

THE LONDON VESTRIES

What they are and What they do.

WITH MAP, TABLE OF VESTRIES,
AND A COMPLETE STATEMENT OF THE CHANGES
IN LONDON GOVERNMENT UNDER THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1894.

PUBLISHED BY

THE FABIAN SOCIETY.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

LONDON :

TO BE OBTAINED OF THE FABIAN SOCIETY, 276 STRAND, W.C.

NOVEMBER 1894.

Fabian Tract No. 82

THE LONDON VESTRIES

What they are and What they do.

WITH AN APPENDIX ON THE CHARGES
AND A COMPLETE STATEMENT OF THE CHARGES
IN LONDON UNDER THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1871.

Published by

THE FABIAN SOCIETY.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

LONDON:

To be obtained of the Fabian Society, 278 Strand, W.C.

November 1894.

THE LONDON VESTRIES:

WHAT THEY ARE AND WHAT THEY DO.

Why the Vestry Election is Important.

LONDON is often supposed to be governed, as far as municipal affairs are concerned, by the County Council. This is a mistake. The greater part of the municipal administration of London, if we measure it by the annual expenditure, is carried on, not by the County Council, but by the forty-three "District Councils," known as Vestries or District Boards of Works.* Every year the County Council spends nearly two million pounds. But the forty-three Vestries and District Boards spend annually over two-and-a-half million pounds of the ratepayers' money, without the ratepayers taking practically any trouble to see that the right people are elected to do the spending. If we care for a healthy city, clean and well-paved streets, good public libraries and baths and wash-houses, and the payment of Trade Union wages to all persons in London's employment, we must give as much attention to the election of the Vestry as we do to that of the County Council. Hitherto it has been almost impossible for the ordinary citizen, especially the ordinary workman, to take any real part in, or to exercise any effective control over, London's local administration. But the Local Government Act of 1894 (the Parish Councils Act) has altered the whole position, and it will now be as easy to fill the Vestries and Boards of Guardians with men of genuinely Progressive views, as it is the County Council.†

* The District Council or local governing body in the City is called "The Commissioners of Sewers," and that in Woolwich is called "The Local Board of Health." The map in the centre of this Tract shows the districts of these local municipal governing bodies.

† For the effect of the Act outside London, see Fabian Tract No. 53, "The Parish Councils Act; what it is, and how to work it." The Act itself can be obtained from P. S. King and Son, 12 King Street, Westminster, price 5d. post free. The Rules made by the Local Government Board for the London Vestry and Guardian Elections can be obtained at the same address.

How London is Governed.

The three main spheres of London Government are the Parish or Municipal District, the Poor Law Union, and the County.* We may therefore classify as follows the principal administrative bodies in the Metropolis :

Area.	Number of separate bodies.	Administrative Authorities.
The Parish or Municipal District.	43	29 Vestries exercising municipal powers. 12 District Boards of Works elected by the 47 smaller Vestries or areas. The Woolwich Local Board of Health. The Commissioners of Sewers for the City.
The Poor Law Union.	30	30 Boards of Guardians.
The County.	2	The County Council [and the unreformed City Corporation exercising within the ancient City certain county functions].
	1	The School Board, dealing with elementary education.
	1	The Technical Education Board, for intermediate education.
	1	The Metropolitan Asylums Board, managing the public hospitals and homes for the imbecile, but not the lunatic asylums.

These 125 separate boards (not counting other subordinate bodies) include altogether about 5,500 members at work in governing London. They are all unpaid, and most of them devote a large amount of time and thought to the public service. Between them they expend annually between ten and eleven millions sterling—more than the revenues of many a kingdom—of which four-fifths is raised by rates on occupiers, varying in 1892-3 (according to parishes) from 4s. to 7s. 5d. in the £. The average total payment for rates for all purposes throughout London is 5s. 6d. in the pound of rateable value, amounting to an average of fifteen pounds per house, or nine pounds per family of four-and-a-half persons, or per separate tenement. Out of this heavy taxation, which falls most oppressively on the working man and small shopkeeper, the Vestries control at least one-third. The Appendix shows the total expenditure of the London Vestries and District Boards (including Woolwich and the old City) in 1892-93, together with many other statistics and details of their work.

* The police force in the "Metropolitan Police District," comprising a radius of fifteen miles from Charing Cross, is at present managed by the Home Office, which thus becomes responsible also for the licensing of London's cabs and omnibuses, and their drivers and conductors. The City Corporation maintains a separate police force in the old City area.

What is a Vestry?

Contrary to the common impression, a London Vestry has now nothing to do with the Church.* It is merely the name given to the council elected by the inhabitants of a London parish to manage their local affairs. Most of the public work that would, in a borough like Croydon or West Ham, be done by the Town Council,† and in a populous suburb like Tottenham or Ealing by the Local Board (now called an Urban District Council)‡ is carried out in London by the Vestry.

A London Vestry has become practically a District Council in all but name.

Omitting, for the moment, Woolwich and the old City, London is divided for municipal purposes into 76 parishes or equivalent areas, each of which elects between 24 and 120 members, who, together with the rector or vicar, and the two churchwardens of the parish, constitute the Vestry. But there are two kinds of Vestry in London. In the twenty-nine larger parishes, such as Islington or Lambeth, the Vestry is itself the local municipal authority, or, as we should now say, the District Council. The other forty-seven areas combine to nominate twelve District Boards of Works, and in these areas (such as Wandsworth or the Strand) it is the District Board of Works which does the municipal work, and corresponds to the District Council. In these forty-seven areas the Vestry itself has very little to do§ except to nominate its proportion of members to the District Board of Works. But as these are nearly always themselves Vestrymen and have the spending of a great deal of money, the election of proper Vestrymen in the smaller parishes is scarcely less important than it is in the larger ones.

In the parish of Woolwich, the District Council is not called a Vestry, but a "Board of Health."|| It is now elected just like a Vestry, and exercises very nearly the same powers.

* The rector or vicar of the parish and the two churchwardens (appointed annually by the Vestry) remain members of the Vestry by virtue of their public offices, but the clergyman no longer takes the chair as a matter of right. In certain parishes the Vestry has (under local Acts of Parliament) still the duty of levying a Church rate, and the Marylebone Vestry has exceptional Church duties.

† See Fabian Tract No. 27, "Questions for Town Councillors."

‡ See Fabian Tract No. 59, "Questions for Candidates for Urban District Councils."

§ These smaller Vestries are, however, the authorities for the adoption of the Baths and Washhouses Act, and appoint a Board of Commissioners to carry it out. They can also hold a poll as to adopting the Free Libraries Act, and, if adopted, they appoint the Commissioners in this case also. The work of Burial Boards is also an adjunct of the smaller Vestries. They can also exercise any common law powers which a Vestry may possess. In many cases they appoint some or all of the trustees of the parochial charities. They can always hold meetings to discuss parish affairs, and they may do valuable service by making representations to the District Board, the Charity Commissioners, or other bodies, about sanitation, charities, or other matters of local interest. Some of the forty-seven smaller areas, such as the Liberty of Glasshouse Yard or the Precinct of the Savoy, have no Vestry, and elect their representatives by a ratepayers' meeting (henceforward open to all local residents).

|| The Woolwich Board of Health was formed under the Public Health Acts, before the present London Vestries were established. It derives its powers from these Acts; and the Metropolis Management Act of 1855, which governs the Vestries

In the old City the District Council is called "The Commissioners of Sewers," and it is not formed by direct election. The Common Council of the City (the old, unreformed Corporation which ought to be united with the County Council) nominates 92 members to act as "Commissioners of Sewers," and these perform, within the City area, practically the same kind of work as a Vestry does elsewhere.*

What a Vestry does.

The 43 "District Councils" of London, whether they are called Vestries or District Boards, are the local sanitary authorities. This means that the whole business of keeping London healthy falls primarily on them. They have to manage the paving, cleaning, lighting and watering of the streets. They arrange for the emptying of dustbins, the removal of all refuse, and the prevention of nuisances. They must provide and maintain the local drains. They are responsible for seeing that no man or woman lives in a house that is overcrowded or so unhealthy as to be unfit for habitation. They have power to insist that all workshopst shall be healthy, properly ventilated, not overcrowded, and provided with sufficient water-closets, separate for each sex. They are bound to take care that all bake-houses are kept in a proper sanitary state. They must see that no food or drink exposed for sale within the parish is so adulterated as to defraud the purchaser, or so as to be injurious to health. They can acquire and maintain gardens, playgrounds and open spaces. It is through them that the parish can get public baths and wash-houses, a free public library (by poll of the parish), a public mortuary and disinfecting station, and a cemetery where the dead can be buried with the least possible expense.†

In many parishes, moreover, the Vestry performs the duties of the Overseers, and becomes thus responsible for the valuation of all the land and houses within the parish, and for making up the register of Parliamentary and County Council electors.

To carry out all these public services efficiently, each Vestry or District Board requires a staff of clerks, doctors and sanitary inspectors; of street sweepers, paviors and dustmen; and many other officers and workmen of one kind and another. The duty of the Vestrymen consists in selecting and looking after this staff; in taking care that it is large enough to do all the work well in all the slums where the poor live as well as in the broad streets and squares; in

and District Boards, does not apply to it. The chief difference between the powers of the Woolwich Board of Health (as an Urban Sanitary Authority) and a London Vestry, is that the former can expend money (up to a penny rate) for Technical Education, under the Technical Instruction Acts, 1889 and 1891. The Woolwich Board accordingly devoted £525 to this purpose in 1894.

* On the relation of the City Corporation to the County Council on the one hand, and the Commissioners of Sewers on the other, see the Report of the Royal Commission on the Unification of London. C-7493 of 1894, price 1/3.

† See Fabian Tract No. 50, "Sweating: its Cause and Remedy."

‡ For an exact statement of the powers of a Vestry or District Board, the Metropolitan Management Act of 1855 should be consulted. Each of them is required by law to publish an annual report, which can be obtained at the local Vestry Hall, price 2d.

watching that every officer does his duty without fear or favor ; in seeing that the public money is wisely and economically expended without jobbery or waste ; and in constantly contriving how, by an intelligent use of the great powers given by the law, they can raise the Standard of Life of the most downtrodden section of the people whose affairs they have to manage.

For carrying out all this business the Vestry or District Board appoints committees of its members. This is generally done at the beginning of each year of office, when the hour of meeting should also be fixed. There are usually separate committees for Sanitation or Public Health, Finance, Assessment, Works or Highways, and Parliamentary business. Most of the important work of administration is done in the meetings of these Committees, and Progressive Vestrymen must take care to get themselves and those who agree with them appointed to these Committees, and then to attend their meetings not less regularly than those of the Council. Many Vestrymen have hitherto voted against Progressive measures in Committee (where reporters are not admitted), which they have not ventured to oppose in public. The time of meeting, if not settled by the Vestry itself, can be fixed by each Committee ; and it might always be in the evening. The Chairman of the Vestry or District Board, who is appointed at the same time as the Committees, will become (unless a woman) a Justice of the Peace during his year of office. But this honorary distinction does not, in London, carry any important powers or duties, except that of annually settling, in full Sessions, the grant of public-house licences.

The most important duty of the forty-seven smaller areas is the appointment of the Vestry's representatives on the District Board of Works. It is especially for the purpose of securing good men in this appointment that the Progressives fight these smaller Vestry elections. The appointment is made at the first meeting of the Vestry after its election, and the number to be chosen varies from one to sixty, according to the population and rateable value of the parish. It is customary to choose from among the Vestrymen, but this is not necessary, as any person qualified to be elected a Vestryman for the parish is eligible. In order to secure the appointment of good Progressives, the Progressive members of the Vestry ought to meet privately beforehand, and decide whom they will nominate and vote for.

The Neglect of the Past.

Previous to December, 1894, the Vestry elections have, in most parishes, been held in a very higger-mugger way. The general public got no proper notice that an important election was going on ; the arrangements for voting were extremely imperfect ; and a high rating qualification prevented working men from becoming candidates. The result was that only a few people even knew that any election was taking place, and still fewer took the trouble to vote. Often there was no contest at all, and the "old gang" remained in office year after year, spending the public money just as they liked. It is greatly to the credit of London Vestrymen that, under these circumstances,

the public work has been done even as well and as honestly as it has been. But the Vestrymen have usually cared more about keeping down the rates than that every poor man should have a healthy house to live in. Sometimes, too, the owners of the slums were themselves Vestrymen. And so it came about that in very few parishes has the Vestry employed enough sanitary inspectors, and even those appointed have seldom been encouraged or urged to make a real effort to render every man's dwelling perfectly healthy. The map which accompanies these pages shows, in vivid contrast, the black spots of overcrowded London where vigorous sanitary administration is most sorely needed. In hardly any parish have any special workshop inspectors been appointed,* and no systematic effort has been made to see that every man and woman had a healthy workshop to labor in. The bakehouses, too, have been very largely neglected. In many a narrow court, where the poorest people dwell, the dustbins are not emptied for months at a time, the water-closets are allowed to remain out of order, the drains smell, and all manner of filth pollutes the air. This is because the Vestrymen are not doing their duty. Many of the smaller streets are badly paved, dark, and often very dirty. When the snow comes, little or no attempt is made to sweep it away.* All this neglect by the Vestry may save money, but it means discomfort and misery and disease to the poor. A parish which elects a sleepy Vestry may find its money-rate go down, but its death-rate will certainly go up.

And whilst the London Vestries and District Boards have failed to make every street and house and workshop healthy, they have failed even more grievously in their other duties. London has 386,973 people dwelling in one-room homes, and 828,941 are declared by the Registrar-General to be living in the overcrowded state of two or more to a room. But only in 21 parishes are there any public baths or wash-houses, and not one of these is free. London has 1,250,000 people who are below the "Poverty Line."* But only 21 parishes have provided public libraries or reading rooms for the great class who can hope for no other access to knowledge or literature. In only 30 parishes are there public mortuaries, so that the dead may be at once removed from the crowded homes of the living. Even death is made an occasion for private profit, and a quite unnecessary toll on the poor, for only 25 parishes have public cemeteries, and in none of these is burial free.

* The Vestry of Kensington appointed, in 1892, two women as workshop inspectors. Bethnal Green, Lambeth, Mile End, Fulham, Newington, Paddington and Chelsea are particularly deficient in Sanitary Inspectors.

* Under the Public Health (London) Act, 1891, the duty of removing snow from the footpaths, formerly imposed on the individual householders, is now placed on the Vestry.

* See Mr. Charles Booth's *Life and Labor of London* (Macmillan; 1893), 4 vols., 3s. 6d. each, and maps, 5s.; and *The London Program*, by Sidney Webb (Sonnenschein, 1894); 1s. and 2s. 6d. The map and the statistical table in the present Tract supply exact particulars as to the area, population, overcrowding, number of houses, expenditure, hour of Vestry meeting, and number of electoral wards for each parish or district, together with information as to the provision of libraries, baths and wash-houses, cemeteries, coroners' courts, mortuaries, and sanitary inspectors.

THE PROGRESSIVE VESTRY PROGRAM.

Each parish has its own local needs, and ought to frame its own Vestry Program. But it may be useful to set down certain general heads for the consideration of Progressive Committees all over London.

We want

An Efficient District Council

1. To carry out to its fullest extent, without respect of persons, the law against insanitary property and nuisances.
2. To appoint enough properly qualified Sanitary Inspectors to make periodical house-to-house visits right through the parish, so as to ensure that *every* home is healthy. [It is calculated that one Sanitary Inspector for each 2,500 houses is the minimum for efficiency.]
3. To insist on the registration of all Tenement Houses ; upon the preparation of a complete list of all workshops of every kind, and of all bake-houses and slaughter-houses ; and upon a specially thorough inspection of all these places, as well as the visitation of all out-workers.
4. To take care that the emptying of dustbins and the removal of refuse is regular, frequent and strictly gratuitous, all over the parish, and especially in the poorer streets and courts ; and that it is done, not by a contractor, but by the Vestry's own staff.
5. To take immediate action to obtain
 - Public Baths and Wash-houses ;
 - Adequate public Lavatory accommodation for each sex ;
 - Public Libraries and Reading Rooms in each district ;
 - A Mortuary, Coroner's Court, and Disinfecting Chamber ;
 - A Public Cemetery ;
 for the use of the parish, if any of these are not provided.
6. To see that all the streets, courts and alleys in the parish (and not merely the better parts) are well-paved, frequently cleaned, properly watered, and (including all open or common stairways) thoroughly well lighted.
7. To do whatever is possible in the way of securing public gardens and open spaces in the parish ; the planting of trees along the broad streets ; the laying down of noiseless pavements ; the erection of seats and shelters ; and the provision of public drinking fountains.

We want also

A Democratic Board

1. To arrange for evening meetings, so as to afford facilities for the attendance of Vestrymen or ratepayers whose occupations leave them no spare time to attend in the day.

LONDON: showing Vestries and Boards of Works.



Reproduced from the Report of the Medical Officer of the London County Council, 1894.

During 1894 the Hackney District Board has been dissolved, and its two constituent Vestries, Hackney and Stoke Newington, are now Vestries exercising municipal powers. The Plumstead District Board has also been divided into the Plumstead Vestry, exercising municipal powers, and the Lee District Board.

2. To allow the presence of reporters and the public at all meetings of the Vestry or District Board.
3. To publish detailed reports of the sanitary condition of each part of the parish, and complete returns of all local charities.
4. To use its influence in favor of a systematic house-to-house enquiry each year for registration purposes, in order to ensure that no qualified person is omitted from the electoral registers.
5. To allow the use of the Town Hall, or any other suitable public building, at a charge to cover actual expenses only, for any public meeting convened by twenty residents; and to make its accommodation available for the meetings of local Trade Union, Temperance, Friendly Society or Political Organizations on the same terms.

But the Vestry must be also

A Good Employer.

1. All the employees of the Vestry should be put on the regular establishment; engaged by the week (or longer period); placed under the recognized Trade Union conditions as to the wages, hours, etc.; accorded proper holidays with pay; and in no case paid less than 24s. per week for an Eight Hours Day.
2. Direct employment by the Vestry should be the rule wherever practicable, in preference to contracting.
3. Where contracting cannot be avoided, in all contracts for supplies as well as for works, clauses should be inserted stipulating under adequate penalties, which shall be rigidly enforced:
 - (a) against sub-contracting or sweating;
 - (b) for payment of Trade Union rate of wages and observance of Trade Union hours and conditions, for each trade, as specified in a schedule to the contract;
 - (c) that, whenever possible, the working day shall be eight hours only;
 - (d) In all contracts for clothing or boots, that the whole work shall be done in the contractor's factory, and none given out;
4. No printing contract should be given to any firm not on the Fair List of the London Society of Compositors.
5. An earnest endeavor should be made, in co-operation with the Board of Guardians, to find, in all periods of depression and distress, temporary useful and honorable employment for those out of work, by the arrangement of the public works in such a way as to increase employment at these periods.

The Vestry, moreover, should do its best to support

Municipal and Financial Reform.

It should

1. Press for the early Unification of London by amalgamating the City Corporation and County Council, as recommended by the Royal Commission.
2. Resist any proposal for dismembering the County Council, or for any system of indirect election.
3. Support the municipalization of the Water Supply, Tramways, and Gasworks, and oppose any proposal to allow the supply of electric light to fall into private hands.
4. Promote the relief of the ratepayer by the direct Taxation of Ground Values in the hands of individuals, and by a Municipal Death Duty.
5. Apply to the Local Government Board to confer at once on the London Vestries all the powers of Parish Councils, including the appointment of overseers, the management of free libraries, baths and washhouses, and cemeteries, the provision of allotments, and further control over parochial charities.

How the Vestry is now Elected.

Henceforth it will be the Londoner's own fault if he does not get a healthy city. The Parish Councils Act of 1894 has swept away the old Vestry, and from December, 1894, onward, the people will be free to choose their District Council in a Democratic way.

Dates of Elections.

On December 15th, 1894, a completely new Vestry is to be elected, all the old members retiring. The first election after that date will be in March, 1896, and thereafter there will be one every March for a third of the total number of the Vestrymen. Each Vestryman will be elected for a term of three years, one third retiring annually. The Vestrymen who received the fewest votes at the election in 1894 will retire in 1896, and those who received the next fewest, in 1897.

Division of Parishes.

Most London parishes are divided into from two to eight wards, each of which has to elect from one to forty Vestrymen. The County Council can alter the division into wards, and the number of Vestrymen, on an application either from the Vestry itself or on one from 500 rated householders.

Who may be Candidates.

Any person registered as an elector in the parish (whether for Parliamentary or County Council purposes), and also any person, whether registered or not, who has resided anywhere in the parish for twelve months prior to the election, may be a candidate for any

ward in the parish, whether he resides in or is registered for that particular ward or not. Women, whether married or single, are eligible under the same conditions as men. There is no rating or property qualification. No alien is eligible until he is naturalized.

Who can Vote?

Only those persons can vote whose names are registered in the printed voting register in force for the year. This is the well-known Parliamentary and County Council register, which is made up annually in July. Thus, all Parliamentary or County Council electors (including lodgers and freeholders) can vote for the Vestry in the ward in which their qualifying address is. Married women householders or tenement-occupiers, who would—it is contended—not be entitled to be registered as County Council electors, can (by claiming before 15th July in any year) get put on this register specially for Vestry and Guardian elections only.

Election Procedure.

Due notice is given of the dates for nomination (usually in April) and polling (usually in May).*

Each candidate must be nominated on a separate form (to be obtained from the Vestry Clerk) by two registered electors of the ward for which he stands. Two electors may nominate the whole number of candidates required in any ward, but not more than that number. This form must be delivered to the returning officer (usually the Vestry Clerk). If there is a poll, the returning officer will appoint the polling stations and make the arrangements for receiving the ballot papers in much the same manner as for a Parliamentary or County Council election. All these official expenses of the election are paid out of the rates, and no charge for them is made on the candidate. The Ballot Act and the Municipal Corrupt Practices Act now apply to Vestry and Guardian elections.

How to Organize a Vestry Election.

Even if every elector took the trouble to vote, it would still be necessary for anyone who wanted a good Vestry to organize the fight. By himself the individual elector is helpless, and unless some stir is made in each parish, very few people will go to the poll, and the "old gang" will get in again and again.

The first thing to be done is to form a Committee to manage the election. It is generally best for some Club or Trade Union or other local organization, or some well-known elector, to send out a circular to all the Progressive bodies in the parish, inviting them to appoint delegates to form such a Committee. It is usually desirable to include any Socialist Societies, the Independent Labor Party, the Working Men's Clubs, the local branches of Trade Unions, the Temperance Societies, the Industrial Co-operative Societies, the Liberal and Radical Associations, any local associations of women, the local

* At the first election in 1894, the last day for receiving nominations is Tuesday, 4th December, at 2 p.m., and the date fixed for the polling is 15th December.

branch of the London Reform Union, and any other organizations in the parish, whatever their differences on other points, that are at all likely to be willing to work together for a Progressive Municipal Program.*

When a representative Joint Committee has been got together, the next step is to find suitable candidates to run as Progressives. "Questions for London Vestrymen" should be sent to each of the present Vestrymen in order to discover which of them will adopt a Progressive Program.† In most parishes there are some members of the Vestry who have done their best to make it an efficient body, often in face of much odium and opposition. Their administrative experience no less than their past service makes it desirable that they should be again chosen. But as each ward has to elect from one to forty members (making from 24 to 120 for the whole parish), probably a great many new candidates will be required. As the Vestry can and ought to meet in the evening,‡ and as not more than five or six attendances a month are needed, working men and other busy people need not refuse to stand. Every local Trade Union branch (especially in the building trades) ought to supply at least one candidate, preferably the President or Secretary. One or more women should certainly be selected. No owner of cottage or slum property should ever be selected as a Progressive candidate.

As each elector can vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies, and can give no more than one vote to each candidate, there is no advantage in running fewer Progressive candidates than there are vacancies. A "full ticket" for each ward should therefore be selected, if enough suitable candidates can be found. But if not, then a "full ticket" should be run in one or two of the wards in which the Progressives are strongest, even if it has to be made up of candidates residing in other wards of the same parish. At least one or two candidates, however, should be run for each of the other less Progressive wards, in order to make the election a reality, and to educate the electors. The same candidate may stand for more than one ward of his parish (or even for all the wards), and it may often be advisable for the Joint Committee to invite popular and well-known local Progressives to adopt this course.

When the Progressive candidates are chosen, they should prepare and issue a joint election address, incorporating as much as possible of the Progressive Municipal Program, with the adaptations and additions required by the local circumstances of the parish. If all the candidates for all the wards can agree on a single joint address, the expense of separate printing will be saved. In that case, arrangements should be made to strike off separate copies for

* The Secretary of the Fabian Society, 276 Strand, or the Secretary of the London Reform Union, 3 Arundel Street, Strand, will gladly help, if desired, in supplying the addresses of local bodies, and specimen programs, &c. Fabian Tract No. 21, "Questions for London Vestrymen" (revised in 1894) should be used.

† It is advisable to enclose a stamped and directed envelope for a reply.

‡ 28 Vestries and District Boards already meet at or after 6 p.m., including Hampstead and Stoke Newington (7.30), Woolwich, Battersea, Fulham, &c. (7 p.m.)

each ward, inserting the names of the ward candidates. At least as many copies of the address should be printed as there are electors.

As the election for each ward must be separately organized, it will probably be convenient for the Joint Committee to appoint a sub-committee for each ward, to manage the ward contest. The first step will be to deliver by hand the election address of the ward candidates to every elector in the ward. For this and other services there should be got together a sufficient number of zealous workers. Then as much canvassing and distribution of literature should be done as time and staff will permit. A vigorous attempt should be made to call on every elector, at any rate in the working-class districts, so as to impress him with the new importance of these elections. Public meetings, indoor* or outdoor, will be useful, even if small. Above all, a polling card, similar to those used in other elections, and containing the exact address of the polling station for the ward, the names of the Progressive candidates, and precise instructions how to mark the ballot paper, should be delivered to every elector one or two days before the polling day. *This is very important, and should on no account be neglected.* The ballot paper will contain from ten to as many as a hundred names, arranged in alphabetical order, without any indication of the candidates' party or opinions. Even when he has to choose one member of Parliament or two County Councillors, the ordinary elector often finds it difficult to pick out on the ballot paper the candidate he wishes to vote for. Anyone who has ever actually counted ballot papers knows what a large number are always incorrectly filled up. With twenty or forty names to choose from, many electors will be utterly at sea unless they have a very plain polling card in their hands, from which to copy their X on to the ballot paper.

But the issue of the contest will depend, in the main, upon the extent and organization of the work done on the polling day itself. It is very desirable that one man in each ward, or in each parish, should be chosen as Election Agent, and should be placed in charge of all the arrangements. He should be provided, before the polling day, with lists of the presumably Progressive electors, entered six or eight at a time, on separate cards. As large as possible a band of volunteer workers should be obtained, and instructed by post-card where to go on polling day. Each one as he arrives should be told off to call upon particular electors, and urge them to poll. If possible, someone (relieved every hour) should be posted outside each polling station, charged to present each elector as he enters with a polling card.

Throughout the contest it is very important to observe the very strict law, the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act,† which has not before been applicable to Vestry Elections. Any

* But not in any club, tavern, coffee room or other place where refreshments are sold.

† The Act (47 and 48 Vict., cap. 70) should be obtained by every local Secretary. An excellent leaflet, summarizing the law relating to these elections, can be obtained from the London Reform Union, 3 Arundel Street, Strand, W.C.

infringement of this Act may involve the candidate, or any person acting in his interest, in fine or imprisonment, or in the invalidation of the election. The chief points to be observed are the following :

1. No committee or public meeting on behalf of any candidate may be held in any part of the premises of a club, public-house, coffee-tavern, or other place where refreshments (even non-alcoholic) are at any time sold. It is not sufficient to lock up the bar, or shut off the refreshment room while the meeting is going on.
2. No cab or other vehicle may be *hired* to convey voters to the poll. But the owner of any carriage, cart, or other conveyance, not being a vehicle licensed for hire, may *lend* it free for this purpose.
3. No favors, banners, colors, or flags may be paid for.
4. Not more than two persons may be employed on payment by any candidate in any ward election, unless the ward has over 2,000 electors.

The total expenditure on the election, which should be almost entirely on printing and meetings—the clerical work being done by volunteers—ought not usually to exceed £1 (or at most £2) per candidate, or less if a large number are run. This amount should be collected before the Election from local Progressives, the Trade Unions, or other societies nominating candidates, and the candidates themselves.

The Poor Law Guardians.

The Local Government Act of 1894 also makes important changes in London, as elsewhere, in connection with the Boards of Poor Law Guardians. The qualification for electors and candidates will, henceforth, be the same as for the London Vestries, except that registration or residence anywhere within a Union will qualify a candidate to be elected for any ward of any parish in that Union. The thirty Poor Law Unions do not always correspond with the Vestry or District Board districts, but (with one exception) the ward, or actual electoral area, is the same for both elections. The Guardians may, by petitioning the County Council, obtain the advantage of simultaneous retirement and election every three years. Progressives should insist on this ; otherwise (except in St. George's, Bloomsbury, and St. Giles'-in-the-Fields and Kensington) the Guardians will retire annually by thirds, like the Vestrymen. The number of Guardians to be elected by each electoral area varies from one to six, making a total of from eighteen to thirty for each Union. The Guardian Elections should be contested in the same manner as is suggested for the Vestry.*

* At the election in 1894, the last day for nominating Guardians is 4th December, at 2 p.m. The day of polling will be 17th December, and (unlike any other election) the poll will be open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. As it follows (on this occasion only) so closely on the Vestry Election, a polling card containing the names of the Progressive candidates should be prepared in conjunction with that for the Vestry, the two being delivered together.

APPENDIX.—Table giving Statistics and Particulars of the work of the 43 Local Municipal Authorities in London for the year 1892-3.

Municipal Area. <i>[The figure in brackets indicates the number of separate areas constituting the District Board of Works.]</i>	Number of Elected Members.	Number of Electoral Wards.	Hour of Meeting.	Area [Statute Acres], 1891.	Population, 1891.	Rateable Value, 1893.
Battersea	120	4	7	2,169	150,558	780,615
Bermondsey	120	4	6	627	84,682	430,523
Bethnal Green	57	4	6	755	129,132	425,743
Camberwell	120	6	6.30	4,450	235,344	1,040,778
Chelsea	60	4	5	794	96,253	712,624
City	92	19	1	654	38,457	4,175,614
Clerkenwell	72	5	6.30	380	66,216	367,007
Fulham	72	3	7	1,701	91,639	471,168
Greenwich [3]	99	9	7	3,425	165,413	841,956
Hackney	120	8	7	3,299	198,606	975,448
Hammersmith	72	3	6.30	2,286	97,239	545,818
Hampstead	72	4	7.30	2,248	68,416	710,379
Holborn [4]	49	4	6	168	34,035	367,519
Islington	120	8	7	3,109	319,143	1,688,177
Kensington	120	3	7	2,188	166,303	2,036,292
Lambeth	120	8	6.30	3,941	275,203	1,554,123
Lee [4]	33	7	7	7,006	36,103	275,476
Lewisham [2]	27	4	4.30	6,543	92,647	646,190
Limehouse [4]	39	4	3	465	57,376	297,121
Mile End	90	5	7	677	107,592	377,956
Newington, Surrey	72	4	7	631	115,804	474,805
Paddington	72	4	9.30	1,256	117,846	1,328,560
Plumstead	96	8	7	3,388	52,436	182,143
Poplar [3]	60	7	6	2,333	166,748	732,387
Rotherhithe	24	1	6.30	754	39,255	223,548
St. George, Hanover Sq.	120	7	11	1,117	78,364	1,848,823
St. George-in-the-East	36	2	6	244	45,795	192,533
St. George, Southwark	43	3	6	284	59,712	278,862
St. Giles [2]	48	2	10.30	244	39,782	418,902
St. James, Westminster	48	4	11	163	24,995	745,090
St. Luke	60	5	3	237	42,440	323,790
SS. Margaret and John, Westminster	96	6	4	813	55,539	778,191
St. Martin-in-the-Fields	36	3	7	236	14,616	524,180
St. Marylebone	120	8	11	1,506	142,404	1,522,656
St. Olave [3]	28	3	11	125	12,723	208,005
St. Pancras	120	8	3	2,672	234,379	1,592,227
St. Saviour [2]	39	2	4	204	27,177	344,329
Shoreditch	120	8	6	648	124,009	685,269
Stoke Newington	60	5	7.30	638	30,936	194,196
Strand [6]	49	6	6.30	166	12,805	411,602
Wandsworth [5]	63	8	4	9,235	156,944	1,092,730
Whitechapel [9]	58	11	6	357	74,420	409,325
Woolwich	18	6	7	1,126	40,848	221,894
				75,362	4,220,339	33,454,579

Table giving Statistics and Particulars of the work of the 43 Local Municipal Authorities in London for the Year 1892-3.

Municipal Area.	Expenditure, 1892-3.	Public Library.	Baths & Washhouses.	Mortuary.	Coroner's Court.	Cemetery.	Number of Inhabited Houses.	Number of Sanitary Inspectors employed.	Number of Houses to each Sanitary Inspector.
[The figure in brackets indicates the number of separate areas constituting the District Board of Works.]	£								
Battersea	62,424	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	23,000	8	2,875
Bermondsey	48,166	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	11,249	4	2,812
Bethnal Green... ..	35,488	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	17,109	3	5,703
Camberwell	89,969	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	33,849	15	2,257
Chelsea... ..	53,376	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	12,214	3	4,071
City	286,008	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	5,750	7	821
Clerkenwell	33,236	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	7,363	2	3,681
Fulham	59,447	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	14,906	3	4,969
Greenwich [3]	66,985	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	24,886	8	3,111
Hackney	86,316	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	28,422	9	3,158
Hammersmith	54,340	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	14,300	5	2,860
Hampstead	67,095	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	10,028	4	2,567
Holborn [4]	22,775	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	3,867	2	1,933
Islington	116,957	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	37,875	14	2,705
Kensington	132,403	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	23,000	6	3,833
Lambeth	128,773	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	38,556	7	5,508
Lee [4]	40,495	No	No	No	No	Yes	7,111	3	2,370
Lewisham [2]	55,333	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	16,463	6	2,745
Limehouse [4]	24,528	No	No	No	No	No	7,759	3	2,586
Mile End	37,763	No	No	No	No	No	15,300	3	5,100
Newington, Surrey	49,613	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	13,392	3	4,464
Paddington	91,366	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15,543	3	5,181
Plumstead	37,111	No	No	No	No	Yes	8,629	4	2,157
Poplar [3]	57,226	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	21,978	7	3,138
Rotherhithe	17,396	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	5,226	2	2,413
St. George, Hanover Sq.	88,040	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	11,215	3	3,735
St. George-in-the-East..	16,946	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	5,451	3	1,817
St. George, Southwark.	27,249	No	No	Yes	No	No	7,567	4	1,892
St. Giles [2]	42,899	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4,068	5	814
St. James, Westminster.	26,654	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	2,641	2	1,320
St. Luke	31,537	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	3,950	2	1,975
SS. Margaret and John, Westminster	59,560	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5,608	3	1,869
St. Martin-in-the-Fields	32,025	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	1,650	1	1,650
St. Marylebone	98,984	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15,386	6	2,564
St. Olave [3]	12,070	No	No	No	No	No	2,083	1	2,083
St. Pancras	152,502	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	28,531	8	3,566
St. Saviour [2]	20,177	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	3,013	2	1,506
Shoreditch	53,075	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	13,932	5	2,536
Stoke Newington	*	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	4,767	4	1,192
Strand [6]	41,625	No	No	Yes	No	No	2,148	4	537
Wandsworth [5]	101,895	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	25,398	14	1,814
Whitechapel [9]	44,970	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	9,058	4	2,264
Woolwich	31,000	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	5,527	3	1,842
	2,635,747								
	Yes ...	22	21	30	19	26	569,773	208	2739.3
	No ...	21	22	13	24	17			

* Included in Hackney.

FABIAN SOCIETY.—The Fabian Society consists of Socialists. A statement of its Rules; particulars of the conditions upon which members will lecture in London or the country; and the following publications can be obtained from the Secretary, at the Fabian Office, 276 Strand, London, W.C.

FABIAN ESSAYS IN SOCIALISM. (35th Thousand.)
Library Edition, 4/6 (*postage, 4½d.*). Cheap Edition, Paper cover, 1/-; plain cloth, 2/-, post free from the Secretary.

FABIAN TRACTS and LEAFLETS.
Tracts, each 16 to 32 pp., price 1d., or 9d. per doz., unless otherwise stated.
Leaflets, 4 pp. each, price 1d. for six copies, 1s. per 100, or 8/6 per 1000.
The Set of 66, post free 2/3. Bound in Buckram, post free for 3/9.
Boxes for set, 1s., post free 1s. 3d.

I.—On General Socialism in its various aspects.

TRACTS.—79. A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich, by JOHN WOOLMAN. 78. Socialism and the Teaching of Christ. By Dr. JOHN CLIFFORD. 42. Christian Socialism. By Rev. S. D. HEADLAM. 75. Labor in the Longest Reign. By SIDNEY WEBB. 72. The Moral Aspects of Socialism. By SIDNEY BALL. 69. The Difficulties of Individualism. By SIDNEY WEBB. 51. Socialism: True and False. By SIDNEY WEBB. 45. The Impossibilities of Anarchism. By BERNARD SHAW (price 2d.). 15. English Progress towards Social Democracy. By S. WEBB. 7. Capital and Land. A survey of the distribution of property among the classes in England (5th edn. revised 1896.) 5. Facts for Socialists. A similar survey of the distribution of income and the condition of the people. (7th edn. revised 1895.)

LEAFLETS.—13. What Socialism Is. 1. Why are the Many Poor?

II.—On Application of Socialism to Particular Problems.

TRACTS.—80. Shop-life and its Reform. 74. The State & its Functions in New Zealand. 73. Case for State Pensions in Old Age. By GEO. TURNER. 67. Women and the Factory Acts. By MRS. SIDNEY WEBB. 50. Sweating: its Cause and Remedy. 48. Eight Hours by Law. 23. The Case for an Eight Hours Bill. 47. The Unemployed. By JOHN BURNS, M.P. 39. A Democratic Budget.

LEAFLET.—19. What the Farm Laborer Wants (Revised 1894).

III.—On Local Government Powers: How to use them.

TRACTS.—82. Workmen's Compensation Act: what it means and how to make use of it. 77. Municipalization of Tramways. 76. Houses for the People. 62. Parish and District Councils. 61. The London County Council. 60. The London Vestries. 55. The Workers' School Board Program. 52. State Education at Home and Abroad. By J. W. MARTIN. 54. The Humanizing of the Poor Law. By J. F. OAKESHOTT.—**LEAFLETS** L 81. Municipal Water. 68. The Tenant's Sanitary Catechism. 71. Same for London. 63. Parish Council Cottages and how to get them. 53. Allotments and how to get them.

FABIAN MUNICIPAL PROGRAM (Nos. 30 to 37).

1. The Unearned Increment. 2. London's Heritage in the City Guilds. 3. Municipalization of the Gas Supply. 4. Municipal Tramways. 5. London's Water Tribute. 6. Municipalization of the London Docks. 7. The Scandal of London's Markets. 8. A Labor Policy for Public Authorities. The 8 in a red cover for 1d. (9d. per doz.); separately 1/- per 100.

IV.—On Books.

29. What to Read. A List of Books for Social Reformers. Contains the best books and blue-books relating to Economics, Socialism, Labor Movements, Poverty, etc. 3rd edn.; revised 1896. Stiff cover, 6d. each; or 4/6 per doz.

V.—On Fabian Policy.

70. Report on Fabian Policy and Resolutions presented to the Internat. Socialist Congress. 41. The Fabian Society. By BERNARD SHAW.

VI.—Question Leaflets, containing Questions for Candidates for the following bodies:—No. 20, Poor Law Guardians. No. 21, London Vestries. No. 24, Parliament. No. 25, School Boards. No. 26, London County Council. No. 27, Town Councils. No. 28, County Councils, Rural. No. 56, Parish Councils. No. 57, Rural District Councils. No. 59, Urban District Councils.

Labor in the Longest Reign. By SIDNEY WEBB. Special Library Edition, (Of all booksellers, 1s.; or post free from Fabian Society, 1s.)

BOOK BOXES lent to Societies, Clubs, Trade Unions, for 6s. a year, or 2/6 a quarter