BIRMINGHAM.

The Best Governed City in the World.

A City Run by Business Men on Business Principles.

From an article in *Harper's Magazine* for June we take the following:—Attention has been called to the youth of Birmingham in its relation as the best-governed city. There are many warm admirers of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain who associate his name and enterprise with the city's new birth. It is only measurably fair to do this, but certainly he deserves great credit for many important reforms and accomplishments. His appearance in public life in Birmingham, some time before he was Mayor, was the occasion for the awakening of the best men of the town to an interest in the local government. This was in 1871; Mr. Chamberlain, then in business as a manufacturer of wood screws, entered public life unostentatiously, but was soon elected Mayor, and served three terms in that office. Under his bold and able administration the water-works and gas works were made public property, the Health Department was more than modernized, and the Improvement Scheme which will be explained further on, was instituted. But first as to the gas experiment. Birmingham is the home of the invention of gas-lighting, but the town did not adopt the system until 1817, after London had done so. In time two companies came to supply the city. It was in 1874 that Mayor Chamberlain moved the purchase of those corporations. The tax-payers voted for the scheme in the same year, and the necessary Parliamentary statute was enacted in July, 1875. In the same year the check of the then borough of Birmingham, drawn for £450,000 ($2,250,000), was paid to the Birmingham Compar for its property and rights; and in January 1876, the sum of £103,845 ($519,-225) was paid to the Staffordshire Company for its interests. The systemization of the new undertaking was more or less complicated and costly, but all that is necessary to be stated here is that, as a result, the price of gas has been materially reduced to the corporation of the city and its citizens, and the investment returns

AN ANNUAL PROFIT

of more than $150,000. The price of the commodity in 1875 was three shillings to three and a half shillings per thousand feet, but in 1884 it had been reduced to two shillings and one penny and two shillings and fivepence per thousand feet. Five per cent. discount is allowed for prompt payment. The officials claim to have shown by an exceptional illumination near the main public buildings that gas, used at its full strength, is capable of competing with the electric light. Their demonstration would not satisfy a resident of an electric-lighted Canadian city, however. It must be remembered that Birmingham has the natural pride of the birthplace of gas-lighting, and that the corporation is the owner of its gas plant, so that it is not an unbiassed judge of the comparative qualities of the two systems of lighting.

For more than thirty years the public [illegible] of the water supply of the city [illegible] and held in abeyance. In [illegible] Chamberlain moved the transfer [illegible] or the compulsory purchase, [illegible] water-works, then in private hands. [illegible] and council were convinced by [illegible] voted accordingly. Du[illegible] Mr. Chamberlain urged [illegible] would be a profit on the [illegible] be mine on [illegible] ction of [illegible] its [illegible] 1882 and [illegible] gallo. [illegible] made. [illegible] fied [illegible] tractor, who takes out whatever is of [illegible] The rest is melted in furnaces and [illegible] into a coarse material, partly vitreous [illegible] partly metal, which is used to fill hol[illegible] or, when mixed with Portland cement, [illegible] a good paving slab. The Drainage [illegible] charge has borrowing powers and [illegible] taxing) powers for the payment [illegible] and the payment of loans. For [illegible] the authori-

to the consumers. Up to 1884 the annual reduction in water rents had amounted to £25,034.

The Improvement Scheme undertaken by the city under Mr. Chamberlain and the Town Council of 1875 will long be pointed to as one of the most stupendous, courageous, and wise acts ever performed by a municipality. Taking advantage of an imperial statute called "the Artisans' Dwelling Act," giving large towns and cities the right to improve unhealthy areas, the Council improved several highways, and finally bought up a great tract of slums and narrow passages in the heart of the city, and there laid out

THAT NOW BEAUTIFUL AVENUE

called Corporation Street, which is one of the handsomest streets to be seen in any city in any part of the globe. The squalor and crowding had been fearful, and the death-rate outrageous; vice, crime, poverty and drunkenness flourished there and the saloon-keepers were the only persons who led endurable lives. A loan of £1,600,000 was obtained at three and a half per cent. for thirty years, the property was purchased, the great street, twenty two yards wide, was laid out, and the area was rebuilt on leases running seventy-five years. Supervision was maintained over the character, cost, and designs of the new buildings, with the result that in the principal street at least all are stately, substantial, and even elegant. Of course at the end of the leases they will become the property of the city. "This," said Mr. Chamberlain, "will make this the richest borough in the kingdom sixty or seventy years hence. It is the only occasion for which I wish to live beyond the ordinary term of human life, in order to see the result of this improvement, and hear the blessings which will then be showered upon the Council of 1875, which had the courage to inaugurate this scheme." But the stranger sees the result now, and if he will, he may read it in the sanitary reports which show that the death-rate is to-day less than one-half what it was before the renovation was made.

Again, under Mayor Chamberlain, in 1876, the drainage and sewage systems were overhauled. A union was formed with the towns close around Birmingham, under a board in which the city elects twelve out of twenty-two members. The united district comprises 47,275 acres, and an aggregate population of 605,594 souls. Here had been a more or less compact population

SERVED BY NATURE

with only a little river the Tame, and mainly putting up with old-fashioned methods and conditions. To-day what has been done is pointed to as the best solution of the sewage problem in England. The Drainage Board now manages a so-called farm of 1200 acres in the Tame Valley. The sewage is conveyed thither through an eight-foot conduit, and is passed through the land by an extensive system of filtration by gravity, after which the effluent reaches the Tame River near by in the condition of perfectly pure water. The sludge remaining after the disposal of the fluid is dug into the land. The cost of the farm and appurtenances was about £400,000, and, roughly speaking, it costs £54,218 a year to operate it. But the meat, milk, and vegetables grown on the farm and sold from it realize nearly £25,000. It is insisted that in time the system will yield enough to pay its cost.

In dealing with this problem the authorities separate the night-soil and ashes from the sewage.

THE NIGHT-SOIL

is controlled by what is called the pan system—metal pans, capacious enough for a week's usage, being periodically carted away in closed wagons, which also remove the ashes collected in a tub in each yard. The wagons are not offensive, and the depositing station presents a view of flowers and of shrubbery outside its enclosure. Here the night-soil is dried and sold as poudrette, or patent manure. There is a profit of a few pence on the ton in this branch of the work. The ashes are sorted by a contractor, who takes out whatever is of value. The rest is melted in furnaces and [illegible] into a coarse material, partly vitreous [illegible] partly metal, which is used to fill hol[illegible] or, when mixed with Portland cement, [illegible] a good paving slab. The Drainage [illegible] charge has borrowing powers and [illegible] taxing) powers for the payment [illegible] and the payment of loans. For [illegible] the authorities of the different localities in the union, according to the number of rate-payers or tenements.

The Sabbath Chime.

Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire.

Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.

Thy blessed unction from above
Is comfort, life, and fire of love.

Enable, with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight.

Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of thy grace.

Keep far our foes, give peace at home:
Where thou art guide, no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And thee of both to be but One.

That, through the ages all along,
This may be our unending song;

Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Brief Collect for the Day.

O Thou who dwellest in the sanctuary not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. Unveil the glories of Thy face to our waiting souls. May we have close and tender fellowship with Thee and with Thy Son in the holy mount. Make us to know the joy of those whom Thou causeth to approach unto Thyself.

May heaven come down our souls to greet
And glory crown the mercy seat.

Chemical Analysis shows Adams' Tutti Frutti Gum to be pure and healthful.

BRISTOL'S

Sarsaparilla.

The Great Purifier

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BLOOD AND HUMORS

Catarrh

IS a blood disease. Until the poison is expelled from the system, there can be no cure for this loathsome and dangerous malady. Therefore, the only effective treatment is a thorough course of Ayer's Sarsaparilla—the best of all blood purifiers. The sooner you begin the better; delay is dangerous.

"I was troubled with catarrh for over two years. I tried various remedies, and was treated by a number of physicians, but received no benefit until I began to take Ayer's Sarsaparilla. A few bottles of this medicine cured me of this troublesome complaint and completely restored my health."—Jesse M. Boggs, Holman's Mills, N. C.

"When Ayer's Sarsaparilla was recommended to me for catarrh, I was inclined to doubt its efficacy. Having tried so many remedies, with little benefit, I had no faith that anything would cure me. I became emaciated from loss of appetite and impaired digestion. I had nearly lost the sense of smell, and my system was badly deranged. I was about discouraged, when a friend urged me to try Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and referred me to persons whom it had cured of catarrh. After taking half a dozen bottles of this medicine, I am convinced that the only sure way of treating this obstinate disease is through the blood."—Charles H. Maloney, 113 River st., Lowell, Mass.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla,

PREPARED BY

Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

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