

# Dr. Jeremy Hall Endowed Schools, Limerick

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## I

Jeremy Hall, second son of Reuben Hall of Booth-towne, Halifax, who had been educated at Halifax School, came to Dublin in the year 1639. He was then aged nineteen and he entered Trinity College, Dublin as a Sizar on the 27th of June in that year. Most of the college students at that time entered as Pensioners, *i.e.* they were fee-paying, but there was a considerable minority, sons of poor parents, who ranked as Sizaris. These were given free education in consideration of their performing certain duties in College. These services were of a menial kind, and sizaris were frequently attached as fags to the wealthier class of students, known as Fellow Commoners, many of whom were members of titled families.

When young Hall entered the College, Roger Boyle, Lord Broughill, was then in his final year, graduating B.A. in 1640. The life-long association of Jeremy Hall and Roger Boyle evidently began about this time, and one immediate effect of this connection would appear to have been to the financial betterment of the former, as in 1640 he attained the status of Scholar in the University.<sup>1</sup> In 1641, a year after he had graduated, Jeremy Hall's patron, Lord Broughill, married Lady Margaret Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk. The pair arrived at Lismore Castle, the home of the groom's father, Richard Boyle, Earl of Cork, on the 23rd of October 1641, the day on which the Catholic Rising began. Lord Broughill immediately became actively engaged in this War in which, as he told his father, "for quarter he never knew what the word meant."<sup>2</sup> Of an engagement towards the end of the war he wrote that his forces had "a very fair execution for about three miles, and indeed it was bloody, for I gave orders to kill all."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Broughill's conduct throughout the whole of this troubled period was marked by such a ferocious inhumanity that his name is indelibly coupled with that of Oliver Cromwell in the story of English activity in Ireland during the seventeenth century.

However with the termination of hostilities and the prospects of the restoration of the Stuart dynasty, Broughill altered from his Cromwellian adherence to a profuse loyalty to Charles II, with whose restoration he prominently identified himself.<sup>4</sup> He became one of the King's principal advisers and was largely instrumental in securing the passage of the infamous Acts of Settlement and Explanation. Throughout this period he had utilised the help of Jeremy Hall in one clerical capacity or another, and

<sup>1</sup> Burtchaell and Sadleir, *Alumni Dublinenses*, London 1924, pp. 89 and 357.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Smith, *Antient and Present State of Cork*, vol. II, Dublin 1750, p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> Crofton Croker, *Researches in the South of Ireland*, London 1824, p. 301.

<sup>4</sup> Professor Richard Lodge, in *The Political History of England*, vol. VIII, London 1910, p. 87, describes Broghill as "the champion turncoat in an age when consistency was out of fashion."

as his sons grew up he employed him as private tutor to them. In 1662, when the boys were older, Broughill (or Earl of Orrery as he had become) sent them abroad for several years of study. The boys Roger and Henry, with Folliott Wingfield, Orrery's ward, whom he had married to his daughter Elizabeth, were placed in the care of Jeremy Hall who accompanied them.<sup>5</sup> While on the Continent having three young people to look after he had necessarily to become interested from time to time in their various physical ailments, and so found himself picking up odds and ends of medical knowledge. He very probably availed himself of his extended leisure to attend lectures on medical matters in some of the principal cities to which he took his charges. He was again on the Continent in 1665, when Orrery sent him there with his son Harry to continue his studies. Jeremy Hall used this opportunity to continue his interest in medicine, and whether or not he obtained a diploma or degree in the subject at one of the centres where he stayed, on his return to Ireland he proclaimed himself as a doctor of medicine. He had left Dublin University without taking a degree, but the fact that he had matriculated, and made attendance there, would very likely have been used by him as evidence of his qualification for admission to studies in schools of higher learning abroad. The present writer has, however, been unable to trace any record of the conferring on Jeremy Hall of a degree in medicine, though there is some evidence that he was in some quarters in Ireland regarded as the possessor of an LL.D.

Having completed his supervision of Orrery's sons abroad, Jeremy Hall was thereafter engaged in acting as steward for his employer. Much of his work in this capacity was centred in Limerick city, which under the Act of Settlement had been shared between the Earl of Orrery and the Earl of Roscommon.<sup>6</sup> For his services the Earl of Orrery paid his old retainer £100 p.a. which the recipient confessed was a good allowance, and which he supplemented with rents from houses which he had acquired in Limerick city.<sup>7</sup> In fact, his employment there gave him the opportunity of obtaining ownership in his own name of several houses and building-sites in the town. He took up residence in Limerick so as to ensure his full attention to his master's business and his own. He would appear to have concerned himself with the civic administration and in connection with his acceptance as a medical practitioner he added to his local reputation by establishing a hospital. This was probably located in one of the houses which were granted to him and a collaborator (Randall Clayton) by the Earl of Roscommon in 1672. The original of this deed, in which he is described as 'Jeremy Hall doctor in phisic' is available in the National Library of Ireland.<sup>8</sup> Jeremy Hall had been associated with his employer in the arrangements for the setting up of the school which the latter had endowed at Charleville, and it is likely that the set of rules for the conduct of this school, dated 9th January 1678, were drawn up by Jeremy Hall.<sup>9</sup> After the death of the Earl of Orrery, Hall took up residence in Dublin, where, amongst various matters arising out of the administration of the Earl's will, of which he was an executor, he also interested himself in the work of the Blue Coat School or Hospital which had been opened a few years previously in Oxmantown. This school

<sup>5</sup> K. M. Lynch, *Roger Boyle, First Earl of Orrery*, Univ. of Tennessee Press 1965, p. 113.

<sup>6</sup> *Fifteenth Annual Report, Irish Record Commission*, Dublin 1825, pp. 148-150.

<sup>7</sup> *Earl of Orrery Papers*, ed. by E. MacLysaght, Dublin 1941, p. 141.

<sup>8</sup> Nat. Library Ire., MS. D. 22689, grant from Wentworth Earl of Roscommon dated 13th January 1672.

<sup>9</sup> There is an account of this school in *JRSAL*, 88 (1958), 25-48.

was of Royal foundation and the Mayor and Corporation of Dublin were closely identified with it. At a meeting of the City Assembly held on 29 September 1680 a petition was considered setting forth

that it would be very much for the advantage and credit of the societie of the governors of the Hospitall and Free Schoole of King Charles the second, by Dublin, to have persons of honour and worth added to the said service, to be assistant in the government thereof, who might be able to advise and assist at all times and places: the petitioners therefore humbly prayed this Assembly, that the reverend Henry, lord bishop of Meath, Sir John Temple, Knight, Doctor Jeremiah Hall, and Mr Josua Wilson, be added to the governors of the said Hospitall.<sup>10</sup>

The foregoing petition was duly granted by the City Assembly, and it may be assumed that Dr. Jeremiah Hall by which altered first name he had for some time previously chose to be known, played a useful part in the formative years of King's Hospital, Dublin.

All through his life Jeremy Hall maintained a close contact with his native parish in England and with his relatives there. He does not appear to have married and in his will, dated 1st March 1687, he mentions several of these relatives. The will opens as follows: "I Jeremiah Hall of Boothtown in the parish of Halifax in the County of York and now of the City of Dublin." It contains the following provisions:

Imprimis I do dispose and bequeath for ever the house I have built in the City of Limerick as it is hereafter particularly set down. I give and bequeath the four lower ground middle rooms of the said house for lodging for four old aged men unmarried and four old aged women, widows, who are not able to labour to get their livelihood, nor have relations that are able to help to maintain them—

Item I do give the two upper middle large rooms of the said house for two schools, that on the north side to teach therein twenty poor boys, and that on the south side twenty poor girls, orphans, or such whose parents are not able to keep them to school—the boys to learn to read English well—to write well and cast accounts, the girls to learn to read English well—to sew, to knit and to make bone lace.—

Item I give and bequeath the two upper rooms on the north east and north west side of the house and also the lower back ground room on the north east side of the house together with the place and passage going into it for lodging and use of the school master.—

Item I give and bequeath the two upper rooms on the south east and south west side of the house and also the lower back ground room on the south east side of the house together with the place and passage leading into it for lodging and use for the school mistress.—

Item I give and bequeath as much of the back side to the first wall to each of the divisions or partments as before set out and described doth contain in breadth and as I have ordered to be separated and distinguished by poles to each division and partment for ever.—

Item I give and bequeath my own lodging room for use of the overseers and trustees hereafter named to meet in, and also to keep in the press already made the books of accounts and the books for the poor boys and girls and other things necessary for the poor people, as also the garret over it for the like use. And as for the lower ground back room under my chamber I do for the present order that it may be made use of for the poor people, but if God preserves my life I do intend to add more to it and make a chapel towards the making

<sup>10</sup> J. T. Gilbert, *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin*, vol. V, p. 198.

whereof the twenty pounds Doctor William Smyth gave by his will to my Hospital I would have laid out, and the rest of my overplus rents. Simon Covell did once make me a model of which I do intend to build.—

Item I give and bequeath the lower garden to the use of the hospital as to the overseers and trustees shall be thought most advantageous and expedient for it.—

Item I give to each of the poor old men and women five pounds per annum to be paid them weekly or quarterly as the said trustees and overseers shall appoint.—

Item I give and bequeath to the school master and school mistress for the teaching of twenty poor boys and twenty poor girls as aforesaid ten pounds to each per annum to be paid them half yearly at midsummer and Christmas.—

Item I give and bequeath to buy horn books, primers, Whole Duty of Man and Common Prayer Books, the Bishop of Geneva's Introduction to a Holy Life, Thomas A. Kempis and for keeping the house in repair ten pounds per annum. I would have every poor boy and girl when they go away to have a Whole Duty of Man or some other of the books of devotion.—

Item I give and bequeath ten pounds per annum to redeem persons out of prison who lie there for small debts or fees, provided they be such who have families and being out of prison may and will by their labour help their families.—

Item I do give and bequeath twenty pounds a year, that is the interest of two hundred pounds per annum to be taken up and secured out of my houses in Limerick which two hundred pounds is to be lent continually to one or more hopeful young men newly come out of service giving very good security for the payment of the principal at the two or three years end. The overseers and trustees in this affair must be very careful that the security must be very good, else the money will not be employed as intended, for the loss of this money by not being well secured will be a prejudice and loss to other hopeful young men for whose use only this bequest is given.

The will directed that any overplus of the property in Limerick, after provision being made for the aforesaid uses, should be applied to any pious uses the trustees should appoint. The reverend Simon, Lord Bishop of Limerick, John Hind, Dean of Limerick, Henry Temple, Esquire, and Mr. Abraham Dickson were named as trustees and sole executors. The overseers were also named: The Lord Bishop, The Dean, the Mayor, the Recorder and the Sheriffs of Limerick for the time being.

It would appear that there was some uneasiness about the year 1770, concerning the administration of charities in Ireland, by the members of the House of Lords sitting in Dublin. That House set up a committee to inquire into all charities on which information was available. On the 26th of May 1774 the House considered a report received from Revd. Dean Hoare<sup>11</sup>

on the state of the late Dr Hall's Alms-house and of his bequests to the city of Limerick, together with the state of the agent's accounts for the last twelve years, by which it appears that instead of the annual disbursements, which were appointed by the said Dr Hall's will, being punctually paid, as set forth by the agent, of the £120 due in said years at £10 a year, for releasing of prisoners, there had been only £33 expended, and that there remains unexpended £81. 11. 8.

<sup>11</sup> *Journals of the House of Lords*, 9 (1753-1756), 780-781.

And that of £240 due in said years at £20 p.a. for binding out apprentices, there had been only £91. 16. expended, and that there remains not applied £148. 4/- making in the whole, not applied to the service of the public in these two articles only, within the said periods, the sum of £234. 15. 8.

It further appears that the present annual rents amount to the sum of £269. 15/- and that the following are the particulars of the purposes to which they be supplied:

To 13 poor men at £5 each p.a.	£65
To 12 poor women ditto	£60
To the chaplain	£10
To the agent	£20
To the schoolmaster	£10
To the schoolmistress	£10
To release prisoners confined for small debts or fees	£10
For books, paper and repairs of house	£10
For binding out apprentices per order	£20
So there is an annual saving of the charity amounting to	£54. 15/-

Besides the foregoing annual disbursements, the interest of £200 left by the said Dr Hall is to be lent, interest free, to young men, newly out of apprenticeships.

It appears further from the said report that on 1st November 1773, there was a balance due to the charity amounting to the sum of £956. 13. 9 as per the following particulars:

Amount of arrears accounted good in the tenants hands November 1773	£610. 14. 4
Ditto in late tenants hands, feared to be bad or irrecoverable	60. 0. 0.
Balance in agent's hands	104. 5. 3.
Amount of Bond-debts	131. 14. 2.
Mr McAllister and Major Burton's Bond	50. 0. 0.

## II

It is clear from the foregoing return that separate schools for boys and girls had been established in Limerick under the terms of Dr. Jeremiah Hall's will of 1687, and that the schoolmaster and schoolmistress were being paid at the rates set out in the will, viz., £10 a year. It would, in fact, appear from a work published in 1787 that the almshouse and schools were then being conducted in a new building which had been erected in 1761 in replacement of that built by Dr. Hall as mentioned in his will. The compiler of this work states:

It appears this charity has been so well conducted, though the income in 1733 was only sufficient to pay eight men and eight women, besides answering the other appointments by the will, yet it has been gradually increased so that a new house was built in the year 1761, at the expense of upwards of five hundred pounds, for the reception of poor men and women, and for apartments for the schoolmaster and schoolmistress, and a chapel where the clergyman reads prayers twice a week.<sup>12</sup>

The Commissioners, set up under an Act of Grattan's Parliament in 1788 to inquire into all schools of public or private foundation,<sup>13</sup> found twenty boys and twenty girls in the schools, and that these were "instructed and bound out with apprentice fees of two guineas each." The master at the date of this inquiry was Henry Bowen and the mistress Sarah Gault.<sup>14</sup> The next reference to the schools is contained in the report of the Commissioners set up in 1806 under an Act of the British Parliament which

<sup>12</sup> Ferrar, *History of Limerick*, Limerick 1787.

<sup>13</sup> 28 Geo. II, c. 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Report of Commrs. of Irish Educ. Inquiry*, 1791—included in vol. II: Evidence, *Report of Endowed Schools (Ireland) Commission*, 1855-58, p. 377.

revived the Act of 1788 passed by the Dublin Parliament. These Commissioners stated that :

Doctor Jeremiah Hall, in the year 1687, left a very large house, and several other concerns in the City of Limerick, for a School-house for the accommodation of twenty poor boys and twenty poor girls, and bequeathed a perpetual annuity of ten pounds per annum to the master thereof, the same sum to the mistress, and ten pounds for the repairs to the house. The Schools are stated to us to be regularly kept, according to the will of Doctor Hall. The salaries of the master and mistress have been raised to £15 each, but from what fund we were not informed.<sup>15</sup>

The total of the rents for the concerns in Limerick in 1811 was £302. 5/- paid by the following:

Reps. of Thomas Pearse	£ 8
new Quaker Meeting House	6
Reps. of Robert Davis	3 10/-
do. Alderman Twigg	14 10/-
do. M. Wilkinson	2
do. A. Vincent	20
do. A. Roche	5
do. Bradford and Bishop	6
do. B. Barrington	20
Corporation of Limerick	32 10/-
Charles Harrison	24
do.	16
Reps. of Jane Davis	2
do. Alderman Sargent	15
Samuel Moor	45 10/-
Reps. of Widow Crens	16 10/-
do. Thomas Mensell	18
do. Alderman Higgins	3 15/-
do. Chris. C. Davis	44

The original return of 1811 from which the foregoing particulars have been extracted, states that "As the school-master's and mistresses' salaries were not sufficient to maintain their families, they have always been permitted to have a separate part of their schools distinct from the charity side, to receive and instruct some pupils for payment and had very respectable schools for many years, but that part of the town having been deserted for some years back by most of the respectable inhabitants, the schools fell away, and the master and mistress not being able to support their families, the master's yearly salary was raised to twenty guineas and the mistress, who had some little advantage by the needlework of the pupils, to fifteen pounds commencing from Christmas 1810." The expenditure from the charity for the year 1811 was recorded as follows:

Schoolmaster	£ 21
Schoolmistress	15
Thirteen poor men @ £5	65
Twenty-four poor women @ £5	120
Chaplain	15
Keeping House clean and in repair, with pens, ink, books and paper	20
Releasing poor prisoners	10
Agent	20
Quit rents	4 13. 3.
Firing	11 7. 6.
	<hr/>
	£302 0. 9.

<sup>15</sup> *Thirteenth Report of the Commrs. of the Board of Educ. in Ireland, 1812, p. 317.*

The interest on a sum of £581. 6/- due from the Corporation was applied towards the payment of apprenticeship fees, and the agent held a bond for the sum of £796. 11. 3 which also bore interest. The names of the thirteen poor men and of the twenty-four poor women have been recorded as were the names of the twenty poor boys and twenty poor girls on the rolls of the schools as on the 1st of October 1811. These were:

Boys

John Hunter	Fran. Lewin	Jno. Rainer	Ed. Fitzgerald
Jno. Allen	Standh. Gibson	Willm. Jackson	Fran. McNamara
Chas. Gordon	Geo. Gordon	Geo. Brew	Jno. Lee
Geo. Lee	Will. Gibson	Chas. Maley	Jno. Lewin
Frans. Carr	Frans. Fitzsimons	Thos. Knight	Thos. Jackson

Girls

Maria Caffren	Jane Pickly	Anne Martin	Margt. Martin
Cathrn. Martin	Anne Brookes	Jane Brookes	Mary Bourke
Mary Brew	Jane Brew	Anne Green	Mary Green
Mary Gordon	Mary Tayler	Rose Tayler	Margt. Smyth
Margt. Lewin	Eliza Bernard	Eliz. Gibson	Mary Allen

From March 1812, because of the rise in the cost of living and the further decrease in the numbers of fee-paying pupils, the master's salary was increased to twenty-five guineas p.a., and from March 1815 it was further raised to thirty guineas. The school-mistress's remuneration was not increased as presumably she was in receipt of increased benefits resulting from the children's work in lace-making.

In 1824 the master of the boys' school was John O'Neil and the mistress of the girls' school was Jane Wilson. The master's total income was stated to be £34. 2. 6 and that of the mistress as £22. 15/-. They each had twenty free pupils, and both were Protestants. There were, however, three other schools in Nicholas Street in that year. All three were pay schools under Catholic teachers. One of these schools, of which John Herbert was master, had seventy pupils—fifty boys and twenty girls. Ten of the seventy pupils were Protestants and the rest Catholics. Another school, kept by Patrick Coghlan, had forty-four pupils—twenty-six boys and eighteen girls. The third school, of which Mary Sheppard was mistress, had seventeen pupils—two boys and fifteen girls.<sup>16</sup> The following notice was published in the year 1827 :

Doctor Hall's Alms-House, Nicholas Street—About the beginning of last century, Jeremy Hall, Esq., LL.D., a member of the Common Council of Limerick bequeathed certain ground rents in this city to the following benevolent and useful purposes . . . . Under wise management the property has been rendered fully efficient to answer all the objects in Doctor Hall's will; and in 1761 the present neat and convenient edifice was erected, which contains apartments for thirteen men and twelve women, who receive each five pounds a year, school rooms, with apartments for the teacher, and a chapel, where a clergyman of the established Church celebrates divine service twice a week. According to a return made to Bishop Elrington in 1821, the net annual income of this Alms House was £433. 2. 6.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Second Report of the Comms. of Irish Educ. Inquiry*, 1826, pp. 1068-9.

<sup>17</sup> FitzGerald and McGregor, *History of Limerick*, vol. II, Dublin 1827, pp. 604-5. The situation of the alms-house in Nicholas Street is indicated (No. 55) on the plan prefixed to this work.

The schools were inspected on behalf of the Endowed Schools (Ireland) Commissioners on the 9th of August by Arthur Sharman Crawford, Assistant Commissioner, his reports were:

Mary Street, Dr Hall's Boys School—The education given in the school is in amount and quality rather above the average. The pupils seem to have a very fair knowledge of geography and of English grammar; and in English dictation four out of six pupils wrote a sentence with perfect accuracy. They are also well instructed in arithmetic; but in consequence of the absence of the older boys I had not an opportunity of testing their proficiency in Euclid and the extra branches. The school is frequently visited by the Dean and other clergymen; but there seems to be a want of fixed rules for the master and of stated inspections and examinations. The management of the school seems to be entirely left with the master; but it is, in many respects conducted on good principles.

Mary Street, Dr Hall's Girls School—The general observations which I have made in reference to the male school are applicable to this one, but the standard of education in this school is very low. The pupils were generally very young, indeed, but still there was a deficiency of knowledge among a few of the older ones, which I thought was not to be accounted for, except by the fact, which was mentioned to me, that the attendance of the pupils was very irregular. In some of the branches of education the teacher of the male school instructs the pupils of this school, and in these I observed a great inferiority to that exhibited by the pupils in the male school. The girls read very imperfectly, had no knowledge of grammar, but seemed to have some of geography.<sup>18</sup>

There were forty-five children on the roll of the boys' school on the date of this inspection, of whom seven were Catholics; and the curriculum comprised reading, writing, English grammar, geography, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, mensuration, navigation and book-keeping. In the girls school there were thirty-two pupils of whom five were Catholics, and as well as 'the three R's' the instruction included English grammar, geography, plain needlework and knitting. In their general report the Commissioners referred to the administration of the endowment in 1791, and continued:

The Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests subsequently found it necessary to take proceedings with respect to this endowment, and in 1834 obtained a decree. The estate of the charity has since been under their control. It consists of house property, stated to be rapidly deteriorating in value, but now worth nearly £200 a year; of this, the agent to the property, and manager of the establishment, is paid £50, and a bailiff £10. Besides house property, there is a sum of £379 of three per cent stock belonging to the institution, but no annual aid is afforded from this source, and it is to be presumed that the dividends are suffered to accumulate.

Our Assistant Commissioner reports that the state of the boys' school is satisfactory, but that of the girls' school, not satisfactory. As there appears to be no efficient control exercised over the schools, the good condition of that for the boys must be attributed altogether to the master . . . Besides neglect in the management of the schools on the part of those in charge of the endowment, there seems also to be inefficiency in the management of the charity estate, which, it is stated, is deteriorating in value.

In connexion with the deterioration of the house property in this case and that of the Blue School, we are of opinion that house property, requiring, as it must, constant vigilance and expenditure, is not a suitable investment for trustees of charities, and that they should be enabled to dispose of it, and lay out the produce on land or head rents.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Report of Endowed Schools (Ireland). Commission*, vol. III: Tables, pp. 342-3 and 354-5.

<sup>19</sup> *Report of Endowed Schools (Ireland) Commission*, 1855-58, dated 1st February 1858.



The above strictures, published in 1858, constrained the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests to examine further the then existing arrangements for the administration of the Dr. Jeremy Hall endowment. There ensued between them and the local overseers in Limerick a prolonged correspondence eventually resulting in Court proceedings. Under a deed of conveyance dated 18th March 1843, the property of the endowment had been transferred to the old Board of Bequests, and in 1845 it was transferred *in invitum* to the Commissioners. They completed, in 1847, various repairs to the alms-house or school-building and other buildings, but rents were not forthcoming in the following years because of the continuing dilapidation of the houses which were for letting. Following the publication of the *Report of the Endowed Schools Commission 1855-58*, the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests sought in 1862 the opinion of the law Officers on the desirability of "proceeding for a scheme." Because of legal complications these proceedings were protracted, and it was not till the 23rd of May 1871 that the Court of Chancery settled a scheme whereby the local management was again placed in the hands of the Bishop, Mayor, and Sheriff of Limerick, all for the time being, and two other overseers. This scheme provided, in accordance with the founder's will, that an alms-house and a school for boys and girls be kept in the alms-house building, that a loan fund for apprentices, with a capital of £200 Irish, and a fund of £10 Irish per annum for the relief of poor debtors, should be maintained, and it provided that £250, but no more, should be expended upon the repairs of the house property and the building housing the alms-house and schools. After paying the costs of obtaining the scheme, no funds were available for effecting it, except £216 Consols and £256 Government 3% Stock. It transpired that some of the houses were in such dangerous condition that the City Engineer required that they should be taken down, and that the monies still available to the charity were insufficient to cover the costs of all the necessary repairs to the rest of the buildings. The master (Russell) of the mixed school which was being conducted in the alms-house building at this time, and who was in receipt of a salary of £50 p.a. under the scheme of 1871, now retired on a pension of £10 p.a. which was granted to him by the overseers, who now proposed, 19th July 1876, that the school be changed to "an infant school for children from three to ten years old." A school-mistress was accordingly appointed, but the continuing structural deterioration of the alms-house building and of the remaining house property, and the lack of sufficient funds to defray the costs of building repairs, obliged all the overseers, meeting on the 20th of April 1878, to address a joint communication to the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests in the following terms:

We, the undersigned overseers of Dr Jeremy Hall's charity, are of opinion that the scheme of the Right Honourable the Master of the Rolls, for the management and administration of the trusts under Dr Jeremy Hall's will, cannot advantageously be worked out.

(1) As regards that portion of the scheme (clause 4) which relates to the Loan Fund, we are of opinion that it cannot be worked, because there are actually in Limerick no apprentices of a class to whom we should be disposed to make loans, the practice of taking apprentices having been nearly, if not entirely, given up:

(2) but if there were at any time apprentices setting up in trade or business we have good reason to believe that they would not accept small loans, if obliged to give such security as we should most certainly insist upon.

(3) The uselessness of this branch of the charity is demonstrated by the fact that when the Bishop of Limerick asked the trustees of the Jubilee Loan Fund, some time ago, whether

that institution could be made more useful if its capital were increased, so as to enable it to grant a greater number of loans to poor persons, he was answered that it had already the means to give as much accommodation in this way as was prudent and desirable.

(4) The expence of a clerk and fees would assuredly swallow up the greater part, if not all, the sum under this head. Loan funds are now so numerous that deserving young apprentices have no difficulty in obtaining loans at a very low rate of interest with reasonable security.

Secondly: with regard to clause (5) which states that the Commissioners may allocate annually £10 Irish to redeem poor debtors, it seems plain to us that the new Debtors' Act renders this provision unnecessary.

Such being our opinion, we suggest that the sums of money devoted to those two branches of the charity should be set free, and made available for rebuilding those houses in front of the alms-house which are now roofless and in ruins. We have reason to believe that a large return would result from this outlay—probably as much as eight or ten per cent.<sup>20</sup>

Charles Dawson, under-Sheriff of Limerick, had written to the overseers on the 30th of December 1876, representing the urgent need of repairs to the fabric of the alms-house, and pointing out that the schools held in it appeared to be then quite unnecessary "since there existed in the neighbourhood numerous free schools for members of all denominations." Both the overseers and the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests, feeling that the continued existence of the alms-house presented the over-riding consideration, accepted the submissions of Mr. Dawson, and on the 18th of December 1878 the Commissioners ordered:

That the Board's solicitor be instructed to bring the Scheme of 23 May 1878, before the Court, with a view to its revision and alteration in such form as the Board's counsel may advise; that the petition pray the Court to abolish the present school as unnecessary and impracticable, and to apply the portion of the income heretofore expended on the school towards the maintenance of the alms-house; also that the Board shall be at liberty to expend a sum sufficient to put the alms-house into proper repair, and, if necessary, to enlarge the accommodation; that it further pray that the portion of the income heretofore set aside for poor debtors shall also be applied in sustainment of the alms-house; that the loan fund branch of the charity, and the fact of its non-application by the present overseers, be specially brought under the notice of the Court, with a view to its deciding whether it will continue or alter its future application.<sup>21</sup>

The preliminary proceedings in the Court of Chancery were "stopped for affidavits as to whether the school could be worked or not." Finally, on the 24th of June 1880, the High Court sanctioned an amending Scheme to the Scheme of 25th April 1871. Under this amending Scheme, the income accruing annually to the charity (now about £60 a year) is applied by a local board of overseers whose main concern is the maintenance of the alms-house. The new scheme authorised the suppression of the school, and the mistress, whose appointment was for a temporary period of six months, pending the rearrangement of the scheme,<sup>22</sup> had her appointment terminated. The pupils were dispersed to neighbouring schools.

<sup>20</sup> *Report of Endowed Schools (Ireland) Commission, 1879-81, vol. I, p. 155.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. II: Evidence, p. 377.