

How British Cities Manage Public Utilities

Manchester's Gas Works Alone Have Paid Into the City Treasury \$13,000,000 Profits—Other Object Lessons

By FREDERICK UPHAM ADAMS

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IX.

MANCHESTER has owned its gas works ever since 1807, which was not long after this present necessity was discovered. Since that time the profits accruing and paid into the city treasury have amounted to the enormous total of \$12,800,000. The plant as it stands today constitutes an asset having a market value of more than \$13,000,000. Gas is furnished not only to citizens of Manchester, but to 30,000 customers outside the corporate limits. The rate charged is 60 cents a thousand cubic feet, and the net profit for the last fiscal year was \$1,332,925. Of this sum \$488,500 was paid into the city treasury in the form of taxes and a direct contribution, and the balance was devoted to the sinking fund or set aside in the contingent fund. The profits have become so large that the city has decided to discontinue the charges made for the use of heaters and ranges and give them to customers rent free.

For motor power a reduced rate of 48 cents a thousand is charged, and gas is used for this purpose in the running of 1,520 engines. Employed in the Manchester gas department is an army of 2,200 men, and their wages have been steadily increased in recent years. After an experiment lasting nearly a century it must be conceded that the public ownership of gas production in Manchester shows all the earmarks of success.

Manchester supplies electric light and power not only to its citizens, but also to neighboring towns and villages. The city embarked on this venture in 1893 on what was then considered a large scale, making an investment considerably in excess of \$600,000. The first year of operation showed a loss of about \$1,000, but the following year found a profit to its credit amounting to \$28,000. The city was then charging 5.68 pence a unit for the current generated, but has gradually reduced this to 2.68. In the meantime its plant has been extended until it represents an expenditure of \$8,500,000. The gross profits last year were \$420,000, and after meeting interest, sinking fund and other fixed charges there remained \$41,000, which was placed to the credit of the reserve.

The enterprise is not yet on a permanent basis for the reason that it is annually expending vast amounts for improvements and extensions, but even during this period it has managed to reduce its debt, increase its surplus and pay \$260,000 toward the relief of rates.

It should be kept in mind that none of these enterprises is promoted or in any way sustained by money raised from taxation. The council committee in charge of them borrows the required money in the open market and goes ahead with extensions and improvements utterly independent of the city treasury. I am not aware of what would be the situation in the event of a failure of one of these enterprises, but presume that the city would assume responsibility for the payment of the bonds and liabilities. No such contingency has ever arisen, so far as I am informed.

It was my privilege to examine the official accounts and statements of the reproductive undertakings in the leading cities of Great Britain, and they unquestionably show without an exception that every bonded obligation has been met, that a proper amount has been set aside for sinking funds, that in a large majority of instances liberal allowances have been made for depreciation and that in every city visited or of which I have reports the tax rate has been reduced rather than raised as a result of participation in public enterprises designed to yield profits.

There is small reason for a potter's field in Manchester. The city maintains and manages at cost three large and beautiful cemeteries, having a total area of 220 acres. The charges for interment vary according to the size of the plot and location and range from \$1.25 for a child under one month old to \$50 for selected private graves. These prices include all fees, including, if desired, the services of a clergyman. The city also furnishes at reasonable prices headstones and monuments. For a charge of \$1.25 annually the graves are kept neatly in turf, and for a slight additional charge flowers are planted and cared for. By the payment of \$25 a grave may be thus kept in perpetuity.

The importance of this institution will be realized when it is stated that the number of interments last year exceeded 8,000. There are private cemeteries in Manchester with more pretentious vaults, tombs and monuments, but none is kept in better order or has more ideal natural surroundings. The rates are changed from time to time so as to make these resting places of the dead self-sustaining.

Manchester has expended nearly \$1,000,000 on its baths and washhouses.

These are in charge of J. Derbyside, and his management of the complicated system is excellent. He took a justifiable pride in escorting me through the establishment on Osborne street. While there 500 boys from a neighboring training school came trooping in, and it was a lively sight to watch them disport in the great swimming pool. The water is automatically kept at the required temperature, and in all of its plumbing, fittings and conveniences the place compares favorably with those in the athletic clubs of our larger cities.

"You can hardly realize what this means to the people who live in this vicinity," said Mr. Derbyside, his fine face lightening as he gazed at the happy throng of youngsters. "There are thousands of poor persons in Manchester who have not a utensil large enough in which to hold water sufficient to properly wash one's face. Large families are packed into two small rooms, and there can be no privacy. For the benefit of such as these we have set aside certain days when they can have the use of the baths for the nominal charge of a penny. Thousands of them are taking advantage of this opportunity, and as a result the death rate is decreasing, and so is the percentage of crime. It was the same way with the washhouses. When we first started them the poor women did not know what it was to have clean clothing. It was a common thing to find the water flowing from the extractor very dirty, but the women imagined their clothes were clean enough. By force of example and constant explanation this has been overcome. They now take a pride in doing good work. For 5 cents in your money a woman can do a large washing and ironing and be finished in less than four hours."

School children are taught to swim and classes are formed and drilled in life saving. Prizes are awarded for proficiency, and expert swimming has become one of the regular courses in a common school education. Although Manchester's bath system is now one of the best in the world, the plans for the immediate future contemplate almost double the present capacity.

The cleansing department of Manchester is probably the largest in the world and deserves a more extended description than that which follows. It is a distinct type of municipal enterprise and is a successful attempt to reduce to a minimum the expense and discomforts of street cleaning and the disposal of sewage. To this end the city has become a manufacturer on a large scale and is the landlord of a farming estate of 3,739 acres, or nearly six square miles of land. The cleansing committee includes the lord mayor as a member and is responsible for the sweeping and watering of streets, passages and courts and for the collection and disposal of night soil and other refuse from dwellings, warehouses and institutions. The committee employ 1,800 men and 420 horses, with large numbers of vans and carts, steam tugs, a fleet of boats, four locomotives and twenty railroad cars. It builds its vans and carts, keeps in repair the immense machinery plant and rolling stock used in the department, makes and sells harness, brushes, receptacles for closets, manufactures concentrated manure, mortar, soap, oils, grease, disinfecting powder, dyes and many other products which otherwise would go to waste.

The manufacturing plant in the parish of Beswick is one of the most extensive institutions in England, and a visit to it will well repay the municipal student who desires to become informed on the best modern methods of solving one of the great problems confronting cities.

Several years ago there were two great marshes situated in the suburbs of Manchester. One belonged to Lord Carrington and was called Carrington Moss. It was undrained and uncultivated. The city purchased it for \$190,000. Near it was another tract of 2,595 acres belonging to Sir Humphrey de Trafford. This was in a deplorable condition. It was occupied by tenants who managed to eke out an existence and pay rent for their tumbledown hovels and boggy land. The city purchased it for about \$700,000.

On both of these estates it proceeded to drain the land, tear down the old farmhouses and erect new ones. For a mile and a half the estate faces the new ship canal and will some day be lined with factories. In the meantime the city has built railroads which convey fertilizers from the city and carry back the farm produce raised by the prosperous tenants who now pay rent to the city. The largest farm on the estate contains 460 acres, for which the tenant pays \$10 an acre. Valuable vegetable crops are raised, and where once was a dreary and disease breeding marsh there are now miles of fertile and productive land under a high state of cultivation. It is the verdict of the highest authorities that the Manchester system of utilizing refuse is the most perfect in existence.

The expense of the cleansing department for the last fiscal year was \$670,000, and this was made possible by the fact that the receipts from the manufacturing plant and the farm estates reduced the cost by the impressive amount of \$240,000.

Some Florida Incidents

The Marshall Swamp Raid. A Thrilling Episode of the Civil War.

BY MRS. FANNIE R. GARY,
Historian Fla. Div. U. D. C.

I have chosen for the subject of my paper an account of the raid on the plantation, in Marion county, belonging to the estate of Colonel J. Foster Marshall, of South Carolina, a hero of the Mexican war, and of the southern Confederacy, who was killed in one of the battles around Richmond in 1862.

The raiders were all negroes except the commander, a white officer.

They landed at or near Fort Gates, on the St. Johns river, on the night of the 9th, or early dawn of the 10th, of March, 1855, and were piloted through the scrub by a barge hand of Captain Gray, who knew the country.

Arriving at the plantation they set fire to the buildings and put Mr Joe Caldwell, the manager of the place, in the burning sugar house but he escaped through a scuttle to die on the outside.

There were about two hundred hogsheads of sugar on the place, all of which was destroyed by the raiders except twenty, which they endeavored to carry with them, and impressed mules and wagons for that purpose.

They also carried off twenty-four negroes from the place. They started to retrace their steps to St. Augustine, whence they had come.

The news having spread like wild fire they were met by a squad, mostly old men and boys, hastily gathered from the vicinity of Ocala, commanded by General Bullock, who was at home on wounded furlough, who put them to flight, and recaptured Mr. Frank Holly, who had been captured by them.

The raiders afterwards made a stand and General Bullock's party gave up the pursuit, but not until Mr. John L. Mathews had been severely wounded and two brave men of our side had been killed. These were Mr. Morrison, a one-armed Confederate soldier, who had belonged to the Marion artillery, and Mr. Henry Huggins, who was almost totally blind, but who at the breaking out of the war, in his ardor to help the cause of the south, had joined Captain Owen's company, afterwards Captain Chambers. But when they went to Fernandina to be mustered into the Confederate states army, he was rejected on account of his defective eyesight, the result of a severe illness when he was twelve years old. From the time he was fifteen he was unable to read a line, but so great was his thirst for knowledge that he would coax his sister, ten years younger, to read for him, and though at first she had often to spell the words for him to pronounce, she kept up the habit of reading to him, which she afterwards shared with his devoted wife, and a most beautiful affection grew up between them.

He married February, 1860 a lovely

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cousin, the daughter of the late Colonel Charles Huggins of North Santee, South Carolina, from which state his father and family removed to Florida in 1854.

The family were wealthy rice planters from before the Revolutionary war, in which his ancestors bore a conspicuous part, serving with the patriot Marion.

Of all the family who bore the name only the fond sister now survives. She has never ceased to mourn the tragic death of her gentle, unselfish, brave and loyal brother.

Having paid this tribute to one who notwithstanding the disability which exempted him from military duty, yet became a martyr to his desire to serve his country, I shall now resume my narrative of the raiders.

Captain J. J. Dickson, the vigilant protector of Florida homes, at his headquarters at Waldo, receiving information of their raid, and that they had retreated in the direction of the St. Johns river, hastily followed with the view of overtaking or intercepting them.

Pursued by this heroic and intrepid officer, with a detachment of his brave men, they re-crossed the river where they had previously landed, leaving wagons, mules and provisions, and had nearly made their escape, but were overtaken in the very suburbs of St. Augustine, where Captain Dickson re-captured the Marshall negroes and marched them back to the old plantation home, having it in his power to restore with them much stolen property to the owners.

The Optimists.

Helen Keller, who, though blind and deaf, is a college graduate and a cultured young woman, writes in her book, "My Key to Life," as follows: "We have seen that the world's philosophers—the sayers of the word—are optimists, so also are the men of action and achievement—the doers of the word. Dr. Howe found his way to Laura Bridgman's soul because he began with the belief that he could reach it. English jurists has said that the deaf-blind were idiots in the eyes of the law. Behold what the optimist does: He converts a hard axiom; he looks behind the dull, impassive clay and sees a human soul in bondage, and quietly, resolutely sets about its deliverance. His efforts are victorious."

Growing Aches and Pains.

Mrs. Josie Sumner, Bremond, Tex., writes, April 15, 1902: "I have used Ballard's Snow Liniment in my family for three years. I would not be without it in the house. I have used it on my little girl for growing pains and aches in her knees. It cured her right away. I have also used it for frost bitten feet, with good success. It is the best liniment I ever used." 15c, 50c and \$1. Sold by all druggists.

Sentiment Growing.

The argument against state life insurance that it will provide "fat jobs" for several hundred politicians, is without force and unworthy of consideration. There is absolutely no danger of any state or county official in Florida being paid half as large salaries as the presidents and other big officers of the big life insurance companies. Furthermore any large and important business, to be permanent, must be managed by competent men who are worth good, not princely, salaries; and if the state goes into the life insurance business, it should pay good salaries to good men to attend to it. Let us have state life insurance and fire insurance also.—Punta Gorda Herald.

A Positive Necessity

Having to lay upon my bed for 14 days from a severely bruised leg, I only found relief when I used a bottle of Ballard's Snow Liniment. I can cheerfully recommend it as the best medicine for bruises ever sent to the afflicted. It has now become a positive necessity upon myself.

D. R. Byrnes, merchant, Doversville, Texas, 25c, 50c, and \$1 at all druggists.

While cleaning his pistol Sunday at Dunnellon Mr. B. S. Weathers accidentally shot himself through the hand. The wound, while painful, is not at all serious. He came home on the noon train Sunday to have his finger dressed as and will be all right in a few days.

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— OF —

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OCALA, FLA., Oct. 22, 1904.

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"Strauss' Royal Reserve"

whisky, the analysis of which shows it to contain:

Alcohol (by weight), per cent.....	36.68
Alcohol (by volume), per cent.....	43.61
Degree proof, per cent.....	87.10
Residue on evaporation, p cent.....	0.660
Ash, per cent.....	0.011
Reducing sugar, per cent.....	0.225
Volatile acids, per cent.....	0.027
Amyl alcohol (fusel oil), per cent.....	0.073

The above results show the whisky to be a carefully blended brand of high grade and that it has been distilled from a clean, pure grain mash. The amount of fusel oil and of volatile acids is very low.

Respectfully,
F. T. SCHREIBER, Chemist.

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