

# **THE ARCHIVES OF THE SHAFTSBURY SOCIETY**

**Part Three:  
The Ragged School  
Union Magazine  
and continuations  
1876-1907**



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SHAFTESBURY SOCIETY**

**PART 3:** The Ragged School Union Magazine  
and continuations, 1876-1907

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## **PUBLISHER'S NOTE**

This is the third part of the Harvester microform edition of the Archives of the Ragged School Union and the Shaftesbury Society.

Founded in 1884, the Union was a central organisation for schools set up to help destitute children. They provided elementary education, ran classes to train children for employment and found suitable occupations for them.

Part One of the Archives of the Shaftesbury Society, already published by Harvester Microform on microfilm contains the Minutes of the Ragged School Union and Shaftesbury Society, 1844-1944. The Ragged Schools illustrated the nature and extent of poverty and squalor in Victorian England. In particular, the collection underlines the position of children within the society, and the gross abuse and deprivation many of them endured. From it emerges a vivid picture of one of the grimmest aspects of nineteenth century life, and the value-system of family life in early Victorian England. These minutes are a new research source in modern social history, particularly for the study of children and the family in industrialisation.

Part Two, now published on microfiche, consists of an unbroken run from 1849 to 1874 of the Ragged School Union Magazine. The Magazine sought to shock its tens of thousands of readers with clinically accurate descriptions of the squalor and the poverty they surrounded them. Specific and detailed reports from hundreds of localities acted as a catalyst in the development of the Victorian Social Conscience. The Magazine offers descriptions, insights and analyses of the whole range of social problems confronted by the industrialised world of the late nineteenth century: Abortion, Begging, Dens, Emigration, Gambling, Poor Conditions and Prostitution. All are seen to inter-link as part of a single living social fabric which demanded immediate governmental action.

Part Three covers the years 1876-1907, a period when Booth and Rowntree were both producing their greatest work a period in which a manifestly wealthy society was still the home of innumerable 'white slaves', destitutes and outcasts.

By 1876 the Society was organised on a large scale national basis. In the London area alone there were more than 140 groups working; and the squalor and poverty that its researchers uncovered led to the attempts by these early social workers to force government legislation and action for the provision of schooling, employment and housing.

Statistical analysis provides details of many of the society's activities, and individuals case-reports reveal as much about the investigators as the investigated. The role of women in early philanthropy is high-lighted, together with the evangelistic motives for reform, and the prestige factors associated with charity.

The journal changed its name in 1888 from **The Ragged School Union Quarterly Record** to **The Record of The Ragged School and Mission Union**. In 1896 there was another changed and the title of the journal became **The Record of The Ragged School Union and Shaftesbury Society**.

# ARCHIVES OF THE SHAFTESBURY SOCIETY

## **Part 3: The Ragged School Union** **Magazine and continuations, 1876 - 1907**

### **CONTENTS**

Volume 1.	1876.	Cards 123-125
Volume 2.	1877.	Cards 126-128
Volume 3.	1878.	Cards 129-131
Volume 4.	1879.	Cards 132-134
Volume 5.	1880.	Cards 135-137
Volume 6.	1881.	Cards 138-140
Volume 7.	1882.	Cards 141-143
Volume 8.	1883.	Cards 144-147
Volume 9.	1884.	Cards 148-151
Volume 10.	1885.	Cards 152-155
Volume 11.	1886.	Cards 156-159
Volume 12.	1887.	Cards 160-163
New Series Volume 1.	1888.	Cards 164-165
New Series Volume 2.	1889.	Cards 166-167
New Series Volume 3.	1890.	Cards 168-169
New Series Volume 4.	1891.	Cards 170-172
New Series Volume 5.	1892.	Cards 173-175
New Series Volume 6.	1893.	Cards 176-178
New Series Volume 7.	1894.	Cards 179-180
New Series Volume 8.	1895.	Cards 181-183
New Series Volume 9.	1896.	Cards 184-186
New Series Volume 10.	1897.	Cards 187-189
New Series Volume 11.	1898.	Cards 190-192
New Series Volume 12.	1899.	Cards 193-195
New Series Volume 13.	1890.	Cards 196-198
New Series Volume 14.	1891.	Cards 199-201
New Series Volume 15.	1892.	Cards 202-204
New Series Volume 16.	1893.	Cards 205-207
New Series Volume 17.	1894.	Cards 208-210
New Series Volume 18.	1895.	Cards 211-213

New Series Volume 19.  
New Series Volume 20.

1896.  
1897.

Cards 214-216  
Cards 217-219