unusual rate of six cents per 1,000 feet. There is a laundry at the top of the houses, and the use of the tenements is free of all taxes.

These tenements are constructed in the most substantial manner. The stairs are stone and the stairway walls are tiled or glazed brick, which are easily kept clean.

It has long been objected that these dwellings do not meet the necessities of the poorest class of laborers. The rents were too high for men who work in the streets or on the docks and at other kinds of unskilled labor. Glasgow had to consider whether it

was possible for the municipality to reach these men in any way. If it had been a question of letting rooms to single men the arrangement could have been made easily enough. But the difficulty was to devise homes for large families; and it usually happens that in this part of the world the poorer the man the larger is his family. Houses could be built, of course, but could the poorest class of laborers afford to pay a rent which would return to the municipality an interest of 2, 3 or 4 per cent on its investment? Could the municipality compete in that respect with the owners of rookeries where families live in single apartments? Much deliberation was given to the subject. It was found that the municipality could put up a block of substantial buildings to meet the wants of the class hitherto left untouched, but that it would not be practicable to provide anything more than what are called "one-roomed houses," that is to say, one room to a family.

To be sure the rooms could be divided by a partition reaching within two or three feet of the ceiling—the sleeping quarter being thus separated from the cooking quarter. It was finally decided that a block of single-room tenements should be constructed. A place was cleared at the rear of a block of Artizans' dwellings, and a plain building of three stories was erected, with four single-room tenements on each floor, two in the front and two behind. These were let at rents well within the means of unskilled laborers. The buildings were opened a few months ago, and they have been filled ever since. The experiment is financially successful, but in other respects there is little to be said for it. Of course the apartments are larger, lighter, healthier, better-built than any single-room tenements in the old rookeries. Nevertheless, the objections to the herding of a family in one room are not thereby removed. They are merely minimized, and in a very slight degree. It is by no means demonstrated that a municipality is justified in doing any-

thing to perpetrate the single room tenement for families.

The construction of Glasgow's municipal tenement-houses, whether of the better or poorer class, is admirable.

The stairways, being built entirely of masonry, are completely fireproof. The stairs themselves and the hall floors are of stone and the walls of the halls are faced with glazed tiles or glazed bricks, as the case may be, and are easily kept clean.

A very large amount of work yet remains to be done on the municipal estate which comes under the administration of the improvement fund. Old houses are still being torn down and crowded areas are being cleared away. Of course all this is very expensive business. But it is being gradually carried on so that the cost may not fall excessively on any single year. Besides, Glasgow, like every other city in the United Kingdom, is suffering from a depression of trade and this is not the time to tighten the screws of taxation.

An organization known as the Improvement Trust was instituted to let air, light and, if possible, a little sunshine into the dismal closes and courts of the city, where not fewer than 75,000 human beings live amid surroundings which had become moral and physical "plague spots," a danger and disgrace to civilization, and it has largely succeeded. The condition of the older city referred to comes down to us in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They could never be very wholesome, but would be tolerated with a modern Scotch population. But we have evidence that even then the dark places of the city were not free from the hygienic and moral evils begot of such conditions, which the persecutions and terrors of the magistracies and the church were, in the absence of the police and of street and stair-lighting, little able to suppress. When, therefore, the great railway works came to be constructed and other industries were situated in the west of Scotland, in Ireland, teeming with its own population, and in Glasgow with its teeming port, when no preparation had been made for it, the immigrants took possession of the older and denser parts of the town, and the authorities were left to their own devices to deal with the situation.

The building defects were owing to the straightened lines within which their frugal ancestors lived. So long as the city remained within the narrow compass, and the green fields were at no point distant, compactness of building was not serious; inconvenient unless epidemics of fires occurred. Originally built in village fashion the houses were on the street and the vegetable gardens in the rear. But the thrifty sires, in place of breaking new ground as families and populations grew up, built over their gardens and heights.

KITCHEN IN A FLAT OF TWO ROOMS IN MUNICIPAL DWELLING HOUSES.

ed these houses. Thus High street, Salt market, Gallowgate, Trongate, Gorbals, Calton and other gardens developed gradually into the "closes" and "vennels" which fell to be broken up under the improvement scheme of 1866. A bold and serious thing it was on the part of the authorities in 1865 to face the prospect of a bill that necessitated the purchase of all this densely crowded and heavily rented property, much of it, too, divided and subdivided by legal writs into flats and half flats. The improvement act was passed by both houses of parliament, and it gave the assessing powers during fifteen years—five years at six pence per pound and ten years at three pence per pound—and the tax was laid on occupiers exclusively, i.e., all persons living in houses or flats in Glasgow above a certain very small rental. Immediate progress of the property, and the town council resolved to impose the maximum rate of six pence per pound. Being entirely new tax, it was not on the evening of the November election of 1866, occasion was taken to arouse the citizens against the scheme and its principal author, Lord Provost John Blackie, Jr. Mr. Blackie was standing for re-election as a councillor with a view to presiding over the practical work of the scheme, and he was slightly outvoted at the poll, to the deep and abiding regret of the general community. The convictions of its authors in the urgency of the work of redefining the city from the reproach into which it had fallen and their straight-forward policy were cogently shown, first, in satisfying parliament that a sixpenny rate might be necessary, and second, in the town council determining that the maximum be levied in the first year.

In going to parliament the sum estimated as necessary to be raised by taxation was placed at \$500,000, and the tax was based on this calculation. But it must be kept in view that as time wore on more liberal ideas than those of 1866 were advocated, with the result that many more streets, wider thoroughfares and more efficient sewerage operations have been carried out than was contemplated in 1866, and at an additional cost in ground and works of probably \$200,000, and also that the number and the paying power of the ratepayers have greatly increased.

Ex-Bailie Archibald Dunlop was chairman of the committee from 1884, and he and his predecessors in the office have been supported at one time and another by the best men in the town council, who in the complex affairs of the municipal government have shown a high standard of public service. Bailie Dunlop recently retired from the council, leaving with the improvement tax at 1d per pound sterling, and with the prospect that this rate will suffice until the trust is wound up.

Only older citizens, familiar with the old city, can realize the vast improvements wrought by the improvement scheme in many ways. Even its supposed failures have been sanitariously beneficial. For example, ground in various quarters, cleared of its buildings, failed to sell, but the health of the district has been thereby immensely benefited. There has, indeed, been no property market for several years, because overcrowding and degradation of

trade, arresting the growth of population, had left many proprietors with a heavy handful of unlettable property.

The committee have had to submit to some temporary unpopularity because of this state of matters, but there is no scheme of the corporation which has excited or continues to excite more general interest, has its various points more crudely examined into by intelligent strangers in search of ideas and is more extensively imitated by other great centers of the city improvement scheme of Glasgow.

SAUL PIMMSOIL WOULD CUT HATRED OF ENGLAND OUT OF AMERICAN SCHOOL BOOKS.

Samuel Pimmsoil, who has won immortality already by giving to the world the name of "Pimmsoil," arrived in this country on Wednesday for the purpose of making a new project as ever he was improving the lot of the British sailor. He hopes to start a movement here which will at least tend to the betterment of the sailor's condition, and to the improvement of the sailor's condition, and to the improvement of the sailor's condition.

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TO FOSTER FRIENDLINESS

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Edmund Curtis, now known all over England as the "Boy Poet" of Silvertown, was found in a humble habitation in one of the most poverty-stricken districts of East London. The credit of having discovered this young genius rests with a weekly newspaper called London. He is 15 years of age. His father descended from a very respectable Irish family, and passed with some distinction through Trinity College, Dublin. By profession an architectural draughtsman, he made an unfortunate investment, and lost heavily. He was left a widower with three young children, and, quitting London, went to England, where he obtained employment at Bury, in Lancashire, but never regained the position he had lost. He seems to have sunk from a good position to the brink of absolute poverty. Silvertown, the district given to a district abounding in squalid and filthy streets and other evil-smelling industries. It is, however, in the squalid suburb of Silvertown that Edmund Curtis has been brought up. Such scant education as he had was obtained at the board school.

It is to the credit of the editor of London that he has endeavored to protect the lad from the well-meant but very harmful adulation of hysterical "admirers," who rushed to the office of the paper with "invitations" for the lad to read his verses in public. Happily, one gentleman, whose tact and ability are to be thoroughly relied upon, took the lad into his confidence, and with the ready consent of his father, took him away into the country, where he will breathe the pure, health-giving air, and should rid himself of the morbid sentimentality which runs through nearly all the lines which have been published. He will not be asked to write any more verses, and he will be encouraged as far as possible. He is apparently in good hands, and if the lad does not turn out a poet, he may at least become a man.

THE FACTORY BELL.

There comes a sound in the morning gray,
When a few faint gleams are heralds of day;
And it calls the bosoms by care oppressed,
Back from the peace-giving country of rest—
Calling them back to the workshops of rest—
To the benches long and the engines' beat,
Where the brow of the worker must sweat,
In the dew of his streaming, honest sweat.

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England's Boy Poet.

Marvelous Genius of a 15-Year Old Lad.

Discovered by a Newspaper in the London Slums.

Telling in a Factory—Specimens of His Marvelous Literary Powers.

Edmund Curtis, now known all over England as the "Boy Poet" of Silvertown, was found in a humble habitation in one of the most poverty-stricken districts of East London. The credit of having discovered this young genius rests with a weekly newspaper called London. He is 15 years of age. His father descended from a very respectable Irish family, and passed with some distinction through Trinity College, Dublin. By profession an architectural draughtsman, he made an unfortunate investment, and lost heavily. He was left a widower with three young children, and, quitting London, went to England, where he obtained employment at Bury, in Lancashire, but never regained the position he had lost. He seems to have sunk from a good position to the brink of absolute poverty. Silvertown, the district given to a district abounding in squalid and filthy streets and other evil-smelling industries. It is, however, in the squalid suburb of Silvertown that Edmund Curtis has been brought up. Such scant education as he had was obtained at the board school.

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Is the making of a pie. The making of a crisp crust depends largely upon the shortening. Use COTTOLINE, the new vegetable shortening, instead of lard, and sogginess will be an unknown element in your pastry. Cottoline should always be economically used—two-thirds as much Cottoline as you would ordinarily use of lard or butter, being ample to produce the most desirable results. The saving in a year represents a considerable item. There are many imitations of COTTOLINE; you should therefore be careful to get the genuine.

THE N. K. FAIRBANK COMPANY, Wellington and Ann Sts., MONTREAL.

Of my own misfortunes, and see That sorrow and trouble and wrong Underlies

Mirth and life's vanity. If any would blame me in seeing And judging Earth as I see her, I pray them forgive me as being Cast in a hard, poor sphere— A sphere wherein even bread Is bitterly fought for, and gained. But the sweating of brows, hard Not a word, nor a nod of the head, Strained;

Brings back these scenes o'er again? How shall I look over life as gay. When round me are toll and pain? Forgive me, and think not 'tis so premature. My grieving, o'er life so divine; But while I am treading the paths of the poor, Their feelings shall also be mine. Here is a bit of pure invention, for he had never ridden a bicycle when this was written.

In the coolness of an evening, When the day's hard work is done, And the sun across the heavens His dotted span has run; On the sweetest hour of twilight, Then to mount the mouthless steed, Down the lane of summer verdure, Like a specter gaunt to speed; Down the roads where daisies bloom, Loveliest red or daintiest white, Close their pearly petals gently As they seem to say good night; And the lowing of the cattle Comes from o'er the distant hill, And the lark above the pastures Its impassioned song doth trill, Julian Ralph, New York Morning Journal.

Architects.

McBRIDE & FARNCOMBE—ARCHITECTS AND SURVEYORS, 213 Dundas street, Dundas Block. H. C. McBRIDE, F. W. FARNCOMBE.

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Is the making of a pie. The making of a crisp crust depends largely upon the shortening. Use COTTOLINE, the new vegetable shortening, instead of lard, and sogginess will be an unknown element in your pastry. Cottoline should always be economically used—two-thirds as much Cottoline as you would ordinarily use of lard or butter, being ample to produce the most desirable results. The saving in a year represents a considerable item. There are many imitations of COTTOLINE; you should therefore be careful to get the genuine.

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