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The First Annual Report of the Boys' Refuge and Industrial Brigade, 16 Quay Street (1871)

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THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT.

Twelve months ago, "The Boys' Refuge and Industrial Brigade" was added to the charitable institutions of Manchester, and opened its doors to receive the homeless and destitute. Its need had long been felt by Ragged School Teachers and others who care for the homeless lads who roam about our streets; they have often looked for some refuge that would open its door to such, and by a little timely help and sympathy save them in their hour of need.

It was only after considerable experience of the ragged lads of Manchester, and frequently meeting cases where such an institution would prove invaluable, and, moreover, after careful inquiry as to whether any existing organization met the need, that its promotors ventured to ask for it public sympathy and support. Having issued last August a pamphlet entitled "The First Six Months of the Boys' Refuge," it will not be needful to recount here the various steps taken in the earlier stages of the work, or the many difficulties that had to be overcome. Suffice it to say that the most suitable premises that could be obtained at a moderate

rent were taken and fitted up with the various requisites; that what was still more important, an efficient Master and Matron were engaged; and that from the 4th of January, 1870, the day we opened, the numbers steadily increased, week by week, until on the 1st of March our house was full from cellar to garret.

Object of Institution.

In commencing our Institution, we defined our object to be as follows:—"To afford to the homeless and destitute boys of our city, from 10 to 16 years, whose cases are proved to be genuine, a temporary home until permanent employment for them is obtained."

In carrying out this object, we felt there were two evils needful to avoid; that of interfering with the rightful duty of the parent, and of encouraging the professional vagrant. We therefore laid down the following rule:—"We desire in no case to interfere with the duty of parents, and therefore consider boys who have parents living in Manchester ineligible, except under very special circumstances. As we propose only to help those who try to help themselves, boys who from physical infirmity cannot, or from confirmed vagrant habits will not do so, are not eligible."

This rule, we may say, has been strictly observed throughout the year. Each case presenting itself has been most carefully investigated, and those not really destitute have been refused admission.

Industrial Department.

It caused us no small anxiety during the first month to organize some employment for the large number we had gathered together; we felt that, for these poor lads especially, idleness would be the parent of crime. After much consideration, therefore, we resolved upon the following means of employment, viz.:—

1. A Shoeblock Brigade for the streets.
2. A Messenger Brigade for Railway Stations, &c.
3. And situations for the most deserving lads, as they could be obtained.

Having obtained the sanction of the Watch Committee of the City Council for our Shoeblocks to occupy suitable positions, and also permission from the authorities at London-road and Victoria to place two Parcel Messengers at each station, we commenced in February our experiment of training to steady and honest labour those of whom the majority, at least, were growing up to love a life of idleness and crime. We say "our experiment," for any one acquainted with the class we were trying to help will fully appreciate the difficulty of getting them to obey rules or settle down to anything like steady work; and though the difficulty remains, and at times baffles all our efforts, we cannot but feel thankful that the experiment has been made.

The Shoeblock Brigade has been largely patronised throughout the year, and is fast becoming an estab-

lished institution. Some lads, formerly in this Brigade, now occupy respectable situations with tradesmen in our city. As a *temporary* means of employment, we find this industry very useful, and trust it will continue to receive the sympathy and support of the public. Twenty-three lads are employed in this Brigade.

The Parcel Messenger Brigade is capable of extension. We have had frequent testimony that the travelling public appreciate this most useful addition to our Railway Stations. Their fare, "3d. per mile," painted on their badge, prevents imposition, is reasonable to the public, and sufficient for the lads. Five lads are in this Brigade.

In Situations, we have eight lads at present learning trades of various kinds. One is with a Cloth Agent, another with an Ironmonger, a third with a Chemist, and so on. They are all doing well, and earning what supports them.

Another industry, that of *Firewood-making*, has been lately added, and is proving most useful, as it affords, what we have long desired, *immediate* employment for each lad on his admission, and while inquiries are being made into his previous history. Seeing we have applicants from all parts of the three kingdoms, it sometimes occupies many days investigating such cases; and during this time the firewood-making prevents these lads from becoming entirely a burden to the Institution.

These four divisions—the Firewood or Probationary

lads, the Shoebblack Brigade, the Parcel Messenger Brigade, and the lads in Situations—comprise all the inmates of our Institution, which at present numbers 40.

No language could exaggerate the deplorable condition of most of these lads when they reached us. At the close of this Report a few examples from our admission-book are furnished.

Of these 40 lads, 19 have lost both parents, 18 have one parent dead, and 3 both parents living; 20, or one-half the number, have been with us upwards of six months.

The total number entered in our admission-book during the year has been 110, of which the 40 present inmates form a part, leaving 70 who have passed away from our care. Of this number 13 we know are now doing well, and remember their connection with the Refuge with gratitude; 9 have turned out badly, a considerable number have been restored to their friends in various parts of the country, and of some we have no account.

But in addition to these, about 90 lads have been taken in for shorter periods of one, two, and three nights. This was in the earlier stages of the Institution. They have passed away entirely from our sight. Probably, in many cases, the temporary assistance they received was all they needed. But in any case, may we not indulge the hope that our Refuge was a blessing to not a few of them, and that the morning and evening prayer, and the general influence for good

surrounding them during their short stay, will be remembered in after life.

The following Table shows the earnings of the boys during the year, and also the amount they have paid towards their own support:—

Table of Boys' Earnings, Payments, &c.

Months.	Average No. of Inmates.	Total Earnings.	Amount paid by Lads towards their own support.
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.
January	28	7 16 2	7 16 2
February	39	30 6 9	28 9 2½
March	45	42 16 10½	34 1 8
April	46	45 7 2	41 16 6½
May	38	46 16 11½	41 5 3½
June	39	52 16 0½	42 0 6
July	39	59 11 11	47 17 8
August	37	56 17 11	45 7 9½
September	40	59 3 4	44 18 6
October	41	58 3 6	46 4 6½
November	42	56 10 11½	43 14 1½
December	40	55 12 1½	43 15 0
		£571 19 8½	£467 7 0

NOTE.—An error occurred in the table of *earnings*, published in "The First Six Months of the Boys' Refuge." A comparison of the two Tables will show that the important point the boys' *payments* for board, &c., was quite correct.

We venture to think these figures are very instructive, and will repay attention. Leaving out the month of January, when there was no organized employment for the lads, and when, therefore, both earnings and pay-

ments were small, they show the following results:—

That the average earnings per month have been £51.

That the average payments per month have been £41.

The difference between the *earnings* and *payments* belongs to the lads, and is either spent in buying Sunday clothes for themselves, or lodged in the Penny Bank on their account. During the twelve months, in addition to what they have paid towards their board, &c., they have lodged in the bank £61. 10s. 9d., which has chiefly been spent in the purchase of clothes for themselves.

These pecuniary results are more than we expected, but we believe not more than can be maintained. At the present time, and for some months past, the lads' payments have met every expense excepting Master and Matron's salary and rent, thus leaving the sum to be provided for carrying on the Institution a comparatively small one.

Boys' Payments.

These are regulated as follows:—Each lad pays from 6d. to 1s. per day for full board and lodging, use of uniform, materials, &c., according to the position he occupies in the brigade, or the wages he earns if in a situation. This sum he knows he has to pay. If he does not earn it, his account is debited with the amount short, which he pays off from the earnings of a good day; all he earns above this fixed sum *is his own*, and is lodged in the bank. This system stimulates

the lads to work hard, knowing that any debt incurred must be repaid; at the same time it offers no encouragement to keep back or understate the full amount of their earnings, seeing that all they earn above what they have to pay is their own.

The sum charged for board and lodging, &c. has been fixed after much thought. It does not burden the lads, but rather stimulates them. It destroys any pauper feeling, by teaching them thus early in life to provide for themselves. It teaches them careful and provident habits, which may be a blessing to them through life, and it wonderfully lightens the pecuniary burdens of the Institution.

Education and Recreation.

The column of our admission-book that records the education of the lads when admitted is a very sad one. While the education of all is more or less defective, the majority are entirely ignorant when they come to us; many lads of twelve, fourteen, and sixteen years not even knowing their letters. We have therefore set apart three nights each week for instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The evenings of Monday, Wednesday, and Friday are so spent, and already with the happiest results. Many lads who came in entirely ignorant can now read and write fairly. Of this branch of our work we deeply feel the importance. The lads also evidently appreciate its importance by their anxiety to improve.

While we ask no questions as to the boy's religion on admission (is he *destitute* and *homeless* being the only point we require to be satisfied about), yet we know there must be some of all churches; we therefore exclude all catechisms and creeds. There is prayer morning and evening, conducted by the Master, which is preceded by reading a portion of Scripture; and on Sundays the boys go to church in the morning, accompanied by the Master. The afternoon they have at their own disposal.

Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evenings are for recreation. The fife-and-drum band is very popular; others play draughts—several boards having been kindly sent by a friend—while others of the boys use the library, so kindly provided by Mr. Blacklock and Mr. Rylands. In recreation the boys need change, and any innocent means of amusement our friends could send us would be thankfully received.

At Whitsuntide the lads were not forgotten, but shared in the general festivities of the district. On Wednesday they were taken in a large wagon to Blackford Bridge, where much kindness and attention was shown to them by Mr. J. B. Champion. After enjoying cricket, football, &c., in a field, they sat down to a substantial tea in the schoolroom, and returned home safely in the evening after a day that will long be remembered. On Thursday afternoon they went by rail to Clayton Vale. On Friday they marched, to the strains of their fife-and-drum band, to a field in Cheet-

ham Hill. We rather feared the approach of this week, owing to the strong temptations presented by the races to these lads; but we are thankful to say it passed over pleasantly, and we hope not unprofitably. Some friends sent special contributions towards our Whitsuntide expenses, for which we are much obliged. Then later on in the year, Mr. Rylands invited them to spend an afternoon at Longford Hall, near Stretford. This day, likewise, will be a red-letter one in the calendar of the Refuge. After enjoying out-door sports in a field, a comfortable tea was provided, which they did ample justice to. We must acknowledge the kindness of the Shawcross Omnibus Company, which conveyed them to Longford and back in one of their well-appointed 'buses, entirely free of charge.

We endeavour to impart to our Refuge as much of the home, and as little of the institution, as possible. We therefore do not burden the lads with many rules and regulations beyond the few simple words of advice and encouragement which hang on the walls of each room. One fact we try to impress on them above all others—*That we only help boys who try to help themselves.*

Each lad is made to feel that *whatever* his past life may have been, if only now he is resolved by God's help to be honest and industrious, we will help him; but that if he will not make an effort so to be, the Refuge is no place for him. This is fully and fairly put before him on his admission, and kept before him continually.

Enlarged Premises.

Respecting the future, we believe a large field of usefulness is opening to our Institution; but in order that we may enter upon it, increased accommodation is required. In addition to the actually or practically homeless lads that still surround us, and whom we desire to make an effort to reclaim, we know that in the course of each year numbers of well-intentioned lads reach our city with the honest desire of getting work, but who, failing to do so soon, are left without home or friends. We should like these to find their way to our Refuge, and that we should be able to afford such the temporary help they need; but at present this is not possible. For twelve months between 40 and 50 lads (lads hitherto unaccustomed to any restraint) have been confined to a small house, with a back-yard scarcely three yards square. This has been injurious to the health not only of the lads, but also of the Master and Matron; it has operated seriously against the peace and happiness of the Institution, and it has hindered its industrial progress. We also desire to increase our in-door employments by adding boot-making and clog-making to the number; but under present circumstances this is impossible.

We do feel therefore that *increased accommodation in a better neighbourhood, where the lads are not continually exposed to temptation whenever they go out, has become a necessity.* All who visit the Refuge

agree with us; and the Overseers of Manchester, after fully investigating the work of our Institution, have unanimously voted £100. towards providing those larger premises which they saw to be so needful. Under these circumstances, we appeal with some confidence to those to whom God has given means, that they will enable us to meet this extra outlay. It is estimated that for £1,000. we shall be able to place the Institution in suitable premises, free of rent for ever. Since this became known, various sums have been *voluntarily* sent to us, [See page 28.] for which we are most thankful. We have no doubt that the remainder will likewise come.

A reference to the Balance Sheet will show that the working of our Institution is inexpensive. After deducting the preliminary expenses of altering and furnishing our present premises, a comparatively small sum remains; so that whatever results have been obtained, have been obtained at a small cost. To a large extent the Institution is self-supporting, and we trust will so continue. This fact encourages us to hope that, as we have not to ask for large *annual* subscriptions, the special effort we make this year will be promptly responded to, seeing it will not have to be repeated.

Conclusion.

We desire to leave on the minds of our friends as they lay aside this Report one great want which is

making itself *increasingly* felt, viz.:—Some outlet for those lads who from their habits, early associations, and other causes, will never do well in Manchester. All who have had much experience of the class we are seeking to help know there are such. We have had several during the past year,—*we have some now*—lads not suited for a city life, but who might do well either at agricultural employment, on board ship, or in the colonies. In London the “Refuge for Homeless Boys” has a training ship on the Thames, where they send large numbers of lads every year, who are trained for the mercantile marine. They have also a farm in Surrey, where those who desire agricultural employment are sent. Both these undertakings have been for some time working admirably. The Secretary tells us they could not do without these outlets,—that but for their *ship* and their *farm* numbers of the homeless lads who reached them must have been lost.

We perhaps could not at once fill a ship on the Mersey, or stock a farm in Lancashire with labourers, but *we could help to do so*; and if we had such places to which from time to time we could draft off those lads who were best fitted for such employments, we believe the usefulness of our Institution would be *very much* increased. Thankful indeed should we be if some who read these lines would take practical steps to help us in this matter.

We cannot conclude this our first Report without alluding to one no longer amongst us, but whose loss

we deplore. W. T. Blacklock was one of the earliest friends of the Boys' Refuge; long before its doors were opened his counsel was sought and cheerfully given. Having perceived the need of such an institution, he entered most heartily into our plans and helped it forward in every way he could. His name will always be held in loving remembrance by the first workers in the Refuge.

We must not withhold our testimony to the self-denying labours of the Master and Matron, Mr. and Mrs. Browne. They have never left their posts throughout the year for a single day.

To Dr. Blackmore, who has bestowed much care and attention gratuitously on our sick lads on many occasions, our warmest thanks are due. Nor must we omit the many friends, both known and unknown, who have aided us with funds, in many cases unasked, and also sent many useful gifts of *new shirts, two boxes of soap, three barrels of treacle, parcels of cast-off clothing, 80 yards of linsey, calico, corduroy, books, &c.* One lady sends us, unasked, 8s. every month, which she collects among her friends. This renders one orphan boy *entirely* free of cost to the Institution. May many "go and do likewise!"

In conclusion, we would call attention to the fact that *we deal with a class untouched by any existing organization.* Most of our inmates are just above the age available for the Industrial Schools; nor would it be right to bring before a magistrate and to deprive of

their liberty for a term of years, at a considerable cost to the community, those who are from only temporary causes in need; they are also above the age affected by the Elementary Education Act. Our Institution, therefore, supplies a missing link in that chain of philanthropic effort which we trust is strengthening the bonds of society in our beloved country.

Thankful for the past, we enter upon the coming year in dependence on Him to whose care we have committed our Refuge day by day, and to Whose good hand upon us we owe whatever beneficial results have been obtained.

Donations towards providing new premises may be paid into the Bank of Messrs. HEYWOOD Brothers and Co., St. Ann's-street.

Cast-off clothing is very much required; we are *entirely* out. If our friends could see the lads as they reach us, we feel sure they would keep us better supplied.

All interested in this movement are invited to visit the Refuge.

Manchester, 4th January, 1871.

*Financial Statement of the BOYS' REFUGE AND INDUSTRIAL BRIGADE, for the Year ending
Dr. January 4th. 1871. Cr.*

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
To Amount of Donations and Subscriptions received	568	5	1	By Rent	40	13	0
“ Boys' payments for board, lodging, and clothing.....	467	7	0	“ Rates and Taxes	16	16	1
“ Interest from Messrs. Heywood Brothers' bank.....	0	17	8	“ Furniture and alteration of premises	257	5	3
				“ Clothing purchased	74	16	5
				“ Provisions	310	1	11½
				“ Master's and Matron's salary	100	0	0
				“ Assistant-Matron's salary	14	0	0
				“ General Expenses—including shoe-blacking and wood-cutting materials, and house expenses	117	9	11½
				“ Balance	105	7	1
	£1036	9	9	Audited and found correct,	£1036	9	9
“ *Balance	105	7	1	H. HARRISON.			

* This Balance includes the £100 given by the Overseers of Manchester towards the Alteration and Extension Fund.

DONATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS, 1870.

	£.	s.	d.
J. Knowles, Esq., share of Dramatic Festival Fund	40	0	0
W. T. Blacklock, Esq.	25	0	0
E. S. Fletcher, Esq.	25	0	0
Sam Mendel, Esq.	25	0	0
Alderman Pearson	25	0	0
Herbet Philips, Esq.....	25	0	0
John Rylands, Esq.	25	0	0
W. Slater, Esq.	25	0	0
Messrs. Todd and Coston	25	0	0
Oliver Heywood, Esq.	20	0	0
H. B. Jackson, Esq.	10	10	0
James Chapman, Esq.	10	0	0
E. Hardcastle, Esq.	10	0	0
Messrs. R. Haworth and Co.	10	0	0
A. H. Heywood, Esq.	10	0	0
W. Pearson, Esq., Sedgley.....	10	0	0
L. K. Shaw, Esq.	10	0	0
Mrs. Prince (proceeds of carpets and bedding sent)	6	17	9
Ditto second donation	2	0	0
Ditto third donation.....	1	0	0
Carried forward	340	7	9

	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward	340	7	9
W. Birch, jun., Esq.	5	0	0
James Carlton, Esq.	5	0	0
James Chadwick, Esq.	5	0	0
J. B. Edmundson, Esq.	5	0	0
B. Heape, Esq.	5	0	0
James Mottram, Esq.	5	0	0
The Overseers of Broughton	5	0	0
Miss Pearson, Sedgley	5	0	0
James Ryder, Esq.	5	0	0
W. Scott, Esq.	5	0	0
Fereday Smith, Esq.	5	0	0
R. B. Taylor, Esq.	5	0	0
Sir James Watts	5	0	0
Miss Huxley (sums collected monthly).....	4	8	0
T. Gibson, Esq.	3	3	0
W. Smith, Esq., Bowdon	3	3	0
Mr. and Mrs. Stanley.....	3	0	0
W. T. Birch, Esq.	2	2	0
Messrs. Taylor, Garnett, and Co.....	2	2	0
Alfred Whitworth, Esq.	2	2	0
R. Barnes, Esq. (for Whit-week treat)	2	0	0
W. T. Blacklock, Esq. (for Library).....	2	0	0
R. Jones, Esq.	2	0	0
S. Kershaw, Esq.	2	0	0
W. F. Robinson, Esq.	2	0	0

Carried forward435 7 9

	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward	435	7	9
E. W. Woolaston, Esq.	2	0	0
E. Blackmore, Esq.	1	1	0
Councillor Galloway	1	1	0
Wm. Gibb, Esq.	1	1	0
C. Lister, Esq.	1	1	0
J. Rowlands, Esq.	1	1	0
R. Taylor, Esq.	1	1	0
Mrs. Bancroft (Broughton Park)	1	0	0
L. Dillon, Esq.	1	0	0
Messrs. Elkington & Co.	1	0	0
T. Freston, Esq. (for clogging materials) ...	1	0	0
B. Hinchcliffe, Esq.	1	0	0
S. A. Knowles, Esq.	1	0	0
C. Mather, Esq.	1	0	0
P. M. Redfern, Esq.	1	0	0
Mrs. Roylance	1	0	0
W. Smith, Esq.	1	0	0
Miss Bacon (for Christmas treat)	1	0	0
S. Turnbull, Esq. (Blackpool)	1	0	0
T. Wright, Esq. (for clothing)	1	0	0
Per T. Wright, Esq.	1	0	0
Mrs. Broughton	0	15	0
Mrs. Micholls.....	0	10	6
Anonymous.....	0	10	0
Miss Armstrong	0	10	0

Carried forward459 19 3

	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward	459	19	
Mrs. Banks	0	10	0
F. B. Bengier, Esq.	0	10	0
Mrs. Gartside	0	10	0
N. Gould, Esq.	0	10	0
J. Mather, Esq.	0	10	0
David Maxwell, Esq.	0	10	0
Dr. Samelson	0	10	0
S. Tattersall, Esq.	0	10	0
Mrs. Auty	0	5	0
J. D.	0	5	0
Miss Windsor	0	5	0
Mrs. Boughey	0	2	6
L. A. G.	0	2	6
Mr. Jardine	0	2	6
Mrs. Nicholson	0	2	6
J. Thomas	0	2	6
E. Y.	0	2	6
J. H.	0	1	0
Sums paid into the Donation Box	2	14	10

£468 5 10

The Overseers of Manchester—just received
for Extension Fund

£568 5 10

The following Cases will show the class of Boys who avail themselves of the REFUGE :—

No. 13, age 15½ years.—Both parents dead ; has been on the streets for two years, living, when he could, in a lodging-house in Charter-street. When admitted he was in great destitution, and suffering from an ulcerated leg. This lad has now been seven months in a situation at 7s. per week.

No. 17, age 15 years.—Father dead ; mother in prison. This boy's condition on admission is reported by the Master as "very wretched." He is now in the Shoe-black Brigade, and doing well ; would be in a situation but for his lameness.

No. 24, age 16 years.—Was taken out of one of the worst places in the neighbourhood of Deansgate. Mother dead ; deserted by father. This lad has been six months in a situation at 8s. per week.

No. 63, age 14 years.—Father dead ; mother a drunkard. The Master's report of him on admission was—"very ragged and dirty : he can read and write a little, and I have good hope of him." This boy is with us still ; for six months he has taken a prize in the brigade for good conduct.

No. 1, age 15½ years.—This was the first boy admitted. The Master says—"When he came he was in a state of utter destitution and covered with vermin. For some time he had been a companion of thieves." This lad is now in the Parcel Messenger Brigade, and doing well. The change in him is wonderful.

These cases are fair specimens of the class admitted.

BOYS' REFUGE AND INDUSTRIAL BRIGADE.

“To help those who try to help themselves.”

Rules read over to each Boy on admission.

Each lad who is permitted to enter this house and make it his home is required to be obedient to the Master in all things, to be strictly honest and truthful, and to be kind to the other boys. Gambling, swearing, and smoking are strictly prohibited.

Those admitted to the Shoebblack Brigade must observe the special rules laid down for them, which they are advised to read every morning.

Those admitted to the Messenger Brigade must take up the position assigned to them by the Master, and ply for hire at the rate marked upon their badges. As the servants of the public, they are especially called upon to be obliging, honest, and industrious.

Those lads who by good conduct show themselves worthy of it, will be chosen to fill situations as they occur. When so chosen, they must obey the rules laid down by their various employers, and endeavour to maintain the good character which has been given of them.

All are expected to account for the money they earn, and to pay the rate fixed for their board, &c. each day; what they earn beyond this is their own, but is to be lodged in the Savings' Bank. Prizes will be given each month to the best boys in the Brigades; and for every six months a lad holds a situation with credit 5s. is given.

Lads,—Strive, by GOD'S help, to be honest and truthful in all things, and kind to one another; act right, and you will make this

A HAPPY HOME!

Declaration to be signed by each Boy on admission.

I, _____ faithfully promise, on condition of being admitted into the Industrial Brigade, to obey the foregoing Rules, and at all times be careful to maintain the good character of the Brigade; I also promise not to leave without first asking permission from the Master, and returning to him any property belonging to the Committee with which I may have been entrusted.

Signed _____

Witness _____