
Fifth Annual Report of the Council of the Statistical Society of London

Source: *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Apr., 1839), pp. 129-134

Published by: Wiley for the Royal Statistical Society

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2338019>

Accessed: 13-08-2021 06:29 UTC

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Royal Statistical Society, Wiley are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*

JOURNAL
OF THE
STATISTICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

APRIL, 1839.

*Fifth Annual Report of the Council of the Statistical Society of
London. Session 1838-39.*

THE Council appointed for the past year have the pleasure of laying before the Fellows of the Society the usual Report of proceedings since the last General Anniversary Meeting; and they would accompany it with an expression of gratification at being able to state that, the general feeling now manifested in favour of statistical studies throughout the kingdom has obviously verified the fact which, in their Second Annual Report, they ventured to anticipate—"that the fruits of this Society will become visible in a spirit of research awakened among its members, in the establishment of corresponding societies, and in the creation of a public as well as an individual interest in its proceedings." In evidence of this it may alone suffice to mention a widely extended and increased amount of correspondence with several recently formed provincial societies, as also with individuals engaged in various statistical researches at home and abroad, and a large additional accession to the number of the Society's members.

From these sources many valuable communications of statistical documents have been received; and several distinguished foreign members of the Society, as M. Quetelet, M. Guerry, Count Serristori, Herr Hoffman, Dr. Julius, and others, have promised to contribute the various results of their statistical studies.

In adverting to the principal inquiries which have occupied the attention of the Council during the past year, and which for the most part are the same as those of which the nature and objects were explained in the last Report, the operations of the Committees require to be first noticed, especially of that on Education, which has constantly been engaged in the investigation of the number, nature, and condition of the schools in several extensive districts of the metropolis.

Since the last Anniversary Meeting, two further Reports of this Committee have been published in the Society's Journal, exhibiting the condition and capabilities of schools in the parishes of St. John, St. Margaret, St. Anne, St. James, and St. George, in Westminster; and completing the inquiry in that extensive and important portion of the metropolis, of which the population, according to the last census, in 1831, was 201,842. The Committee has subsequently continued its operations throughout the principal parts of the borough of

VOL. II. NO. XII.

K

Finsbury, comprising the parishes, wholly or partially, of St. Luke, St. John, St. James Clerkenwell, St. Andrew, St. Peter, St. Sepulchre-without, St. Botolph, St. George, Bloomsbury, St. George the Martyr, St. Pancras, and Islington. All the schools in this extensive district, amounting to nearly 600, have been completely examined, and the classified results are in a forward state of preparation.

The sum expended in carrying on the inquiries of this Committee during the past year is under 95*l.*; confessedly a small amount compared with the satisfactory accomplishment of an object of such magnitude and interest as that of procuring a minute and correct account of the real state and means of education among the metropolitan population. For such information must be regarded as a near approximation to the absolute truth, and is therefore of the highest importance as supplying the evidence required for legislative proceedings, and furnishing a guide to all benevolent efforts for alleviating the evils of popular ignorance. It must then be gratifying to the Society to find that, the Committee's First Report received the attention of the Parliamentary Committee on Education, by which it was noticed with expressions of commendation.

In reviewing the progress of the Education Inquiry, the Council cannot omit to express their acknowledgment of the active and zealous services of the Rev. Mr. Edgell, by whose personal labour and liberal assistance the useful objects of the Committee have been greatly promoted.

The Committee on Vital Statistics continues to be engaged in collecting various data from which may be deduced the laws that govern the rate of human mortality. With regard to one of the earliest, and a very important object of its proceedings, namely, a collection of the experience of the numerous Assurance Societies established in the United Kingdom, the Council have the satisfaction of stating that, the circulation of the Committee's Forms among the several offices has had the effect of inducing the members of a Committee of Actuaries to renew the prosecution of a previously contemplated plan for collecting the desired information. In consequence of this proceeding, combined with the circumstance of many of the Assurance Societies having preferred to communicate their experience to the Committee of Actuaries, this part of the general inquiry contemplated by the Society's Committee has been in a great measure relinquished, and attention has since been directed to other points of the subject of Vital Statistics. The Committee of Actuaries possess peculiar facilities for the task they have undertaken, and they have given the strongest assurances of their having in view the same object as the Society's Committee, to which they have promised to communicate the information they collect.

The Committee has been more immediately successful in the applications which it has made to the principal public medical institutions in the kingdom, from some of which extensive and valuable returns have been promised. The medical officers of these establishments, especially of those in the country, have in general manifested a laudable readiness to furnish such information as could be obtained from their respective registers; but as the preparation of numerical returns of this nature requires much attention and labour, the collection of such documents, in

sufficient number to admit of general deductions, must of necessity occupy a considerable period of time.

In many institutions difficulties are frequently found to arise from deficiencies in the mode of registration hitherto followed. With regard to this essential point it is gratifying to the Council to state, that in several instances the forms of registry proposed by this and other Committees of the Society have been adopted in important public institutions—a fact which, as tending to produce a systematic completeness and uniformity of future results, is alone sufficient compensation for the labour of planning judicious forms of registration.

The Committee is at present engaged in considering the means of procuring from other sources a variety of information respecting the duration of human life, and the circumstances by which it is influenced. It has also drawn up, under the direction of the Council, some suggestions for the attainment of greater perfection in the mode of effecting the next census of the population of the kingdom in 1841.

The Medical Committee has prepared a very complete tabular form for the record of Coroners' Inquests, which has been transmitted by the Council to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with such a representation as they hope will lead to its adoption in the Bill for the regulation of the office of Coroner, which is about to be brought before Parliament.

Since the last Annual Meeting, the Committee on Strikes among the Working Classes has received some additional returns to its printed paper of queries, and several others have been promised. For these the Committee consider it desirable to wait, before they proceed to report upon the subject.

A Committee has been appointed to inquire into the condition of the working classes in the parishes of Westminster, and its operations have commenced by the employment of a paid agent, who is investigating the parish of St. Anne, Soho.

The Council have next to notice one of their most important transactions during the past year, namely, the commencement, on the 1st of May, of a periodical publication, entitled the "*Journal of the Statistical Society of London.*" The establishment of such a periodical, as furnishing a vehicle for the prompt and convenient circulation of documents deemed worthy of the Society's attention, was considered by the Council an advisable mode of accomplishing one of the principal ends proposed at the foundation of the Society; for, by adverting to the prospectus of its objects and plan of operation, it will be seen that the collection of new statistical materials is intended to form only one part of the Society's work; and that, to condense, arrange, and publish those already existing, but either unpublished or published only in a diffuse or expensive form, or in foreign languages, is declared to be a task of equal usefulness.

In the adoption of this measure, the Council were further encouraged by an offer on the part of Messrs. Knight and Co. to take upon themselves the risk of the publication for one year, upon the condition of the Society's engaging to take 500 copies of each number, at two-thirds of the sale price, that is, one-ninth less than the price to the

trade. By this arrangement the expense to the Society for the first year was limited to 300*l.*, which could not, by any contingent circumstances, be exceeded; and Messrs. Knight and Co. further engaged that, should the publication become remunerative, they would share with the Society any profit that in future might accrue from its sale. This offer was accepted by the Council, who appointed a Publication Committee to direct the selection of papers for the Journal, and to superintend its management.

That the end proposed by the Council has been in some measure attained, can hardly be doubted, as the Journal has been the means of extending a knowledge of the proceedings of the Society throughout this and foreign countries in a manner that otherwise could not have been effected. The Society has since been joined by a number of new members, which, compared with those previously elected during any similar period, is more than three to one. Communications made to provincial Statistical Societies have been contributed by several of those bodies, with the expression of a desire to adopt the Journal as the channel of their publications; while the use which has been made of its contents in Parliament and other public meetings, may be regarded as testifying the credit which it has generally obtained.

The Council would earnestly impress upon the Members of the Society at large, the necessity of their zealous co-operation in promoting the useful objects for which they are associated; and with regard to the means of procuring for the Society this important advantage, on which its ultimate success or failure is greatly dependent, they would reiterate the anxious recommendation expressed in their Third Report, that such information should be furnished as accrues from the daily and professional occupations of all members connected with public institutions, or the employment of large numbers of the working classes. The communication of information respecting the existence of statistical records and documents not generally known; and the transmission to the Society of all reports of public institutions, exhibiting numerical facts relating to the social interests of this and other countries, would be a service especially worthy of the Society's thanks.

The Council are of course always desirous to receive any judicious proposition of inquiries to be undertaken, or of expedients to be adopted for the more efficient promotion of the Society's prosperity and usefulness; and while they are deeply sensible of the high responsibility attached to them, they would state that, however well directed may be their endeavours, in order to render them most effectual, it is always not only desirable but necessary to have the assistance of the members at large. For this purpose they introduced, in the year 1837, a rule by which any number of Fellows might associate and use the facilities which the Society possesses, and the means it can exert for the prosecution of any useful inquiry. Only one committee however has been formed under this rule.

In proceeding with the usual topics comprised in the Annual Report, the Council have now to state that the Society's accounts have been examined by the auditors appointed for that purpose, in accordance with the Regulations. Their Report, with a balance-sheet of Receipts

and Expenditure, were presented and read at the ordinary Meeting in February, and they will again be read before the present Meeting.

It will be seen that the receipts have been more than usually large, and that the amount of outstanding arrears of subscriptions, as compared with that of the previous year, is less by 50 guineas.

The sum invested in stock, and which has not in any respect been altered since the Report of last year, is 867*l.*, which exceeds by 37*l.*, the amount of 40 compositions paid since the commencement of the Society.

The number of Members at present on the Society's books is 418, of whom 18 are Foreign Honorary Members, and 7 Foreign Corresponding Members.

The Council has transmitted the Society's diploma to each of the following distinguished individuals, who have been elected Foreign Honorary Members:—Professor Balbi, Colonel af Forsell, Professor Bache, and M. Moreau de Jonnés; and the class of Foreign Corresponding Members has been augmented by the appointment of William Adam, Esq., of Calcutta, and the Rev. H. Longueville Jones, of Paris.

In accordance with a Resolution of the General Committee of the British Association for the advancement of Science, that body was attended, at its last Meeting at Newcastle, by three Fellows of this Society, delegated by the Council for that purpose.

During the past year numerous presents of interesting books and papers have been received from various Members of the Society at home and abroad. Among the presents of books are a valuable set of 25 volumes of "The Farmer's Magazine," from Thomas Tooke, Esq.; 5 folio volumes of the "Population Returns," from Thomas Vardon, Esq.; "A Description of Würtemberg," in 7 volumes, from M. Mohl of Tübingen; and various volumes of official statistical documents relating to France and Belgium, from M. Quetelet, M. M. de Jonnés, Leonard Horner, Esq., &c.

The Council cannot omit to notice the continued activity of the Manchester Statistical Society; and they have also pleasure in adding that, the Statistical Society of Ulster, which at the date of their last Report had only commenced operations, has become distinguished for its energetic proceedings; and promises to accomplish much good in the development and diffusion of truth in the north of Ireland.

In concluding the present Report, the Council would state that, while all the leading nations of Europe and the United States of America are striving to establish the true principles of social science, by prosecuting statistical labours with a continually increasing conviction of the importance of collecting and publishing numerical facts affecting their social interests, they cannot but feel satisfied that a society, established in the metropolis of the British Empire for accomplishing the same great purposes, will always be amply supported by the generous services of many patriotic individuals, willing to devote a portion of their time and talents to its useful proceedings; and therefore they confidently anticipate, as they sincerely hope for, all the satisfactory success to this Society which can be produced by the cordiality, zeal, and intelligence of its Members.

Abstract of Receipts and Expenditure, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December, 1838.

<i>January 1, 1838.</i>		£.	s.	d.
Balance in the hands of the Treasurer and Secretaries	•	33	15	11½
Cash received for Arrears of Subscriptions for 1835	•	2	2	0
„ „ „	•	14	14	0
„ „ „	•	88	4	0
„ „ „	•	617	6	0
„ „ „	•	98	14	0
„ „ „	•	29	16	0
<i>31st December, 1838.</i>				
Cash paid for Rent (four quarters)	•	•	•	•
„ Salaries, Assistant Secretary, and Messenger, each four quarters; and a temporary Clerk, six months, ending in August	•	•	•	•
Per-Centage to Collector on Subscriptions for 1837	•	205	2	10
Expenses of Housekeeper and ordinary Meetings, including Payments and Gratuities to Housekeeper, Hall Porter, Servants, and Postmen	•	6	8	0
Printing Annual Report for 1837, Report of Education Committee, Proceedings previous to the Publication of the Journal, and Forms for Committees	•	62	15	6
Grants to the Committee on Education in the Metropolis	•	130	7	3
Stationery, including Paper for Lithographing & Folding Books, Papers, and Maps	•	75	0	0
Postages, Parcels, and Portage	•	24	13	7
Messrs. Knight and Co. for the „Journal,” two quarters, ending 1st October	•	11	15	9
Miscellaneous Expenses, including a Subscription returned	•	12	7	0½
Balance in the hands of the Treasurer	•	150	0	0
„ Secretaries	•	10	16	9
„	•	90	5	3
<hr/>				
		£884	11	11½
<i>Assets, December 31, 1838:—</i>				
Stock in Red. 3¼ per cent., £569. 17s., cost £567	0	0		
„ Cons. 3½ per cent., £328. 15s. 4d., cost 300	0	0	957	5 3
Cash Balance	•	•	•	•
<hr/>				
<i>ARREARS OF SUBSCRIPTION DUE TO THE SOCIETY:—</i>				
1 for 1834	•	•	•	•
5 „ 1835	•	•	•	•
13 „ 1836	•	•	•	•
29 „ 1837	•	•	•	•
46 „ 1838	•	•	•	•
<hr/>				
		£884	11	11½
<i>Due from the Society, December 31, 1838:—</i>				
To Collector for Per-Centage on Subscriptions for 1838		25	17	4
Messrs. Blackwood, for Statistical Account of Scotland		1	4	0
<hr/>				
		£27	1	4
Signed { EDWARD ROMILEY, JOHN C. W. LEVER, GEORGE WEIGHT,				<i>Auditors.</i>
<i>7th February, 1839.</i>				