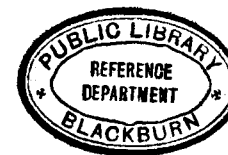


HISTORY  
OF THE  
DISTRESS IN BLACKBURN.

1861-5.



HISTORY  
OF THE  
DISTRESS IN BLACKBURN,  
1861-5,  
AND THE MEANS ADOPTED FOR ITS RELIEF.

---

BY  
WILLIAM GOURLAY.

---

DEDICATED TO  
ROBERT HOPWOOD HUTCHINSON, ESQ.,

*Mayor and Chairman of the Relief Committee, 1861-2,*

AND

JAMES BARLOW STEWARDSON STURDY, ESQ.,

*Mayor, 1862-3, and Chairman of the Relief Committee, 1862-5.*

---

"IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PRAISE TOO HIGHLY THE MUTE AND TRANQUIL COURAGE WITH WHICH THE FACTORY POPULATION SEEMED TO MAKE UP THEIR MINDS FROM THE FIRST TO ENDURE LOYALLY AND UNCOMPLAININGLY THE HARD FATE THAT HAD BEFALLEN THEM."  
—*Lancashire's Lesson*, by W. T. M. TORRENS.

---

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1865.



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3.  
TO ROBERT HOPWOOD HUTCHINSON, ESQ., AND JAMES BARLOW STEWARDSON  
STURDY, ESQ.

---

As Chairmen in succession of the Relief Committee during the whole period of what can happily now be spoken of as the late distress, I dedicate these pages to you, and feel honoured by the privilege of thus associating your names with mine in such a work. You know the motives which prompted me to begin, and are thoroughly competent to judge of the success with which I have accomplished, what has proved to me an interesting task. And while you may detect in my narrative much that might be improved, I hope you will find little that is deserving of censure, and nothing that can destroy the friendship which enables me to subscribe myself as

Obliged and faithfully

Yours,

WM. GOURLAY.

Blackburn, July 1st, 1865.

## PREFACE.

---

This work was undertaken at the suggestion of a few friends, who believed that a history of the late distress and the means adopted for its relief would be acceptable to many, both of those who were themselves sufferers from the effects of the Cotton Famine, and of those who, by personal exertion and pecuniary contributions, helped to mitigate its severity. With what success the task has been performed, the public must decide. I have endeavoured to give a fair and impartial statement of the extent of the distress in the town; and also to embrace in my narrative a notice of all that was devised by the benevolent for the relief of our suffering thousands. I have been very much encouraged in my labour by the cheerful alacrity with which almost all to whom I made application supplied me with the information I required; and while I regret that in a few cases I was denied the fuller particulars I solicited, or the information was delayed beyond the time when I could make it available, the completeness of my history has been thereby only very slightly impaired; and what I most regret in such cases is, that I have thereby been deprived of the opportunity of recording efforts and services which I was desirous should be known and acknowledged.

Although the interest of such a work, if interest it possesses, must be chiefly local, I am not without hope that the book may prove acceptable to many who have no connection with either Blackburn or Lancashire. Thousands there are to whom Lancashire is a *terra incognita*, who yet felt and manifested a lively interest in the sufferings of her industrious operatives during the period of the Cotton Famine, but have been able to form only the most vague conceptions with respect to the depth and extent of the distress which they then interested themselves in relieving. The returns of the Poor Law Board, and the reports of the Manchester Central



Executive Committee, have recorded the severity of the distress in figures which are bewildering. In the following pages, while I have not overlooked or neglected statistics, I have endeavoured to give them life and meaning—to tell what the figures import, and so to convey to the reader an intelligible notion of the destitution within the limits of the Borough of Blackburn, and the various expedients by which the consequent suffering was mitigated or relieved. The work may be regarded as a microscopic view of the condition of say one-thirtieth part of the cotton districts during the period of the Cotton Famine; and the reader has but to imagine thirty such histories, each the record of the experience of 63,000 inhabitants, to understand the aggregate of privation that had to be endured by the poor, and of effort and self-denial on the part of the more favourably circumstanced, during the lengthened period of commercial gloom extending from the close of 1861 to the spring of 1865. In saying this, I must not be understood to admit that the distress was everywhere else as severe, and the organisation for its relief as complete as in Blackburn; but simply that in a general way the history I have here given may be taken as exhibiting, within the limits to which my narrative is confined, something of what was done and suffered by a population of about two millions.

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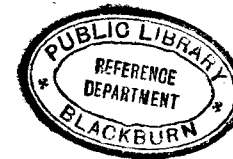
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## CHAPTER I.

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The Cotton famine, consequent on the American War, must ever be memorable in the annals of Lancashire. Far-seeing politicians had for years previous anticipated and predicted such a calamity; but their warnings were generally disregarded; a present prosperity blinded the manufacturing interest to the probabilities of future privation and distress. Isolated efforts, indeed, had at distant intervals been made to procure Cotton from other countries than the Southern states of the American Union, that so the dependence of Lancashire on one country, and on slave labour, for the raw material of her industry might be lessened; but these efforts resulted in considerable loss to the private enterprise by which they were suggested and carried out, and their success, as regards the object in view, was hardly appreciable. The agitation of the question in Chambers of Commerce, which finally resulted in the establishment of the Cotton Supply Association, betokened earnestness on the part of the few who achieved so much. But even then the cotton interest of the country

was but partially aroused. The lukewarmness of the great majority whom the question most intimately concerned, discouraged the energy and perseverance of those who would otherwise have gone into the matter with spirit. And large as was the organization thus set on foot for the purpose of securing to Lancashire a supply of cotton from every cotton producing country under the sun, and considerable as were the funds placed at its disposal, it was in no respect adequate to the emergency against which it was intended to provide. In the hope that the crisis which was to deprive them of American Cotton was still distant; and possibly with a vague notion that events would now and again, during a series of years, presage the catastrophe and afford the leisure to prepare for it, the spinners and manufacturers of Lancashire were content to build mills and fill them with machinery, and make every preparation for clothing the world in calico—omitting only the important preliminary of making sure that the cotton when required would be always available. Many, no doubt, honestly believed that demand would in this, as in so many other cases, always secure a supply; and others, perhaps, pleaded this doctrine as an excuse for their own negligence or indifference. But ultimately the calamity came in a manner quite unexpected, and with a suddenness that few anticipated and fewer still were prepared for.

The events in America during the last five years belong not to the history of Lancashire, much less of Blackburn, but to the history of the world. But Lancashire—next to the States which have been the scene of hostilities, and the people whose blood and ruin have fed the unnatural war—has suffered most from the terrible strife. And yet there are those of authority who assure us, that but for the calamity which deprived us of American Cotton, and inflicted untold misery on more than half a million of operatives, worse evils must have befallen us. We are told that in the natural course of events, whose operation was suspended or superseded by the outbreak of the American War, and the consequent scarcity of cotton, the bone and sinew of Lancashire must not only have experienced as great a scarcity of employment, but there would have been superadded the ruin of thousands in the higher walks of life, whose means during 1862-3 were largely taxed for the support, and in many cases cheerfully expended in the relief of the suffering and destitute. True as this is asserted to be of Lancashire, we are assured it is especially true of Blackburn, whose trade is chiefly with India. At the time referred to, the almost illimitable markets of that immense country

were very much overstocked, and adverse harvests had made the *Kyots* but very indifferent customers. In such circumstances, the returns from India, with shipments thither continuing at the rate to which they had attained prior to the American War, and the consequent dearth of cotton, must have been disastrous in the extreme. But although I am not prepared either to deny or affirm, that the consequences of the panic thus confidently asserted to have been inevitable, would have been as terrible as has been represented, it is some comfort, on a review of a calamity which is unparalleled, to feel, and, it may be, believe, that it might have been worse; and that rapid and unlooked for as was its approach and progress, it did not overwhelm us with the startling suddenness of a commercial crisis; and that great and prolonged as were the privations inflicted on the operatives, the employers were not so thoroughly prostrated in the common ruin as to be entirely helpless and totally unable to render to their dependants the succour naturally expected at their hands.

Of all the towns in Lancashire, I believe that Blackburn suffered most severely during the crisis. I speak not now of the actual misery endured by individuals and families, but of the amount of destitution that had to be relieved; and it appears to me that in all the returns, both official and non-official, which the distress in the cotton districts has called forth, this is a point which has been almost if not entirely overlooked. According to the census of 1861, the population of Blackburn was 63,126, and of this number about 25,000 were employed in the various branches of the cotton trade, in the mills and factories of the town and neighbourhood. It has been usual, and I believe the estimate to be a fair one, to regard each worker in a cotton factory, as representing also a non-worker—a superannuated parent or helpless child or the necessary attendant—so that the 25,000 workers in Blackburn, in 1861, represented a total of 50,000 persons, or 79 per cent. of the entire population, directly dependant upon one branch of industry. In addition to this, about 3000 persons employed in the various machine-making and engineering establishments in the town, and in other branches of trade more or less directly dependant upon the prosperity of the cotton manufacture, must be reckoned as having their fortune linked with that of the 25,000 cotton workers; and if we take the number of their dependants to be no greater in proportion than that of the cotton workers—although the higher rate of their earnings would warrant an estimate of at least one half more—we have 6,000 to add to the

50,000 cotton workers and their dependants, making a total of 56,000 persons, or about 89 per cent. of the total population of the Borough, whom the scarcity of cotton threatened with starvation and absolute ruin.

In the report of the Blackburn relief committee issued in October, 1864, the following is given as a "proximate estimate of the weekly earnings and the extent and value of the yarns and cloth produced in Blackburn" during the few years of good trade which preceded the cotton famine:

#### "WEEKLY WAGES.

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| 1,006,422 Spindles at 2-5ths of a penny per Spindle .....              | £1677  |
| 31,072 Looms at 5s. 3d. per Loom.....                                  | £8146  |
| Wages for the preparation connected with the Spinning Department ..... | £1677  |
| Wages for same in the Weaving Department, 31,072 Looms at 1s. 9d. .... | £2715  |
| Weekly Wages of Cotton Operatives .....                                | £14215 |
| Added to which 3,000 Mechanics, Engineers, &c., at 25s. per week ..... | £3750  |
| Making a total amount of Weekly Wages of.....                          | £17965 |

#### WEEKLY PRODUCTION.

With American Cotton at 6d. per lb., and Cloth prices at 1s. per lb., which are about the average for 10 years previous to the Cotton Famine for shirting qualities—the length and weight of Cloth, and its average value, we assume as follows:—

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| 31,072 Looms using each 45 lbs. of Yarn per week ...         | 1,398,240 lbs.   |
| 31,072 Looms producing each 260 yards of Cloth per week..... | 8,078,720 yards. |
| 1,398,240 lbs. of Cotton Cloth at 1s. per lb.....            | £69,912"         |

Mr. James Henderson, the Sub-Inspector of factories for the Blackburn District, in an interesting communication made by him to Mr. Redgrave, and embodied by that gentleman in his half-yearly report as Inspector of Factories, says: "To understand and appreciate the present position of the Blackburn Operative, it is necessary to consider his antecedents. During the prosperous years of the cotton trade, it was not an unusual thing to stumble on a family with an income of £5 or £6 a week. Young women could earn in many cases 18s., or 20s., a week, and lads of 16 years of age very little less. Such wages gave them the command, not only of the necessaries, but of many of the luxuries of life. They lived in comfortable cottages; of 12,913 assessments in Blackburn, less than 2000 are under £4, while there are about an equal number above £10; the

balance, or fully two thirds of the dwelling-houses, being rated at £10 inclusive, proves that the great bulk of the working population are comfortably housed." And in one of the sketches of Lancashire published in the "*Glasgow Weekly Herald*," which are understood to be from Mr. Henderson's facile pen, I find the following cases given as examples of the earnings of families engaged in the Cotton Trade, the writer premising that "these or similar ones have come under our own personal knowledge, and that throughout we have rather under than over-estimated the income of the family:—

#### "Example 1.—Family of Eight Persons.

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Husband, aged 45, Spinner, earns .....                  | £1 10 0 |
| Wife, aged 40, Winder .....                             | 0 14 0  |
| Two daughters, aged 22 and 20, Winders or Weavers ..... | 1 10 0  |
| Two sons, aged 18 and 16, Weavers or Piecers .....      | 1 10 0  |
| Two children, Half-Timers .....                         | 0 5 0   |
| Weekly income .....                                     | £5 9 0  |

In the majority of cases like this, where there are so many workers in a family, there are two or more children under age who earn nothing.

#### Example 2.—Family of Six.

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Husband, aged 40, Weaver .....           | £0 18 0 |
| Wife, aged 38, Warper .....              | 0 15 0  |
| Daughter, aged 18, Winder or Rover ..... | 0 12 0  |
| Son, aged 16, Weaver or Piecer .....     | 0 10 0  |
| Two children, Half-Timers .....          | 0 5 0   |
| Weekly income .....                      | £3 0 0  |

#### Example 3.—Family of Four.

|                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Husband, aged 30, Spinner ..... | £1 10 0 |
| Wife, aged 28, Weaver .....     | 0 15 0  |
| Two children under age.....     | 0 0 0   |
| Weekly income .....             | £2 5 0" |

Such being the position of Blackburn in regard to the staple trade of the County, a condition of almost entire dependence on its prosperity for the commercial life that made the good town so busy a hive of industry; and such being the earnings of the operatives, amongst whom provident habits are not prominent traits of character, the anticipation of a cotton famine was the anticipation of a most serious calamity. For it implied not only the semi-starvation of the 56,000 men, women, and children, whom I have shewn to be directly or indirectly dependent upon the cotton trade of the town for the means of their subsistence, but the ruin of almost all the small shopkeepers and their families, and such a serious encroachment upon the

ratepaying capabilities of the capitalists, side by side with the increasing demands made upon them for contributions, in the shape of poor rates and subscriptions, as must very soon reduce them to bankruptcy. We shall by and by see how deep and wide spread was the destitution in the town when the distress came upon us in its full severity; but meanwhile let us look at its progress, and trace the steps of that somewhat complicated but most effective organization which was ultimately devised for the relief of our suffering thousands.

During the autumn of 1861, the apprehension of a severe winter became very general in the town and neighbourhood. Short time commenced in some mills, in others the numbers employed were reduced, and in several there was a talk of stopping altogether. By the month of November the distress had made itself felt in the increased number of applicants to the Guardians for relief, and the increased amount of the relieving officers' weekly expenditure. In the Blackburn district of the Union, which includes, besides the Borough or Township of Blackburn, the Townships of Balderstone, Little Harwood, Mellor, Osbaldeston, Pleasington, Ramsgreave, and Witton, the numbers in receipt of out-door relief had increased, by the middle of November, from a normal average of 1,750 to 2,000, and the expenditure from about £80 to £92. On the 9th of November, Robert Hopwood Hutchinson, Esq., was elected Mayor of the Borough, and in the address to the Council in which he returned thanks for the honour of the appointment, he referred to the approaching season of gloom in terms which the event proved to be almost prophetic. He then announced his intention to give £200, to be distributed by the clergy and ministers of the town in the mitigation of any cases of distress which might come under their notice; and a few days afterwards this money was distributed, and was thus the precursor of the Relief Fund, for the collection and distribution of which a committee was subsequently organised.

The first steps towards the formation of a Relief Committee were taken by a few working men, who hardly appreciated the magnitude of the task they undertook, or the indispensable necessity of carrying with them in such a movement the influential members of the community. A general, but very mistaken, notion prevailed amongst the working classes of the town, that there was something disgraceful in accepting relief from the Guardians, but nothing at all derogatory to the independence on which they prided themselves, in accepting aid from an irresponsible committee, entrusted with the

distribution of the free-will offerings of the benevolent. Actuated by this feeling, a few leaders amongst the operatives made haste to call a meeting to consider the distress, and the means by which it was to be met and relieved; and they fixed the day and completed the arrangements for the meeting, before the wealthy and influential were either consulted respecting its object, or invited to take part in its proceedings. It was felt, however, by many, that as the Mayor had granted the use of the Town Hall for the purpose of the meeting, and had consented to preside, the meeting would possess an importance to which it was not otherwise entitled; and therefore it was arranged that the Mayor should call a preliminary meeting to consider the subject of the distress, and the steps which should be taken with respect to the projected public meeting, which was announced to take place on the evening of Thursday, the 21st of November. This preliminary meeting was held in the Mayor's parlour, on Monday, the 18th of November. There was an influential gathering, including W. H. Hornby, Esq., M.P., and James Pilkington, Esq., M.P., and it was resolved that the Town Clerk should write to the promoters of the public meeting, suggesting that it be deferred, as the feeling of the gentlemen assembled was that it was premature, there not yet being any distress in the borough which the ordinary means of relief were unable to overtake, and nothing as yet to warrant the extraordinary means of relief which the promoters of the public meeting seemed to contemplate.

The Town Clerk wrote as requested, but the meeting having been advertised, and the day fixed being so close at hand, it was considered by the promoters inexpedient, if not impossible, to either abandon or postpone it. The meeting therefore took place as originally announced. The Mayor presided, and explained that the meeting had been got up by a committee of working men, and with them alone the responsibility rested. On the motion of the Rev. C. W. Woodhouse, Incumbent of St. Peter's, seconded by Alderman Baynes, the following resolution was passed:—

"That this meeting views with considerable fear the present extraordinary depression in the cotton trade, and deeply regrets that spinners and manufacturers are compelled, in consequence of the high price of the raw material, to close to some extent their establishments, a step which cannot, in the opinion of this meeting, be either desirable or satisfactory to themselves, but which must inevitably entail a fearful amount of distress among the operatives, who are thereby thrown out of employment."

On the motion of Mr. C. Tiplady, seconded by Mr. C. Duxbury, it was further resolved:—

“That this meeting is of opinion that a large amount of distress already prevails amongst the unemployed operatives in Blackburn, and whilst expressing its sympathy for their sufferings, considers it highly necessary that immediate steps should be taken to provide them with relief, and to avert as much as possible the effects which the commercial depression threatens still further to entail.”

Another resolution was passed in favour of a subscription being commenced, and a committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements “for establishing some institution where provisions should be periodically distributed for the necessities of the distressed.”

The first, and a merely preliminary meeting of the committee thus appointed was held in the Council Chamber, on Monday, the 9th of December, when ward committees were appointed to canvass for subscriptions, and it was decided to leave the distribution of the funds so collected “to a committee to be appointed by the subscribers, and the mode of such distribution to be arranged by the subscribers and the committee, who are also to appoint a treasurer or treasurers.” It does not appear that any meeting was ever held pursuant to this resolution. The canvass for subscriptions had been pretty successful, and the distress being now rapidly on the increase, the original committee, with some volunteer accessions, met again on the 16th of January, 1862, for the purpose of considering the propriety of distributing the funds in hand; and it was resolved, in the first instance, to establish a soup kitchen, and a sub-committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements.

The soup kitchen sub-committee lost no time. Premises, admirably adapted for the purpose, were found in Cleaver Street, and were kindly placed at the disposal of the relief committee by Messrs. Yates; Alderman Boyle and Mr. James Eastwood lent to the sub-committee copper boilers in which to make the soup, and on Wednesday, the 22nd of January, the first distribution of soup took place. The quantity made and distributed was 640 quarts. The Mayor, through the clergy and ministers of the town, gave tickets for 560 quarts, and the rest was sold at 1d. per quart. It may be interesting here to note that the composition of 130 gallons of the soup was as follows: beef, 120 lbs.; barley, 60 lbs.; groats, 20 lbs.; peas, 60 lbs.; onions, 18 lbs.; carrots, 20 lbs.; turnips, 10 lbs.; salt, 10 lbs.; cayenne pepper,  $\frac{1}{4}$  oz.; white pepper 3 oz. The cost was 5d. per gallon.

The distribution of soup was continued from this period up to May, 1863, and the following table shews the quantity and value of

the soup supplied during that lengthened period, reckoning the cost of the soup as  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per quart, which is a fraction higher than the price given above, 5d. per gallon:—

### SOUP RETURN.

|                 | QUARTS.             | £    | s. | d.             |
|-----------------|---------------------|------|----|----------------|
| 1862.           |                     |      |    |                |
| January .....   | 13064               | 81   | 13 | 0              |
| February .....  | 42105               | 263  | 3  | $1\frac{1}{2}$ |
| March .....     | 39133               | 244  | 11 | $7\frac{1}{2}$ |
| April .....     | 20313               | 126  | 19 | $1\frac{1}{2}$ |
| May .....       | 16115               | 100  | 14 | $4\frac{1}{2}$ |
| June .....      | 12602               | 78   | 15 | 3              |
| July .....      | 12948               | 80   | 18 | 6              |
| August .....    | 10166               | 63   | 10 | 9              |
| September ..... | 11090               | 69   | 6  | 3              |
| October .....   | 17121               | 107  | 0  | $1\frac{1}{2}$ |
| November .....  | 26178 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 163  | 12 | 3              |
| December .....  | 17202 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 107  | 10 | $4\frac{1}{2}$ |
| 1863.           |                     |      |    |                |
| January .....   | 15316 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 95   | 14 | 6              |
| February .....  | 13721 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 85   | 15 | 3              |
| March .....     | 13380               | 83   | 12 | 6              |
| April .....     | 8804                | 55   | 0  | 6              |
| May .....       | 4521                | 28   | 5  | $1\frac{1}{2}$ |
|                 | 293781              | 1836 | 2  | $7\frac{1}{2}$ |

The total cost is here returned as £1,836 2s.  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d., but the total sum received for the sale of soup tickets was £1,277, shewing a deficit on the soup account of £559 2s.  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. I may venture to remark, however, that no part of the relief expenditure was productive of more substantial benefit than this loss on the soup account. Large families, with daily narrowing incomes, by means of the wholesome food provided at the soup kitchen—for which they paid without feeling or having any occasion to regard themselves as in any sense paupers or dependants—were enabled to sustain themselves in health and strength, and make their scanty earnings suffice for their necessities, for a much longer period than would otherwise have been possible. And many single men, who were reduced to a pittance of 2s., or 2s. 6d., per week, found the advantage of being able to procure a wholesome and substantial meal for a penny—for the soup kitchen

sub-committee soon made arrangements for supplying, for consumption on the premises, a pint of soup and a slice of bread for that sum.

While the soup kitchen sub-committee were thus successfully fulfilling the task entrusted to them, the general committee were assiduously engaged in organising a system of relief adequate to the probable exigencies of the crisis. At a meeting held on the 31st of January, they decided upon the following as the scale according to which relief should be given,—the limits of their resources, rather than the requirements of the necessitous, leading them to determine on a scale which soon proved utterly inadequate:—6d. per head per week for families of one, two, or three; 1s. 10d. for four; 2s. 2d. for five; 2s. 6d. for six; 2s. 9d. for seven; 3s. for eight; 3s. 3d. for nine; 3s. 6d. for ten; 3s. 9d. for eleven; 4s. for twelve; 4s. 3d. for thirteen; 4s. 6d. for fourteen; 4s. 9d. for fifteen; and 5s. for families of sixteen and upwards. It was also decided that the relief should be given in bread and meal, supplementary to any other sources of income, but in no case was the income of the family to be supplemented beyond a total of 1s. per head. A preliminary distribution of meal to 200 of the most necessitous families in each of the six wards into which the Borough is divided, was made during the week-ending 8th February, at the rate of 4 lbs. to each family; and the systematic distribution of bread and meal, according to the scale of relief above mentioned, was commenced on Monday, the 10th of February, when the poor of St. Paul's and St. Mary's wards received 2,430 lbs. of meal, and 2,160 lbs. of bread; and was continued on the Thursday and Friday following, on the former of which days the poor of St. Peter's and Park wards received 2,086 lbs. of meal, and 2,400 lbs. of bread; and on the latter, the poor of Trinity and St. John's wards 2,640 lbs. of meal, and 2,955 lbs. of bread. And for many months the arrangement was continued, by which the distribution of relief was made weekly,—to St. Paul's and St. Mary's wards on Monday, to St. Peter's and Park on Thursday, and to Trinity and St. John's on Friday.

The scene at the distribution of the relief is thus described by the Rev. Scott F. Surtees, rector of Spotbrough, the originator and supporter of the straw plaiting class, in a letter to *The Times* :—

"I was present at Blackburn at the distribution of relief by one of the committees. The organization was perfect; from 800 to 1,000 persons passed through the room in 1½ hours, or at the longest 1¾. Each applicant on behalf of a family in that short space of time received flour, bacon, money, and a ticket for coal. The demeanour on both sides was all that could be wished. Nothing could be more

orderly and quiet than the behaviour of the recipients; their tone, manner, and temper were entirely satisfactory. I could not be mistaken on this point. I purposely placed myself where I could see each one come up to the pay table, and, while I was talking to the Executive or asking questions of the bystanders, was carefully scrutinizing every countenance as they filed before us. There was only one case where there seemed any 'hitch' or disappointment, and I noticed more than one member of the committee go to the poor woman, who was crying, and speak with her himself. True, there was no obsequiousness, or touching the hat or taking off the cap, but that no one acquainted with the North country would expect or wish—least of all committees of Lancashire gentlemen, millowners, and tradesmen, who have for so many months given their time and labour to organise and superintend this gigantic work."

At this period a very large increase had been made to the number of persons obtaining relief from the Guardians. I have already said that about the middle of November, 1861, the recipients of parochial relief in the Blackburn district of the Union, had increased from a normal average of 1,750 to 2,000; in the three months from that date the numbers had increased to 6,000, and the weekly cost from £93 to £352—a ratio of increase somewhat appalling. The Guardians were at this time engaged in the erection of the new Union Workhouse, and acting according to the instructions of the Poor Law Board, as laid down in the "out-door relief regulation order," the able-bodied applicants for relief were sent to labour on the workhouse site, under superintendents appointed by the Guardians. This arrangement, most wholesome in theory, was in practice the cause of much unpleasantness. The amount of work done bore no proportion at all to the amount of money paid; idleness, and a total want of discipline, characterised the conduct of the labourers; and the superintendents felt compelled to discharge many of the most indolent and unruly. The men thus discharged were cut off from relief, and on renewing their application to the Guardians, were either refused aid altogether or sent to the workhouse. But the workhouse orders were loathed and detested, and the men appealed from what they considered the unfeeling harshness of the Guardians, to the sympathetic tenderness of the Mayor, (R. H. Hutchinson, Esq.,) Chairman of the relief committee. They pleaded their cause so eloquently and convincingly that his worship headed a deputation to the Guardians at their meeting on Saturday, the 1st of March, and remonstrated against the harsh and unfair treatment to which he believed the men had been subjected. The Guardians explained that the men were idle and had been discharged on that account on Wednesday, and when they went



to the relieving officer, he told them he would bring their case before the Board on Saturday; but they demanded instant relief, and he gave them orders for the workhouse, which was all he was empowered to do. A long conversation took place on the subject, the result of which was a general request by the Mayor to the Guardians to deal liberally with the poor during the present distress, and not to enforce the workhouse test very stringently, in order that those who had houses of furniture might not be reduced to the necessity of selling or pledging it for the relief of their immediate necessities.

But this interview, and the apparently amicable result of it, did not allay the uneasiness which had been excited. The remonstrances of the deputation, reflecting as they did on the consideration and humanity of the Guardians, drew forth some rather warm expressions in vindication of their conduct, with correspondingly severe reflections on the conduct of the operatives, whose cause the Mayor had espoused. Of course the Mayor, and the gentlemen who acted with him in the matter, gave the Guardians full credit for dealing fairly and impartially, as between the rate-payers and the recipients of relief, in the very onerous and difficult circumstances in which they were placed, and were probably satisfied with the explanation which had been given to them. But not so the unemployed operatives; who regarded their fellow workmen, who had been discharged from the workhouse site and then refused all relief except orders for the workhouse, as in some sense martyrs, and the Guardians as their persecutors. Influenced by this feeling, a meeting of the unemployed was held in the Rechabites' Hall, on the evening of Monday, the 10th of March, "to take part in the vote of thanks to the deputation who waited upon the Board of Guardians, and to hear the conduct of the Board criticised." Thanks were voted to the deputation, and it was resolved—"That this meeting pledges itself to use every effort to unseat those Guardians who have justly rendered themselves unpopular, and to elect in their stead men who have a proper consideration for the claims of the aged, the infirm, and the destitute." Nothing came of this resolution; the personnel of the Board of Guardians underwent no change; and the Board adhered to the practice of setting the able-bodied to work in return for their relief. The numbers so employed increased rapidly, and besides digging on the workhouse site, labour was found for a portion in Shorrock Delf, the Guardians having undertaken certain work there by contract. A special subscription was also entered into for the

purpose of employing a portion of the able-bodied in laying out the Infirmary Grounds, the labourers in this latter case being under the superintendence of Mr. James Thompson, and other members of the relief committee. But the secret had not yet been discovered by which the factory "hands" could be made, what they subsequently became, contented and industrious out-door labourers.

On the last day of May there was a turnout of the whole of those employed both by the Guardians and the Relief Committee, because one of the overseers employed by the Guardians had told the men under his charge that they would not be paid for time which they were prevented working on account of the weather. On learning, however, that this was an unauthorised statement, they returned to their work. On the 3rd of July there was a turnout of the men, numbering between 200 and 300, employed in Shorrock Delf, the cause being the discharge of three or four of their number on the previous day on account of disorderly conduct. The whole body, a rather formidable array, marched through the Town to the Union Offices; and having completed their demonstration, were afterwards, by a little persuasion induced to return to their work. On Monday, the 29th of September, there was another turnout, and between 300 and 400 held a meeting in the Market Place, and sent a letter to the Clerk to the Guardians requesting that the Guardians would use their influence to put an end to the "labour test," and would increase their relief and make it more equal. On the Saturday following, a deputation from this meeting appeared before the Board to urge the concessions for which they had already applied through the Clerk. In reply to their request the Board explained that the labour was not a "test," but merely an equivalent for the relief given; but in order to put an end to the uneasiness, all work would be withdrawn from that day, and they (the able-bodied) would require in future to apply for relief in the ordinary way, when each case would be dealt with according to its merits and the necessities of the family. Thus terminated the efforts of the Guardians to establish a system of out-door labour for the unemployed; and although they adhered to the system while urged by other Unions in the cotton districts to join in a remonstrance to the Poor Law Board against the order which required labour to be given in return for relief, they declined to revert to the system, after they had thus tried and abandoned it, although strongly urged to do so by Mr. H. B. Farnall, the special Commissioner to the distressed districts.

The following account in the vernacular, of how the men fared at their out-door work, appeared in the columns of the *Manchester Examiner and Times*:—

"Some on 'em gets knocked up neaw an' then, an' they han to stop a-whoam a day or two; an' some on 'em cannot ston gettin' weat through—it mays 'em ill; an' here an' theer one turns up at doesn't like the job at o'; they'd rayther clem. There is at's both willin' an' able; thoose are likely to get a better job, somewheer. There's othersome at's willin' enough, but connot ston th' racket. They dun middlin, tak 'em one wi' another, an' considerin' that they're noan use't to th' wark. Th' hommer fo's leet wi' 'em; but we dunnot like to push 'em so mich, yo known, for what's a shillin' a day? Aw know some odd uns i' this delph at never tastes fro mornin' till they'n done at neet,—an' says nought abeawt it, noather. But then, they'n families. Besides, fro wake lads, sich as yon, at's bin train't to nought but leet wark, an' a warm place to wortch in, what can yo expect? We've had a decal o' bother wi' 'em abeawt bein' paid for weat days, when the couldn't wortch. They wur not paid for weat days at th' furst; an' they geet it into their yeds at Shorrock were to blame. Shorrock's th' paymaister, under th' Guardians. But, then, he nobbut went accordin' to orders, yo known. At last th' Board saddle't that they mut be paid for weat an' dry, an' there's bin quietness sin'. They wortchen fro eight to five; an', sometimes, when they'n done, they drill'n o' together i'th' road yon, just like sodjurs, an' then they walken away i' procession."

## CHAPTER II.

*Solicitude of the Clergy for the girls and young women—Sewing Class established in a cottage—Meeting at the Vicarage—Appeal to the beneficed Clergy for aid—Success of the Appeal—Sewing Classes formed at the Town Hall and Mechanics' Institution—The Vicar on the denominational system (note)—Sewing Classes formed in connection with Dissenting Congregations—Roman Catholic classes formed—Agitation in favour of mixed classes—A "Churchman's" Letter—The Sewing Classes recognised by the relief committee—The Strangers' Friend Society—Non-sectarian class—Classes for Married Women—Mrs. A. I. Robinson's class—Mrs. Potter's scheme for the employment of Factory Girls as Domestic Servants—The Orphanage—Miss Freeman—Straw Plaiting Class.*

The consequences of such a large number of the unemployed being thrown upon the streets, with nothing to occupy their time, and with nothing to divert their attention from brooding over the gloom of the present, and the still greater gloom of the future, might have been very serious. But fortunately, other agencies had been at work during the summer, and other organizations had come into successful operation, by which a large proportion of the constantly increasing number of the unemployed was saved from the proverbially evil effects of idleness. In the first place the Clergy, justly apprehensive that the young women and girls, who early in the spring began to crowd the streets in hundreds, might be tempted into sin, commenced a sewing class (after a plan which had been found successful during the distress in Coventry,) in which the girls were assembled under the care of ladies, who generously undertook the self-denying labour. The first class was commenced in a cottage, capable of accommodating about 20 or 30; and with little anticipation that the movement, so humble in its origin, would swell to the dimensions which it afterwards assumed, or that the distress would continue and increase so as to

render such an expansion of the scheme necessary. The situation of this first sewing school was Clayton Street, within St. Peter's Parish, and the Rev. F. Binyon, then a volunteer Curate at St. Peter's Church, is the gentleman who originated the scheme. In the *Home Mission Field of the Church of England*, for January, 1863, the first beginnings of this class are described in the following terms:—

"In the early part of May, when young women were out of work and manifestly beginning to suffer from having nothing to do, the clergy of St. Peter's, most opportunely assisted by a lady, who sent to a friend in Blackburn the means of commencing a class, were enabled to do something for these young women and to provide lest daily inactivity should lead to vice. A real old Lancashire person, who had originally come from the country with the savings of years, who had begun a small business, and lost her money by it during the declining trade, occupied in this parish, along with her two adult daughters, herself being a widow, a house of the rental of £12 a-year; the factory wages of the daughters supplying an excellent maintenance for the three. When the volunteer curate, in charge of that street, and to whom so much is due for conceiving and advancing the scheme, asked her for her houseplace, she generously consented to lend it, and offered during the hours of work to retire into her cellar, where she said "she could *weel* lit her fire and do her little cooking, that the clergyman might have the lasses in a class." \* \* \* \* The little germinal gathering was opened with Ken's morning hymn, the general confession, and other selections, and then while the needlework was going on, the second lesson was read."

This class was not strictly confined to young women belonging to the Church of England, but embraced a few Roman Catholics and others. There was, however, a daily religious service, at which all were required to be present, and the idea under which the Clergy took up this work—which was really at first a work of faith and labour of love, and continued so to the end, on the part of both the Clergy and the ladies of their respective congregations who became associated with them—was well expressed by the Rev. John Smith, of St. John's, in an address of thanksgiving which he delivered at one of the Girls' dinner parties, which were held in the Town Hall, in the week following Christmas, 1862. He said:—

"Amidst all this distress, there is one thing I am thankful for in connection with the crisis; and it is this: the gathering of you together as Sunday school scholars in sewing classes in different parts of the town. Your orderly behaviour from the first to the last, and the little trouble you have caused us, have taught us and have taught the world the great benefit of Sunday school systems. We look upon you as Sunday school girls; as dear to us as if you were sisters and daughters; and we are thankful that we have you together in these large schools, and we can look forward to see you in our Sunday schools trained up to be orderly citizens and orderly subjects of our Sovereign."

The success of the first sewing school, so humble in its pretensions, was very decided, and on the 1st of July, 1862, the Clergy met in anxious and prayerful deliberation, to consider the steps that must be taken in view of the rapidly increasing distress, and especially to devise means "for preventing degradation amongst our unemployed females." The meeting took place at the Vicarage, where the Clergy are in the habit of assembling monthly for friendly conference, and the question being to a large extent a ladies' question, Mrs. Rushton had invited the wives of the Clergy to be present along with their husbands. The Venerable Archdeacon Rushton, D.D., the Vicar, and Mrs. Rushton, had a few days previously visited a sewing school in Manchester, and enquired into its organization and working; and while they were both able to report most favourably of the sewing school system, (in confirmation of the results of the cottage experiment mentioned above), Mrs. Rushton had matured, and submitted to the meeting, a plan for the establishment of sewing schools in Blackburn on a somewhat extensive scale,—if only the funds requisite for their support could be obtained. The meeting cordially approved of the proposal, and the question was soon narrowed down to one of finance. An appeal in the columns of the *Times*, certainly a most ready, and hence a very popular, as well as, generally speaking, a very effective mode of evoking public sympathy, was suggested by some as the best means of procuring funds for the support and extension of the sewing class movement; but by others, and these the most earnest, it was apprehended that this might deprive the movement of the religious character it had assumed, and which it was most desirable it should retain. The Rev. J. Smith suggested that in the first instance an appeal might be made to the beneficed Clergymen throughout the country, and if from each a subscription of only one half crown were obtained, the result would be a fund that would for a time relieve their anxieties as to ways and means; but the majority of the Clergy thought Mr. Smith too sanguine, and his project received the active support of only the Rev. G. Donaldson, then curate of Christ Church. But Mr. Smith was in earnest, and therefore he was urgent, and having faith he felt strong; and when he saw he was but feebly supported, he became more bold, and said to his brethren that he should make the experiment, and if he failed the disappointment would be his own, and if he succeeded the advantage should be theirs as well as his.

A circular appeal was then drawn up by a sub-committee, and printed, stating the position of the Church in Blackburn, and her requirements in the calamity which had befallen the industry of neighbourhood, and setting forth the great peril in which large numbers of the young females would stand, if there was no door of employment, for both mind and body, thrown open to them. Mr. Smith returned from the clerical meeting to his parsonage, talked over his hopes and disappointments with her who was and is his second self in all good works, and at once enlisted her zeal and energy in the project he had taken up; and with the help of the Rev. G. Donaldson, who became his guest for the evening, and some lady friends, who were on a visit at the parsonage, he that night issued 2,000 of these appeals to his brethren in distant parts of the country, soliciting aid in the extension of the sewing school system in Blackburn, and the establishment of other and larger classes than the cottage meeting which had been for a few weeks in such successful operation. These appeals were so liberally responded to, that by the end of the week in which these first circulars were issued, Mr. Smith had received £400. Other circulars, amounting in the whole to about 15,000, were issued by Mr. Smith and the rest of the Clergy, and in a few days more Mr. Smith, as Secretary, had received £800; and the movement, which he had thus nobly inaugurated, being taken in hand by the Clergy generally, was so successful, that by the end of July several classes were in operation in the Town Hall and Mechanics' Institution, under the superintendence of the Clergy, assisted by the Ladies of their respective congregations. The appeals thus issued were read in the various churches by the Clergy to whom they were addressed, and caused public sympathy to be directed especially towards Blackburn. Congregational collections flowed into the treasury at the vicarage, from the obscure village church with its offering of a few shillings, to the fashionable congregation in a popular watering place with its noble offering of £300, and it was felt by all that this, if not the first, was one of the most striking illustrations on record of the reality of the communion between members of the same church, evoking a spirit of sympathy for, and willingness to help those who are in "need and necessity."

The classes at the Mechanics' Institution were especially composed of the Factory girls and young women residing in the Parish of St. Peter, and the District of St. Luke, while the Town Hall afforded accommodation for those belonging to the other Parishes and

Districts of the Town. The girls were required to attend in the forenoon and afternoon (five hours daily) during three days of each week, and they received weekly one shilling. The Clergy in turn attended morning and afternoon, to open and close the days proceedings with prayer and praise, and at intervals during the day to assist and encourage the Lady teachers in their arduous task, and afford counsel and comfort, as occasion might offer, to the girls and young women in their poverty, sorrow and depression. The nucleus of the Mechanics' Institution classes, was the small class held for a time in the widow's cottage, in Clayton Street, where, as I have said, there were Roman Catholic girls and others sitting side by side with those belonging to the Church of England. The organization which the sewing school movement had now received, forbade any extension of the mixed system which had been permitted in this first class. The girls, however, whose presence made the cottage gathering a mixed class, were not expelled on the removal of the class to the Mechanics' Institution; but a special fund was provided from which they received the same weekly allowance as the others; and they continued till the closing of the classes to reap all the benefits and advantages provided for their sisters of the Church of England. The sewing classes were no sooner established than they became popular, and the applicants for admission became every week more numerous. The Clergy, bearing in mind the source whence the funds for the support of the classes were obtained, and the avowed object with which they had solicited the liberal contributions they had received, felt compelled to strictly limit the admission to those connected with their respective congregations; and this in turn raised against the classes a cry of sectarianism. But the advantages of the arrangement, by which the Ladies of each congregation, headed by the Clergymen, were made to feel a personal interest in the classes under their charge, from the consideration that they were composed of their poorer fellow worshippers, were too many and too apparent for such a cry to have much influence.\*

\*The remarks of the Vicar on the denominational character of the classes, uttered after six months' experience of their utility, and of the advantages of this feature in the system, are worthy of note in this place:—

"The sewing classes in Blackburn are, I believe, the only ones in the kingdom which are called denominational. Whether that term has been applied to them jeeringly or not, I am fully convinced that the advantage of the denominational plan has been exhibited during these two days (The girls dinner parties at the Town Hall, in the week following Christmas, 1862,) in a manner to convince the greatest opponent of that mode of administering relief, if he had anything in him which was

In the same month of July, 1862, in which the Church sewing classes assumed such large dimensions, a sewing class was formed in connection with James Street Independent Chapel, under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. B. Lister, which met in the school room under the chapel, and was superintended, like the church classes, by the Ladies of James Street Congregation. The girls attending this class received 8d. per day, and they attended during the forenoon and afternoon of three or four days in each week. The numbers were at first small, but they increased rapidly, and by the end of August the number in attendance was 30, and in a fortnight after, 40.

In the following month of August, a similar class was commenced in connection with Mount St. United Presbyterian Congregation. The class met in the Rechabites' Hall, under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Skinner, minister of the chapel, and the ladies of his congregation, who in rotation, two at least daily, attended to instruct the girls in sewing and the common branches of school learning. The class met on four days of each week, for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours in the forenoon and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours in the afternoon, and the young women above 14 years of age received 2s. per week if in full attendance, and the girls under that age a smaller payment according to circumstances. The morning was "devoted to reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic, and the afternoon to sewing—either such articles as the young people bring with them or such as are purchased or obtained by the ladies."

About the same period similar classes were commenced in connection with Chapel St. Independent Congregation, under the pastoral superintendence of the Rev. A. Fraser; Park Chapel (Independent)

capable of being convinced. Had you been collected together as Christians of all denominations, you would have had none of those nice hymns which you have sung; you could not have had the short litany read, with which you have each day commenced the proceedings, and you could not even have said the Lord's prayer without offending the prejudices of some of your neighbours. Surely it is better that you should meet together as Church people, and that your neighbours, with whom you do not wish to interfere, should have their meetings also, and that you and they should each call down upon you God's blessing in your own way. The religious and spiritual feeling with which the classes are supported has been continued here. You have been taught to recognise God's hand in your sufferings, and also in the help which has been afforded, and in the cheerfulness with which your privations have been borne. Had you been brought together, all denominations mixed, you would not have been able to do that. You would have had to bury your religion, or carry it in your pockets, and the impression left upon you young people attending the classes would have been, that religion was like dress, to be put off and on at pleasure, and to be changed according to fashion. I for one most positively and solemnly declare that on no other terms but the denominational system would I have done what I have done in connection with these schools; and I am satisfied that the result, both individually and religiously, is greater and more blessed than if we had tried to amalgamate."

under the pastoral superintendence of the Rev. A. S. Maclean; the Primitive Methodist Chapel, and the Paradise and Barton St. United Methodist Free Church. In the daily conduct of these various Protestant Dissenting classes, religious exercises hallowed the commencement and the close of each day's duties, and the pastoral superintendence they enjoyed made them, like the Church classes, as nearly as might be week day meetings of Sunday scholars.

The Roman Catholics were the most dilatory in the Sewing class movement; but they pleaded that they were poor and unable to establish classes for themselves as the Church people and Protestant Dissenters had done; and they were very anxious to see classes formed on what is called a broader basis, that so the poor of their flocks might share in the advantages they afforded. But to this there were insuperable objections; and not because the clergy pitied the suffering Roman Catholic girls less, but because they pitied the suffering of their own flocks more, they persisted in the course which had originally commended itself to their judgment and their conscience. The Roman Catholic Priests were urged to follow the example which had been set them, and stir up the liberality of the wealthier members of their own communion to place funds at their disposal for the purpose of establishing sewing classes for themselves. But in this they were unsuccessful. They took steps, however, for the establishment of classes, where, having no funds at disposal, no allowance was made for attendance; but where the girls and young women were set to work, and taught sewing, and so kept from the streets—which was no inconsiderable advantage to them. The first of these classes was opened on the 1st of September, in St. Anne's School room, and was well attended. But the limited inducements held out by these unpaid classes placed them at a disadvantage as compared with the classes where a weekly payment was made for attendance; and a cry was continued for aid from some common fund. There was some apprehension that this cry implied a condemnation of the system on which the classes had been hitherto so successfully conducted by the Church people and the Protestant Dissenters, and "A Churchman,"\* in sending to the Mayor a donation of £100 in support of the sewing classes, (to be divided as follows:—£50 to the Church of England Clergy; £20 to the Roman Catholic; and £30 to the Nonconformist and other dissenting ministers,) after a conclusive vindication of the denominational principle on which

\* Alderman Baynes of Claremont.

the classes had been established, makes the following very pertinent remarks :

"As the young unemployed females will have to be supported by the Poor-law Guardians or by the Relief Committee, it is better to do so by some instrumentality that will keep them usefully employed rather than keep them in idleness ; therefore, I conceive it will be a perfectly legitimate application of their funds, if the Blackburn Relief Committee, of which you, Mr. Mayor, are the Chairman, were to appropriate a certain portion of the funds weekly towards the support of these congregational sewing classes, *pro rata*, at so much per head. I feel assured that if this course be adopted, the general public will endorse such appropriation, and the whole moral tone of the lower strata of society will be improved and raised, and the working man's home in future made more comfortable and happy, and the cause of temperance greatly promoted."

In the cry for aid from some common fund, to be dispensed in the manner here indicated, the clergy soon joined, as the drain upon their resources became greater than they could well meet, (the number of applicants for admission having increased so rapidly), and at length the Relief Committee were induced to look upon the sewing classes as valuable auxiliaries, and to make a capitation grant of 1s. per week for their support. This payment was first made for the week ending 20th September and amounted to £60 9s. 1d., being a payment on behalf of 1239 girls and young women. Of this number 669 were in the Church classes, 185 in the different Protestant Dissenting classes, and 385 in the Roman Catholic classes. From this date the numbers in attendance upon these classes increased rapidly. By the 18th of October there was a total of 1980, being 967 in the Church classes, 404 in the Dissenting classes, and 609 in the Roman Catholic classes, and the Relief Committee's grant amounted to £96 10s.

But great as the numbers were for whom the denominational classes provided, there were many poverty-stricken and suffering who for want of a denominational connection could find in them no refuge ; and for the benefit of such, another class was commenced by the "Strangers' Friend Society," which by way of distinction was called the "Non-Sectarian Class." At the time the distress came upon the town, the Strangers' Friend Society was suffering under the loss of its founder, Mrs. Lonsdale, of Spring Hill, who died on the 14th November, 1861 ; and her long illness, added to the time necessary to complete the new arrangements requisite for carrying on the operations of the society without the presence and aid of her who, during a long course of years (since 1817) had been the soul of the charity, necessarily caused a delay—a sort of interregnum—but on the 2nd December the working machinery of the society was reconstructed—

Mr. John Livesey being appointed treasurer, in room of Mr. Thomas Hart, deceased, (the secretaries being Mrs. John Sharples and Mr. Alderman Baynes), and Miss Broadbent being appointed assistant-secretary. The society set to work vigorously, to relieve in its own way such cases of want and destitution as seemed to call for its special interference ; and the distribution of made-up clothing being a prominent feature in the society's relief expedients, the sewing meetings of the ladies soon developed into the sewing class to which I refer, for the employment of factory women and girls. Although non-sectarian in its constitution, Scripture reading and religious exercises were not only not forbidden, but were pretty generally attended to in the daily routine of the class duties ; but the class being under the management of ladies of all denominations, neither Clergy, Dissenting Ministers, nor Roman Catholic Priests had any standing in the class which would permit their interference in religious matters, and I believe that generally, if not universally, the religious exercises were conducted by the ladies themselves.

This class was several months behind the others in sharing the capitation grant made by the Relief Committee, probably because the garments which the girls were engaged in making up were intended for distribution by the society and not by the Relief Committee, and because the arrangements of the class were in some respects different from those which the Relief Committee were prepared to sanction. But on the 29th of August the Committee made a grant of £50 in support of the class, and in November the class became, like the other sewing classes, a weekly recipient of the Relief Committee's capitation grant. The number attending this class increased as the distress deepened, and in the week ending 6th December, (when the distress had attained its acme,) the attendance at all the Sewing classes had reached a total of 2,624, being 1164 in the Church classes, 493 in the Dissenting, 804 in the Roman Catholic, and 163 in the Non-Sectarian class ; and the Relief Committee's grant amounted to £126 0s. 9d.

But in all these expedients, there was no provision for married women as a class. It seemed to have been generally thought that as their proper sphere is home, and their proper duty the care of their children, to establish a sewing class for their benefit, would be to hold out a premium for the neglect of both their domestic and maternal duties. But there were many married women to whom the instruction and pecuniary aid afforded by the sewing classes were as necessary as they were to the young women ; and whose domestic engagements left

them sufficient leisure to attend during the limited hours of the three, four or five class days of the week. On behalf of such the Mayor arranged with the managers of the different sewing schools, that a limited number should be admitted, for whom he would provide an allowance of 2s. per head per week. This arrangement came into practical operation in September, and the number for whom the Mayor thus volunteered to provide was about 100, requiring an outlay of about £10 per week. The arrangement continued till the close of Mr. Hutchinson's mayoralty, in November, 1862, (at a cost to his worship of about £100) when other provisions were made for continuing to the married women the advantages of which they had thus been made to experience the benefit.

In the first place, Mrs. A. I. Robinson, having for some time assisted at one of the classes for married women, and having observed the benefits which those of the class who had families of young children derived from being allowed to mend their children's clothes, and being instructed how to do so to the best advantage, determined to establish one expressly for mothers with large families. This school was opened on the 1st of December, 1862, in a shop in Astley Gate, kindly lent by Mr. Wm. Stones, and was continued until the 1st of April, 1863. It was supported without any aid from the Relief Committee, principally by subscriptions collected by Mrs. Robinson amongst her friends. At the commencement the women in attendance numbered 20, drafted from one of the classes supported by Mr. Hutchinson, but they soon increased to 40, and they attended from 10 to 12 and from 2 to 4 o'clock on every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The women were not chosen from any particular parish, but were gathered from all parts of the town and admitted on the recommendation of the clergy—the principal requirements being that they should have young children, be women of good character and in the poorest circumstances. A few of them were widows, but the majority were women whose husbands were out of work and in receipt of relief. No woman was admitted unless she could shew that her husband or some other responsible person was left at home to look after her children during her absence.

The women were occupied during three days of the week in making shirts, petticoats, flannels and other articles of clothing, which were sold to them, and to other persons properly recommended, at the cost price of the materials, and for which they were allowed to pay by weekly instalments. On the fourth day in each week the women

were occupied in mending their own and their children's clothes—everything necessary for the purpose being provided gratis; or in making up children's garments out of old dresses and other articles which kind friends sent to Mrs. Robinson for the purpose. These last were distributed amongst the women for the clothing of their children as soon as they were made up. The women received, in addition to these advantages, a weekly payment of two shillings each, and a substantial dinner of soup and bread or potato pie on every day they attended; and those who were absent through sickness, either of themselves or their husbands or children, received their full weekly payment. The amount of subscriptions received and expended in carrying on this school amounted to about £100, but the total cost of the establishment for the four months was about £155, which includes the price of materials, the greater part of which was repaid by instalments. A Christmas tea was given to the women, to which they were allowed to bring all their children, and a very merry party of clean and healthy children, many of them infants in arms, testified to the advantages which the mothers had received from wholesome food and warm clothing. Mrs. Robinson was assisted in the management of the school by Mrs. George Ainsworth, Mrs. James Dickinson and Mrs. Arnold.

The Clergy of St. Peter's and St. Luke's also made arrangements for married women. A few were admitted to the Mechanics' Institution, and when the rooms there became too crowded, and the girls and young women belonging to St. Luke's district were removed to the Philanthropic Burial Society's large room in Princes Street, the married women's class was removed thither also, and subsequently to a vacant house in Paradise Lane, kindly placed at their disposal for that purpose by Mr. John Livesey. And in all the sewing classes, the Church of England and also the various Dissenting bodies, there was a sprinkling, greater or less, of married women; but as they were not, (except in the case of the Strangers' Friend Society's class), recognized by the Relief Committee, the weekly allowance made to them had to be provided from the funds in the hands of the managers of the different schools; and in the case of the Church schools, from funds specially provided for married women—the general fund for the support of the sewing classes having been contributed for the benefit of girls and unmarried women only.

The Strangers' Friend Society, as I have said, formed a sewing class for the benefit of those who had no denominational connection



which would give them a claim on any of the denominational classes. But there were many young women of a lower grade than those whose position was of this negative character. Were they to be treated as beyond the sympathy in which the sewing class movement originated? It would have been manifestly improper to place them in the same classes with the young women of good character and Christian reputation; but could they not be cared for without contaminating others? The clergy of St. Peter's provided for such women, and for others who from various causes were ineligible for admission into any of the other classes in the town, in a portion of the premises in Pump Street, which had been placed at their disposal for such purposes of benevolence by Messrs. W. Dickinson & Sons. The general routine of this class, which was commenced towards the close of 1862, was similar to that of the other sewing classes; but in consequence of the great ignorance found to exist amongst the women and girls of whom it was composed, some little time was devoted to giving them some instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. The number in attendance averaged from sixty to one hundred, and it was carried on for several months—till an advanced period in the spring of 1863—in the first instance at the sole cost of the clergy of St. Peter's, who from a special fund expended about £100 in its maintenance, and latterly at the cost of the Relief Committee, who eventually extended to this class the capitation grant of 1s. per week.

The material, as well as the moral advantages of the sewing classes, were very considerable; for hardly anything struck the lady teachers with more surprise, than the total ignorance of the simplest description of needlework displayed by the girls and young women under their charge. Some considered they could do better without thimbles than with them, and were with difficulty drilled into the proper mode of using the needle; and with respect to the needles best suited for particular kinds of thread, and the needles and thread best suited for particular kinds of sewing, they were helpless as children, and required constant guidance. On these points they received instruction which they must since have found to be most valuable.\* In the Town Hall there were knitting classes as well as sewing classes, and in the Mechanics' Institution there were classes for various other

\*A valuable testimony to the importance of these sewing classes is that of Mr. Redgrave, Factory Inspector, who, in one of his reports after a visit to the distressed districts, writes—"In many of the sewing schools I was told that one-third of the females knew nothing of sewing upon their first attending the classes; that when they first took a needle in their hand, they pushed it through their work by pressing

descriptions of female work, such as dressmaking and crochet, heald mat and cloth mat making.

Another scheme for the benefit of our unemployed factory girls was projected by Mrs. J. Gerald Potter, of Mytton Hall, namely, the finding of homes for them as extra servants in the households of the nobility and gentry in different parts of the country, where the girls, besides being for the time well fed and cared for, were taught household work, and so fitted for new spheres of duty. The numbers capable of being so benefitted were comparatively inconsiderable; but to the girls selected the advantages were great, and it is satisfactory to know that, with very few exceptions indeed, the conduct of the girls in their new homes was abundantly satisfactory.

An extract from the appeal, dated 22nd August, 1862, which was issued by the society organised for the carrying out of this scheme, will best explain the object and the hopes with which this proposal was entertained and prosecuted:—

"The present state of things in Lancashire probably presses most hardly on the girls and younger women, and it is to endeavour, in some, if only in a small measure, to alleviate their distress, that the present appeal is made to all the ladies of England who are heads of large households, asking them to do what they alone can do, begging them to receive into their houses some of these factory girls, *not as regular servants*, but *as extra temporary servants*, praying them to place these girls under housekeepers or upper servants, that so they may be protected and taught for six, eight, or twelve months, until the cotton mills re-open and they can return to their usual work. If this were at all generally done, the present overwhelming calamity might with God's help, be turned to a blessing, and a great number of honest, hard-working young Englishwomen might not only be saved from degradation or death, but might be absolutely benefitted and return to their work improved members of society, having learned in the well ordered and wealthy homes of their more fortunate countrywomen those simple but useful household duties of which many are now ignorant. \* \* \*

If the present distress were likely to last, if the present stoppage of the cotton trade in England were final, no such scheme as the one now proposed could be entertained; but the distress although most awful for the time, is but temporary, and the help asked for, although of a most unusual and extensive character, is only sought for a limited period. At the end of six or twelve months it is hoped and believed that the Cotton Factories will again be opened, and the women again be able to return to their regular employment.

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Women. The ladies who have undertaken to work and manage this society, feel deeply the responsibility they incur, and they wish to explain to all who generously take factory women into their houses, that they are not sending out well-trained servants, but untaught women, who in general know little of household work, and whose previous life has in many cases rendered their manners blunt and independent. Often indeed, this seeming rudeness is only an outward manner, often the factory worker is a truly intelligent Sunday school teacher, a well principled, and right-minded woman,—and that many of the factory women are patient, industrious and self-denying, with strong loving natures—they who know them best, know well.”

From another circular dated the 29th of August, 1862, I take the following extract:—

“The Society is aware of the great responsibility it incurs, and will endeavour to send only such girls as are of known good character, free from physical defects and mental deficiencies. The girls who have hitherto availed themselves of its aid, are among the best Sunday School Teachers and Scholars.

The Society wishes to state that it is not sending out trained servants, but only trying to secure a temporary home for some of the poor women who might otherwise sink under the privations and temptations to which they are now exposed. Any Lady, who takes one of these girls, may be assured that by so doing she has saved a fellow woman from a depth of misery hardly yet realized, but which is the consequence of an unemployed population, whose savings are exhausted, being crowded into the smallest because cheapest houses with 1s. 6d. per head, per week, allowed them, as the maximum support that the combined efforts of Relief Committees and Poor Law Guardians can afford. \* \* \*

It is requested that families proposing to take girls will state what proportion of the following expenses they are willing to pay:—

- 1.—Re-payment of the Journey from Blackburn, to be sent to the Matron of the Society.
- 2.—Small wages from £4 to £8.
- 3.—20s. to 40s. for Clothes, to be sent to the Society.
- 4.—Promise of Return Journey to Blackburn, in case of good behaviour.

The Society, appreciating the great benefit to be bestowed, and the kindness and liberality of ladies who receive the factory women into their houses, will endeavour to send them on any terms, that may be proposed within its pecuniary means.”

As will be readily understood, the arrangements under which this scheme was carried out, involved an immense amount of labour on the part of the benevolent projector and her coadjutors. There was in the first place a great deal of correspondence with the parties who, in response to their appeals, volunteered to find a home for one or more of their *protégés*, and to accept starving Lancashire factory lasses as domestics in their households. Then, the girls selected being mostly orphans, were in such cases taken for a time to the “Orphanage,” (to be referred to presently,) where they were boarded and lodged until the arrangements were completed for their removal to their new homes.

And finally, whether orphans or not, they were all provided with suitable changes of clothing, and instructed as to their duty and deportment. The cost of the outfit and travelling expenses of each servant was on the average £3 9s. 1d., of which £2 0s. 6d. were defrayed from the funds collected by Mrs. Potter, and £1 8s. 7d. from the money remitted, according to agreement, by the persons for whose service they were destined. Up to November, 1862, the number of girls who thus passed from scenes of misery and starvation to sojourn in homes of plenty was 203; which number was subsequently augmented to 280; and while some still continue their occupation as domestic servants, the greater part remained in their situations from twelve to eighteen months, and then returned to the cotton districts, and to the resumption of factory life—benefitted, there is no doubt, by the experience acquired as household domestics. The total cost at which this scheme was carried out was £795 18s. 8d.

With a like design, and probably in imitation of Mrs. Potter's scheme above described, Mrs. W. E. Gladstone established a Home for factory girls at Hawarden Castle, where they were trained under judicious management and afterwards placed in service in gentlemen's families. The Rev. Dr. Robinson was entrusted with the selection of girls of suitable character, whom he sent to Hawarden as the Home might be able to receive them; and Mrs. Gladstone superintended their training, and, with the aid of private friends, maintained them during the period of probation, and then found for them suitable situations. The girls who have been in this way provided for, have conducted themselves in their new spheres with the utmost propriety, and many have written to their friends in Blackburn expressing the liveliest gratitude for the comfortable homes and kind treatment they had met with.

In connection with these provisions for the young female factory operatives, I must give something more than a passing reference to the Home Class or Orphanage, established by Mrs. J. Gerald Potter. This useful and unpretending little Institution provided a comfortable home and instruction for 14 poor orphan girls; and it also provided good and wholesome food for an additional number of young women, living at their own houses, whose circumstances called for aid of this special character. One object of the “Home” being to meet cases of temporary distress, its benefits were not restricted to any parish or religious denomination. The lady superintendent, during Mrs. Potter's absence, was Miss Freeman, one of the numerous volunteers

from the south, who so cheerfully and with such disinterested liberality, took up a temporary residence in Blackburn during the distress, willing to spend and be spent in the relief of the suffering poor. The class opened on the 24th of July, 1862, and being established in the Parish of Holy Trinity, was placed under the clerical superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Robinson, who paid frequent visits to the "Home," or, as it was more generally denominated,—being more expressive of its character and more calculated to elicit sympathy and support on its behalf—the "Orphanage," and conducted religious services and gave instruction and advice as occasion offered to the helpless and homeless who had found in it a refuge. In November, the "Orphanage" was removed to a cottage in Whalley New Road, kindly lent by Wm. Hy. Hornby, Esq., M. P., and thus came under the clerical superintendence of the Rev. J. W. Pengelly, of St. Michael's. The girls, both the day boarders and lodgers, received instruction in sewing, and thus formed a class, which participated with the other sewing classes in the town in the Relief Committee's Capitation grant. The "Orphanage" continued to prove a home to many who would otherwise have been homeless, for the space of twelve months, and during the greater part of that lengthened period was superintended by Miss Freeman, (as the *locum tenens* of Mrs. Potter) who added to her Orphanage duties, that of visiting the sick and afflicted resident in the neighbourhood, and superintending a class of about 50 married women, supported entirely out of the funds entrusted to her for charitable distribution. Miss Freeman's services were highly appreciated, and in the month of April, 1864, when the necessity for her further exertions had ceased to be so pressing, and she was about to leave the town to return to her home in the south, she was presented by those whom she had so long helped and instructed with a beautiful copy of Bagster's Pollyglott edition of the Holy Scriptures, (the result of a penny subscription,) as a mark of their grateful feelings for the warm interest she had taken in their temporal and spiritual welfare. The following inscription, beautifully illuminated, was inserted:—"Presented to Miss Freeman, by the members of her sewing class, as an expression of their gratitude for the interest she has taken in their temporal and spiritual welfare."—"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy."—"Blessed are they that sow beside all waters." The presentation was made on behalf of the donors by Miss Farrer, one of the coadjutors of Miss Freeman in her work of benevolence.\* The weekly cost of the

\* A letter by Miss Freeman to a benevolent lady in the south, one of that nu-

"Orphanage" was on the average £7, and the total cost during the twelve months it was in operation was £371 6s. 3d., the whole of which was contributed by Mrs. Potter.

Before passing from this enumeration of the various schemes devised for ameliorating the condition of our unemployed factory women, I must not omit a few words with respect to the Straw Plaiting class—a well intentioned but unsuccessful effort to introduce into the Cotton Districts a new species of industry. The history of the class is interesting. In the autumn of 1862, the Rev. Scott F. Surtees, rector of Spotbrough, paid a visit to Blackburn that he might judge for himself of the distress in the cotton districts and the means in operation for its relief. He came here a stranger, unknown to any of the clergy of the town; visited the Church sewing classes and made enquiries as to their constitution and working; left a small donation for their support; and returned to his rectory evidently much interested with what he had seen and heard. He then wrote to Rev. C. W. Woodhouse, Incumbent of St. Peter's, (the classes under his charge at the Mechanics' Institution having attracted most of his attention,) enquiring whether he thought it desirable to introduce straw-plaiting into the town, and offering to provide apparatus, material and an instructress, and to make a grant for the support of the girls attending until such time as the class either became self-supporting or the experiment was pronounced a failure—but his earnest hope was that straw-plaiting might become a remunerative employment to a certain number of our factory girls. Mr. Woodhouse accepted Mr. Surtees' generous proposal, believing the experiment was worth trying, and a select class was formed from the various Church schools, and met in one of the smaller rooms in the Town Hall. The Rev. F. Hose, M.A., vicar of Dunstable, at the request of Mr. Surtees, selected two sisters to be the teachers of this novel class, and they came to Blackburn and entered upon their new duties full of hope and enthusiasm. The class met on five days in the week, and worked five hours each day; and it was a most interesting class to visit, for the girls from Dunstable were very musical, and they and their pupils never failed to entertain

merous band who interested themselves in the distress in Lancashire by collecting subscriptions to be dispensed by such self-denying volunteers as Miss Freeman, was printed as part of a circular appeal, and one sentence, expressing very plainly Miss Freeman's opinion of Blackburn, may be here quoted: "I never visited a town where I have met so few who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ as in Blackburn." It would seem that part of the money entrusted to her for distribution had been strictly limited by the donors to those of whom she thus laments she found so few in this wicked Blackburn.

their visitors with a song or hymn. The class opened in November, 1862, and the girls made creditable progress in straw plaiting, (only the coarser descriptions being attempted,) and a number of bonnets were made from the straw they had plaited for the prisoners' home at York, and a few for private sale in Blackburn. But the hope of straw-plaiting being made a remunerative employment proved a delusion. The number of hours which the girls worked in the class room were not above a third of the number which the straw-plaiters of Dunstable work per day—for they work at home, and also carry their work about with them, and they are working when they seem to be only gossiping with their neighbours, or frolicking in the fields. In such circumstances, the wages which the Blackburn straw-plaiters proved capable of earning were very small. But the greatest difficulty to be overcome was the jealousy of the people of Dunstable, who were very apprehensive lest the trade of their town should be diverted to Lancashire. They had no objections to send as much straw, prepared for straw-plaiting purposes, as might be required, but they declined to re-purchase the straw when plaited, and no other market was open for the disposal of such a commodity. The Vicar of Dunstable was put to an immense amount of trouble in trying to overcome the prejudices or obstinacy of the Dunstable merchants, but he was only very partially successful; and an effort made to dispose of the plaited straw through a lay agent, making the negotiation a thoroughly commercial transaction, resulted in failure equally disastrous. The plaited straw was only disposed of eventually at an immense sacrifice; but the class was continued till the sewing classes closed, and pleasant reminiscences no doubt survive amongst the girls who attended it during so many months.

### CHAPTER III.

*Formation of classes for young men—Clerical appeal for their support—Extension of the scheme for the benefit of married men—Mrs. Potter's Industrial School—Mrs. Gladstone's Industrial School—Shakespeare married men's class—"Gooin' t' Schoo"—Dissenting young men's classes—The Overlookers—The Tape Sizers—The Rifle Volunteers' class—Grant by the Relief Committee to the Educational Classes—How to live on 2s. per week—Penny Bible readings—Appeal for their support—Increase in the number attending—The Riot.*

Having provided, as we have seen, for the unemployed factory girls by the establishment of sewing classes, the clergy next turned attention to the young men and lads, to whom the temptations of idleness were likely to be scarcely less disastrous than to the girls; and for their benefit they established Educational Classes, in which were taught reading, writing and arithmetic; and for attendance during five hours per day the sum of 3d. was paid, or 1s. 3d. for the five class days of the week. The idea of a class for young men was first mooted by the Rev. Dr. Robinson, of Holy Trinity Parish, and the Rev. J. Smith, of St. John's, who suggested to the Vicar the desirability of such a class; but in view of the increasing demands of the girls' sewing classes on the limited resources available for their support, the Vicar did not see his way to undertaking this new scheme. A little delay and further reflection only served to more completely convince Mr. Smith and Dr. Robinson of the absolute necessity of something being done in the direction they had indicated; and upon their expressing a determination to commence a class, each of them contributing £5 to defray the expenses of the first few weeks, relying in faith on the liberality which had been so nobly displayed in support of the sewing classes for the support of this new scheme, the Vicar gave them £10, and accompanied his donation with his best wishes for the success of the movement. Suitable premises were soon found in the unoccupied weaving factory in Back Lane, belonging to Mr. Varley, marble mason,

who frankly placed it at the disposal of the clergy for the purpose ; and the first of the young men's educational classes was opened there on Monday, September 8th, 1862. The number in attendance at the opening was 50, but a daily increase soon raised the numbers beyond what the funds at the disposal of the Clergy could provide for, and a fortnight after the opening of the class, a special appeal was issued to the friends of the Church (as well as the Clergy) in different parts of the country, for aid in extending the accommodation so urgently needed. From this appeal I extract the following :—

“In ordinary times, single young men obtain perhaps less sympathy than any other class : but in their present unhappy leisure in this town, knots of them group together to while away vacant time, enumerate their privations, and canvass their grievances ; and therefore seem now to need prompt attention. The Clergy have had sad experience of the baneful influence of ill-regulated youths on those of more tender years, and look forward with fear and trembling to the demoralising effects of idleness, want and ‘evil communications.’ To avert such evils, we beg leave to mention the plan which we have adopted, and which we hope to see largely and effectually carried out. A fortnight ago we obtained the loan of an empty factory. It has been fitted up cheaply with desks, benches and black boards. We have now 250 young men over 15 years of age, (above 30 of whom are learning the alphabet,) under daily instruction. Hundreds from all our parishes, some of them long connected with our Sunday Schools, are anxiously waiting for admittance. We give each three-pence per day, which acts as some encouragement in their present deplorable state.”

This appeal was liberally responded to, and the number of applicants for admission to the class continuing to increase, a second class was opened on Monday, the 6th October, in a large shed at Little Peel, kindly lent for the purpose by Messrs. T. & J. E. Fielding, Manufacturers. In two days the number entered in this class was 180, and a third class was opened on Wednesday, the 15th October, in premises at Bank Top, kindly provided for the purpose by Messrs. Dickinson & Sons. The Teachers in all these classes were in general persons selected from the better educated of the operatives; and although the amount of instruction imparted and received might not be very great, the influence of the habits of order and discipline which the presence of the teachers and a pretty close superintendence and oversight by the Clergy secured, was very beneficial.

For the young men's classes thus established by the Clergy, married men were ineligible. But it is very evident that the claims of married men to a similar provision were quite as great, if not greater, than those of the unmarried; and it was very pertinently asked by the Rev. J. Smith: why should married men be tabooed? No satisfactory reply could be given to this question; but it was felt that the

funds received for the support of the young men's classes, having been obtained in response to an appeal specifically limiting their application to this object, could not be applied to any other. It was therefore determined by the Clergy to commence another fund for the establishment and maintenance of married men's classes, and an appeal for this object was issued, but less extensively circulated than the others, and met with a liberal response. The efforts of the Clergy in this direction were confined, in the first instance, to the married men connected with their different Sunday Schools, who assembled in the class rooms along with the unmarried men and youths, and passed under the same training, and received the same allowance for attendance, as the unmarried men. So long as this arrangement continued the numbers were comparatively limited, but on the formation of the industrial classes, which were open to married and unmarried indiscriminately, and to all creeds without distinction,—so that the oversight of the Clergy and the devotional exercises which they might conduct or prescribe were not interfered with—the numbers rapidly increased.

And this leads me to notice that most important agency, still auxiliary to what may be called the direct labours of the Relief Committee, the Industrial Classes, first commenced at the suggestion of Mrs. Potter, (who contributed liberally towards their maintenance,) in an unoccupied portion of Messrs. Yates' spinning mill, Eanam, which those gentlemen kindly lent for the purpose. These classes were for the instruction of youths and men in some of the most useful of the industrial arts, such as tailoring, shoemaking and carpentry; and the design was, that while affording a present employment, the men thus trained might, on the return of better times, be enabled to occupy their leisure in a manner that would tend to economise their resources. The industrial labours of the classes were alternated with instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic; and religious exercises marked the opening and close of each day's duties. The classes, as I have hinted above, were for married men as well as single, and were what I may term, without admitting the propriety of the designation, “nonsectarian”—the doors being open, so far as the available resources admitted, to all who were in want, without distinction of creed. The suggestion by Mrs. Potter for the formation of an industrial class was originally made to the Rev. Dr. Robinson, Incumbent of Holy Trinity Church, who cheerfully and at once, in concert with his curate, the Rev. William Ogden, M. A. (now of Ashton-under-Lyne) undertook its organisation and management, and continued, during the whole time of its existence,

to personally superintend its operations. The movement was as humble in its origin and aims, when compared with the dimensions to which it soon expanded, as any of the other schemes which the exigencies of the distress called into being, and raised into undertakings of magnitude such as the most sanguine of their originators and promoters could never have anticipated. The Rev. Dr. Robinson, in an address at the Christmas dinner parties, thus narrates its origin and progress:—

“Mrs. Potter said to me ‘Do you think you could get together twenty or thirty men, thirty would be quite as many as we could wish, to establish an industrial school? I should like that carpentry, tailoring and shoemaking should be taught, and it might be an example to other persons in the town, who might establish similar small industrial schools.’ Well, we began, and we had a difficulty first in getting teachers, and then in getting men to come to be taught; but gradually one and another came, until the schools attained their present large dimensions. And such has been the skill, application and wonderful versatility displayed by the men, that many are now able to make shoes almost as well as any shoemaker; to mend their own clothes in a very respectable manner; and to make and mend their clogs. And we have turned out from the schools some excellent teachers, who know nothing of educational theories, but are plain practical men able to instruct in arithmetic, reading and writing. So that I am prepared to think there is nothing we could not have accomplished.”

A weekly payment of 1s. to youths under 18, and 1s. 6d. to men above that age, was all that could at the outset be allowed, and during the first week of Mrs. Potter's class (for so the first formed was designated) the number entered was 23, and the amount paid 15s. 6d. This was the week ending September 13th. The number in attendance during the week ending September 20th, was 52, and the amount paid £3 7s. 1d., and a month after that date, in the week ending October 18th, the number in attendance was 150, and the amount paid £11 0s. 0d.

On the 3rd of October Miss Burdett Coutts visited Blackburn, accompanied by Mrs. W. E. Gladstone, Mrs. Brown, Sir James P. K. Shuttleworth, Bart., and Mr. J. W. Maclure, Hon. Secretary of the Manchester Central Relief Committee, and inspected the sewing and reading classes, being accompanied on their tour of the classes by the Mayor and several of the Clergy. Mrs. Gladstone remained overnight, the guest of the Rev. Dr. Robinson, at Holy Trinity Parsonage, in order that she might more fully acquaint herself with the extent of the distress prevailing in the town, and the agencies at work for its relief. She visited and felt interested in Mrs. Potter's Industrial School, and became so enamoured of the idea of thus combining industrial training with instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, that on the occasion of a second visit to Blackburn, within a fortnight

after, she agreed to follow Mrs. Potter's example, and provide liberally for the establishment and maintenance of another class of a similar character. The indefatigable Clergy of Holy Trinity Parish cheerfully undertook its organisation and superintendence, and what was called Mrs. Gladstone's Industrial School was opened, during the week ending 18th October, in the new mill belonging to Messrs Willan and Mills, kindly lent for the purpose by those gentlemen. The number entered was 50, and the amount paid in the first week £3 5s. 0d. Adding these figures to those I have given above respecting Mrs. Potter's Industrial School during the same week, we find the total number then under this species of training to be 200, and the amount paid them from this source £14 5s. 0d. Both classes increased in numbers daily, and in the week ending November 8th, the number in attendance at Mrs. Potter's was 185, at Mrs. Gladstone's 150, making 335, and the amount paid £24 13s. 0d.

A Lady in London, hearing of the success of these classes, and feeling interested in the movement and anxious to aid, sent to Mrs. Potter a donation of £50 towards the expenses of another similar school for married men only—a further condition of her gift being, that sufficient money should be raised to pay £4 per week for its support during 26 weeks. The sum required was soon subscribed by friends at a distance, and the organisation and management of the school being undertaken by the Clergy of St. Peter's, the class was commenced on 3rd November, 1862, in a portion of Shakespeare Mill, kindly placed at their disposal for the purpose by Messrs. Dickinson & Sons. The men attending this class, many of them advanced in years, were taught, as the youths and young men in the educational classes, the elements of what I may call school learning—reading, writing and arithmetic. Great were the deficiencies of their early training which the exercises of the class revealed, but they took to their schoolboy tasks most kindly. It must have been after a visit to some such class that Mr. Ramsbottom penned the verses, entitled “Goin' t' Schoo,” from which I extract the following:—

“ Their help has been great help to me,  
It's that alone at sent me t' schoo ;  
It's that as tow't me th' A B C,  
For o aw'd turnt o' forty two.  
Twur rayther hard at fust to sit,  
An' stare at things aw could no tell,  
Cose when owt puzzl't me a bit,  
O th' lads ud laugh among thersel.

" A mon grown up, an' owd, as me,  
 To stop before a letther fast ;  
 Wur gradely fun for them to see,  
 Bo aw geet thro', an' that's o past.  
 I' th' news aw neaw con read a bit ;  
 I' th' Bible spell a chapher thro' ;  
 Con write a line ut's fair an' fit ;  
 And multiply, divide, an' do."

But this class for married men had this feature to distinguish it from the educational classes for young men and youths and the industrial schools—the men had, in lieu of a money payment from the clerical fund, a good dinner of stewed meat and potatoes, or good soup and a large piece of bread daily, on five days a week; and for a time, also, a second meal per day of coffee and bread; and this good and wholesome fare had a most beneficial effect in preserving them in health and strength, and warding off fever and the other forms of sickness which frequently follow in the wake of famine. The men were also, like those attending the industrial schools, employed during certain portions of the day in industrial occupations, limited, however, to two branches—tailoring and shoemaking. This class soon increased beyond the accommodation which the premises at Shakespeare Mill afforded, and it was found necessary to form a branch in Pump Street, in the room occupied by the young men's class. The men occupying this supplemental accommodation increased to the number of 80, and daily at dinner time, and again in the afternoon, while the coffee distribution continued, they marched to the Shakespeare Mill in relays, and partook of the food so liberally provided for them.

In connection with the various Dissenting Congregations, also, educational classes were commenced for the benefit of the youths belonging to their respective Sunday Schools. Indeed, educational classes for youths were everywhere established side by side with the sewing classes for girls, as if the one were the necessary complement of the other; but the efforts of the Dissenters were Congregational, and therefore limited in their results when compared with what the Clergy, by their combined exertions, were enabled to accomplish. By the middle of November classes had been commenced in connection with only three or four of the Dissenting places of worship, and the aggregate number in attendance was only about 70, against 849 in the Church classes. But they soon increased considerably, although the number in attendance never reached an aggregate of 250, while

the attendance at the Church classes attained an aggregate of nearly 2,000. The Roman Catholics, also, took steps for assembling their youth in suitable halls and school rooms, so soon as the Relief Committee manifested an inclination to recognise young men's classes as entitled to a capitation grant. Their classes were commenced towards the end of October, or early in November, and by the middle of November were attended by an aggregate of nearly 300 persons. The course of instruction, or rather, the routine of daily duty, was very similar in the Dissenting and Roman Catholic classes, to what it was in the Church classes; and to those attending, all the classes had this merit in common, that of affording occupation, which no doubt served to divert the thoughts from melancholy musings on the present and still gloomier anticipations with respect to the future.

The distress reduced to poverty all classes of cotton operatives, the Overlookers as well as the Weavers under their charge; and a question arose as to how the Overlookers, and those holding superior positions in the mills, should be relieved, so as to preserve in them that self-respect which is so essential in order to secure to them the respect of the persons whose labour it is their function to overlook and direct. Club monies and other funds enabled the Overlookers to bear up against the storm for some time after they had lost their employment and weekly earnings, but at length they became as poor as the poorest, and at a meeting held on the 26th of August, 1862, called to consider the best means to be adopted to relieve themselves without applying for parochial aid, it was resolved "That some means should be devised to raise subscriptions to relieve the distressed Overlookers who are thrown out of employment in the district of Blackburn, as the funds of the different societies established for relief in periods of distress are now nearly exhausted." Little or nothing was done in pursuance of this resolution till after a subsequent meeting held on 30th September, when a report was presented stating that "186 Overlookers are now out of work, whose families embrace an aggregate of 787 persons; 148 are working short time, varying from two to five days per week; and 163 are working full time. The funds accumulated by the society are now exhausted, and efforts are now making to get a special grant from the Relief Committee, so as to enable us to maintain the position we have hitherto occupied between the operative and their employers; and that we may not have to apply for relief at either the relieving office or the soup kitchen, which we feel to be very repugnant to our feelings." The Relief Committee did not,



and on mature reflection felt that they could not, recognise the Overlookers as entitled to special consideration at their hands, and the application for a grant to a special fund to be entrusted to the Committee of Overlookers for distribution was refused. But the general public, not of Blackburn only but throughout the country, and notably the Mansion House Relief Committee, felt the force of the Overlookers' appeal, and responded by liberal contributions. The Overlookers' Committee were soon supplied with considerable funds, and they at once delivered up the cards of all those of their fellows, who, under the pressure of peculiar circumstances, had sought for and obtained relief from the Guardians, and made preparations for opening a room in Ainsworth street, kindly lent to them for the purpose by the late Mr. T. B. Turner, Commission Agent, as a reading and mutual instruction class room. The class room was opened in the month of October, 1862, and the amount paid to the men attending it in the week ending 11th October was £14 13s. 4d.; in a little more than a month after, the week ending November 15th, the sum paid was £34 7s. 4d., and in the week ending November 29th, the sum paid was £70 1s. 5d.—in support of the families of 142 Overlookers.

In imitation of the Overlookers, but with no such substantial reasons derivable from the position they occupy in the factories for seeking to be thus organised in a class by themselves, the Tape Sizers opened a room for mutual instruction, and appointed a committee to solicit subscriptions for their support. The canvass for subscriptions resulted in only a moderate measure of success, and the class had for some months to sustain a sort of struggling existence. On the 29th of November, 1862, it became a participant in the Relief Committee's grant to the educational classes (the number then in attendance being 40) and continued in existence till August, 1863.

Another educational class of this special character was commenced by the officers of our local rifle volunteer corps, (the 2nd. L. R. V.) for the benefit of those members of the corps who were out of work and suffering privations which might compel them to resort to either the Guardians or the Relief Committee for the means of subsistence. This class was formed on the 1st of November, 1862, and met in the orderly room at the Barracks. It was under the management of Capt. (now Major) Robinson and Lieut. Cameron, who appointed teachers from amongst the sergeants and other well educated members of the Corps, —men who were themselves out of employment. The average number in attendance was 40, and they met on five days in the week, for five

hours each day, and received for each week's attendance 2s. if single men, 2s. 6d. if married, and 6d. additional for each child. The men were taught reading, writing and arithmetic, and a few were also instructed in the art of mending shoes. A large quantity of cast off boots and shoes were given by the wealthier members of the corps, and these, having been thoroughly repaired with materials provided by the Committee of Officers, were distributed to those most in want of such articles. The class continued in operation till the 6th of February, 1863, and the total amount expended was £65,—the whole of which was subscribed by the Officers of the Corps and their friends.

The Relief Committee were not long in recognising the young men's Educational Classes, and the Industrial Schools, as valuable auxiliaries in the relief distribution with which they were entrusted; and they resolved to make them a weekly grant after the same rate as that to the sewing classes. The first payment in accordance with this resolution was made for the week ending November 15th, at which date the number in attendance was 1,146, being 849 in the Church classes, (including Mrs. Potter's Industrial School) 58 in the Dissenting, and 295 in the Roman Catholic. By the middle of December, when the distress was at its height, the number in attendance was 3,068, being 1,266 in the Church classes, 221 in the Dissenting, 519 in the Roman Catholic, and 1,062 in the Industrial and other miscellaneous schools, and the amount paid was £149 16s. 2d. As in the case of the sewing classes, the Relief Committee's allowance for the support of the educational and industrial classes, was at this time a capitation grant of 1s. per week, which was increased on 3rd January, 1863, to 1s. 6d., and on 14th February to 2s.

An allowance of 2s. per week to single men and women was a liberal allowance, and cannot be regarded as inadequate where the recipients were members of families, and a similar amount received by two or three brothers and sisters, or, added to the earnings of two or three who might have partial work, formed a common fund for the subsistence of the household. But in the case of single men and women living in lodgings, many must have been the shifts resorted to, and great the straits to which at times such persons must have been reduced, in order to provide the necessaries of life. In one of the sewing or industrial schools in Preston, the best means of expending an allowance of 2s. per week was given as a problem to be solved by some of the girls whose means of subsistence were limited to such an allowance, and out of twenty replies here are four, which may



serve to give some idea of how, with such resources, the girls managed to "make the two ends meet:"—

"Mary —, 18 years old, an orphan, who in good times pays 1s. 3d. per week for lodgings, but is now allowed to pay less. Her expenditure of the 2s. she receives is—lodgings, 6d.; seconds flour, 9d.; treacle, 1½d.; coffee, 2½d.; barm, ½d.; salt, ½d.; sugar, 2d.; bacon, 2d.; total, 2s.—Jane —, 17 years of age, an orphan, who lives in lodgings, and says she sometimes obtains a loaf from the charities, spends her 2s. as follows:—Lodgings, 1s.; seconds flour, 9d.; treacle, 1½d.; coffee, 1½d.—Mary —, 19 years old, has a father who has married a second time:—Lodgings, 9d.; seconds flour, 9d.; treacle, 1½.; coffee, 1½d.; sugar, 1d.; bacon, 2d.; total, 2s.—Ellen —, 20 years old, lives with her aunt; parents not living in Preston:—Lodgings, 6d.; seconds flour, 8d.; treacle, 2d.; coffee, 2½d.; barm, ½d.; salt, ½d.; sugar, 2½d.; bacon, 2d.; total, 2s."

In this enumeration of the principal agencies at work for the relief of the distress, I must not omit the Penny Bible Reading Classes, commenced by the Rev. Dr. Robinson, in Holy Trinity parish, and continued by him for several months with a success which could not have been predicated of the movement in its humble beginnings. Their origin and object are best told in the words of the circular by which Dr. Robinson and his curate, the Rev. Wm. Ogden, M.A., appealed for aid the week after they were established. The circular is dated October 10th, 1862, and reads as follows:

"Instead of giving indiscriminate help to the crowds of poor starving creatures who constantly come to us for a Penny Soup Ticket, we began, merely as an experiment, Penny Bible Reading Classes at the beginning of last week. For one hour's reading of the Bible we give to each attendant one penny. The men and women are assembled in two separate buildings, under the charge of some of our pious Sunday School Teachers. At first about a dozen came, next day about fifty, and gradually, as the classes became better known, crowds flocked to them, who were taken in and instructed in relays hour by hour, from 9 in the morning until 12, and from 2 until 4 o'clock. In one corner of the room may be seen a class of rough men learning the Lord's Prayer; in another a similar class learning the Alphabet; in another the First Reading Book; whilst in the remaining part of the room are five or six Testament classes. The women are divided into two classes, an Elementary and a Testament, and are similarly instructed. Inquiry having revealed the awful fact that many both men and women never pray, we make them go down on their knees, and repeat after us the Lord's Prayer, and short ejaculations such as "God be merciful to me a sinner;" "Lord Jesus save us," &c. We also try to persuade them to adopt this practice for themselves when they retire to rest. Generally each class is addressed before leaving, either by one of ourselves, or one of the Teachers in our absence. Tears are often seen rolling down the cheeks of the poor women, and nothing can exceed the gratitude of both men and women for the penny. And although the penny is the inducement at first for them to come, they nearly all express their delight at the instruction which they receive. And as a proof of it may be stated the fact that at our Wednesday night service, where of course there was

no pecuniary inducement, our School room, which will hold 1200, was not only filled to overflowing, but multitudes had to go away unable to gain admission. It is truly pitiable to notice the marks of famine on the faces of many, but the conduct of the poor sufferers has hitherto been most patient and heroic. Never were they so softened, never so ready to hear the Word of God, never so respectful to the Messengers of Salvation. Pray send us a little help to continue this good work. We are following out the object of the Bible Society by getting the careless masses to read; and whilst we help to mitigate their temporal distress, we are at the same time communicating to them that Blessed Word which is able through faith in Jesus Christ to save their souls."

This humble but earnest effort to do good soon surpassed all anticipations. The return of the numbers attending during the first week was 298 men and 260 women, making a total of 558, representing an outlay of £2 18s. 2d., including the allowance made to the men and women—unemployed Sunday school teachers—engaged in reading and expounding the Scriptures, hour after hour, to the successive assemblies. In the week ending 18th October, the number of men who thus received 1d. and an hour's Bible instruction, was 2,599, and the number of women 2,595, (or, if we suppose that the same individuals attended on four days during the week, the numbers will be 649 and 648 respectively) and the cost for the week was £23 16s. 11d. A fortnight after the numbers were 4,313 men and 4,880 women, and the cost £64 6s. 5d.; and in the week following 4,880 men and 5,114 women, and the cost £83 5s. 8d. During the two following weeks the numbers were nearly as large, but during December there was a decrease, which became more perceptible in January, from which date, till the end of March, the number of men continued to average 2,500, and the number of women 3,500 per week, while the average amount paid weekly in pennies, or for the coffee, soup, or scouse, which during November, December, January and February, was substituted for the money payment, was £50. The substitution of a good basin of scouse, or of coffee or soup, with bread, (costing on an average 2d.) in lieu of the penny, was owing to a suggestion by Mrs. W. E. Gladstone, who at the same time generously assisted Dr. Robinson to bear this additional expense. These classes were continued till Easter, 1863, and besides the good they effected in a temporal point of view, by giving food to the hungry, those who watched most narrowly their progress and results, were enabled to report that "multitudes have begun to pray who never scarcely prayed before, and many have been led to serious reflection, to attend the means of grace, and to enter upon a new course of life.

Several, even some advanced in years, offered themselves for confirmation, and received imposition of hands on the last occasion, and have been since admitted to holy communion. Perhaps, however, the most gratifying fact is, that when it was announced that the classes must close at Easter for want of funds, a large number entreated that they might be continued on two days of the week without pay."

I have already said that the distress had reached its height towards the close of 1862, and at that time the fountains of British charity, yea of a world-wide charity, were pouring in liberal contributions to Lancashire; and Blackburn, as one of the most distressed towns, shared largely in the general bounty. The clergy and ministers, in their respective spheres of humane exertion, and the Relief Committee, in their general arrangements for the relief of the suffering, were supremely solicitous that nothing on the part of the operatives should occur to damp or chill the ardour of the overflowing benevolence which had been evoked; and the Clergy, especially, were instant in season and out of season, in impressing upon the minds of the poor the great exertions which were being made on their behalf by their fellow-townsmen, and the extraordinary liberality which had been displayed by the world at large in devising measures for their relief, and the duty which devolved upon them of testifying their gratitude, and so justifying the representations of all who pleaded their cause, by orderly and peaceable conduct, and a patient endurance of the privations, great as they were, which they had been or might be called upon to suffer. But early in November an event occurred which disturbed the peace of the Borough, and caused the ominous intelligence to be flashed across the length and breadth of the land "Riots in Blackburn: the military called out," which there was some reason to fear might be interpreted to the prejudice of the operatives, at a moment when the greatest exertions and liberality were no more than enough to save thousands from absolute starvation. - During the night of Wednesday, 3rd November, several men were apprehended on a charge of poaching on lands in the neighbouring township of Pleasington, belonging to J. B. Bowdon, Esq.; and the hearing of the charge came on before the justices at Blackburn, on Thursday, the 6th November, when Mr. Ernest Jones, Barrister-at-law, appeared for the defence of the prisoners. The result of the magisterial investigation into the charge was, that four of the defendants were found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment, and the rest were discharged. During the hearing of the case an immense and greatly-excited crowd was

collected in the Market Place and around the entrance to the police court, and on the result of the case being made known, they became more excited, and watched for the gamekeepers as they emerged from the Town Hall building about half-past two o'clock, and proceeded up King William Street to Preston New Road, attended by three or four of the county police. The crowd followed the keepers, jostling them as they went along, and at Strawberry Bank several stones were thrown at the keepers and police, who took refuge in the shop of Messrs. Dugdale & Sons, engravers. The keepers were after some time conveyed back to the Town Hall, whither the crowd followed, and increased as the afternoon advanced. About half-past five o'clock, it being then dark, the mob commenced the work of destruction. They first attacked the Police Office, smashing at the door with stones, which they found convenient in great quantities on the vacant ground opposite. They then came up between the Town Hall and Market Place, breaking the windows in the Town Hall building as they went along, and also the windows in the front of the Town Hall. They then proceeded down King Street, up Montague Street, and down Preston New Road, smashing windows as they went along; and afterwards a large body of them went to Pleasington Hall, the residence of J. B. Bowdon, Esq., and broke the windows there. After seven o'clock there was no open violence in Blackburn, but crowds, excited, uneasy, and threatening, hovered round the Town Hall and on the Market Place, and a meeting of the magistrates having been held, it was resolved to read the Riot Act, and swear in special constables. The Riot Act was read about eight o'clock by Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy, the Mayor elect, (the Mayor being that night engaged at Oxford addressing a meeting on behalf of the distressed), from the steps in front of the Town Hall, and about a hundred and fifty special constables having been sworn in and armed, the town was soon restored to a state of comparative quiet. The military were sent for from Preston, under an apprehension that the disturbance might be renewed, and a troop of fifty lancers arrived at half-past ten o'clock, but fortunately their services were not required.

On people at a distance, ignorant of these facts and circumstances which explain the occasion of the riot, and shew that the unemployed factory workers, for whom so much was being done, had nothing to do with the disturbance, the mere announcement of a "Riot in Blackburn: the military called out" was likely to have a most prejudicial influence, and the Relief Committee, but especially the Clergy, were

anxious at once to disabuse the minds of any whose first impressions might have been hard thoughts of the Blackburn operatives. A special meeting of the Committee was therefore summoned for the following day, by the Rev. Canon Rushton, D.D., the Vicar, "to agree upon a public statement of the origin of the disturbance, lest some exaggerated or erroneous report should go forth to the detriment of our cause," and the following statement was adopted and published:—

"The Blackburn Relief Committee consider it just to express to the public their absolute certainty that the disturbances in Blackburn, on the evening of November 6th, incident on the conviction of certain persons of poaching, was in no sense due to the distress, or to the administration of relief by the Poor-Law Guardians, or by the Relief Committee. The friends of those convicted seem, as far as the Committee can discover, after enquiry, to have led a number of persons, who, out of mere mischief, commenced the breaking of windows, without discrimination, inasmuch as the windows of empty houses, as well as of operatives, were broken. The Committee, therefore express their conviction that there is in this affair nothing to shake their confidence in the manly patience and quiet behaviour of the sufferers, as a class; many of the operatives have to-day expressed their sorrow that persons should have acted so wrongfully, and cheerfully enrolled themselves as special constables."

I believe the evil effects of this unfortunate disturbance were never very great; that the prompt measures adopted to inform the public as to the real facts of the case had the desired effect; and that public confidence in the quiet and orderly behaviour and patient endurance of the suffering operatives cannot be said to have been at all affected by it. But the riot was for the moment sufficiently alarming, and its bearing, or possible consequences on the distress and the means available for its relief, were for a time of sufficient importance to warrant this notice of the incident in what purports to be a history of the distress in Blackburn.

In further confirmation of the opinion so confidently expressed by the Relief Committee, that the disturbances were in no degree occasioned by the distress, and that the unemployed operatives were in no way responsible for them, the Overlookers' Committee addressed his Worship in the following terms:—

"The committee of the unemployed Overlookers desire on their behalf to express their deep sorrow and regret at the disturbance which has arisen, and the destruction of property which has taken place in this town, and whilst we heartily condole and sympathise with you in this severe trial, we volunteer as a body to assist you and the authorities of the borough to keep order and protect life and property; and either on the present or any future occasion you may rely on the co-operation of the Overlookers in keeping order in the town."

## CHAPTER IV.

*The various relief expedients necessary—Census of the state of employment—Progressive increase of the number "wholly out of work"—Increase of the out-relief by the Guardians—The extent and increase of the relief by the Guardians and the Relief Committee—Depressed condition of the town at the close of 1862—Movement to provide Christmas cheer—Christmas dinners at the Town Hall—Origin of the movement—Fitting-up of the Hall—The dinner on Monday—The dinners on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday—Dr. Robinson's address to the girls—Address by Mr. Marychurch to the men—Grant for Christmas dinners to the recipients of relief.*

The progress of the destitution, for the amelioration of which so many expedients were devised, fully warranted all the efforts which were thus made for its relief. Hundreds of illustrations might be given of individuals and families reduced from plenty, and even comparative luxury, to absolute poverty or positive starvation; of many who were erewhile gay and jocund, becoming depressed and haggard,—the veriest ghosts of their former selves; of the provident (of whom there were but too few) withdrawing their savings from banks and building clubs; and of the extravagant, whose riches consisted of their gay attire, and the house-proud, whose furniture had cost them the savings of years, resorting to the pawn shop for the means of purchasing a morsel of bread. Many pictures might be drawn, singularly alike in their broad outlines, of the homes once happy which were thus rendered scenes of discomfort and misery; and many tales might be told of family hopes disappointed, by not only the savings of years being lost, but the independence of a life-time, or a generation, being at last sacrificed to the necessity of begging for daily food. The experience of every relief visitor could supply the materials of many heart-rending narratives; but into the fields thus inviting me I must

not enter. I must confine myself to the more prosaic task of stating broad facts, and leave the reader to draw, from the stern truths they embody, such notions of the condition of the unemployed factory operatives of Blackburn as a sympathetic imagination will very readily suggest.

I have already stated that Blackburn is almost entirely dependent upon the cotton trade for its prosperity, and that 25,000 of its operatives, representing 50,000 of its population, were in 1861 directly connected with that single branch of industry. Shortly after the Relief Committee commenced operations, the Chief Constable of the Borough received instructions to take a census of the state of employment in the town, and to renew his enquiries weekly, in order that the Relief Committee and the Guardians might have some idea of the extent and progress of the distress, and be better able to anticipate and provide for the claims that were likely to be made upon them. The following selections from these returns will show the rapidity with which the numbers of the unemployed increased during the year 1862:—

| Date, 1862.         | Number usually Employed. | Working full Time. | Working Short Time. | Wholly out of Work. |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1st January.....    | 21,348                   | 6,252              | 10,420              | 4,676               |
| 24th May .....      | 25,975                   | 9,113              | 8,438               | 8,424               |
| 1st August.....     | 26,440                   | 7,162              | 7,179               | 12,099              |
| 5th September ..... | 27,055                   | 6,577              | 6,255               | 14,223              |
| 3rd October .....   | 27,060                   | 5,002              | 6,552               | 15,506              |
| 31st October.....   | 27,273                   | 3,857              | 6,079               | 17,337              |
| 21st November.....  | 27,273                   | 3,931              | 5,874               | 17,486              |
| 19th December.....  | 27,273                   | 7,062              | 3,888               | 16,323              |

The progressive increase in the "number usually employed" is accounted for by the greater completeness of the later returns, and the number in excess of 25,000 (the estimated number of cotton workers,) arises from other trades being included in the census. But the great fact to be noted in these figures is, the large proportion which the "wholly out of work" bear to the "usually employed," amounting in November and December to from 60 to 64 per cent., and representing from 32,500 to 35,000 individuals.

In harmony with these figures shewing the state of employment, are the figures exhibiting the extent of out-door relief administered by the Guardians. I confine myself to the out-door relief of the Guardians, because the (old) workhouse accommodation being limited,

the number of inmates varied little,—increasing, from a normal average of about 400, to no more than 500 at the very height of the distress,—and the fluctuations in the extent of the out-door relief are therefore a correct index of the pressure of the crisis. Bearing in mind what I have already stated, that in the Blackburn district of the union the average number in receipt of out-relief, prior to the distress, was about 1,750, and the weekly cost of their relief about £80, the following figures are painfully significant:—

| 1861.<br>Week ending | BLACKBURN DISTRICT.* |          | WHOLE UNION. |          |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------|--------------|----------|
|                      | Number.              | Cost.    | Number.      | Cost.    |
|                      |                      | £ s. d.  |              | £ s. d.  |
| November 16 .....    | 2061                 | 93 5 5   | 3213         | 154 12 4 |
| " 23 .....           | 2386                 | 106 1 7  | 3508         | 171 8 2  |
| " 30 .....           | 2908                 | 120 19 9 | 4110         | 186 7 2  |
| December 7 .....     | 3129                 | 133 8 8  | 4411         | 201 8 11 |
| " 14 .....           | 3301                 | 146 8 3  | 4614         | 213 9 8  |
| " 21 .....           | 3473                 | 156 17 9 | 4811         | 228 9 7  |
| " 28 .....           | 3563                 | 171 4 1  | 4878         | 242 0 0  |
| 1862.                |                      |          |              |          |
| January 4 .....      | 3659                 | 164 5 2  | 4960         | 233 3 11 |
| " 11 .....           | 3945                 | 187 13 8 | 5260         | 258 2 5  |
| " 18 .....           | 4054                 | 199 0 1  | 5411         | 273 1 1  |
| " 25 .....           | 4534                 | 249 13 2 | 5989         | 324 15 7 |
| February 1 .....     | 5074                 | 262 19 9 | 6750         | 350 16 5 |
| " 8 .....            | 5495                 | 297 17 0 | 7331         | 390 4 4  |

\* Includes the townships of Blackburn, Balderstone, Little Harwood, Mellor, Osbaldeston, Pleasington, Ramsgreave and Witton.

The operations of the Relief Committee were up to this time limited to the Soup Kitchen, which they had established as we have seen for the sale of soup at about 30 per cent. under cost price; and during the week ending 8th February they made a preliminary distribution of bread and meal. But from this time forward, until the close of the year, the operations of the Guardians and the Relief Committee run side by side, like two immense and constantly augmenting streams flowing for the refreshment of an apparently insatiable soil. I append in parallel columns the weekly returns of these two main sources of relief, in order that the reader may obtain at a glance some idea of the extent to which aid had to be afforded for the sustenance of the large numbers whom the employment returns shew were "wholly out of work." (See notes to pages 62 and 63.)

These figures indicate the cost at which our unemployed thousands were preserved from starvation, and while the Guardians ad-

## RELIEF BY GUARDIANS.

| 1862.<br>Week ending. | BLACKBURN DISTRICT. |            | WHOLE UNION. |             |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
|                       | Number.             | Cost.      | Number.      | Cost.       |
|                       |                     | £ s. d.    |              | £ s. d.     |
| February 15 .....     | 6,096               | 352 4 0    | 7,959        | 445 10 9    |
| " 22 .....            | 6,499               | 401 13 3   | 8,434        | 496 3 10    |
| March 1 .....         | 6,836               | 432 15 10  | 8,791        | 525 0 2     |
| " 8 .....             | 6,727               | 392 3 1    | 8,709        | 482 0 6     |
| " 15 .....            | 7,110               | 374 2 3    | 9,084        | 463 7 7     |
| " 22 .....            | 7,398               | 417 1 1    | 9,330        | 505 15 0    |
| " 29 .....            | 7,616               | 439 0 10   | 9,610        | 530 14 1    |
| April 5 .....         | 7,347               | 365 8 2    | 8,919        | 445 15 4    |
| " 12 .....            | 7,286               | 384 14 0   | 8,974        | 467 17 6    |
| " 19 .....            | 7,429               | 417 9 0    | 9,297        | 502 15 8    |
| " 26 .....            | 7,540               | 440 1 2    | 9,414        | 529 5 5     |
| May 3 .....           | 7,642               | 430 12 1   | 9,557        | 523 17 2    |
| " 10 .....            | 7,900               | 466 11 2   | 9,873        | 560 12 2    |
| " 17 .....            | 8,012               | 471 2 1    | 10,005       | 565 18 7    |
| " 24 .....            | 8,113               | 471 11 10  | 10,089       | 565 16 7    |
| " 31 .....            | 8,235               | 495 7 9    | 10,229       | 580 12 9    |
| June 7 .....          | 8,582               | 541 3 6    | 10,781       | 644 11 7    |
| " 14 .....            | 9,489               | 554 7 2    | 11,790       | 661 19 10   |
| " 21 .....            | 8,910               | 553 13 4   | 11,193       | 660 2 4     |
| " 28 .....            | 8,923               | 548 16 5   | 11,097       | 650 10 0    |
| July 5 .....          | 8,795               | 535 10 10  | 10,852       | 633 18 3    |
| " 12 .....            | 8,973               | 540 19 5   | 11,000       | 634 12 11   |
| " 19 .....            | 8,941               | 570 3 6    | 10,935       | 662 18 10   |
| " 26 .....            | 9,190               | 551 16 11  | 11,268       | 645 10 8    |
| August 2 .....        | 9,487               | 557 1 5    | 11,566       | 649 14 7    |
| " 9 .....             | 9,878               | 569 4 0    | 11,974       | 657 18 10   |
| " 16 .....            | 10,655              | 633 5 10   | 12,911       | 733 0 7     |
| " 23 .....            | 11,402              | 635 11 7   | 13,840       | 742 9 6     |
| " 30 .....            | 11,930              | 676 13 1   | 14,457       | 786 14 7    |
| September 6 .....     | 12,501              | 702 19 0   | 14,997       | 812 14 6    |
| " 13 .....            | 12,841              | 700 19 2   | 15,422       | 813 14 4    |
| " 20 .....            | 13,481              | 758 6 5    | 16,265       | 887 7 10    |
| " 27 .....            | 14,104              | 795 2 10   | 17,087       | 934 19 1    |
| October 4 .....       | 14,221              | 741 16 2   | 17,144       | 876 2 11    |
| " 11 .....            | 14,967              | 807 16 8   | 18,161       | 1,054 17 4  |
| " 18 .....            | 15,652              | 852 1 3    | 19,145       | 1,021 7 8   |
| " 25 .....            | 16,082              | 812 12 5   | 20,016       | 997 8 2     |
| November 1 .....      | 16,683              | 871 10 1   | 20,802       | 1,079 14 9  |
| " 8 .....             | 17,130              | 949 16 2   | 21,552       | 1,156 11 4  |
| " 15 .....            | 17,375              | 938 4 6    | 21,941       | 1,157 11 10 |
| " 22 .....            | 17,861              | 1,009 10 9 | 22,726       | 1,237 7 1   |
| " 29 .....            | 18,395              | 1,101 12 7 | 23,524       | 1,346 13 9  |
| December 6 .....      | 18,459              | 1,078 16 3 | 23,573       | 1,336 8 7   |
| " 13 .....            | 18,300              | 988 7 2    | 23,312       | 1,229 3 4   |
| " 20 .....            | 18,108              | 1,034 3 10 | 22,781       | 1,267 7 3   |
| " 27 .....            | 18,707              | 1,121 1 6  | 21,207       | 1,352 12 6  |

ministered relief to upwards of 20,000 persons, the Relief Committee's distribution of bread or flour and meal was made to upwards of 25,000

## RELIEF BY RELIEF COMMITTEE.

| 1862.<br>Week ending. | Bread. | Meal.  | Total Value. |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------------|
|                       | lbs.   | lbs.   | £ s. d.      |
|                       |        |        |              |
| February 15 .....     | 7,422  | 7,756  | 94 17 3      |
| " 22 .....            | 7,948  | 8,400  | 102 3 6      |
| March 1 .....         | 9,100  | 9,200  | 114 7 6      |
| " 8 .....             | 9,900  | 10,026 | 139 10 9     |
| " 15 .....            | 11,496 | 11,400 | 143 2 0      |
| " 22 .....            | 10,132 | 9,858  | 124 18 9     |
| " 29 .....            | 8,991  | 9,360  | 114 13 10½   |
| April 5 .....         | 9,685  | 10,080 | 123 10 7½    |
| " 12 .....            | 9,909  | 10,560 | 127 18 7½    |
| " 19 .....            | 11,317 | 11,010 | 139 10 10½   |
| " 26 .....            | 11,090 | 11,400 | 140 11 3     |
| May 3 .....           | 11,449 | 10,920 | 139 16 1½    |
| " 10 .....            | 11,296 | 10,920 | 138 17 0     |
| " 17 .....            | 11,548 | 11,760 | 145 13 6     |
| " 24 .....            | 12,492 | 11,948 | 152 15 0     |
| " 31 .....            | 12,900 | 13,180 | 163 0 0      |
| June 7 .....          | 13,344 | 13,080 | 165 3 0      |
| " 14 .....            | 13,463 | 13,920 | 171 2 10½    |
| " 21 .....            | 13,970 | 13,800 | 173 11 3     |
| " 28 .....            | 12,893 | 12,360 | 157 16 7½    |
| July 5 .....          | 13,549 | 13,340 | 168 1 1½     |
| " 12 .....            | 14,183 | 12,840 | 168 17 10½   |
| " 19 .....            | 14,981 | 14,280 | 182 17 7½    |
| " 26 .....            | 16,455 | 14,880 | 195 16 10½   |
| August 2 .....        | 18,016 | 17,400 | 221 7 0      |
| " 9 .....             | 20,605 | 19,200 | 248 15 7½    |
| " 16 .....            | 24,565 | 21,820 | 289 18 1½    |
| " 23 .....            | 27,887 | 23,440 | 320 16 1½    |
| " 30 .....            | 28,044 | 24,000 | 325 5 6      |
| September 6 .....     | 30,200 | 28,720 | 368 5 0      |
| " 13 .....            | 31,200 | 29,040 | 376 10 0     |
| " 20 .....            | 31,031 | 33,120 | 400 18 10½   |
| " 27 .....            | 32,616 | 33,606 | 413 17 9     |
| October 4 .....       | 33,409 | 37,080 | 440 11 1½    |
| " 11 .....            | 39,328 | 39,600 | 493 6 0      |
| " 18 .....            | 44,608 | 42,000 | 537 11 0     |
| " 25 .....            | 43,229 | 43,680 | 543 3 7½     |
| November 1 .....      | 48,289 | 45,360 | 585 6 1½     |
| " 8 .....             | 45,614 | 45,840 | 571 11 9     |
| " 15 .....            | Flour. |        |              |
| " 22 .....            | 48,183 | 45,660 | 586 10 4½    |
| " 29 .....            | 52,887 | 43,200 | 600 10 10½   |
| December 6 .....      | 56,536 | 47,040 | 647 7 0      |
| " 13 .....            | 54,440 | 48,560 | 643 15 0     |
| " 20 .....            | 56,040 | 47,760 | 648 15 0     |
| " 27 .....            | 56,040 | 45,420 | 634 2 6      |
| " 27 .....            | 59,520 | 42,240 | 636 0 0      |

persons. To a considerable extent, as will be shewn hereafter, the same persons received an allowance from both sources, but on the most moderate computation the families relieved comprised an aggregate of 35,000 persons, or considerably more than one half of the total population of the Borough.

Towards the close of 1862 the condition and prospects of the operatives were gloomy in the extreme. The relief of destitution was all that the Guardians and the Relief Committee were empowered to attempt; it was beyond their province to provide comforts, much less luxuries. But the many who sympathised with the operatives were not so fettered as to the object to which their benevolence might be devoted, and a few weeks before Christmas, when there were so many thousands subsisting day by day on the allowance made to them by the Relief Committee or the Guardians, it was suggested by some of the ladies attending the Church sewing classes, that the young people under their charge should be cheered during the approaching festive season with something more than their ordinary stinted fare. The suggestion was no sooner made than it was approved of and acted upon; but before much was done in the way of collecting the funds necessary to provide a Christmas dinner for so many hundreds, friends at a distance heard of the project, and requested the privilege of defraying the expenses; and the proposal was at the same time extended so as to embrace not only the girls attending the Church sewing classes, but the young men attending the Church educational classes, and the men attending the industrial schools and the St. Peter's married men's class. The Vicar thus explained the origin and progress of the movement to the first of the Christmas dinner parties, which made the week following Christmas a season of festivity and rejoicing even to the suffering operatives—for the large numbers whom it was ultimately determined to entertain at a Christmas dinner required that they should be divided into five companies and entertained on five successive days:

"The idea of a dinner at this time having originated with the lady teachers of the sewing classes, I contrived to make it known in the course of my correspondence in different parts of the kingdom. It was highly approved of by the subscribers who have so freely sent us their money, and particularly, I may say, by Mrs. Lushington, who was the first to give us anything like substantial cheer, by proposing to send us two fat sheep. After that followed other subscriptions, which have enabled us to provide this repast for you to-day, and a similar feast for those who are to come on succeeding days. The subscriptions are from Mrs. W. E. Gladstone, Mrs. Warre, Mrs. J. Gerald Potter, the Rev. R. T. Wheeler (late incumbent of St. John's, in this town), Mrs. Wheeler, and other friends."

The Mayor, (J. B. S. Sturdy, Esq.,) kindly placed the Town Hall at the disposal of the clergy for the proposed festive meetings, and the dinner tables were fitted up for the occasion by the joiners in the employment of Mr. Alderman Stones, builder, who cheerfully gave their time and labour, while Mr. Stones lent the timber, and thus contributed gratuitously what must otherwise have made a serious inroad on the funds. The tables for dining, with forms at each side, were fifteen in number, about 36 feet in length and placed across the hall, being close to the wall at the front side of the room, but leaving ample space at the other side of the hall, where a broader table was placed longitudinally for the carvers. The hall was simply but tastefully decorated. Around the room, suspended against the walls and floating at the side of the windows, were flags and banners. The front of the platform or orchestra was wreathed with evergreens and flowers, and in the centre was a crown, surrounded and surmounted with similar wreaths, and having underneath in large letters "God save the Queen." At the lower end of the room two flags were displayed, placed cross-wise in front of the windows, one being the flag with "St. Michael's Sunday School" on it, and the other having the text "Whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." The dinner party on Monday, the 29th of December, 1862, consisted of the girls attending the sewing classes in the Town Hall, and they numbered about 560. They assembled, along with their lady teachers and superintendents, at St. John's School-room at noon, where they were each supplied with a blue ribbon which was pinned to the left shoulder. These ribbons were specially prepared for the occasion, at the cost of Miss Zorlin, who was then a guest at the vicarage, and bore the inscription "Cotton Crisis, Blackburn, 1862, 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.'—Psalm xlvii, 1 v." At the same time that the scholars were supplied with these blue ribbons, the teachers were supplied, through the kindness of Mrs. Rushton, with beautiful white rosettes, which they wore on their left shoulder. Thus accoutred, and headed by the Vicar and several of the clergy, the girls and their teachers were marshalled in the order of procession, and marched to the Town Hall, gazed upon by immense crowds, who manifested the liveliest interest in the imposing spectacle. The dinner fare was boiled beef and plum pudding, and right heartily was it enjoyed. So novel and interesting a sight as a dinner party of 560 girls and young women on two successive days, and as large, or a greater number of young men and old, on the three following days, assembled under such

circumstances, has seldom if ever been witnessed; and strangers from a distance who visited the town during the week, and spent an hour in the assembly room of our Town Hall during dinner on any one of these days of festivity, retired with impressions which can never be effaced.

On Tuesday, the 30th of December, the girls attending the classes at the Mechanics' Institution, at Nova Scotia, Eanam, and Bank Top formed the dinner party, and they numbered about 700. They presented the same clean and orderly appearance as the girls did on Monday, and marched in procession from their respective schools to the Town Hall, and were seated at the dinner tables by one o'clock. On Wednesday, the third day of the week's festivities, the unmarried men attending the educational classes in Back Lane and Pump Street, and the married men attending the class at the Shakespeare mill, numbering altogether about 750, formed the dinner party. The fare was similar to that provided for the girls, and the arrangements in all respects the same. On Thursday the number who dined was upwards of 700, being the men attending the schools at Little Peel, at Highfield, and about 200 from the Industrial classes at Eanam. The men who dined on Friday were the remainder of the scholars from the two Industrial classes (Mrs. J. G. Potter's and Mrs. W. E. Gladstone's), and numbered 750. During dinner on Thursday and Friday Mrs. Gladstone was present, and she was on Friday accompanied by her brother, Sir Stephen Richard Glynne, Bart., of Hawarden Castle, Flintshire; and Mrs. Elwin, of Brighton. While the men were at dinner on Friday, Mrs. Gladstone, leaning on the arm of the Rev. Dr. Robinson; Sir Stephen Glynne and Mrs. Elwin; and Mr. and Mrs. Feilden, of Witton Park, passed slowly up the hall and back again, and Mrs. Gladstone spoke to several of the men as she passed where they were sitting. Later in the day, on Friday, the waiters, servants, cooks, police-constables, &c., to the number of about 200, who had assisted at the festivities of the week, were regaled with a substantial dinner. The quantity of beef, &c., consumed at the five days' dinners was as follows:—Beef, 4,595 lbs.; Potatoes, 4,800 lbs.; Plum Puddings, 3,056 lbs.; Bread, 720 lbs. Mr. James Boyle, confectioner, then an Alderman of the Borough, contracted with the clergy for the successive repasts, at a rate which I fear left him but a narrow margin of profit for his trouble. He was, however, satisfied with having contributed to the entertainment of so many thousands; and the thousands who partook of the substantial fare he provided,

were, I am sure, equally satisfied with the mode in which he catered for them.

These festive meetings, at which for five successive days such large numbers were brought together under circumstances which tended so much to the promotion of good humour, were diligently taken advantage of by the clergy to inculcate the duty of gratitude, and all that was implied in such a disposition, as well as the higher lessons of religion. At this time there had been a partial revival of trade, which created a demand for a few weavers; but it was alleged by the masters, that although work was offered, the operatives were not to be found who would accept it, so satisfied were they with the provision made for them by the Relief Committee, and especially by the clergy. On this subject the Rev. Dr. Robinson enlarged in his after-dinner address on the Monday. He said:—

"I think you have practical proof now, if you never had before, that the clergy have proved themselves your friends in the day of adversity. And I speak not now of the clergy of the town of Blackburn alone, but I speak of the clergy of the Church of England throughout the whole country, because you must remember that these sewing classes originated with the clergy, who were supported by their brethren in every part of England; and therefore we are enabled now to speak to you a word of counsel, and I am sure you will receive it kindly from us. If we have proved to you that we really wish the best for you; and if we have shewn you that we desire to promote your happiness; and if we have come forward at some little personal inconvenience, toil, and expense to ourselves in order to minister to your wants in your deep state of distress, I do think that now you will listen to us when we give you advice, which may perhaps not be palatable to you, and which now, in your present state, I can quite understand you may not be able to see the benefit of, but which I feel confident you will know the benefit of, and you will realise the benefit of in the future. Now then you have a duty to perform, and I call upon you to shew your thankfulness to those kind people in every part of the country who have come forward with large gifts and contributions, and noble and generous munificence, to meet the wants and mitigate the sorrows of the people now in this dark time of poverty and trial. A duty not merely to the town of Blackburn, not merely to the clergy of Blackburn, but to yourselves; for if you fail in your duty you will not only bring disgrace upon us who have done so much for your welfare by pleading your cause amongst our brethren in different parts of the country, but upon yourselves. I have been told now that there are spinners and weavers wanted, and that the masters have experienced a difficulty in obtaining hands to work. Now, this must not be. You must go back to your work on the first offer of work; and I entreat and exhort you, I earnestly beseech you that if you have any regard for me and the rest of the clergy, and if you have any regard for what we have done for you, with the vicar at our head, you will go back to-morrow morning and ask at the factories if you can obtain work; and if it be even unprofitable to you, if it even don't bring in wages, at least at first, go to work and shew to England that you will do your duty in spite of hardship and difficulty and loss, and before very long you will be in



full work with full wages, and you will forget this dark cloud, or if you remember it at all it will only be the increasing kindness, sympathy and generosity which were displayed towards you on the one hand, and the patient endurance, and noble magnanimity, and high Christian feeling and still higher Christian conduct which were manifested on the other hand. Now, nothing must deprive you of the character which you have heretofore sustained. You have hitherto conducted yourselves well and nobly; and people have looked to Blackburn, and they have seen that the classes have been established upon a religious basis, and that the people have been orderly and peaceable; and it depends upon your conduct now not to bring discredit upon us, not to bring discredit upon the Church of England, and not to bring shame and distress to the clergy who have so much helped you in this time of need. I will say nothing more than this: if there is a loom or a spindle waiting for you to-morrow, you go and offer your services willingly, and let there be an universal determination to accept work wherever it is offered."

On a kindred subject the Rev. H. W. Marychurch, Incumbent of St. Paul's, addressed the men who formed the Thursday's dinner party, as follows:—

"I think many events have transpired in the course of the year which must considerably modify the ideas you have hitherto entertained on many subjects. You must be very much struck with the almost universal sympathy which has been expressed for you throughout England. I think you must have felt, also, that the masters of the various mills where you worked have been amongst your best friends. You have often been taught by misguided men that your masters are antagonistic to you, that they are men who take no interest in your welfare, but are only intent on amassing large fortunes, irrespective of your wants and necessities. But I think that what you have witnessed within the last year has shewn you that that was a mistaken notion. You will find that the masters have a very deep sympathy with you in your troubles. They feel that your distress is their distress; they feel that your interests are their interests; and they have practically shewn that they feel it. It is very well for men who have large incomes from property to be liberal and give hundreds or even thousands; but it is not a common thing for men who are losing hundreds to give their hundreds, and men who are losing thousands to give their thousands, but this is the spectacle which your masters have exhibited. And let us hope that the time will never come when you will dissociate your interests from theirs, or when they will dissociate their interests from yours."

But the Town Hall dinners to the members of the sewing, reading and industrial classes were not the only festivities that marked the Christmas of 1862, and enlivened the gloom in which the distress had enveloped so many erewhile prosperous and happy homes. A suggestion by some friends in the South, liberal contributors to the funds for the relief of the distress in Lancashire, that the poor factory workers should have an extra allowance for a Christmas dinner, induced the Mansion House Committee to make special grants to Local Relief Committees for this purpose. The grants were at the rate of 8d. per head, to which our Local Relief Committee added 4d., and

this extra allowance of 1s. per head was distributed to the families in receipt of relief during the week preceding Christmas, in time to enable them to make suitable preparations for one day of festivity in a long winter of privation. The grant, which was under the circumstances on a liberal scale, was thankfully received and most faithfully devoted to the purpose for which it was intended. The grant to Blackburn was made on behalf of 40,000 persons, and amounted to £1,333 6s. 8d., to which the Relief Committee added £666 13s. 4d., making a total of £2,000; and this sum, expended in the manner indicated, caused such an extra demand for Christmas fare that the supply in the town was found quite inadequate; and the large stocks of geese, turkeys, &c., with which the poulterers and game dealers had provided themselves in anticipation of a little extra sale, were entirely cleared out at a comparatively early hour on Christmas-eve. Such a consumption of Christmas delicacies had not been known in Blackburn for years, and it seemed as if the distress had suddenly vanished, and been as suddenly succeeded by most unwonted prosperity.



## CHAPTER V.

*Ways and means—The Guardians and the Union Relief Aid Act—Their experience of its defects—Agitation in favour of a loan—The Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, 1863—First local subscription—The Mansion House Fund—Public sympathy thoroughly aroused—Formation of the Manchester Central Committee—The Bridgewater House Meeting—Negotiations of the Bridgewater House Committee with the Manchester Committee—The Mansion House Committee and the Manchester Committee—Advantages of the Mansion House Committee remaining independent of the Manchester Committee—County Meeting—Liverpool Relief Committee—The resources and constitution of the Manchester Central Committee.*

In my rapid survey of the relief expedients, which the increasing distress called into active operation, I have said little respecting the ways and means for their support. The Board of Guardians, as the legally established organisation for the relief of poverty, was the first to feel the pressure of the distress; and the amount of the rates necessary to meet the expenditure soon became a very serious question. Long before the crisis of the distress had been reached, the Guardians felt the necessity of preparing for its approach. At their meeting on the 19th of July, 1862, they instructed the Clerk to prepare a memorial to the Poor law Board, setting forth the present amount and probable increase of the distress in the Blackburn district of the union, and praying the Board to take steps, by an application to Parliament or otherwise (but not by a rate-in-aid), to assist the union with money, to enable the Guardians to meet the distress—the money so advanced to be repaid in more prosperous times.

The expedient of a rate-in-aid was what seemed then to find favour with the Government, and the Bill was in preparation, which ultimately became law, applying the principle of a rate-in-aid to the unions in and surrounding the distressed districts. At their meeting

on the following Saturday the Guardians recurred to the subject, and adopted a petition to the House of Commons against the Union Relief Aid Bill of Mr. Villiers, on the ground that it "is totally inapplicable to the condition of things now existing in Blackburn and other unions suffering in a similar manner from the present distress;" and they prayed for "power to borrow from Government, on the security of the rates, such sums as may from time to time be necessary to enable them to meet the claims made upon them in consequence of the unprecedented distress now prevailing in the manufacturing districts; such money to be repayable by instalments, extending over a period of seven to ten years; such repayment to commence when the cost of relief in the unions has decreased to one-third above the average of the last three years." The Petition was forwarded to Colonel Wilson Patten for presentation, and the members for Lancashire, Cheshire, and the West Riding, were invited by circular letter to support its prayer.

The memorial and petition were alike unsuccessful. The power of levying a rate-in-aid and of borrowing the excess of a certain expenditure, were all that the sagacity of our legislators could then devise for the relief of Lancashire, and with this very limited privilege our Guardians were perforce required to be content. But the rate-in-aid clauses of the Union Relief Aid Act they never put in force, although the amount of their expenditure entitled them to do so, as they preferred the more independent and self-reliant expedient of borrowing on security of the rates any sums in excess of a 3s. rate expenditure.

The first Union Relief Aid Act received the Royal assent on the 7th of August, 1862, and at the close of the then current quarter (Michaelmas) the Guardians prepared to take advantage of its borrowing provisions. It was towards the end of October before the expenditure of the quarter could be ascertained, and then it appeared that the expenditure, in excess of what a 9d. rate would yield, amounted to £3,517 (of which excess the township of Blackburn had paid £2,351), and at their meeting on the 1st of March the Guardians resolved to apply to the Poor Law Board for power to borrow that sum. This was a step, but only a preliminary step, towards obtaining the relief sought for. The Poor Law Board, I believe, lost no time in completing the formalities required of them, and arming the Guardians with the necessary "power to borrow;" but this did not provide them with the money. They had after this to enter the money market, almost as if no act had been passed for their relief, in the capacity of needy borrowers, having a security to offer which was indeed good

enough, but not attractive to money lenders, and negotiate the loan on such terms as they best could, which proved to be almost any terms which the money lending capitalists chose to dictate. The general opinion of the Board, founded on experience, with respect to the act as a relief to over-burdened unions I ventured to express at the time in language which I may here repeat:

"We have now got to the beginning of December, and we have not yet obtained the relief to the extent of £3,517 which the act referred to ('The Union Relief Aid Act') says we are entitled to in respect of the expenditure for the quarter ending September last. At the same rate of progress it will be March next before the over-burdened ratepayers obtain the relief to which the act says they are entitled in respect of the expenditure for the quarter now current, and which terminates at Christmas. The ratepayers have first to be ruined by the expenditure from which the act pretends to relieve them by giving the power of borrowing, and two or three months after the ruin has been completed the relief comes! \* \* \* If we are spending in Blackburn (Township) at present at the rate of 14s. 6d. in the £ per annum, we are spending at the rate of 3½d. per week, and in less than three weeks the 9d. in the £ which the act says is all we should be called upon to spend before we are entitled to relief by borrowing will have been expended. At this stage it is the relief, to be effectual, should come in. But no; we must spend a first 9d., a second, a third, and a fourth 9d. before the end of the quarter; and we must spend other three 9d. rates while the formalities for borrowing are being gone through, and before we get the money which the act says we may borrow when the expenditure exceeds 9d. in the pound in any quarter. We are promised relief after we have spent 9d. in the pound, but we do not get it till we have spent 9d. and 4s. 6d. in addition." \*

What was required was, that the Guardians should be permitted to make an estimate of their expenditure at the commencement of a quarter, (which the weekly returns of relief would have enabled them to do with a pretty close approximation to accuracy), and then to borrow the estimated surplus of the produce of a 9d. rate; and such facilities should also have been afforded for borrowing, as would have obviated the necessity of their going into the open market and so being compelled to give 5 or 6 per cent. for the money they might require.

It is true, however, that although the relief which this power of borrowing money afforded, or was intended to afford, came too late—about four or five months after the expenditure, which it was nominally intended to relieve, had not only been incurred, but met—the money, when it was at length obtained, was some relief in regard to the expenditure then going on, and each successive loan might be regarded as relieving the second quarter following that for which it was nominally obtained. The amount, for example, which the Guardians were entitled to borrow

\* Blackburn Standard, December 3rd, 1862.

in respect of the Michaelmas quarter of 1862, when obtained at the end of December or the beginning of January following, was a relief to the Lady Day quarter of 1863. And so the loan for the Christmas quarter, when obtained about the end of March or beginning of April following, was a relief to the midsummer quarter. But the act was far from affording that prompt and efficient relief which the exigencies of the times demanded.

But although the Guardians had been unsuccessful in the efforts they made, during the time the Union Relief Aid Act was under discussion in Parliament, to effect such modifications in its provisions as would have made it prompt and effective as a measure of relief, they never ceased to agitate, when the opportunity was afforded, in favour of the views in which experience had confirmed them. On the 4th of July, 1863, they resolved to join the movement of the Lancashire and Cheshire unions, to impress on Government the necessity of inserting a clause in the Public Works Manufacturing Districts Act, then under consideration in Parliament, to enable boards of guardians in the distressed districts to borrow money at 3½ per cent. on security of the rates. They also appointed a deputation to attend a conference of Guardians of the distressed unions to be held on the subject, on the following Wednesday, in London; a duty which the Rev. Philip Graham, an *ex-officio* Guardian, promptly and cheerfully undertook, and at the conference referred to, seconded the following resolution, which the meeting adopted:—

"That such bill (The Public Works Manufacturing Districts) does not afford to Boards of Guardians of the distressed unions sufficient facilities for borrowing money to meet the distress in excess of an expenditure of 3s. in the pound in and about the relief of the poor: That by the late act (The Union Relief Aid Act) it has been found difficult to obtain the necessary loans, and the terms offered have been unfavourable: That inasmuch as the Public Works Loan Commissioners have for upwards of 20 years advanced moneys to Boards of Guardians on security of the rates, and such moneys having been promptly and regularly repaid without loss to the Government, this meeting is of opinion that the present circumstances of the distressed unions are so exceptional, that Government ought to lend the requisite funds, under proper regulations, on the security of the rates, at 3½ per cent. interest, re-payable within a period not exceeding 20 years."

The Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, 1863, became law on the 21st of the same month of July, and I fear was not much modified in consequence of this agitation, and the resolutions in which the feeling of dissatisfaction was expressed. The aim of the Legislature was to find labour for the unemployed, and they were probably under an apprehension that that object might be defeated were

Guardians to obtain too great facilities for borrowing money for the purposes of relief without regard to labour. A few days before the bill received the Royal assent, the Guardians were visited by Mr. H. B. Farnall, the Special Commissioner to the Distressed Districts, who explained its provisions, and its adaptability to the case of the out-townships, in which no local authority was established; but the Guardians never saw their way to undertaking works of "public utility and sanitary improvement," and the relief which the "Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, 1863" afforded to the ratepayers was effected by other means than that of the Guardians enforcing its provisions in the townships over which it gave them this novel jurisdiction.

The circumstances under which, as I have already explained, the first relief subscription was commenced, coupled with the belief, which for a considerable time prevailed, that the American war would be of short duration, and that consequently a limited subscription would suffice to meet the extraordinary requirements of the crisis, induced many to withhold subscriptions altogether, and others to give but sparingly. The result of these combined influences was, that the Blackburn subscription, when compared with the distress which had to be relieved, was miserably inadequate, and drew down upon our spinners and manufacturers, and the wealthy of the town and neighbourhood, severe animadversion. Subsequent events proved that it was no niggard selfishness on the part of those who had the means to be liberal, which thus at the outset exposed them to censure; and those who at the first might be the most disposed to blame, would, with a full knowledge of all the circumstances, have then been quite as forward to justify, as many of them afterwards found occasion to praise, the conduct of the masters and property owners of the town and district. There are no doubt some who must be excepted from this commendation—some who throughout the crisis refused to recognise the duty of property; but they are few in number, and may be safely left to the reproaches of their own consciences, and the regrets which they must feel at having let slip an opportunity, such as seldom occurs, of learning by experience the luxury of doing good.

The total amount received by the Relief Committee, from the date of its appointment on 21st November, 1861, till the 15th October, 1862 (when a public meeting was held in the Council Chamber for the purpose of inaugurating a second local subscription), was £12,592 12s. 8d., of which £3,800 had been received from the Mansion House

fund and £2,600 from the Manchester Central Fund. Deducting these two items, the first local subscription is reduced to £6,192 12s. 8d. But even from this other sums must be deducted, which cannot in any sense be regarded as local subscriptions. Of the sums received by the "Lancashire Lad," in response to his stirring appeals in the *Times*, £100 came to Blackburn, and is included in this statement of receipts up to the 15th October; and £237, received by Councillor Tiplady, is also included in these receipts. A careful examination of the subscription list compels me to deduct many other sums, which reduce the first local subscription to about £3,500, or about 2·42 per cent. on the then rateable value of the Borough and Township of Blackburn.

Humiliating (when the figures are contemplated without regard to the circumstances to which I have referred as explaining and accounting for, if they do not excuse them) as these facts are, I do not suppose that they are more to the discredit of Blackburn than a similar analysis of other local subscriptions would be to a great many other towns; and in the course of these pages it will be seen how completely any shortcoming at the outset was redeemed by subsequent liberality on the part of the rich, and unwearied labour and self-denial on the part of all, for the relief of the abounding destitution. But the first effects of small subscription lists in the cotton districts was to call down upon Lancashire the censure of the Metropolitan Press, and the smaller organs of public opinion published in distant parts of the country. And it cannot be denied that in certain quarters Lancashire was censured with hearty good will. The tide of public opinion flowed adversely at first, and it almost seemed as if Lancashire was to be left to cope single-handed with a distress, for the relief of which the result proved that the charity of the world was not too much. But something had to be said for Lancashire, as well as against; and the influence of the appeals in vindication of Lancashire was soon manifested in the improved tone of feeling with respect to the claims of the cotton districts, and their suffering thousands, on the sympathy of the country at large.

The first practical manifestation of this improved state of feeling took place on the 25th of April, 1862, when a deputation of gentlemen connected with and interested in the cotton manufacture had an interview with the Lord Mayor of London (the late Wm. Cubitt, Esq.) at the Mansion House, and the Lord Mayor consented to receive subscriptions towards a general Lancashire Relief Fund. This fund received the name of "The Lancashire and Cheshire Opera-

tives' Relief Fund," but has always been best known as the "Mansion House Relief Fund," and owed much of its success to the exertions of Mr. W. J. R. Cotton, a London merchant, who originally suggested the idea that the Lord Mayor should take upon himself this onerous duty. It belongs not to the history of the distress in Blackburn, to detail how freely contributions flowed into the channel thus opened for the distribution of, not only a nation's, but a world's sympathy, amongst the distressed population of the cotton districts. But it is interesting to note that at the first meeting of the Mansion House Committee called for the purpose of distributing some of the funds entrusted to them, a grant of £500 was made to Blackburn. This was on the 8th of May, 1862, and at frequent intervals afterwards grants from the same source, ranging in amount from £100 to £1,000, continued throughout the distress to supply the constant drain which the necessities of the crisis kept up on the resources of our Local Relief Committee.

It may be said that about the middle or towards the autumn of 1862 the sympathy of this country, and of all countries, was thoroughly aroused on behalf of the suffering operatives of the cotton districts; and the profitless discussions respecting the duty of Lancashire, and the conduct of Lancashire in the crisis, had been superseded by the pleasanter and more profitable task of devising means whereby the starving might be fed, and the hundreds of thousands of poverty-stricken, although industrious operatives, might be saved from the miseries that were present and impending. The general feeling was well expressed by the facetious *Punch* in these noble lines:—

Is Lancashire liberal? outface her,  
Giving two crowns to her one.  
Is Lancashire stingy? outface her,  
Giving much to her none,

Be it little or much; let's be striving,  
Give money, or blankets or prayer—  
All but reasons for not giving,  
Be they never so fair.

If the North pour her wealth without stint,  
The want passes all her powers;  
If the North's heart be hard as flint,  
More need of softness in ours.

Then be there no cry but one  
Heard through the struggle to live,  
The cry of the horse-leech alone—  
A sore cry of Give! Give! Give!

The Central Relief Committee of Manchester is the next organisation to which I must refer. Situated in the very centre of the distressed districts, Manchester was admirably suited to be the source whence the outlying towns and townships should draw such foreign supplies as they might require, and from which an effective supervision and control could be exercised on the proceedings of the various local committees. This was the onerous task which the Central Relief Committee ultimately undertook, and which they have throughout performed, and are still continuing, to the general satisfaction of both the subscribers to the relief fund, and the recipients of their bounty. But at the time this committee was formed (29th April, 1862) the hope of an early termination of the American war, and that the distress would be of short duration, had not been abandoned; and there was then also a pretty general feeling that each district, either by an increase in the poor rates, or by voluntary subscriptions, should bear the burden of its own distress. The Central Committee was therefore at its formation little more than a Manchester organisation, with representatives from the surrounding towns and districts, and was very far from being the influential body which it afterwards became. There was an apathy on the subject of the distress in Manchester as elsewhere, which was only gradually removed. The first decisive indication of earnestness on the part of the committee, and that they appreciated the magnitude of the task which was likely to devolve upon them, occurred at a meeting held on the 25th of June, 1862, when it was resolved, on the motion of the Mayor of Blackburn (R. H. Hutchinson, Esq.), seconded by the Mayor of Stalybridge (R. Hopwood, Esq.,)

"That the existing distress of the workpeople connected with the cotton trade of Lancashire and Cheshire, Yorkshire, and Derbyshire, and the expectation of its increasing in intensity as the winter approaches, warrants the Committee in communicating to the public the fact that this Committee is prepared to receive any sums that may be subscribed for the object in view, and to give its best attention to the proper and judicious distribution thereof."

This was the real commencement of the Central Relief Committee's operations. At the same meeting it was determined that a copy of this resolution, with the names of the committee, should be advertised in the Manchester and London papers; and that copies should be forwarded to all lords lieutenant, mayors, and other civic officials in the United Kingdom; and in response to that appeal the subscriptions flowed into the coffers of the committee with a liberality

which at once astonished and delighted, not only the districts distressed, but the country at large.

A few months after the establishment of the Mansion House Relief Fund, namely, on the 19th of July, 1862, a meeting of noblemen and other wealthy landowners connected with the cotton districts was held at Bridgewater House, under the presidency of the late Earl of Ellesmere, and a magnificent subscription (called The Cotton Districts Relief Fund) entered into for the relief of the distress in Lancashire. A Committee was formed; the gallant representative of the Northern Division of this county, Col. Wilson Patten, was appointed treasurer; and large funds were soon placed at their disposal for distribution—the Queen, as Duchess of Lancaster, contributing £2,000. But the distribution of the funds subscribed by or entrusted to them formed no part of the duty or objects of the Bridgewater House meeting, or the committee then appointed; their simple object was to collect, and it was intended that others more centrally situated and better conversant with the condition and necessities of the distressed districts, should undertake the work of distribution. In these circumstances attention was naturally turned to Manchester, and to the Central Relief Committee then recently formed, and a deputation of the Bridgewater House Committee, consisting of Lord Egerton, of Tatton, Sir James P. Kay-Shuttleworth, Bart., and Col. Wilson Patten, M.P., attended a meeting of the Central Relief Committee on the 8th of August, 1862, and stated that the committee which they represented would be willing to contribute £4,000 per month for six months to an executive committee consisting of persons “representing districts in need of relief and all parties contributing,” on condition that the amount so given should be dispensed by local committees, and devoted to unemployed workmen and their families who were not receiving parish relief. Sir James P. Kay-Shuttleworth placed the proposal before the Central Relief Committee in a formal manner as follows :—

“That grants by the Central Executive Committee be devoted to the relief of workmen, their families, dependents and others reduced to indigence by the crisis in the cotton trade, not being on the poor rates. That the rate of such grants be proportionate to the number of cotton operatives out of employment, regard being had to the amount of local subscriptions obtained as compared with the supposed wealth of the district applying for aid.”

The distinction here made, between those who had been reduced to a state of destitution through the Cotton Famine, and those who, in ordinary times, might occasionally be under the necessity of apply-

ing for and accepting aid from the poor rates, was noticed by several of the gentlemen present when the proposal was made, who strongly urged that the terms of the proposed grants should be modified. Amongst the rest, the Mayor of Blackburn (R. H. Hutchinson, Esq.), while confessing the strong reluctance which those who had been accustomed to earn their daily bread by honest toil felt to making application to the Guardians for aid, expressed a strong desire that some other term than “pauper,” which carried with it an idea of degradation, could be devised for designating those whom adversity might occasionally drive to the union office for relief. I felt and expressed, at an earlier period of the distress, strong objections to the distinction which was then sedulously attempted to be made, between those who in their poverty applied to the Guardians for aid, and those who declined parochial relief, but were willing and forward enough to accept the help which a volunteer committee dispensed from voluntary funds. And when the distinction was thus again so prominently brought forward, and that apparently with the high sanction of the noblemen and gentlemen who composed the Bridgewater House meeting, I ventured another remonstrance, in the hope of influencing local public opinion towards what I conceived to be more correct views on so important a question. I may be pardoned for reproducing here a short extract from the remarks I then made, expressing as it does the opinion in which subsequent observation has only served to confirm me :—

“The words pauper and pauperism, so far as they convey a meaning which causes a blush of shame to suffuse the cheek of honest indigence, are unfortunate, and should not be used in reference to any class of the poor, as descriptive of either their state or character. Unless we regard poverty as a crime, and the necessity which drives widows and orphans to the parish for relief as a calamity which is more their disgrace than their misfortune, it is heartless to speak of the poor by any name which can cause them to feel either pain or shame. We have no sympathy with those who speak in terms of opprobrium, characterising as “paupers,” all who apply to the Poor-law Guardians for relief in the hour of their extremity; and still less with those who, under the pretence that industrious operatives whom the present distress has reduced to poverty are both humiliated and disgraced by accepting the relief which the law provides, in a spirit of humanity, for the indigent, advise the unemployed to hold aloof from the relieving officer, and demand to be assisted through some other instrumentality. We believe that in times of the greatest prosperity there are to be found on the relief books of the union some as worthy and deserving people as the very best of those whom a season of such exceptional distress as the present reduces to the necessity of applying for aid to the rates. Why should they have added to the pinchings of their poverty the feeling of shame and humiliation which is thought to be implied in the term “pauper”? And if the relief

provided by the Poor-law, and dispensed by the Guardians, is in the mode and manner of it such relief as the legislature of a humane and Christian country, not designing to disgrace those whom it benefits, has provided for the widow and orphan, why should the acceptance of it be thought to disgrace the unemployed operative, reduced to indigence through causes over which he has no control?" \*

The remonstrances of those who remonstrated were unsuccessful. The Executive Committee was formed, as suggested, with the Earl of Ellesmere as chairman, and the proposed grants were accepted on the terms on which they had been offered; but I do not know that the restriction to which I have referred, vicious as I conceive the distinction on which it was based to be in principle, ever caused any practical difficulty or inconvenience. The local committees received grants from the Central Executive Committee according to their necessities, and they distributed the money amongst the poor according to their discretion; and rather in spite of than in consequence of the crotchets which from time to time were put forth as to who were paupers and who were not paupers, and as to who were degraded by accepting relief in one way, and who were not degraded by accepting it in another way, the poor were fed and the evils of the crisis nobly surmounted.

As I have already stated, one part of the proposal submitted to the Central Relief Committee by the Bridgewater House Deputation was, that the funds contributed by them should be entrusted for distribution to an Executive Committee, consisting of persons "representing districts in need of relief and all parties contributing." The representative of Blackburn on the Central Executive Committee, from its first formation till the present time, has been Alderman Robert Hopwood Hutchinson, whose punctuality of attendance at the weekly meetings of the Committee, frequently at great personal inconvenience, and unwearied attention to the interests of Blackburn, have entitled him to the warmest thanks of all classes.

The propriety of having a Central Relief Committee in Manchester was very apparent from the first, and so strongly did the proposal commend itself to many interested in the distressed districts, that an earnest effort was made to amalgamate the Mansion House Fund with the Central Relief Fund, or, at least, to induce the Lord Mayor and his Committee to give up the work of distribution, and, like the Bridgewater House Committee, be content with replenishing the coffers of the Central Executive Committee with monthly grants from the moneys with which they might be entrusted. But the Lord

\* Blackburn Standard, August 13th, 1862.

Mayor and his Committee, fortunately, as I think, for Blackburn and other places, determined to continue the work of distribution as well as collection. This double source of supply, while it afforded no encouragement to reckless and extravagant expenditure by local committees, proved to some extent a check upon the Central Executive Committee, whose regulations were occasionally a little too strict and crotchety, and would have resulted at times in serious inconvenience to local committees, but for the relief which a Mansion House grant supplied. The Mansion House Committee, situated at a distance from the scene of distress, relied implicitly on the local committees for both the discretion with which they expended the moneys entrusted to them, and the truth with which they periodically reported their necessities; while the Central Executive Committee, as in duty bound, required satisfactory proof, not only on both these points, but also as to whether the rules and instructions they from time to time issued were in all respects adhered to. Local circumstances, of which only the local committee could judge, occasionally rendered it impracticable to carry out the regulations of the Central Executive Committee, and in such cases the Mansion House grant came most opportunely to relieve the local committee from their difficulty till an opportunity could be afforded for explanation, and so removing the misapprehension or misunderstanding which might have sprung up. \*

As the winter of 1862 darkened on the country, and the condition of the operatives became more sad and their prospects more gloomy, a county meeting, convened and presided over by the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Sefton, was held in Manchester, and a noble

\* While I write I observe a further confirmation of my remarks in the case of the Wigan Relief Committee. On Monday, the 5th of December, 1864, a special meeting of the General Relief Committee of that district was held for the purpose of receiving the resignation of the Executive Committee, tendered in consequence of the impossibility of properly performing their duties, owing to the stringent and, as they believe, uncalled-for regulations of the Manchester Committee with regard to the refusing of relief to the mothers of illegitimate children. The General Committee quite sympathised with the Executive Committee in their protest against this regulation of the Manchester Committee, but they were helpless in the matter, and felt that they must either renounce all aid from Manchester or comply with the conditions on which the money was granted. The resignation of the Executive Committee was accepted (in order to avoid the greater evil of being denied all aid from Manchester), and it was resolved to appeal to the Mansion House Committee. The result of the appeal was satisfactory in the highest degree. In a few days a letter was received from London, enclosing a cheque for £250, and stating that the whole of this sum was to be expended at the discretion of the Local Committee as might be thought most useful and beneficial. One-fifth of this amount was placed to the credit of a special Relief Fund intended for the assistance of the mothers of illegitimate children, and similar cases to which aid is refused by Manchester; and it was decided to ask for local subscriptions towards the same fund.



subscription entered into for the relief of the abounding distress. The meeting took place on the 2nd of December, and on the motion of the Earl of Derby a resolution was passed declaring that an amount of destitution hitherto unknown prevailed in this and the adjoining counties; and another resolution, proposed by the Mayor of Manchester, and seconded by the ex-Mayor of Liverpool, inaugurated a subscription, which the Earl of Derby headed with the munificent donation of £5,000. The funds resulting from this meeting were thrown into the coffers of the Central Relief Committee, and while thus greatly increasing their resources, greatly augmented the confidence with which they addressed themselves to the task of relieving a distress which was most correctly characterised as "hitherto unknown."

It is beyond the purpose of these pages to give details of the history of the Central Relief Committee, and the executive body in which its functions have long been practically merged. But *en passant* I may be permitted to mention that this Central Committee, as finally organised, consisted of three bodies, whose constitution and functions are thus stated, for the information of the subscribers to the central funds, in a report issued by the committee on 19th January, 1863:—

"First. The General Committee, which is composed of the high sheriffs and lords lieutenant of the counties, and the bishops of the dioceses within which the cotton districts lie; the mayors of all their municipal boroughs; some of the principal noblemen and gentry; several members of parliament; and many wealthy and influential merchants, bankers, and employers of labour. This General Committee is presided over by the Mayor of Manchester—the city which is the centre of the cotton districts.

"Secondly. An Executive Committee, limited to 24 in number, appointed by the General Committee for the distribution of its funds, and for all subordinate administration. \*

"Thirdly. A canvassing and collecting Committee, recently appointed by the general Committee, the zealous exertions of which have, especially in Manchester, furnished very large contributions to the central fund."

\* The Central Executive Committee was constituted as follows:

|   |                         |                         |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., Chairman.                   |                         |                         |
| Sir James P. Kay-Shuttleworth, Bart., Deputy Chairman.              |                         |                         |
| The Right Hon. Lord Egerton, of Tatton.                             |                         |                         |
| The Right Hon. Lord Edward Howard, M.P.                             |                         |                         |
| Col. Wilson Patten, M.P.  | Joseph Fenton, Esq.     | John Platt, Esq.        |
| Major Egerton Leigh.  | J. Goodair, Esq.        | W. Rathbone, jun., Esq. |
| Thomas Ashton, Esq.   | Robert Hutchinson, Esq. | William Roberts, Esq.   |
| Edmund Ashworth, Esq.   | R. H. Hutchinson, Esq.  | Malcolm Ross, Esq.      |
| G. L. Ashworth, Esq.  | J. Robinson Kay, Esq.   | S. J. Stern, Esq.       |
| Robert Gladstone, Esq.  | Hugh Mason, Esq.        | James Worrall, Esq.     |
| Nathaniel Eckersley, Esq.   | Robert McClure, Esq.    |                         |
| The Worshipful the Mayor of Manchester, Chairman General Committee. |                         |                         |
| H. B. Farnall, Esq., Special Commissioner. <i>ex-officio</i> .      |                         |                         |
| A. H. Heywood, Esq., Bank, St. Ann's-street, Treasurer.             |                         |                         |
| John Wm. Maclure, Esq., 2, Bond Street, Honorary Secretary.         |                         |                         |

The scale of relief which experience led the Central Committee to adopt, and according to which they urged local committees to administer the funds entrusted to them, was such an allowance as, when added to the other resources of the family, would not be less than 2s. per head per week, besides fuel and clothing, and school-pence for the education of the children. I may also state further, before passing from the subject of the Central Relief Committee, that, following the example of the Bridgewater House Committee, the Relief Committee formed in Liverpool, with funds amounting, at the end of September, 1862, to £33,000, made choice of the Central Executive Relief Committee as their almoner, by a resolution as follows:—"That this Committee approve of the action taken by the Meeting in Manchester, on Friday, the 22nd August (the day on which the Central Executive Committee was formed), and accept of the Committee as then proposed to be the Executive Committee for the distribution of such funds as the Liverpool Committee may, from time to time, appropriate to the relief of the distress in the Cotton Districts of Lancashire and Cheshire." And on the 30th of September, the Bridgewater House Committee announced to the Central Relief Committee that they had resolved to increase their monthly contribution from £4,000 to £8,000; and again on the 22nd November, that they had resolved to increase it to £12,000. The Earl of Ellesmere, chairman of the Central Executive Committee, died in October, 1862, and was succeeded by the Earl of Derby, who has since continued to discharge the onerous duties of that important position.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Central Committee's grants to Blackburn—Principle on which their amounts were determined—The consequence of this principle—Second local subscription—List of the Relief Committee—Analysis of the subscription list—The onerous duties imposed on Messrs. Hutchinson and Sturdy—Mr. Tiplady's appeal—Unity of action between the Guardians and Relief Committee—New scale of relief—Distribution of coal—Distribution of clothing—House accommodation—The cottage owners.*

The first grant by the Central Executive Committee to Blackburn was made on the 11th August, 1862, and was a grant of £400; and from that date till the 15th October, when our first local subscription was closed, the amount received from this source was £2,600. Acting on the principle so distinctly laid down by the Bridgewater House Committee, that the grants to Local Committees should bear some proportion to the amount of local subscriptions and the supposed wealth of the district, it was not without some misgivings that the Central Committee made these grants to Blackburn. They complained that the amount of our local subscriptions hardly warranted grants so large. But this principle, which appears at first sight to be fair and reasonable, was in reality very unfair and most unreasonable. It lost sight altogether of the fact, that those districts in which foreign aid is most necessary, are precisely those which are least able to shew a large local subscription. The distress affected not the operatives only but all classes; and while it reduced the poorer to destitution, it seriously crippled all in respect of both their subscribing and rate-paying capabilities. But the remonstrances of the Central Executive

Committee, and the daily increasing amount of distress in the town and neighbourhood, induced the Mayor (Mr. Hutchinson), before his term of office expired, to call a meeting for the purpose of inaugurating a second subscription. And in this second subscription, special regard was had to the principle according to which the Central Executive Committee would measure the claims of Blackburn on the funds at their disposal. But was the result greater liberality than the demands of the crisis would of itself have called forth? I believe not. But one result was, that considerable sums appeared in the local subscription list, which were never intended to be handed over to the Local Relief Committee. In this way the Vicar, on behalf of the Clergy, undertook to provide £2,000 to be expended in support of the sewing and educational classes; "Presbyterian Friends, per the Rev. Dr. Skinner," subscribed £500 to be similarly expended by themselves; and many of the millowners who subscribed largely retained considerable amounts for private distribution. And altogether no less a sum than £7,917 of the second subscription was "reserved for special distribution" by the donors. This was really a large proportion of the strictly local subscriptions, and properly speaking no part of this sum should have appeared in the Relief Committee's accounts. But the Manchester Central Committee insisted on the local subscription being large, and they were apparently satisfied with this mode of swelling its dimensions.

But I must now proceed to speak more particularly of our second local subscription. The meeting for the purpose was held in the Council Chamber, on the 22nd of October, 1862, and was attended by Sir James P. Kay-Shuttleworth, Bart., Vice-Chairman, and Mr. J. W. Maclure, Honorary Secretary, of the Central Executive Committee. These gentlemen attended that they might have the opportunity of judging from personal observation of the spirit and liberality of the people of Blackburn, and I believe they left the meeting satisfied that Blackburn was resolved to do its duty in the crisis. On occasion of this meeting our Local Relief Committee presented a report of their proceedings since the date of their appointment, or rather since the date when they commenced the onerous duties in the midst of which this meeting arrested them, for I have already shewn that there was no regular appointment of a Relief Committee, and the few by whom the duty was at first undertaken invited others to join them as the necessities of the crisis seemed to call for additional assistance. Our Local Relief



Committee was ultimately constituted as follows:—

CHAIRMEN.

Mr. R. H. Hutchinson, Mayor, from November, 1861, till November, 1862.

Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy, Mayor, from November, 1862.

VICE-CHAIRMEN.

The Venerable Archdeacon Rushton, D.D., Vicar.

Mr. R. H. Hutchinson, from November, 1862.

TREASURERS.

Mr. R. Hopwood Hutchinson.

„ John Procter.

„ James Parkinson, (who died on Good Friday, 1863.)

HON. SECRETARY.

Mr. J. C. Fielden.

COMMITTEE.

Mr. Alderman Baynes.

„ Alderman Cunningham.

„ Alderman Thwaites.

„ Councillor John Dean.

„ Councillor William Yates.

„ Councillor Thomas Lewis.

„ Councillor R. Shackleton.

„ Councillor C. Tiplady.

Mr. Councillor E. Duckworth.

„ Councillor James Thompson.

The Rev. Dr. Robinson.

„ C. W. Woodhouse, M.A.

„ William Ogden, M.A.

„ Dr. Skinner.

„ J. B. Lister.

„ W. Chambers.

„ J. V. Meany.

Mr. John Livesey.

„ William Dickson.

„ John Procter.

„ James Boyle.

„ William Hoole.

„ Robert Watson.

„ R. Edmundson.

„ R. Webster.

„ Mallinson.

„ R. Constantine.

„ John Pickup.

„ R. Wilson.

„ James Booth.

„ John Green.

„ Richard Beaty.

„ C. Bennington.

„ Ezra Duxbury.

„ James Henderson.

„ J. G. Potter.

„ Thomas Howard.

„ Commissioner Farnall.

The Meeting adopted the report presented by the Relief Committee (the interest of which is superseded by the more complete report issued by the Committee, in October, 1864), and passed votes of thanks to the Lord Mayor's Relief Committee, at the Mansion House, to the Central Executive Relief Committee, and to the ladies who conducted the sewing classes in Blackburn; and on the motion of Alderman Baynes, seconded by Mr. James Stott, it was resolved:—

“That a second subscription be forthwith commenced on a liberal scale, as being the mode best calculated to elicit still further the munificent generosity and cordial co-operation of the benevolent both in this and other countries; and thus alleviate the deep distress at present existing amongst the unemployed cotton operatives in this town, which the local rates are totally inadequate to relieve.”

The motion was passed unanimously, and subscription sheets were handed round, when Mr. Joseph Feilden subscribed £1,000; His Worship the Mayor, Mr. R. H. Hutchinson, £1,000; the “Clergy of England and Friends,” £2,000; Mr. W. H. Hornby, M.P., £1,000; Messrs. Pilkington, Brothers, £1,000; Mr. Alderman Baynes, £1,000; Colonel Jackson, £500; Messrs. W. D. Coddington & Sons, £250; Mr. W. Pilkington, £250; Messrs. W. Dickinson & Sons, £200; Messrs.

T. Lund & Brother, £100; Messrs. Firth & Sturdy, £100; Messrs. Lewis Brothers, £100; Mr. Wm. Birtwistle, £100; and altogether about £10,000 were subscribed in the room.

Liberal as were many of these subscriptions, and others subsequently received, they were not greater than the crisis demanded; and indeed our whole local subscription was little more than a tithe of the sums received and expended in the town during the interval from the date of this meeting to the 10th of September, 1864, when the Relief Committee made up their Balance sheet. During that interval we received from the Mansion House Fund £26,030, and from the Manchester Central Fund £46,508, making a total of £72,538 from these two sources. The total amount of the second subscription (including the grants from the two central funds and all donations and subscriptions) was £88,077, of which £7,917 were, as I have already stated, reserved for private distribution, and £416 were unpaid at the time the Balance sheet was published. This reduces the amount received by the Relief Committee to £79,744 or only £9,236 in addition to the grants from the Mansion House and Central Relief Committees; and of this no more than about £7,000 can be regarded as local subscriptions. This, however, does not prove that the people of Blackburn were deficient in liberality, but simply this, that they chose to distribute in their own way, either directly to the poor themselves or through channels which they preferred to the Relief Committee, the funds which they devoted to the relief of the distressed and indigent. And who can blame them for so doing? Who can blame the Clergy, Churchmen, or the ministers and members of Dissenting congregations for devoting all they could spare and collect to the support of sewing and educational classes, and in providing for the destitute members of their respective congregations little comforts in the midst of their distress over and above the stinted allowance of the Guardians or Relief Committee? or who can blame a millowner, or other large employer of labour, for having a special regard to his own workpeople during such a season of trial, and seeking that they have comforts superior to what a Board or Committee, having no feeling for one person above another, and bound to regard all alike, would be justified in allowing? The liberality of Blackburn during the crisis was exhibited, not in the amount of the public subscriptions but in the amount of the private expenditure for the relief of the distress; and it never will be known how much was lost and how much was given, as well by those whose names appear as subscribers, as by hundreds more who could not spare or did

not feel disposed to give to the Relief Fund a sum that would have insured them the immortality of a place in the subscription list.

In speaking of ways and means, the efforts of Mr. R. H. Hutchinson and Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy (Mayors of the Borough during the years 1861-2 and 1862-3) to augment the Local and General Relief Funds must not be overlooked. On the evening of the riot (6th November 1862), as already intimated, Mr Hutchinson was attending a meeting at Oxford and pleading the cause of the distressed in Lancashire. And on many other occasions, frequently at personal inconvenience and expense, he visited towns at a distance and advocated the claims of the cotton operatives to the sympathy and support of the benevolent in all parts of the country. Mr. Sturdy, also, as occasion offered, pleaded for the distressed in the Cotton Districts, and on one occasion attended a meeting in the Parish of St. Dunstan, London, presided over by Mr. Henry Hoare, Banker (churchwarden of the Parish), when a committee was formed to collect subscriptions, which eventually found their way into the coffers of the Mansion House Committee. But it was as Mayors of the Borough, and chairmen of the Relief Committee, that Messrs. Hutchinson and Sturdy performed the most efficient services in behalf of the distressed. Many were the strangers who visited Blackburn that they might see and judge for themselves of the extent and depth of the distress prevailing in the town; and to the mayor they applied for the information they were in search of, and from him they received the courtesy and hospitality which as strangers they were entitled to expect. Many more made their inquiries respecting the distress by letter, and thus entailed on the Mayors in succession a most voluminous correspondence. "A working man who is obliged to turn up his sleeves every morning" sent to Mr. Sturdy on several occasions small sums, ranging from 2s. 6d. to 5s. in postage stamps, and these successive remittances required to be acknowledged. Some benevolent ladies in Birmingham, having collected £50 for the benefit of our unemployed operatives, transmitted it to the Mayor (Mr. Sturdy) with the stipulation that it "should be applied under your sanction and that of the ladies who are employed in the sewing schools and in special objects for the benefit of young women." These being his instructions, the Mayor had to apportion the money amongst the sewing schools according to the numbers in attendance; and for the satisfaction of his fair correspondents at Birmingham, obtained from the manager of each school a receipt for the 10s., 20s., 40s., or 50s. which were thus added to the

funds. Letters were frequently received by Mr. Sturdy from different parts of the country inclosing money for distribution in a special manner; making inquiries as to the amount of our poor rates as compared with the poor rates in the agricultural districts; as to the earnings of the operatives, and on a variety of other subjects connected with the relief of the distressed. But it is impossible, and would be uninteresting, to give details of the labour which thus devolved upon our Chief Magistrates during the years 1861-3.

I cannot conclude this part of my subject without alluding to the letter in the *Times* by Mr. Chas. Tiplady, which was among the earliest of the public appeals by which sympathy was evoked on behalf of the suffering in the distressed districts, and especially in the town of Blackburn. The letter appeared on the 23rd of April, 1862, and the response to it was prompt and generous. Mr. Tiplady's plain statement of fact, detailing a condition of distress which was almost incredible, elicited contributions amounting in the aggregate to £237, and this sum appears in the accounts of the Relief Committee to the credit of "Mr. Tiplady's appeal."

Up to Christmas, 1862, there had been no unity of action between the Guardians and the Relief Committee. The Guardians received all applicants for relief, and by their numerous staff of visitors inquired into the circumstances of each, and administered relief according to their judgment of the necessities of each. The Relief Committee had established a system of house to house visitation, which brought to light many families who were suffering severely but had never made application for parish aid; but which also brought on to their books many of the hereditary paupers, and others who were in regular receipt of parochial relief. Thousands of persons were thus relieved from both sources at the same time; and in not a few cases the relief was given by the Relief Committee in ignorance that any relief at all was afforded by the Guardians, and by the Guardians in ignorance of the applicants being in receipt of "dole" from the Relief Committee. The scale of relief adopted by both the Guardians and the Relief Committee being the barest that human nature could subsist upon, there was a great temptation to those who had been accustomed to the best of food in ample quantities, to practice deception and obtain from both sources the utmost that each would allow. The arrangement, or rather want of arrangement, by which imposition was thus invited, entailed on both the Guardians and the Relief Committee a large amount of extra labour; and the result, after the utmost vigilance, was in all

respects most unsatisfactory. The Relief Committee in their report say:—"The system of giving supplementary aid to those relieved by the Guardians, and, vice versa, the system of the Guardians supplementing relief given by your Committee, so increased the numbers, that jointly there appeared upwards of 44,000 people on the rolls, while in reality there were not more than 32,000, the difference arising from 12,000 persons obtaining aid from both sources."

On the 8th of November, 1862, Mr. H. B. Farnall attended a meeting of the Guardians and suggested some arrangement which would insure unity of action between them and the Relief Committee, and after several conferences between deputations of both bodies, it was decided:—"That the Guardians should relieve all persons who were in receipt of relief on the 16th of August, 1862, and the Relief Committee should relieve all cases which had arisen and might arise after that time, and which were fairly attributable to the Cotton Famine. It was further agreed that this arrangement should commence in the first week of 1863, and in the meantime books should be prepared for its successful development, and lists made out of the persons who were, after the date named, to be relieved by the two bodies respectively."

The preparations necessary for effecting so great and important a change in the mode of administering relief were very great, and the labour involved hardly credible. A considerable addition had to be (temporarily) made to the staff of clerks and other assistants employed in the Union Relief offices, and the Relief Committee were compelled to resort to the employment of paid assistants—the visiting and dispensing of relief having been hitherto undertaken by voluntary labour. But the preparations were completed in due time, and during the first week of 1863, as had been arranged, the change was effected. At first considerable misapprehension prevailed amongst the poor as to the cause and objects of the change. Those who had been receiving double relief felt the new arrangement to be very detrimental to them, by limiting them to one source of supply; while in the confusion necessarily incident to so great a change, many were temporarily cut off from both sources of supply; and the result was an uneasiness which for a time threatened very unpleasant consequences. But a few weeks sufficed to set all to rights, and the new arrangement was soon found to be of the greatest advantage, if on no other ground, because of the simplicity which it introduced where all before was complexity and confusion.

The scale of relief (as must necessarily be the case) was most difficult of adjustment. The circumstances of families and individuals

vary so much that it seems almost, if not quite, impossible to frame rules for determining the amount of relief which shall not give some an advantage over others, and consequently place some at a disadvantage as compared with their neighbours. But early in 1863, the Relief Committee, guided by twelve months experience, prepared a scale of relief, which was sanctioned by the Central Relief Committee in Manchester, and embodied in the code of instructions to visitors. It is as follows:—

"That in cases where it shall be established that such income does not amount to 2s. per head per week in families above four in number, or 2s. 6d. per head per week in families of four and under, the Ward Committees be authorised to grant relief not exceeding the following scale :

- I. One shilling and sixpence per head per week to each individual or member of a family where there is no other income. Special relief, unless stated to the contrary by the donor, to be regarded as income.
- II. Single individuals and members of families not exceeding four in number, who are in receipt of the Committee's grant of 2s. per week for attending any of the sewing or industrial classes, not to receive more than 1s. additional.
- III. Members of families, exceeding four in number, who are in receipt of the grant of 2s., to be considered as relieved, and not reckoned in the number of the family.
- IV. Sick, aged, or disabled persons, members of a family of four and under, above 14 years of age, may receive 2s. 6d. each per week in relief from the Visitor, instead of the 1s. 6d. before-mentioned.

"In cases where partial work is obtained, the income of families of four and under may be made up to 2s. 6d. per head per week; in families above four to 2s. per head per week, provided always in both cases that it does not take more than 1s. 6d. per head to do so."

These rules continued to the end of the Committee's labours to be the rules according to which the amount of relief was regulated; and while on the one hand the scale they lay down cannot be regarded as extravagant, it cannot on the other hand be called insufficient, having regard to the object in view and the sources whence the relief funds were obtained.

But the scale of relief, even when it had attained its greatest height, afforded no margin for the poor, reduced to an entire dependence on either the Guardians or the Relief Committee for the means of subsistence, providing themselves with fuel; and it was evident that the frost and cold of winter would add very much to the misery of the households, which a state of enforced idleness and a scarcity of food had already reduced to a sufficiently pitiable condition. On the advent

of winter, therefore (the winter of 1862-3), the Relief Committee prepared for a distribution of coal, of which large quantities had been placed at their disposal by the colliery proprietors of the neighbourhood, who in this form made their donations to the relief fund. The first distribution was made during the week ending November 22nd, and was at the rate of 1 cwt. to each household. The number of families so supplied was 3,848, and the quantity of coal distributed 192 tons 8 cwt. In the week following the distribution was at the same rate per household, but the number to be supplied had increased to 4,615, and the quantity of coal required was 230 tons 15 cwt. In the week ending December 6th, the weekly allowance to each family was increased to 2 cwt., at which rate it was continued till the week ending April 4th, 1863, when it was reduced to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cwt. per week, and in the first week of May to 1 cwt. per week. The last distribution of coal for that season was made during the week ending 20th June, when the quantity distributed was only 62 tons 8 cwt., amongst 1248 families. The distribution of coal was largest during the months of January and February, 1863, when the number of families supplied exceeded 5,000, and the quantity of coal divided amongst them exceeded 500 tons. If the value of the coal be taken at the very low average of 9s. 6d. per ton, this branch of the Relief Committee's operations represented at that time a weekly expenditure of about £235. The rule adopted by the Relief Committee in the distribution of coal, as expressed in their circular "notes of instructions to visitors," was as follows:—"Where the income does not exceed 3s. per head per week, an allowance not exceeding 2 cwt. of coal weekly to be granted to each house." In their report, the Relief Committee refer to the large expenditure on the coal account, and add an expression of confidence, in which all must concur, that "no portion of the money entrusted to them for distribution did more in proportion to promote the health and comfort of the poor operatives, or proved in the end more economical, than the amount spent in this way." The distribution of the coal, involving, as must be evident to the most uninitiated, an immense amount of labour, was kindly undertaken and most satisfactorily performed by Councillor John Dean, to whom the thanks of the Relief Committee have been most appropriately tendered, and to whom the thanks of the poor who received the boon he was entrusted to dispense are most justly due. The following tabular statement shews the quantity of coal distributed weekly, and the number of families amongst whom it was divided:—

## COAL DISTRIBUTION.

| Week ending. |          | Number of families.                 | Tons. Cwt. |    |
|--------------|----------|-------------------------------------|------------|----|
| 1862.        |          | 1 cwt. to each family.              |            |    |
| November     | 22 ..... | 3848                                | 192        | 8  |
| "            | 29 ..... | 4615                                | 230        | 15 |
|              |          | 2 cwt. to each family.              |            |    |
| December     | 6 .....  | 4417                                | 441        | 14 |
| "            | 13 ..... | 4757                                | 475        | 14 |
| "            | 20 ..... | 4919                                | 491        | 18 |
| "            | 27 ..... | 5201                                | 520        | 3  |
| 1863.        |          |                                     |            |    |
| January      | 3 .....  | 5047                                | 504        | 13 |
| "            | 10 ..... | 5185                                | 518        | 10 |
| "            | 17 ..... | 5292                                | 529        | 5  |
| "            | 24 ..... | 5281                                | 528        | 2  |
| "            | 31 ..... | 5276                                | 527        | 13 |
| February     | 7 .....  | 5106                                | 510        | 13 |
| "            | 14 ..... | 5102                                | 510        | 4  |
| "            | 21 ..... | 5212                                | 521        | 5  |
| "            | 28 ..... | 5122                                | 512        | 4  |
| March        | 7 .....  | 4979                                | 497        | 19 |
| "            | 14 ..... | 4870                                | 487        | 1  |
| "            | 21 ..... | 4978                                | 497        | 16 |
| "            | 28 ..... | 4961                                | 496        | 2  |
|              |          | $1\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. to each family. |            |    |
| April        | 4 .....  | 5119                                | 341        | 6  |
| "            | 11 ..... | 5811                                | 387        | 8  |
| "            | 18 ..... | 5027                                | 335        | 3  |
| "            | 25 ..... | 5649                                | 376        | 11 |
|              |          | 1 cwt. to each family.              |            |    |
| May          | 2 .....  | 4535                                | 226        | 15 |
| "            | 9 .....  | 4367                                | 218        | 7  |
| "            | 16 ..... | 4073                                | 203        | 13 |
| "            | 23 ..... | 2280                                | 114        | 0  |
| "            | 30 ..... | 1416                                | 70         | 16 |
| June         | 6 .....  | 1636                                | 81         | 16 |
| "            | 13 ..... | 1455                                | 72         | 15 |
| "            | 20 ..... | 1248                                | 62         | 8  |

In the following winter (1863-4) the condition and prospects of the operatives had so much improved that it was not considered necessary to resume the distribution of coal till towards the close of January, 1864, and between the 25th of January and the 21st of March the quantity distributed was 858 tons 11 cwt., making the total distribution 12,357 tons 18 cwt.

The approach of winter (the winter of 1862-3), and the certainty that was then felt that the distress would be both protracted and severe, compelled the Relief Committee, and all who were interested

in ameliorating the condition of the unemployed operatives, to make arrangements for a liberal distribution of clothing and bedding. In September, 1862, the Relief Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to attend to this department of their operations, this Sub-Committee consisting of

|                                     |                   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mr. James Henderson (Chairman.)     | Mr. John Procter. |
| „ R. H. Hutchinson (Vice-Chairman.) | „ Robert Watson.  |
| Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy.                | „ R. Edmundson.   |
| „ C. Tiplady.                       | „ James Boyle.    |
|                                     | „ C. Bennington.  |

The instructions given to the Clothing Committee on their appointment were, to expend a sum not exceeding £200 in the purchase of clothing and bedding; but the special reports with respect to the destitution of the families in receipt of relief, as regards both clothing and bedding, which the Relief Committee at the same time requested the district visitors to prepare, shewed that this allowance would be not only inadequate, but scarcely perceptible in the relief of the necessities of so many thousands. Clothing and bedding had been sold and pledged to an extent of which no one had any conception, and the Relief Committee found, when winter was upon them, that provision must be made for a wholesale distribution of clothing, if the operatives were to be saved from perishing with cold. The Relief Committee then resolved, as they had received abundant supplies of clothing, and liberal grants of money for the purpose of purchasing bedding, &c., that an allowance of clothing or bedding, not exceeding 6s. in value to each person, should be made to all who were in receipt of relief; and that it should be optional with the recipients to receive new clothing and bedding, or the redemption, to an equivalent value, of such of their clothing and bedding as they might have pledged. Of this latter alternative many availed themselves, and during the winter of 1862-3, a sum of upwards of £2,000 was expended by the Relief Committee in redeeming clothing and bedding which during the early part of 1862 had found its way to the pawnbrokers. The number of articles of clothing distributed by the Relief Committee during the first winter (1862-3) was 94,972, in which are included a number of articles of under-clothing which were given to the poor in the shape of cloth—there having been no time or opportunity, on account of the suddenness with which the overwhelming demand for clothing came upon the Relief Committee, to have the articles made up. The same cause—the greatness of the demand and the suddenness with which it came upon them—led to a charge of dilatoriness in the distribution of clothing

being made against the Relief Committee; but the charge was without foundation, the vast amount of work which the arranging and distribution of so many thousands of articles involved, fully accounting for and excusing any delay which might have occurred.

The experience acquired by the Relief Committee with respect to the distribution of clothing during the winter of 1862-3, enabled them to provide more effectually for the advent of the winter of 1863-4. During the summer of 1863 large quantities of underclothing were made up in the sewing classes, more especially in the sewing class conducted under the auspices of the Strangers' Friend Society, which were ready for distribution on the first approach of cold weather. The Committee had also found that the distribution was very unequal when it was left to the discretion of the visitors (as during the previous winter) to make grants of clothing and bedding not exceeding the value of 6s. in respect of each member of the families in receipt of relief; and they therefore prepared a form of application for a grant of clothing, to be filled up by each applicant, stating the name and address of applicant; the names, ages, occupations and earnings of each member of the family; also, whether any were receiving relief or working for the Committee; also, whether applicant had lived in any other part of Blackburn since January, 1862, and what articles of clothing were received from the Relief Committee in the previous winter; and lastly, what articles of clothing the applicant was most in need of. The statements in this application were investigated by a visitor of the Relief Committee, who reported as to their accuracy or otherwise, and made a recommendation of what articles of clothing he considered the applicant should have; and he also reported as to the condition in which he found the clothing and bedding supplied to the applicant during the previous winter. On receiving the visitor's report, the Clothing Committee considered and determined upon the grant to be made, and signed an order accordingly to the superintendent of the clothing depot, who delivered the articles to the applicant. This mode of procedure, while more satisfactory in its results, imposed on the Clothing Committee a greatly increased amount of labour, requiring them, during several months of the winter of 1863-4, to meet regularly three times a week for the purpose of investigating the cases of the numerous applicants. But the labour was cheerfully undertaken and patiently borne, and the perseverance of the Committee finally overcame the difficulties which at the outset seemed well nigh overwhelming. The following is the list, published by the Relief Committee in their

report, of the articles of clothing which were distributed by them during the winters of 1862-3 and 1863-4:—

| ARTICLES OF CLOTHING.                           | WINTER OF<br>1862-3. | WINTER OF<br>1863-4. |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| Men's Coats .....                               | 1571                 | 1569                 |
| Vests .....                                     | 1454                 | 372                  |
| Trousers .....                                  | 1863                 | 1933                 |
| Boys' Jackets .....                             | 650                  | 791                  |
| Vests .....                                     | 425                  | 242                  |
| Trousers.....                                   | 710                  | 943                  |
| Cotton Shirts .....                             | 9135                 | 7038                 |
| Wool Shirts.....                                | 10477                | 4566                 |
| Drawers.....                                    | 610                  | 71                   |
| Jerseys .....                                   | .....                | 675                  |
| Hats, Caps, and Bonnets.....                    | 1236                 | .....                |
| Hose .....                                      | 14506                | 3675                 |
| Boots and Shoes .....                           | 1331                 | 22                   |
| Chemise and Night Dresses .....                 | 8012                 | 8796                 |
| Dresses.....                                    | 3424                 | 51                   |
| Frocks .....                                    | 878                  | 1917                 |
| Petticoats .....                                | 4948                 | 8323                 |
| Mantles, Shawls, and Jackets .....              | 1669                 | 689                  |
| Handkerchiefs.....                              | 181                  | .....                |
| Stays .....                                     | 106                  | .....                |
| Cravats .....                                   | 1345                 | .....                |
| Sundries .....                                  | 1794                 | 659                  |
| Yard Materials.....                             | 378                  | 723                  |
| Blankets, Sheets, Quilts, Rugs, Bed Ticks ..... | 23051                | 1361                 |
| Water-tight Boots .....                         | .....                | 79                   |
| Clogging Orders .....                           | 2200                 | 904                  |
| New Clogs.....                                  | .....                | 4655                 |
| Water-tight Clogs .....                         | 3218                 | 376                  |
| Totals .....                                    | 94972                | 50430                |
| Total number of Articles distributed.....       | .....                | 145402               |

The Jerseys and water-tight boots distributed during the winters of 1863-4, were part of the clothing received from the stores of the Manchester Relief Committee, and proved of the greatest value for distribution to the men employed on the Public Works.

But enormous as are the quantities of clothing represented by these figures, they are only a portion of what were distributed in Blackburn during the winters of 1862-3 and 1863-4. Not to speak of the clothing given by private individuals, in the way of private charity, the Clergy and Dissenting Ministers were made the almoners of hundreds of hales, collected by the benevolent friends in different parts of the country, who so liberally supplied them with the means of relieving the most pressing necessities, and adding to the scanty comforts, of the poor of their respective parishes and congregations. These efforts will be more particularly referred to in a subsequent part of my narrative.

But here it is incumbent upon me to notice Mrs. Potter's efforts in the same direction. By her appeals in the columns of the *Times*, which have been already referred to, Mrs. Potter stirred up public sympathy on behalf of the poor of Blackburn and neighbourhood, and received large quantities of clothing, as well as liberal contributions of money, for the relief of their necessities. Within five weeks after an appeal for clothing made in the early part of the winter of 1862-3, the quantity received was valued at £400, and with the exception of £60 worth divided at Mrs. Potter's request between the neighbouring townships of Mellor, Ribchester and Langho, the whole was distributed by the Relief Committee to the poor of Blackburn. Subsequent to this Mrs. Potter received clothing, and money to purchase clothing, to the value or amount of £385, the distribution of which was left to her own discretion; and the greater part of this, also, was distributed in Blackburn, small portions only having been sent to some of the more necessitous of the neighbouring townships.

Having said so much respecting the food, fuel and clothing, it will not be out of place to add a few words with respect to the house accommodation of the unemployed operatives. We have already seen that in prosperous times the factory operatives of Blackburn occupy roomy and comfortable cottages; and many of them display a commendable pride in their furniture and wall decorations. But the scarcity of Cotton, which threw them out of employment and out of their earnings, compelled them to sacrifice their most cherished predilections, and cottages were first stripped of their luxuries, then of their conveniences, and lastly, in not a few cases, of the most necessary articles of furniture. Rents could not be paid; and although there were few owners of cottage property so hard-hearted as to enforce against their defaulting tenants the terrors of the law, many cottages were voluntarily vacated, and families learned to huddle together, two or three in a single dwelling. In this way less furniture sufficed, and, what was perhaps regarded by the operatives as a more important consideration, the arrears of rent which were being accumulated against them did not multiply in such an overwhelming ratio. But empty cottages and unpaid rents pressed very severely upon the small cottage owner, who with heavy and daily increasing rates to pay, and in many cases the interest of mortgages, soon came to be as destitute as the poorest cotton worker.

The condition of this class, only to be found among the industrious poor, is thus described in the "minute" drawn up by the Earl

of Derby and adopted by the Central Relief Committee on the 19th of January, 1863 :—

"It is not an uncommon case for persons who have saved a small sum to invest it in the purchase of one or two cottages, the rent of which, in ordinary times, returns a full interest for the money invested, a portion of which, however, is frequently borrowed on mortgage of the property itself. But, under the present exceptional circumstances, this property has become absolutely valueless, and worse than valueless, when any part of the capital has been borrowed. The owner is still liable to the mortgage, while it is impossible for him to collect any rent; or, if he should attempt it, only by the harsh process of distraint, yielding little to him, and sacrificing the little property of the tenant at a ruinous loss. These owners, therefore, although with visible property, are in many cases on the very verge of destitution; and it would seem unreasonable, in their case, to insist, as a condition of relief, upon their divesting themselves of a property, which, for the time, is practically unsaleable, as well as unprofitable. The wise and humane policy would seem to be that recommended with regard to the co-operative or joint stock shares (that the holder is entitled to relief); and in deciding upon the claim for relief, to estimate only the amount of income actually received, and to omit from calculation any property which, for the time, is yielding no return."

This humane and very proper suggestion in respect to the small property owners, is succeeded in the same "minute" by another suggestion, "that no portion of the relief afforded must in any case be granted for the payment of rent," which seems to tend towards an aggravation of the evil deplored. I cannot take upon myself to decide whether the abuses incident to a clause which would sanction the payment of rent, are greater than the evils to which the poor who fail to pay their rents are subjected by hard-hearted property owners, and the privations to which small cottage owners are reduced for want of their rents; but of this I feel convinced, that the shelter of a comfortable home is as necessary for the preservation of life and health during such a long season of distress as the cotton factory workers had to pass through, as the food, clothing and fuel with which they were so liberally provided; and an allowance for rent given as part of, or in addition to the relief in the shape of food and clothing, would have been in many cases productive of immense benefit, and the means of averting a large amount of misery.

The small cottage owners of Blackburn felt the pressure of the crisis at an early period of the distress, for it is an undoubted fact that the outlay on account of rent is the first which the factory worker feels disposed to retrench. Towards the end of November, 1862, the prospect was gloomy in the extreme, and the cottage owners held a meeting to consider what could be done for their present and future relief. The result of the meeting was the adoption of a memorial to the Guardians,

reciting in affecting terms the loss they had sustained and the destitution that stared them in the face,\* and praying the Guardians, "in conjunction with the other authorities of the town, to join with us in applying for a loan of £50,000 from the Consolidated Fund, the re-payment to be spread over a number of years." The Guardians received this memorial, and knowing to some extent practically what burdens the memorialists had to bear, carefully considered it, but the only relief they could afford was a request that the Overseers would allow the poor rates of those who were unable to pay to be carried forward as arrears, and not enforced against them, to their utter ruin and the sequestration of their property.

\* The following is the language of this part of the memorial :—"For more than 12 months we have borne the burden of bad trade and loss of our rents. Many of us are in that financial strait that we know not scarcely how to obtain food. Some of us have paid rates and extended aid in goods to our unemployed customers until our own credit and stocks are nearly exhausted; while those among us who, after a life of struggling, had succeeded in obtaining an interest in a few cottages, in hopes of preventing dependence on charity when old age and impaired strength prevented us longer from joining in the labour battle of life, find that the results of our life-struggle are nearly destroyed, and our little properties almost consumed in value through the loss of rents, claims for mortgage interests, and the payment of excessive rates." Many of the memorialists were small shopkeepers as well as cottage owners, but under the circumstances this only added to the privations they had to endure.



## CHAPTER VII.

*Apprehension of famine fever—Suggestions as to preparing for the outbreak of an epidemic—The Infirmary—Its unpromising position—Mr. Hutchinson's offer towards its completion—Subscriptions by the Members of the Infirmary Committee—Mr. Sturdy elected Mayor—Appeal by the Infirmary Committee for Subscriptions—Arrangement with the Relief Committee—Miss Nicholson—Success of the appeal for Subscriptions—Work resumed—One Ward completed—The admission of patients—Temporary closing of the Infirmary—Re-opening—Death of Miss Nicholson—The Infirmary handed over to the Governors—The Infirmary as a Dispensary—The Medical Kitchens—Sick Kitchen—Mrs. Potter's Mothers' Kitchens—Presentation to Mrs. Potter—Buxton Hospital—Whitewashing.*

Amidst all that had to be endured by the poor, and all that had to be done for them by their more fortunately circumstanced fellow townsmen, it is now a source of grateful reflection that the distress in Blackburn did not bring in its train the too frequent accompaniment of famine—disease. Nevertheless, famine fever was an evil which it was so reasonable to apprehend, that it was absolutely necessary to make some provision against it. During the Autumn of 1862, Dr. Buchanan, of the Privy Council Office, visited Blackburn on a sanitary inspection of the distressed districts, and called the attention of the Mayor and other officials to the necessity of being prepared for the outbreak of an epidemic. Later in the year Lord Radstock visited the town, and in conversation with the Vicar enquired if there was a sick kitchen in operation; and on learning that there was not, generously offered—if anyone could be found to take the matter in hand and establish and carry out such an institution in the vigorous manner that the other schemes of relief were carried out in the town—to contribute £10 per month towards its support. Mr. J. T. Hopwood, M. P., had suggested the formation of a Dispensary; and the late Miss Nicholson, of Rugby, in the course of a visit she paid to the town, enquired wistfully if nothing could be done to prepare some part of the Infirmary for the reception of patients and the dispensing of medical comforts?

The Infirmary, now happily complete and in successful operation, was then, and had been for some time previous, in a condition the reverse of promising. The Foundation Stone of the building had been laid on Whit-Monday, 1858, under circumstances which afforded a reasonable anticipation that in two years at farthest it would be completed and ready for the reception of patients, and with no more debt upon it than a spirited demonstration at the opening would easily have cleared off. But at Whit-Monday, 1862, the building was little more than roofed in, and the cost had so far exceeded the estimate, that the money subscribed, and which should have completed the building, had all been expended in merely securing it from wind and weather. No scheme of benevolence, from being one of the most popular, had come to be so unpopular as the Infirmary, and the boldest shrunk from an appeal to the public for the funds requisite to complete the undertaking. The details of the mismanagement in the erection of the Infirmary belong not to my present narrative; but this much it is necessary to put on record, in order that some idea may be formed of the difficulties in the way of getting the Infirmary so far completed as to be available in any emergency that might arise in connection with the distress.

Such was the position of affairs, when the increasing destitution forced upon all engaged in the work of relief the necessity of something being done in the way of preparation for the possible, if not the probable, outbreak of disease. The cheapest expedient—the conversion of some unoccupied building into a temporary hospital—would have involved a considerable expenditure, and on the passing away of the dark cloud which was then enveloping the district in a daily deepening gloom, the shelter for the sick thus improvised would be found to be useless. In such circumstances, attention was naturally turned to the Infirmary, unpopular as it had become, because there every pound expended in adapting the building to the necessities of a present emergency, was a step towards preparing it for the uses to which it was intended to be permanently dedicated; and at a dinner given by the Mayor to the volunteer staff of relief visitors, on the 30th of October, the subject was freely discussed, and his worship wound up the evening's proceedings by generously offering to give one-twentieth part of the sum requisite to make the Infirmary complete. This was a practical and noble beginning, which Mr. Hutchinson's successor in office, Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy, energetically followed up, and had the satisfaction of bringing to a most successful conclusion.

The proposal to complete the Infirmary was of course hailed with



gratitude by the Infirmary Building Committee, and at a meeting of that body held on the 3rd of November a letter addressed by Miss Nicholson to the Mayor (Mr. Hutchinson)—urging that a portion at least of the Infirmary might be completed as a "House of recovery and dispensary for the suffering poor," and stating her conviction that if a local subscription were entered into for the purpose and it should prove insufficient, a large sum might be procured from the south—was submitted, along with the Mayor's generous offer to give one-twentieth part of the cost of completing the Building; and the Committee resolved to issue an appeal for subscriptions which would enable them to accomplish the desirable object aimed at by Mr. Hutchinson's offer. The amount expended on the Building of the Infirmary up to this time had been £17,233, which left the Building Committee in debt to their Bankers in the sum of £324; and the amount then required to complete and furnish the Building was estimated at £8,524, being £4,000 to be expended in completing the interior, £2,000 for furnishing, and the remainder for gates, lodge, boundary walls, &c. At another meeting of the Infirmary Building Committee, held on the 8th of November, the subject was further considered, and Mr. Wm. Pilkington announced that he would give a further subscription of £1,000, and Mr. John Livesey £250 on the same condition as Mr. Hutchinson—that the building be completed forthwith. Each day brought fresh subscriptions, and on the 10th of November the new Mayor, Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy, on his election to office, was able to make the following announcement in speaking of the Infirmary and the prospect there then was of its being speedily completed:—

"I may mention that the following sums have been promised on condition that the building be completed forthwith:—W. Pilkington, Esq., £1000; the ex-Mayor (R. H. Hutchinson, Esq.) £500 (if the cost be £10,000, if less, in proportion); John Livesey, Esq., £250; a gentleman well known, but whose name I am not at liberty to give at present, (James Pilkington Esq., M. P.) £500, and although I had no intention of saying anything of myself, I have agreed to give £200, and a large collection of surgical instruments, and a library of medical books, of about 1,500 vols.; and I shall provide and fit up in the room, when ready for their reception, the necessary book cases, &c."\*

On the 19th of November, a subscription of £500 from Joseph Feilden, Esq., was announced; Mrs. W. E. Gladstone expressed to both Dr. Robinson and the Mayor (Mr. Sturdy) an anxious interest in the completion of at least a part of the building, and sent a donation of £50

\* Mr. Sturdy subsequently altered the form of his donation, by giving £100 in lieu of the promise to fit up the book-cases, &c., and thus left the matter wholly in the hands of the Infirmary Committee.

besides influencing friends to subscribe; and in a report which the Building Committee issued as an appeal on the 12th of December, I find it stated that the subscriptions then promised amounted to £4020, or about one-half of the required sum. One passage in this report is worth citing in connection with the history of the distress:—

"The Committee have regretted their inability to complete the Institution, which is the only one of the kind for the requirements of a district containing a population of upwards of 200,000 inhabitants, and their anxiety in this respect has been much increased by the fact, that a large portion of the population being factory operatives, are entirely out of employment, destitute and dependent for their daily bread upon the charity of their fellow countrymen, and therefore more than usually exposed to the attacks of fever and infection, with which, in the absence of a hospital, they are compelled to struggle in their own desolate and poverty-stricken homes."

The success of the appeal for subscriptions fully justified the Building Committee in resuming the works which had been so long in abeyance, and a resolution to this effect was passed at a meeting held on 3rd of December. In this resolution, as afterwards in the published report of the 12th of December (already quoted), the prevailing distress is prominently alluded to as inciting the Committee to the immediate re-commencement of the works, the tenor of the resolution being as follows:—"That having in view the present distressed state of the operatives in this district and the consequent sickness which may be expected, this Committee consider that the amount already promised towards the completion of the Infirmary and the kind offers of co-operation by distant friends justify them in at once proceeding with the works." But however vigorously the works might be proceeded with, the Relief Committee could not await their completion, and an arrangement was entered into according to which the Relief Committee obtained immediate possession of part of the Building and fitted up a few beds, sufficient for their probable necessities. The arrangement and subsequent management of this branch of the Relief Committee's operations was delegated to an "Infirmary Committee" composed as follows:—

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| The Mayor (Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy), Chairman | Mr. William Hoole. |
| Rev. Dr. Robinson.                        | „ John Livesey.    |
| „ R. Moss, M.A.                           | „ James Thomson.   |
| „ C. W. Woodhouse, M.A.                   | „ James Boyle.     |
| Mr. James Henderson.                      | „ Henry Edge.      |

The Relief Committee made a preliminary grant of £100 towards the completing and fitting up of one of the wards, and Miss Nicholson no sooner heard that something was to be done towards carrying out the object in which she had evinced such a lively interest, than she offered her services, which were at once and gratefully accepted,

in the management of the Institution, and hurried to Blackburn that she might superintend the requisite preparations and be at hand to act as matron when the first ward should be ready for the reception of patients. An appeal for aid was made to the Mansion House Committee and responded to by a grant of £600; the Relief Committee made a further grant of £500, and they (and of course, indirectly, the Infirmary Committee) were so much encouraged by the support they received in providing for the probable advent of disease, that the necessary works were pushed forward with the utmost vigour, and more was ultimately achieved by the Relief Infirmary Committee than was originally contemplated. In a few weeks one ward in that portion of the building which had been given up to the Relief Committee was ready for the reception of patients; but long prior to that time Miss Nicholson, in the same spirit of self-denial which had originally prompted and which continued throughout to characterise her kindly interest in the suffering poor of Blackburn, had taken up her residence in the unfinished building. About the middle of January 1863, it was necessary that arrangements should be made with respect to the admission of patients, and at a meeting of the Relief Infirmary Committee held on the 16th of that month, the proceedings of which were afterwards issued in the form of a circular as "rules for the admission of patients," the opinion was expressed "that there is so little fever of a severe character among the operative classes \* \* \* that a special fever ward is not at present necessary, but that the ward now ready for the reception of patients should be made use of temporarily for patients afflicted with other diseases;" and it was resolved:—

1. That no patient be admitted having any contagious or infectious disease, or who is likely to require medical or surgical attendance for a lengthened period, or may be considered incurable, or is in receipt of relief.
2. That at present only female patients be admitted.
3. That patients be admitted on a recommendation addressed to Miss Nicholson at the Infirmary, and signed by the Chairman of a ward Relief Committee, and be accompanied by a certificate from a physician or surgeon that the patient in each case is a proper person to be admitted as an inmate of the Infirmary.
4. That one bed be at the disposal of the Chairman of each ward."

The circular containing these rules was dated 21st January, and a note was appended to the following purport:—"The Committee have reason to believe that the medical gentlemen of Blackburn will gratuitously attend those patients to whom they give certificates during the time they may remain in the Infirmary." In this anticipation the Com-

mittee were not disappointed. The medical gentlemen of the town displayed throughout the crisis the generosity which is characteristic of the profession, and attended to the poor in the time of their sickness and distress, as well in their own homes as at the Infirmary, without asking, and, to a very large extent, without expecting either fee or reward.

The extent of the accommodation provided by the Relief Committee was at first, as we have seen, only one ward of eight beds, but this was increased in about a week after by the addition of two small wards of three beds each, making the total accommodation fourteen beds. On the 14th of January Dr. Buchanan, of the Privy Council, paid another and a very hurried visit to Blackburn, and in company with his worship the Mayor, J. B. S. Sturdy, Esq., made a minute examination of the various arrangements completed and in progress at the Infirmary. He expressed himself very well satisfied with the building, and with what had been done, and what was intended to be done; and made many useful suggestions which were of great value to the Relief Committee in the arrangements they had to make for the temporary occupation of the completed wards. Towards the end of January the first patients were admitted to the shelter and benefits of this noble Institution, and during four or five months following an average of from eight to ten persons (females only) continued to occupy the wards which had thus been fitted up. But throughout this period when the distress was lessening in amount, as throughout the previous twelve months when the distress was daily increasing in intensity, the town continued healthy, and it was gratifying to find that none of the Infirmary cases were those of persons suffering from low diet, but all were cases of an ordinary character, in no way traceable to the prevailing distress. There is a great deal of truth in the homely remark of the old sexton, uttered almost in a tone of lamentation at the falling off in his trade during the distress:—"Well, thae sees poverty seldom dees. There's far more kilt wi' o'erheytn' an' o'erdrinkin' nor there is wi' bein' pinched."

In June, 1863, the number of patients had so decreased, and the general health of the town and district continued so satisfactory, that it was determined to close the institution for a few weeks in order that that portion of the building which had been in temporary use during the winter and spring might be completed. Fortunately this could be done without any detriment, for the few patients who were in the Infirmary were convalescent and quite capable of being removed.

Miss Nicholson took advantage of this interval to return to the south, having more than fulfilled the promise implied in the offer she at first made of her services, but she arranged to revisit Blackburn so soon as the building was completed, in order to introduce the Matron, whom the Committee had engaged, to the duties which she herself had for so many months efficiently discharged, and that with a disinterestedness and generosity which would admit of no acknowledgment or recompense.

The Infirmary was re-opened in September, when Miss Nicholson, according to promise, returned to Blackburn for a few weeks, and initiated the Matron, Mrs. Winstanley, in the duties of her office. The Committee also revised their rules for the admission of patients, substituting the following, dated September 26th, for those which they had previously adopted on the 16th of January :—

“1.—That patients be admitted on a recommendation addressed to Mrs. Winstanley, the matron, at the Infirmary, signed by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of a Ward Relief Committee, and accompanied by a certificate signed by a physician or surgeon, that the patient in each case is a proper person to be admitted.

2.—That no patient be admitted having any contagious or infectious disease, or who is likely to require medical or surgical attendance for a lengthened period, or may be considered incurable, or who is in receipt of parochial relief.”

The note was added :—“The Committee have reason to believe that the medical gentlemen of Blackburn will continue to attend gratuitously the patients to whom they give certificates.”

The extended accommodation now available enabled the Committee to admit male as well as female patients; and during the subsequent period that the Infirmary remained in the hands of the Relief Committee under the temporary arrangement I have described, the wards were occupied with an average of 11 male and 12 female patients.

After spending a few weeks in concert with the new matron, and completing the necessary arrangements for the efficient management of the Infirmary, Miss Nicholson retired to her own home at Rugby, and the superintendence of the domestic arrangements of the Institution was entrusted to a committee of ladies, consisting of Mrs. Rushton, Mrs. J. B. S. Sturdy, Mrs. Wm. Pilkington, Mrs. John Livesey, and Miss Sarah Ann Thwaites. Her work of charity in Blackburn was among the last Miss Nicholson was permitted to engage in. She died a few months after her return to Rugby, and the tidings of her decease was felt in this town as the announcement of the death of a public benefactor, and in many a household her death was regarded almost as a personal loss.

The Relief Committee retained possession of the Infirmary until Thursday the 13th of October, 1864, when a deputation, consisting of the Rev. Richard Moss, Mr. John Procter and Mr. James Henderson, attended a special meeting of the Governors, to whom the Building had been recently transferred by the Building Committee, and formally gave up the Institution, in working order, as it had been occupied by them for upwards of eighteen months. Mr. Henderson, as spokesman of the deputation, informed the Governors that the Relief Committee, during the time they had had possession of the building, had expended upon it something like £2,000; and Mr. William Pilkington, chairman, on behalf of the Governors, assured the deputation, and through them the Relief Committee, who had kept the building open for such a lengthened period at such a cost, that the Governors were very much indebted to them for what they had done, in taking the Institution off their hands at a time when they themselves were not prepared to carry it on; and that it had been a heartfelt pleasure to the Governors that it had been in the hands of the Relief Committee so long and had been of such service to the town.

But the Infirmary was valuable, not only as an institution for the reception of patients, but also, and perhaps chiefly, as a dispensary whence medical comforts were distributed to those who were feeble and slightly ailing. Stores were formed at the Infirmary of all descriptions of sick nourishment,—wine, brandy, cod liver oil and such like,—and large numbers of the poor obtained from thence such supplies as their respective cases required. This was obtained on a medical certificate of the necessity for the nourishment or stimulant, countersigned by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Relief Committee for the ward in which the applicant resided.

Of a similar character, but more strictly confined to the dispensing of nourishing food, were the medical kitchens, of which the first was commenced by the Vicar, at the suggestion of Lord Radstock, and opened early in January, 1863, in premises in Mount Street, belonging to Mr. Boyle, which that gentleman kindly permitted to be occupied for a considerable time gratuitously. This kitchen was entirely under the management of and wholly supported by funds entrusted to the Clergy of the town—Lord Radstock, with whom the idea originated, contributing £10 per month. But it had not been long open before its importance was recognised, and on the 22nd of January the Relief Committee resolved to establish a similar kitchen, and premises suitable for the purpose were procured in France Street.

The articles of nourishment distributed from these kitchens were cooked meat, beef tea, sago, arrowroot and barley gruel, and a medical certificate was required to entitle an applicant to a supply—the certificate prescribing also the particular description of nourishment required and the quantity to be supplied daily. The certificate or order required to be renewed weekly.

On the opening of the Relief Committee's kitchen in France Street, an arrangement was made by which orders might be signed by either clergymen or the Chairmen or Vice-Chairmen of the Ward Committees, and such orders were "honoured" at either kitchen. But the France Street kitchen was not managed on the most economical principles, and after a few months it was discontinued and there remained only the Radstock Kitchen, which still (May, 1865) continues its operations for the benefit of large numbers of the sick and suffering. The Radstock Kitchen was carried on for many months at a weekly cost of about £20; and the average number of persons who were then in daily receipt of the sick nourishment it afforded was 100. Since the partial improvement in trade, and consequent increase of employment, the number of persons who daily visit the kitchen is on an average 55 and the weekly cost of the kitchen £12.

Another institution of a similar character was the "Sick Kitchen," established at the suggestion of Lady Kay-Shuttleworth. The suggestion was made to Mrs. Gerald Potter, to whom Lady Kay-Shuttleworth offered £100 if she would organise and establish such a kitchen, giving a liberal allowance to sick persons and providing facilities for teaching a few, at least, of the young women out of work the principles and practice of simple cookery. The Sick Kitchen was accordingly opened in the winter of 1863, and was maintained for a period of 9 months, at a cost of £189 18s. 6d., of which Lady Kay-Shuttleworth sent £140. The allowances consisted of freshly-cooked meat, vegetables, puddings, bread, tea, beef tea, or soup, as required. Several young women had the opportunity of learning cookery in this small establishment (carried on in a house in Paradise Lane, kindly lent for the purpose by Mr. John Livesey), which provided from 20 to 35 patients with their daily food. Lady Kay-Shuttleworth being desirous to have the Kitchen re-opened in the winter of 1864, sent an additional sum of £80 for the purpose, which, with a subscription of £30 from the Dowager Lady Buxton and other small sums, has enabled the Kitchen to provide up to the present time (May, 1865) for from 20 to 24 patients daily. Besides the provision made for those who receive the tickets of the

subscribers, an arrangement was made this year for the sale of tickets to any one who chose to purchase for the benefit of the sick poor in whose welfare an interest might be felt.

On the 1st of November, 1862, at the suggestion of Mrs. Potter, a Mothers' Kitchen was opened in St. Peter's district, in a cottage in Adelaide Street, kindly lent for the purpose by Colonel Jackson. The object of this institution was to supply nursing mothers with two or three good wholesome dinners per week, which might so keep up their strength as to enable them to afford adequate nourishment to the helpless babes they were suckling. The Rev. C. W. Woodhouse or one of his curates, and one or two ladies, attended daily at the dinner hour and assisted in the distribution of the food; and thus created an opportunity of speaking a word in season to the interesting class for which this special provision was made. An intelligent and tender-hearted lady from the lake district thus describes a visit which she paid to the kitchen in January, 1863:—"The dinners are varied; the day we were there they had capital meat and potato pie; we tasted it and found it excellent; goodly portions were heaped on each plate. It was truly affecting to see thirty or forty women—some very pale and worn-looking—sit down to this nice, hot, well-cooked meal. Nearly all had their babies, of from three to twelve months old, with them; the great majority were bright, hearty looking little things. It was amusing and touching to watch the mothers stuffing great pieces of meat and potato (pepper and all!) into their infants' mouths with the end of their knives! before they ever tasted a mouthful themselves. The little things seemed to enjoy it amazingly. One poor woman fainted on smelling the meat; she had not tasted food that day. In going out we found a detachment in the waiting room, ready to go in as these came out." This extract describes most vividly both the kind of relief afforded by the mothers' kitchen, and the objects for whom it was provided.

The success of the St. Peter's Kitchen was marked and decided; and as the same necessity existed in other parts of the town, a second Mothers' Kitchen was commenced in St. Luke's District on the 5th of December, 1862; a third at Wensley Fold on the 9th of January, 1863; a fourth at Audley on the 16th of February, and a fifth in the district of St. John's on the 23rd of February. The arrangements with respect to the management of all these Kitchens were similar to the description I have given of a visit to the St. Peter's Mothers' Kitchen, and in each of them, as at St. Peter's, the Clergy of the

different districts, assisted by ladies of their respective congregations, attended day by day during the distribution of the food for the purpose of addressing to the nursing mothers suitable words of counsel and encouragement. The chief, if not the sole support of these Kitchens, each of which supplied dinners to an average of fifty persons, was Mrs. Gerald Potter, whose eloquent appeals through the columns of the *Times*, rendered more eloquent by the earnestness and pathetic tenderness with which she pleaded on behalf of the suffering poor of Blackburn, placed at her disposal large funds for the support of this and the other schemes of benevolence which her sympathetic ingenuity devised. During the seven months that the Mothers' Kitchens were open, embracing the severe winter of 1862-3 and the spring of 1863, Mrs. Potter contributed to their support £419 14s. 10d.

The Kitchens were closed, one after another, during the summer of 1863, when the warm weather and the decrease of the distress rendered such a provision less imperatively necessary than it had been during the previous winter. The St. Peter's kitchen was closed on the 29th of May, by a tea party at St. Peter's School, at which 176 mothers were present (most of them with their babes in their arms) to testify their gratitude for the benefits they had received during the 30 weeks the kitchen had been opened. On the same day the Kitchen in St. John's District was closed by a meeting of the mothers in the school room, where they were suitably addressed by the Rev. J. Smith. And the other three kitchens were similarly brought to a close for the season during the earlier half of the month of June.

But the gratitude of the mothers was not confined to words. Recognising Mrs. Potter as the benefactress to whom they were chiefly indebted for the provision they had enjoyed during the severity of a season of great privation, they resolved to present that lady with something (although it might be a trifle) which would serve at once as a memorial of their gratitude and of Mrs. Potter's liberality; and accordingly, on the 11th of June, 1863, they met in the Town Hall, to the number of 800, and presented Mrs. Potter with a handsome walnut cabinet, containing book stand, writing desk and envelope case, with the following inscription engraved upon a plate affixed to the upper lid:—"Presented to Mrs. J. G. Potter, in grateful remembrance of the Mothers' Kitchens established by her in Blackburn during the cotton famine of 1862. This little memorial was provided by means of a penny contribution among the mothers attending the five kitchens. Blackburn, June 11th, 1863." The presentation was made through

Mrs. J. B. Carr, who feelingly expressed to Mrs. Potter the gratitude felt by the mothers for her kindness.

On the approach of the following winter (1863-4), although the distress in the town was considerably less than it had been and threatened to become at the close of 1862, it was still sufficient to warrant if not to demand the resuscitation of the mothers' kitchens, and Mrs. Potter benevolently anticipated the necessities of those who had so moved her sympathies in the previous autumn, by at once making arrangements for re-opening the five kitchens which had been the instruments of so much good in the winter of 1862-3, and for establishing five others in different parts of the town. The ten kitchens thus called into active operation for what I may call the winter campaign of 1863-4 were situated, and opened and closed as follows:—

| SITUATED.           | OPENED.            | CLOSED.     |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| St. Peter's .....   | October 20th ..... | May 7th.    |
| Trinity .....       | " 26th .....       | April 23rd. |
| St. Luke's .....    | " " .....          | " "         |
| Wensley Fold .....  | " " .....          | " "         |
| Christ Church ..... | " " .....          | " "         |
| Langho .....        | " " .....          | May 7th.    |
| Mellor .....        | " " .....          | April 23rd. |
| St. Thomas's .....  | November 9th ..... | " "         |
| St. Michael's ..... | " 16th .....       | " "         |
| St. Paul's .....    | December 7th ..... | " 30th.     |

The arrangements with respect to the management of the kitchens, and the kind and quantity of food distributed, were very similar during this second winter to what they were in the previous winter, but their operations being more extended, the cost of their maintenance was greatly increased. The number of mothers who benefitted by the wholesome food dispensed from them was 2,500, the daily average being over 500, and the number of dinners with which these mothers were supplied was 75,350, while the cost at which the kitchens were maintained was £895 5s. 1d. The whole of this sum was provided by Mrs. Potter, but it should be added, that the cost of the St. Peter's Kitchen, amounting to £104, was subsequently repaid by the Rev. C. W. Woodhouse, from funds collected by him for the purpose.

The summer of 1864 failed to restore the town to a normal condition of prosperity, and the amount of distress anticipated during the following winter induced Mrs. Potter to take steps for re-opening several of the kitchens on the 1st of November. The districts for which this provision was made during the third, or rather the fourth winter of the distress, were:—St. Luke's, St. Paul's, Trinity, St. Thomas's, St. Michael's and Wensley Fold, (for all of which Mrs.

Potter found the requisite funds, the cost being £21 per week, and St. Peter's, where the Rev. C. W. Woodhouse took the kitchen under his own management, and (as during the previous winter) provided the funds required for its support.

The mode in which nursing mothers became entitled to the benefit of the Mothers' Kitchens, was by tickets obtainable from the Clergy and others, especially ladies, who interested themselves in the condition of the poor, and by visits and enquiries sought out the necessitous and deserving. Many ladies, during three successive winters, and at great personal inconvenience, devoted a great deal of time to this work of charity, and thus gave practical effect to Mrs. Potter's benevolent suggestion, which must otherwise have failed of accomplishing half the good it effected.

In addition to these provisions for the relief of the sick and debilitated, the Managers of the Devonshire Hospital, Buxton, placed at the disposal of the Mayor and the Vicar upwards of twenty nominations to their excellent Institution, each of which entitled the recipient to from three weeks to four months' residence at Buxton, with all the advantages, medical and dietary, which the Hospital afforded. The nominations were principally for females, and were of course strictly limited to those whose poverty and bodily ailments rendered them proper objects of charity.

The sanitary condition of the town, as a subject having an intimate and important bearing on the health of the inhabitants, was not lost sight of by the Relief Committee. Acting on a recommendation which reached them from the Central Relief Committee of Manchester, they instructed their visitors to enforce habits of cleanliness, in respect of both their persons and their dwellings, on the recipients of relief; and having great faith in the virtue of whitewash, were especially urgent that the houses of the poor, as well as courts and passages, should be by this means cleansed and made to look bright and healthful. And in order that the poorest might have no excuse for the neglect of so simple an expedient for sweetening and purifying their dwellings, a "brigade of limewashers" was formed, under the direction of the Labour Committee (by whom they were paid and who provided brushes and the necessary material), who for several weeks (from December 9th, 1863, to March 31st, 1864) were engaged in whitewashing, and during that interval whitewashed 1,794 houses and 7,447 apartments.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*State of employment at the close of 1862—Wage loss sustained by the operatives—Approximate estimate of the money value of the relief from all sources—Slow progress of the improvement in the state of employment—The Sewing Classes at the Town Hall—Opening of branch schools—Presentation of an Address and a Quilt to the Princess of Wales—The difficulty of obtaining material for the sewing classes—The classes made educational—Murmurings of the masters against the operatives—Complaints by the operatives of bad material—Embarrassment of the Clergy—Circular of 16th March, 1863—Closing of the Sewing Classes—Tabular statement of the attendance—Presentations to Messrs. Hudson and Binyon—Mount Street United Presbyterian Classes—The Strangers' Friend Society's Class—The closing of the Educational and Industrial Schools—Cost of their maintenance—Presentations to Mrs. Gladstone and Mrs. Potter—The work of the Industrial Schools—The operations of the Overlookers' Committee—Attendance at the Men's Classes—Summary of Mrs. Potter's efforts on behalf of the distressed.*

I must now revert to the close of 1862, up to which date I have traced the progress of the distress, and the development of the various schemes devised for its relief. The destitution in the town was then greatest; and we have seen that the point which may be called the crisis of the distress had been reached by very rapid strides. The improvement which commenced with the early spring of 1863, was much more tedious in its development than the distress which culminated about Christmas, 1862. But before beginning to trace the progress towards that better state of things which now prevails in Blackburn as in the rest of the cotton districts, it will not be out of place to pause a little and take a survey of the condition of the town and its operative population at the time when the destitution was greatest.

The number of operatives wholly out of work at the close of 1862 was 16,323, representing a money loss of wages to the extent of about £8,500 per week. The number working short time was 3,888; and although their short time earnings probably enabled them to maintain



themselves without any aid from either the Guardians or the Relief Committee, the short time they were working represented a money loss of probably £1,000; making the total money loss of wages sustained by the operatives about £9,500 per week. The withdrawal of this large sum, which was really the means of comfortable subsistence to about 35,000 persons, or more than one-half of the population, necessarily inflicted intense misery and privation, which it was the object of the Guardians, the Relief Committee, the Clerical Association, and the other organisations of a more or less private character, to mitigate and relieve. The relief expenditure at this time I approximately estimate at nearly £3,000 per week, the principal items being as follows:—

|  | £    | s. | d. | £     | s. | d. |
|--|------|----|----|-------|----|----|
| Guardians, In-door maintenance.....        | 36   | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| „ Out-door relief .....                    | 1000 | 0  | 0  | 1036  | 0  | 0  |
| Relief Committee, Flour and Meal.....      | 640  | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| „ Loss on Soup.....                        | 6    | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| „ Coal .....                               | 235  | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| „ Grant to Sewing Classes .....            | 150  | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| „ „ Young Men's Classes..                  | 224  | 0  | 0  | 1255  | 0  | 0  |
| Clerical Association, Sewing Classes ..... | 89   | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| „ „ Young Men's Classes.....               | 95   | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| „ „ Married „ „ .....                      | 22   | 0  | 0  | 206   | 0  | 0  |
| Dr. Robinson's Penny Bible Classes .....   | 50   | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| Industrial Schools.....                    | 80   | 0  | 0  | 130   | 0  | 0  |
| Dissenting Sewing Classes .....            | 40   | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| „ Men's Classes .....                      | 18   | 0  | 0  |       |    |    |
| Strangers' Friend Society .....            | 15   | 0  | 0  | 73    | 0  | 0  |
|  |      |    |    | 2,700 | 0  | 0  |

The funds distributed privately by the Clergy, Dissenting Ministers and others, will probably bring up the weekly expenditure in relief at the close of 1862 to the sum I have named, £3,000; but it is to be observed that in this estimate I have taken no account of the cottage rents that were either excused or fell into arrear, or of the clothing which was distributed in such large quantities by the Relief Committee, and through many other channels. The sum of £3,000 was required each week simply to save the unemployed from starvation, and provide them with a moderate allowance of fuel. The rateable value of the Borough was then (in round numbers) £144,000, and if we deduct no more than Mr. H. B. Farnall's very moderate estimate of 25 per cent. for the property which the distress had rendered non-productive, we have a rateable value of £106,000, which, in the absence of aid

from foreign sources, would have been called upon to bear the burden of this overwhelming expenditure. A little calculation will suffice to shew, that an expenditure of £3,000 per week from a rateable value of £106,000 would require a rate of rather more than 6½d. per week, or nearly 30s. per annum—which would have been little short of confiscation. But even this is a more favourable view of the question than the actual facts will warrant. If we deduct no more than 25 per cent. in respect of non-productive property, we must add the cottage rents—which were either lost by the property owners or accumulated against the tenants—to the expenditure; and if we allow five persons to each dwelling, and take the rentals at the very low average of 2s. 6d. per week, this will add to the expenditure no less a sum than £875, increasing the rate necessary to meet it to rather more than 8½d. per week, or 37s. per annum. And this expenditure, it must be remembered, was not for a solitary week, or for two or three weeks, but had to be continued at about the same high average for many months.

But while from this point of view it is apparent that Blackburn—and the remark applies with greater or less force to all the towns in the distressed districts—could not have coped with the distress without external aid; from another point of view the question arises: Did an expenditure of £3,000 or £3,875 per week suffice as a substitute for the £9,500 of wage loss sustained by the operatives? not, indeed, to supply them with the abundance of necessities and the modicum of comforts which their wages would have enabled them to provide, but with wholesome food in sufficient quantity to preserve them in health and strength. The reply must be in the affirmative. It is admitted on all hands that the unemployed operatives of Blackburn were well cared for during the whole period of the distress; it was asserted in some instances that they were so well off that they could not wish for better times; and if a little more than one-third of the amount of their ordinary earnings sufficed during this crisis for their absolute necessities, it follows that in ordinary times they have a considerable margin on which to exercise provident habits; and if provident, the cotton famine must have found them with savings sufficient to enable them to tide over a somewhat protracted period of depression. But the actual result was far from justifying these natural and reasonable anticipations. The savings of the factory workers, notwithstanding the high rate of their earnings, were comparatively inconsiderable; and there were few households which the total or even the partial deprivation of work did not bring under the cognizance of the Guardians or the Relief Committee within

a few weeks, or even a few days, after the earnings on which they had depended ceased.

But I must return from this digression to trace the progress of that gradual improvement in the trade of the town and district which commenced with the spring of 1863, but has not yet (in this the summer of 1865) restored us to our normal condition of commercial prosperity. And here the census of the state of employment in the town will most clearly exhibit the fluctuations which have occurred to retard our progress towards that healthy state of trade which has been so long and ardently hoped for. The figures shewing the rapid strides by which the distress increased during 1862 have been given at page 60; and the following are the returns in continuation, shewing the state of employment each month from January, 1863, to April, 1865:—

| Date.             | Number usually Employed. | Working full Time. | Working Short Time. | Wholly out of Work. |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| January .....1863 | 27,780                   | 12,585             | 2,819               | 12,376              |
| February..... "   | 27,780                   | 11,882             | 2,921               | 12,977              |
| March..... "      | 27,840                   | 11,349             | 3,227               | 13,264              |
| April..... "      | 27,840                   | 13,393             | 1,749               | 12,698              |
| May..... "        | 27,840                   | 16,334             | 1,657               | 9,849               |
| June..... "       | 27,840                   | 16,904             | 1,840               | 9,096               |
| July..... "       | 27,840                   | 17,664             | 1,198               | 8,978               |
| August..... "     | 27,840                   | 16,777             | 1,780               | 9,283               |
| September..... "  | 27,840                   | 16,289             | 1,485               | 10,066              |
| October..... "    | 27,840                   | 17,384             | 1,153               | 9,303               |
| November..... "   | 27,840                   | 15,683             | 2,580               | 9,397               |
| December..... "   | 27,840                   | 15,174             | 716                 | 11,950              |
| January .....1864 | *23,840                  | 12,843             | 2,255               | 8,742               |
| February..... "   | 23,840                   | 13,093             | 2,179               | 8,568               |
| March..... "      | 23,840                   | 13,297             | 2,209               | 8,334               |
| April..... "      | 23,840                   | 17,287             | none                | 6,553               |
| May..... "        | 23,840                   | 17,509             | none                | 6,331               |
| June..... "       | 25,646                   | 19,369             | 1,095               | 5,182               |
| July..... "       | 21,164                   | 18,381             | 507                 | 2,276               |
| August..... "     | 21,313                   | 18,913             | 403                 | 1,997               |
| September..... "  | 21,721                   | 14,701             | 2,626               | 4,394               |
| October..... "    | 22,654                   | 12,809             | 3,178               | 6,667               |
| November..... "   | 23,690                   | 15,660             | 1,657               | 6,373               |
| December..... "   | 23,560                   | 16,858             | 1,258               | 5,444               |
| January .....1865 | 23,353                   | 18,417             | 700                 | 4,238               |
| February..... "   | 23,425                   | 19,135             | 471                 | 3,819               |
| March..... "      | 23,659                   | 19,027             | 371                 | 4,261               |
| April..... "      | 23,636                   | 18,684             | 446                 | 4,506               |

\* The sudden decrease of 4,000 in the "number usually employed" was made at the suggestion of the Relief Committee, who believed that the number of operatives in the town had been decreased to that extent by emigration and removal to other parts of the country, and that such a deduction was necessary in order to arrive at a correct estimate of the state of employment.

The state of employment in the town during the early months of 1863, was so small an improvement on that which preceded the close of 1862, that in the week after the Christmas festivities to which I have referred, the everyday work of the sewing, educational and industrial classes had to be resumed as vigorously as ever. The classes at the Town Hall, embracing the girls and young women belonging to the Parishes of St. Mary, St. John, St. Paul, St. Michael and Holy Trinity, and the district of Bottomgate, were under the constant superintendence of the Vicar and Mrs. Rushton; while the other clergy of these parishes attended in turn, for one week at a time, to assist in the management of the classes, and conduct the devotional exercises which hallowed each day's proceeding. Mrs Rushton was the soul of the Town Hall classes. She undertook the very onerous work of superintending the material and cutting out, and displayed during the continuance of the classes the same hearty zeal and enthusiasm in the cause which originally induced her to organise and mature the scheme which received in the Town Hall such a successful development. The Vicar acted as treasurer and paymaster, as well as general superintendent, and thus took upon himself duties of a very laborious character.

But large as the Town Hall is, providing accommodation for 600 girls, it was found too small for the necessities of the Parishes for which it had been made a Central Sewing School; and in the week ending 18th October, 1862, a branch class was opened in Nova Scotia, in the school at the Commercial Mill, placed at the disposal of the Clergy for the purpose. The number attending this school at the close of the first week was 77, and by the 22nd of November the attendance had increased to 146. On the 15th of November another branch sewing school was opened at Higher Eanam, in a portion of the then unoccupied factory belonging to Messrs Willan and Mills, which had an attendance during the first week of 68, and increased by the 6th of December to 126. The school at Nova Scotia remained open till 10th January, 1863, and during its continuance was under the special superintendence of the Revd. Richard Moss, Incumbent of Christ Church; and the school at Higher Eanam, superintended by the Revd. H. Wescoe, senior curate at the Parish Church, remained open till May 1863. The formation of these schools relieved the Town Hall of considerable numbers; and besides proving a convenience to the girls and young women resident in the districts of Nova Scotia and Eanam who had been in the habit of attending the Town Hall



classes, provided accommodation for many who otherwise might not have found their way to any of the sewing classes.

In connection with the sewing classes at the Town Hall, and the indefatigable efforts of Mrs. Rushton and the ladies whom she associated with her in the management as teachers, I must not omit to mention the manufacture of a silk quilt for presentation to the Princess of Wales. The working of the quilt was for some months a subject of great interest to the lady teachers and their pupils; and when completed, and exhibited for a few days to the public of Blackburn, attracted the notice of large numbers of sympathetic admirers. Along with the quilt was forwarded a congratulatory address, as follows:—

“TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,—

We, the ladies superintending the Blackburn Church of England sewing classes, most cordially joining the pupils in their congratulations on the auspicious event of your Royal Highness's marriage with his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, beg leave most humbly to approach your Royal Highness with every expression of loyalty to the throne, and dutiful affection for the several members of the Royal Family of these Kingdoms, and request your Royal Highness's acceptance of the Quilt worked by the women in these classes, many of whom are fatherless and orphans, and all of whom have found the self-imposed task a source of no small consolation in this lengthened season of privation and distress. That the blessing of Heaven in richest abundance may be the happy and lasting portion of your Royal Highness is, in common with that of every subject of these Kingdoms, the earnest prayer of all parties to this humble address.

Dated at Blackburn, this 20th day of April, 1863.”

The reply was prompt, being dated 25th April, and most gratifying to the loyalty which had prompted the gift and address. It was as follows:—

“Marlborough House, 25th April, 1863.

Lord Harris has received the commands of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales to inform the Ladies superintending the Blackburn Church of England sewing classes that her Royal Highness has been graciously pleased to accept their address and the Quilt which accompanied. Lord Harris has been directed to express her Royal Highness's warm acknowledgments for the kind sentiments expressed in the address, and for the interesting specimen of the industry of the sewing schools, which has thus been presented to her.”

A difficulty in connection with the Church sewing classes, to which I have not yet referred, was the providing of material for the consumption, by the needle and knitting pin, of so many hundred girls, and the subsequent disposal of the made-up garments and knitted articles. On the first formation of the classes, and for many months after, material was provided in abundance, to a large extent through the efforts and in-

fluence of Mrs. Rushton; and the destitution of the girls and young women, and the families of which they were members, was sufficient for a time to absorb the most of what was produced in the school, so that little was left for which customers had to be found elsewhere. But in the early part of 1863, when the novelty of such noble gatherings had ceased, and there was a gleam, or, at least, a hope of returning prosperity, it became almost impossible to obtain an adequate supply of material, and very difficult to dispose of the manufactured goods, and the Clergy then resolved to give the classes more of an educational character. To this they were the more strongly urged by observing the extraordinary deficiencies of a large number of the girls in the most elementary branches of school training. A supply of slates and copy books was procured, and also some black boards, and a considerable portion of each day was devoted to instructing the girls in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The result was gratifying beyond anticipation. A new impetus seemed to have been given to the classes, and the girls made rapid progress in studies which were to a large extent new to them.

I have already shewn that even during the Christmas festivities at the Town Hall, there had been murmurings on the part of some of the masters, that the unemployed were being too well cared for, and that they would not accept of work when it was offered to them; and that the Clergy vindicated the operatives from the charges of idleness, and the lack of a spirit of independence, which were implied in these murmurings, and at the same time warned them against giving occasion for such complaints by either word or deed. As the spring of 1863 advanced, there was a partial revival of trade and consequent resumption of employment, and the murmuring by the masters against the operatives, principally the weavers, became more audible, as they found a difficulty in obtaining hands to work the machinery they were prepared to set in motion. It must be confessed that the masters' complaints were not unfounded, and yet a great deal may be said in vindication of the operatives' reluctance to accept the employment offered. The material (although in some cases the best that could be obtained, was in others the very worst that could pass under the name of cotton) was so inferior to what they had been accustomed to work prior to the distress, that they could hardly earn wages sufficient to sustain life—even after a week of harder work and closer application than had ever before been required of them. But good material was not to be had; and without an effort, and a persevering effort, on the part of both

the operatives and their employers, the machinery and modes of manipulation could not be adapted to the altered condition of things, and a revival of the cotton trade was impossible. It was felt by both the Central and Local Relief Committees that no complaint must go forth of a scarcity of hands, as nothing would more surely stem the flow of the world-wide charity which had been elicited on behalf of the Lancashire operatives, than anything like a suspicion that they had proved unworthy of the sympathy which had been evoked on their behalf, by preferring still to subsist on the bread of charity, to exerting themselves to earn a subsistence by honest industry.

The managers of the different classes, especially the Clergy, were justly jealous of the reputation of the operatives, on whose behalf they had pleaded so eloquently and successfully with their brethren and their respective congregations in different and distant parts of the country, and they were placed at times in a most embarrassing position, not knowing whether to believe the masters, who complained of the idleness of the operatives, or the operatives, who complained that a week's work would not yield them more for the support of their families than the scant allowance they received from the Relief Committee or the Guardians. From this cause many of the Clergy and others interested in both the girls' and men's classes, passed a more anxious time during the spring of 1863, when there were some slight gleams of a returning prosperity, than that which they endured at the close of 1862, when the distress was at its height. But they were in some measure relieved from their embarrassments by the more active superintendence taken by the Relief Committee of the different schools and classes, such superintendence carrying with it an increased responsibility with respect to the very point which had thus occasioned their difficulty. The Relief Committee took this more active superintendence of the classes to which I refer, in consequence of having increased the capitation grant from 1s. 6d. (to which it had been raised from 1s. in the week ending January 3rd, 1863) to 2s. This change took effect in the week ending 14th February, 1863, and on the 16th of March, a circular was issued directing the attention of "those in charge of the Sewing, Industrial and Educational classes to the following resolutions which have been agreed to by the Central Relief Committee:—

- 1st.—That in future the capitation grant will not be allowed to any one attending a Sewing, Industrial, or Educational Class, unless such class, including teachers, numbers twenty regular attenders.
- 2nd.—That the capitation grant will not in future be allowed to any Sewing or Female Educational class, unless the hours of attendance are at least twenty-

four per week; not more than six hours' attendance being allowed in any one day, and no attendance after six o'clock p.m. to be taken into account.  
3rd.—That in future no class be allowed to spend any portion of the ordinary hours of attendance at school in marching or walking."

The tenor of these resolutions indicates that some abuses had been allowed to prevail in the management of the classes, which made the daily routine of duty bear too much the character of pastime.

As the summer of 1863 advanced, and factory work became more plentiful, the numbers in attendance at the classes decreased. But still there was a cry by the masters that the operatives could not be induced to accept employment; and although the Relief Committee had given notice on the 28th of May, that the various sewing classes in the town would close in one month from that date, the complaints by masters were so numerous, and apparently believed by the Relief Committee to be so well founded, that on the 8th of June a resolution was passed as follows:—

"That the ward committees be instructed to refuse relief to all families, in which there is a weaver, warper, or winder out of employment."

The resolution of the Relief Committee with respect to the closing of the sewing classes at the end of June, was before that date modified to this extent, that one class should be continued for some time longer, to be composed of women who had previously obtained their livelihood by the needle—each ward committee to have power to nominate 12 persons suitable for such class. This class met in the Town Hall, and the women were paid according to the work done. In the first week, that ending 4th July, the number in attendance was 30 and the amount paid them £5 9s. 4d.; in the next week there were 38, who were paid £6 13s. 4d.; in the week following 42, who were paid £8 9s. 2d.; and in the fourth week 49, who were paid £11 9s. 4d.

At the close of the Sewing Classes in St. Peter's district, which met at the Mechanics' Institution and Pump street, the ladies who had superintended the classes, remembering how much they had been assisted in their labours by the two gentlemen who then officiated as volunteer Curates of St. Peter's Church, met in the Mechanics' Institution, and through the Rev. C. W. Woodhouse presented each of them with a silver pocket communion service. The services were both alike and contained the following appropriate inscription:—  
"Presented to the Rev. W. Hudson, B.A. (and to the Rev. F. Binyon, B.A.) by the ladies of St. Peter's, Blackburn, sewing schools, established for unemployed factory women during the disastrous cotton famine

of 1862-63, as an expression of their estimation of his unwearied efforts."

On the closing of all the sewing classes, and the formation of the very limited class of needle-workers mentioned above, the Clergy of St. Peter's took steps for keeping together the young girls who had been for so many months in daily attendance at the sewing classes in the Mechanics' Institution, by assembling them in the evening for educational purposes, and making them a trifling allowance of 1d. or 1½d. per night. The funds placed at their disposal for this purpose amounted to about £70, and permitted the class to be carried on till the summer of 1864.

The following table shews the average attendance at the various sewing classes in each month, during the time they were in operation and in receipt of the Relief Committee's capitation grant:—

|                                      | 1862        |             |             |             | 1863        |             |             |             |             |            |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
|                                      | Sept.       | Oct.        | Nov.        | Dec.        | Jan.        | Feb.        | Mar.        | Apr.        | May.        | June.      |
| <b>CHURCH CLASSES.</b>               |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |            |
| Town Hall .....                      | 409         | 549         | 521         | 492         | 431         | 444         | 447         | 369         | 162         | 111        |
| Nova Scotia .....                    |             | 102         | 131         | 119         | 90          |             |             |             |             |            |
| Higher Eanam .....                   |             |             | 87          | 114         | 120         | 97          | 101         | 82          | 55          |            |
| Mechanics' Institution .....         | 223         | 253         | 286         | 256         | 194         | 167         | 175         | 131         | 73          | 30         |
| Pump Street .....                    |             |             | 32          | 51          | 63          | 72          | 103         | 74          | 60          | 42         |
| Wensley Fold .....                   | 41          | 52          | 48          | 49          | 39          | 35          | 36          |             |             |            |
| Orphanage .....                      | 16          | 20          | 13          | 11          | 8           | 14          | 13          | 10          | 7           | 6          |
| Straw Plaiting .....                 |             |             |             |             |             |             | 12          | 10          | 14          | 10         |
| <b>Total Church Classes.....</b>     | <b>689</b>  | <b>976</b>  | <b>1118</b> | <b>1092</b> | <b>945</b>  | <b>849</b>  | <b>887</b>  | <b>676</b>  | <b>371</b>  | <b>199</b> |
| <b>DISSENTING CLASSES.</b>           |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |            |
| Chapel Street (Independent)          | 52          | 47          | 60          | 62          | 47          | 38          |             |             |             |            |
| James Street (Do.)                   | 58          | 92          | 95          | 75          | 60          | 67          | 51          | 34          | 17          |            |
| Park Road (Do.)                      | 32          | 48          | 91          | 103         | 83          | 34          | 22          | 19          | 11          | 9          |
| Bolton Station (Do.)                 |             | 15          | 21          | 15          | 11          | 9           |             |             |             |            |
| Mount Street (U. P.) .....           | 35          | 46          | 62          |             |             |             |             |             |             |            |
| Wesleyan Methodist .....             | 35          | 43          | 49          | 44          | 39          | 34          | 26          | 23          | 15          |            |
| Primitive Methodist .....            | 18          | 31          | 41          | 34          | 30          | 28          | 26          | 24          | 17          |            |
| Paradise and Barton Street           | 16          | 38          | 50          | 50          | 33          | 30          | 29          | 25          | 13          | 9          |
| Particular Baptist .....             | 6           | 8           | 13          | 16          | 13          | 6           | 4           |             |             |            |
| Baptist (Branch Road) .....          | 19          | 21          | 20          | 24          | 30          | 26          | 21          | 11          |             |            |
| New Jerusalem .....                  |             | 8           | 9           | 10          | 7           | 6           | 3           |             |             |            |
| Unitarian .....                      |             | 9           | 25          | 21          | 14          |             |             |             |             |            |
| <b>Total Dissenting Classes ....</b> | <b>252</b>  | <b>404</b>  | <b>537</b>  | <b>450</b>  | <b>360</b>  | <b>282</b>  | <b>187</b>  | <b>146</b>  | <b>84</b>   | <b>18</b>  |
| <b>ROMAN CATHOLIC CLASSES.</b>       |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |            |
| St. Anne's .....                     | 196         | 259         | 296         | 274         | 250         | 269         | 327         | 272         | 224         | 147        |
| St. Alban's .....                    | 157         | 239         | 304         | 294         | 298         | 442         | 415         | 338         | 190         | 130        |
| St. Mary's .....                     | 53          | 98          | 131         | 127         | 90          | 94          | 103         | 91          | 64          |            |
| <b>Total Roman Catholic Classes</b>  | <b>406</b>  | <b>596</b>  | <b>731</b>  | <b>695</b>  | <b>638</b>  | <b>805</b>  | <b>845</b>  | <b>701</b>  | <b>478</b>  | <b>277</b> |
| <b>MISCELLANEOUS.</b>                |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |            |
| Strangers' Friend Society...         |             |             | 157         | 160         | 146         | 160         | 164         | 134         | 103         | 80         |
| <b>Total Girls' Classes .....</b>    | <b>1347</b> | <b>1976</b> | <b>2543</b> | <b>2397</b> | <b>2089</b> | <b>2996</b> | <b>2083</b> | <b>1657</b> | <b>1036</b> | <b>574</b> |

It will be observed from the foregoing tabular statement that early in December the classes in connection with Mount street United Presbyterian Chapel ceased to receive the Relief Committee's grant. This was in consequence of the voluntary renunciation by the Committee in charge of these classes of all aid from public sources, a resolution which the Rev. Dr. Skinner communicated to the Mayor and Chairman of the Relief Committee (J. B. S. Sturdy, Esq.) in a letter dated 8th December, 1862.

The Sewing class in connection with the Strangers' Friend Society, which was largely supported by the members of the Society of Friends, was continued for about twelve months, at a cost of nearly £1,000. This large expenditure, however, did not interfere with the ordinary operations of the Society, as the funds devoted to the support of the sewing class were specially contributed for that purpose. The establishment of the sewing class, and this large expenditure in its support, tended rather to expand than contract the usefulness of the Society, as they were the means of many married women (members of the class) obtaining clothing for themselves and their children who in ordinary circumstances would not have been considered eligible as objects of the Society's bounty. The class was established in one of the smaller rooms at the Town Hall, and when the number of women in attendance exceeded the accommodation which this room afforded a branch was opened at the Meeting House of the Society of Friends in King Street, which was kindly placed at the disposal of the Committee for that purpose.

The Reading and Industrial Schools (to which, as well as the sewing classes, the circular of 16th March was addressed) were continued for some weeks after the sewing classes were closed. But on the 13th of July, 1863, in consequence of the number of contracts in hand for spade work, it was resolved by the Relief Committee to allow the out-door labourers to work for the whole of their relief, instead of supplementing their wages by money and provisions, as had previously been the case; and to give a fortnight's notice for the discontinuance of all the men's schools except one, which should be established in some central situation of the town. This central school was intended for the benefit of such single young men and others as were not required to work out-door for the whole of the week. Their attendance at school on the days when they were not working was intended to be optional, but to encourage such attendance, additional relief was to be given to each attendant. This resolution was only anticipatory of the instruc-

tions of a circular from the Central Relief Committee, dated 21st July, in which attention was called to the "Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, 1863," and Local Committees were warned "that during the winter months there will again be a greatly increased pressure upon your funds," and urged "to withdraw your aid from single able-bodied young men as soon as possible and as far as practicable in order that they may be induced to seek for out-door work from such sources as are already and soon will be afforded to them." The sequel of this circular belongs to another portion of my history—the progress and success of the out-door labour movement; but I cannot pass from my notice of the Industrial Schools, without adverting to the presentations made to Mrs. Gladstone and Mrs. Potter by the men attending the schools, as expressions of their respect and gratitude. The gifts were homely articles, table covers made by the tailors attending the schools, but subscribed for by all the men and their wives. On the border of each cover was an inscription in Old English characters, the one presented to Mrs. Gladstone being to the following effect:—"Made in Mrs. W. E. Gladstone's Industrial School, Blackburn, and presented in grateful acknowledgment of her kindness to the factory operatives during the cotton famine, 1862-3." The inscription on the cover presented to Mrs. Potter was to the same purport. The presentation to Mrs. Gladstone was made by the Mayor, to whom Mrs. Gladstone expressed her gratification on receiving such a recognition of her services; and to Mrs. Potter the presentation was made in the school by the Rev. Dr. Robinson, and suitably acknowledged on behalf of Mrs. Potter by her excellent husband.

In the Industrial schools, as I have said, there were carried on works of tailoring, shoemaking and carpentry. In the departments of tailoring and shoemaking the work undertaken was almost entirely confined to the making and repairing of clothes, clogs and shoes for the use of the men attending the schools and their families; but in the department of carpentry orders were executed for "home use and exportation." Besides desks and forms for the use of some of the young men's reading classes, the carpenters made wheelbarrows, window rollers and coffins! and the amount earned in this way by the close of 1862 was £8 9s. 4d. In the following year the earnings of the Industrial schools amounted to £83 0s. 4d. The amount received and expended in support of the Industrial schools was £2177 7s. 3d., which includes the capitation grants made by the Relief Committee, and £207 10s. 0d. contributed by Mrs. Potter in support of the school which bore her name.

The Church educational classes for young men were five in number, one having been formed at Highfield, in premises kindly lent for the purpose by Messrs. Harrison, and another at Wensley Fold, in addition to the three which were opened, as we have seen, in such rapid succession in Back Lane, Little Peel and Pump Street. The school in Pump Street was shortly after its formation placed under the superintendence of Mr. W. G. Prebble, and proved most successful in respect both of the discipline which was maintained and the instruction imparted and received. Many of the men who entered that class were ignorant of the letters of the alphabet, and before they left were able to read intelligently any book that came in their way. In this school, also, English grammar and geography were taught, and the adults soon exhibited a most creditable proficiency, and displayed in these studies, especially in geography, the liveliest interest.

The five classes I have referred to (for young men), were under the general control of the Clerical Association; and from their fund, specially contributed for that purpose, allowances were made supplementary to the Relief Committee's capitation grants, and the salaries of teachers and general expenses of management were defrayed. Of this fund Mr. Thomas Lewis was treasurer, and the amount disbursed for the objects named amounted to £1,477 5s. 9d. The school at Highfield opened in November, 1862, and continued in operation till June, 1863, but the rest of the classes did not close till August, 1863.

It will be seen from the tabular statement on page 127, that the young men's classes in connection with the various dissenting places of worship were not very numerously attended, and that they were all brought to a final close in June, 1863. The Mount Street young men's class does not appear in the list, as it never became a recipient of the Relief Committee's grants.

The Overlookers having formed themselves into an educational class, shared with the other men's classes in the Relief Committee's capitation grants; but, with the exception of very liberal supplies of clothing, this was all the aid they received from the Relief Committee; and they received no aid whatever from the Guardians subsequent to the month of October, 1862, when the Committee of the trade felt themselves in a position to deliver up the cards of all who had previously been in receipt of parochial relief, and rely on the help received and promised towards their support in the manner which they considered necessary in order, as they said, "to enable us to maintain the position we have hitherto occupied

between the operatives and their employers." The men attended at the school-room in Ainsworth Street, and through the school the Committee distributed amounts proportioned to the necessities of each—having regard to the number in the family and the amount that might be received by the children as earnings (if they were in work), or for attendance at one or other of the sewing or educational classes. The scale of relief adopted by the Overlookers' Committee was considerably more liberal than the maximum adopted by the Relief Committee. The funds which enabled the Overlookers to establish a Relief Committee of their own, independent of the General Relief Committee, and owing to it only such nominal allegiance as the capitation grants gave it a claim to, were principally received from the Mansion House Committee. I find from the balance sheet of the Overlookers' Committee that the amount received from this source was £2,030 (this being part of the sum which appears in the Relief Committee's balance sheet as "reserved for special distribution by the donors"), and that the local subscriptions amounted to £585 15s. 0d., the subscriptions from Overlookers in work to £99 19s. 2d., the capitation grants to £358 18s. 0d., and the subscriptions from other towns to £172. These are the principal items of receipt; but there are also among the receipts a sum of £586 for work done under the Public Works Act, 1863; sums amounting to £100 11s. 0d. for excavations done for Joseph Feilden, Esq., and Messrs. Greenwood and Son; and £16 for services in the clothing depot of the Relief Committee. The total receipts (including £27 10s. 0d. specially contributed for emigration) amounted to £4,067 5s. 5d., of which £3,850 11s. 1d. were expended in the support of the Overlookers and their families; £47 7s. 0d. as wages to gangers, time-keepers, &c., and £10 15s. 6d. for making-up clothing material received from London. This expenditure amounts to a total of £3,908 13s. 7d. to which must be added the £27 10s. for emigration (which was devoted to the object for which it was contributed) making a total of £3,936 3s. 7d. The balance in hand when the account was closed amounted to £4 0s. 3d., which shews that the cost at which this large fund was collected and distributed, and the school supplied for so many months with books and stationery, amounted to only £127 1s. 7d.

The following table shews the average attendance at the various men's classes in each month during the time they were in operation and in receipt of the Relief Committee's capitation grants:—

## AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT MEN'S CLASSES.

| CHURCH CLASSES.                | 1862. |      | 1863. |      |      |      |      |       |       |      |
|--------------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|------|
|                                | Nov.  | Dec. | Jan.  | Feb. | Mch. | Apr. | May. | June. | July. | Aug. |
| Back Lane .....                | 226   | 207  | 182   | 160  | 153  | 116  | 68   | 73    | 65    | 41   |
| Little Peel .....              | 291   | 255  | 229   | 321  | 292  | 234  | 119  | 72    | 57    | 41   |
| Pump Street .....              | 206   | 287  | 224   | 293  | 299  | 239  | 136  | 67    | 112   | 114  |
| Highfield .....                | 123   | 230  | 159   | 118  | 115  | 139  | 100  | 72    |       |      |
| Wensley Fold.....              | 89    | 144  | 145   | 143  | 141  | 96   | 63   | 42    | 40    | 40   |
| Shakespeare.....               |       | 182  | 158   | 162  | 142  | 140  | 72   | 61    |       |      |
| Industrial (Mrs. Potter's)...  | 206   | 305  | 272   | 232  | 222  | 200  | 140  | 127   | 45    | 22   |
| Do. (Mrs. Gladstone's)         |       | 553  | 513   | 448  | 447  | 415  | 276  | 241   | 105   | 45   |
| Total Church Classes.....      | 1141  | 2163 | 1882  | 1877 | 1811 | 1579 | 974  | 755   | 424   | 303  |
| DISSENTING CLASSES.            |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |      |
| Chapel Street (Independent)    | 11    | 25   | 23    | 21   |      |      |      |       |       |      |
| James Street (Do.) .....       | 19    | 25   | 24    | 27   | 27   | 18   | 10   |       |       |      |
| Park Road (Do.) .....          | 46    | 57   | 46    | 25   | 19   | 25   | 26   | 23    |       |      |
| Bolton Station (Do.) .....     | 6     | 10   | 6     | 5    | 4    |      |      |       |       |      |
| Wesleyan Methodist .....       | 26    | 40   | 36    | 34   | 29   | 23   | 17   |       |       |      |
| Primitive Do. ....             | 10    | 9    | 11    | 12   | 10   |      |      |       |       |      |
| Baptist (Branch Road).....     | 18    | 21   | 26    | 28   | 26   | 26   | 22   | 12    |       |      |
| Particular Baptist .....       | 2     | 4    | 3     | 1    |      |      |      |       |       |      |
| Paradise and Barton Street     | 25    | 18   | 13    | 11   | 11   | 10   | 7    |       |       |      |
| Unitarian .....                | 14    | 11   |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |      |
| Total Dissenting Classes ..... | 152   | 227  | 193   | 166  | 126  | 103  | 85   | 42    |       |      |
| ROMAN CATHOLIC CLASSES.        |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |      |
| St. Anne's .....               | 147   | 221  | 214   | 92   | 66   | 52   | 35   | 22    | 14    | 8    |
| St. Alban's .....              | 137   | 193  | 256   | 280  | 228  | 195  | 150  | 141   | 92    |      |
| St. Mary's .....               | 85    | 108  | 117   | 119  | 92   | 80   | 58   | 53    | 46    |      |
| St. Anne's (Paradise Street)   |       |      | 112   | 117  | 86   | 71   | 44   | 23    | 18    | 17   |
| Total Roman Catholic Classes   | 369   | 522  | 699   | 608  | 472  | 398  | 287  | 239   | 170   | 25   |
| MISCELLANEOUS.                 |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |       |       |      |
| Overlookers .....              | 134   | 146  | 152   | 139  | 141  | 141  | 113  | 92    | 67    | 62   |
| Tape Sizers .....              | 40    | 37   | 27    | 29   | 25   | 25   | 22   | 21    | 15    | 11   |
| Non-Sectarian .....            | 24    | 26   | 26    | 29   | 21   | 22   | 22   | 10    | 4     |      |
| Total Miscellaneous Classes    | 198   | 209  | 205   | 197  | 187  | 188  | 157  | 123   | 86    | 73   |
| Total Men's Classes .....      | 1860  | 3121 | 2979  | 2848 | 2596 | 2268 | 1503 | 1159  | 680   | 401  |

The scattered notices I have heretofore given of the active sympathy displayed by Mrs. Potter on behalf of the distressed operatives of Blackburn, will have sufficed to shew that her benevolence was of a most substantial and thoroughly practical character; but it may not be out of place to present here a summary, expressing in pounds, shillings and pence the value or cost of the varied schemes of benevolence which she originated and maintained, or was made the channel of supporting, during the period embraced in this narrative. Between July 14th, 1862, and the 29th of September, 1864, the total amount received by Mrs. Potter, including estimated value of clothing

and £104 4s. 1d. collected by the Rev. C. W. Woodhouse for the Mothers' Kitchen in St. Peter's Parish during the winter of 1863-4, was £3,868 18s. 6d., and the disbursements were as follows:—

|  | £           | s. | d.  |
|--|-------------|----|-----|
| Servants' Society .....                  | 795         | 18 | 8   |
| Orphanage or Home Class .....            | 371         | 6  | 3   |
| Industrial School .....                  | 207         | 10 | 0   |
| St. Peter's do. ....                     | 104         | 0  | 0   |
| Sick Kitchen—Lady Kay-Shuttleworth ..... | 189         | 18 | 6   |
| Mothers' Kitchen .....                   | 1,314       | 19 | 11½ |
| Emigration .....                         | 4           | 8  | 9   |
| Christmas Dinners .....                  | 20          | 9  | 0   |
| Pawn Money.....                          | 20          | 10 | 6½  |
| Loss on Sales of Food .....              | 15          | 15 | 11½ |
| Miscellaneous .....                      | 19          | 2  | 0   |
| Clothing.....                            | 385         | 3  | 10  |
| Clothing per Relief Committee .....      | 400         | 0  | 0   |
| Balance in hand .....                    | 19          | 15 | 0   |
|  | £3,868 18 6 |    |     |

In addition to this Mrs. Potter provided the means of maintaining six mothers' kitchens during the winter of 1864-5, as explained at page 111, at a cost of £21 per week. And this is perhaps the most fitting time to acknowledge the valuable services rendered, not so much to Mrs. Potter, as to the distressed for whom she accomplished so much, by Mr. J. B. Carr, of the Old Bank, Blackburn, who acted throughout as treasurer of Mrs. Potter's various funds.

## CHAPTER IX.

*The arrangement between the Guardians and Relief Committee—The Relief Committee's expenditure—Formation of a single relief Board—Decrease of the distress—Necessity of finding employment for the operatives—Out-door work—Formation of a labour committee—Scale of allowance—Progress of the out-door labour movement—Mr. Rawlinson's visit to Blackburn—The Corporation and public works—Memorial to Sir George Grey—Public Works Act, 1863—Estimate of first loan—Operations and advantages of the Public Works Act—Estimate of second loan—Report of the Borough Surveyor on the works—Balance Sheet of the Relief Committee.*

The arrangement between the Guardians and the Relief Committee, referred to at page 90, took effect on the first of January, 1863; and the numbers who, after this division of the necessitous into two bodies, one receiving aid from the Guardians and the other from the Relief Committee, were found in need of relief, were 25,898, being 12,911 relieved by the Guardians and 12,987 by the Relief Committee. This was a considerable reduction from the aggregate of 45,000 persons who were on the relief lists of the two bodies prior to the close of 1862, and, after deducting 8,000 as the probable number for whom the increase of employment in January, 1863, found the means of subsistence, shews that nearly 12,000 persons had been in receipt of relief from both sources. For some months after the commencement of 1863, there was little improvement (as the employment returns shew) in the trade of the town and the condition of the operatives, and the expenditure of the Relief Committee continued, till the month of May, to average £1,000 per week. As the Relief Committee, under the arrangement with the Guardians, were "to relieve all cases which had arisen and might arise and which were fairly attributable to the Cotton famine" subsequent to the 16th of August, 1862, the returns of their relief expenditure, from January, 1863, till May, 1864, when they suspended operations, will most clearly exhibit the ebbing and flowing of the distress. I give below

the returns for the last week of each month during that interval; and with respect to the decrease exhibited in the month of April and the still greater decrease in the month of May, which may seem to contradict what I have said above, that the expenditure of the Relief Committee continued till that time to average £1,000 per week, I may explain that the Relief Committee had then commenced a heavy expenditure on labour account, amounting in the month of May to about £200 per week, of which I take no account in this return. It will also be observed that I do not include in the return the grants made by the Relief Committee in support of the sewing and educational classes, but have limited the return to the general relief given in money and kind:—

| 1863.<br>Week ending | Flour.<br>lbs. | Meal.<br>lbs. | Money value<br>of Flour<br>and Meal. |       | Relief in<br>Money. |       | Total<br>Amount of<br>Relief. |       |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|
|                      |                |               | £                                    | s. d. | £                   | s. d. | £                             | s. d. |
| Jan. 26th .....      | 37,200         | 19,920        | 357                                  | 0 0   | 400                 | 1 9   | 757                           | 1 9   |
| Feb. 23rd .....      | 38,894         | 16,894        | 348                                  | 1 9   | 383                 | 3 3   | 731                           | 5 0   |
| March 30th .....     | 35,040         | 14,640        | 310                                  | 1 0   | 368                 | 0 6   | 678                           | 1 6   |
| April 27th .....     | 30,240         | 11,280        | 259                                  | 1 0   | 294                 | 18 6  | 553                           | 19 6  |
| May 25th .....       | 22,080         | 7,440         | 184                                  | 1 0   | 202                 | 19 0  | 387                           | 0 0   |
| June 29th .....      | 10,320         | 3,360         | 85                                   | 1 0   | 92                  | 13 0  | 177                           | 14 0  |
| July 27th .....      | 6,720          | 1,920         | 54                                   | 0 0   | 52                  | 19 6  | 106                           | 19 6  |
| August 31st .....    | 5,364          | 1,584         | 43                                   | 8 3   | 69                  | 15 5  | 113                           | 3 8   |
| September 28th ..... | 4,640          | 1,030         | 35                                   | 8 9   | 36                  | 5 6   | 71                            | 14 3  |
| October 26th .....   | 4,127          | 933           | 31                                   | 12 6  | 26                  | 12 0  | 58                            | 4 6   |
| November 30th .....  | 2,610          | 660           | 20                                   | 8 9   | 18                  | 12 7  | 39                            | 1 4   |
| December 28th .....  | 2,160          | 512           | 16                                   | 14 0  | 14                  | 9 11  | 31                            | 3 11  |
| 1864.                |                |               |                                      |       |                     |       |                               |       |
| Jan. 25th .....      | 4,752          | 1,263         | 37                                   | 11 10 | 35                  | 11 0  | 73                            | 2 10  |
| Feb. 28th .....      | 7,235          | 1,680         | 55                                   | 14 4  | 63                  | 14 9  | 119                           | 9 1   |
| March 28th .....     | 6,290          | 1,260         | 40                                   | 18 9  | 59                  | 8 1   | 100                           | 6 10  |
| April 25th .....     | 3,408          | 672           | 25                                   | 8 9   | 34                  | 5 11  | 59                            | 14 8  |
| May 28th .....       | 1,020          | 60            | 6                                    | 15 0  | 5                   | 4 7   | 11                            | 19 7  |

In addition to the above a considerable quantity of American bacon (part of the cargo of the "George Griswold") was distributed weekly during the months of March and April. In the week ending 22nd March, the quantity distributed was upwards of 2,800lbs; and during two or three subsequent weeks the quantity distributed was between 700 and 800lbs.

The great improvement which had taken place by the month of June, 1863, induced the Relief Committee to dispense with the ward committees, by which the applications for relief had theretofore been heard and determined, and to form one central relief board, consisting of eighteen members, three being selected from each of the ward committees, under the chairmanship of Mr. Richard Beaty. Up to

this time "the whole labour of visiting the homes of the workpeople and reporting upon their cases, as well as an active participation in the distribution of relief, was the work of upwards of 100 voluntary visitors;"\* but on the formation of the Central Relief Board it was arranged that the cases they might be called upon to determine should be previously investigated by paid visitors.

It will be observed that from the month of June, 1863, till the end of the year, there was a great and rapid decrease in the relief distribution; and that in January and February, 1864, there was suddenly a great increase, corresponding with the returns of the state of employment. This sudden relapse at the beginning of 1864 induced the Relief Committee, on the 11th of January, to pass a resolution as follows:—"That in the present state of trade the resolution of June 8th, 1863, by which weavers, warpers and winders were debarred from receiving relief be in the meantime suspended." But it was not long before hope again returned to cheer the gloom. In March, 1864, the Relief Committee resolved to give notice to the most of their clerks and assistants that their services would not be required after the end of the month; and by that time they were enabled to close the sewing class of needlewomen which had been formed, as previously explained, on the closing of the denominational sewing classes. On the 18th of April the Committee resolved "to restrict as far as possible the weekly expenditure in supplementing the wages of the members of a family at work;" and on the 2nd of May they gave instructions to the Treasurer to embrace in the balance sheet he was preparing the receipts and expenditure up to the end of the month, as they had the prospect of then bringing their labours to a close. On the 23rd of May, they resolved "That the distribution of relief cease after Monday, the 30th inst.," and at that date the labours of the Relief Committee were brought to a close for the time, the distribution of relief having continued for 127 weeks.

The large amount of relief given in kind imposed on the Sub-

\* Report of the Blackburn Relief Committee.—The report adds:—"Not only was this work done, but it was admirably done, with an untiring zeal and ever watchful discrimination, honorable alike to them (the visitors) and the cause in which they were engaged. While giving credit to the relieving officers, that their numerous cases have received prompt attention, and a fair and impartial investigation, it was mainly owing to the regular house to house examinations made by the visitors that your Committee can now look back and say that during this trying and distressing crisis there has not been one single case of death from starvation in Blackburn."



Committee entrusted with this department very onerous duties. The Committee consisted of

Mr. R. H. Hutchinson, Chairman,  
 „ R. Shackleton,  
 „ W. Dickson,

Mr. John Procter,  
 „ C. Tiplady,  
 „ R. Edmundson.

It is creditable to the whole Committee, that the quality of the bread, flour and meal supplied was such as to leave the most fastidious no ground of complaint. But thanks are especially due to Mr. Shackleton, “who supplied the whole of the oatmeal at the wholesale price without charging the usual trade commission,” and who also gave the benefit of his experience in other respects for the assistance of the Committee.

I must now speak of the employment of the operatives on Public Works. It was apparent from the first to everyone engaged in or connected with the relief of the distress, that something must be done to preserve the people from the demoralization incident to a condition of enforced idleness. The perception of this in Blackburn led to the establishment of sewing classes and educational and industrial schools, and to those efforts to which I have alluded, by both the Guardians and the Relief Committee, to find out-door work for the able-bodied. The Central Relief Committee commenced operations under a deep conviction that the cotton operatives must be employed as well as fed; and the first report of the Central Executive Committee (dated September 30th, 1862) states that they have been “most anxious that the Local Relief Committees should develop the organisation of forms of labour for the able-bodied; the establishment of day schools for youths of above 13 and of classes for the employment of women and girls in sewing and other suitable work; the sending of children of families relieved to school and the payment of schoolpence at the rate of 2d. per week. In their circular to Local Committees, they have set forth those forms of employment for persons in receipt of relief most extensively sanctioned by experience. Such employment is important, not only for the preservation of public health and order, but for the right moral guidance of all whose usual occupation is at an end.” In the circular referred to, dated 29th September, the language of the Executive Committee is as follows:—“For the permanence of public order, it is suggested that suitable work should be provided for all in receipt of relief. The health and strength of the population also will be sustained, in proportion as it is kept by proper work from the temptations incident to unwon ed leisure.” And again in a “minute” of the 20th April, 1863, specially devoted to the subject of the “employment of

the able-bodied cotton operatives,” after a statement of the number out of work and a review of the prospects of the opening year, they say:—

“The difficulties in the way of the removal of a large part of the cotton workmen is so great, and the motives to retain them would operate so powerfully, that, if the facilities for the drainage and improvement of estates and for public works—such as water supply, the sanitary improvement of towns, the provision of public parks and walks, the improvement and decoration by planting of the chief approaches to towns—were, during this period of unproductive condition of capital, rendered capable of execution by money provided by loans, as previously described, such works would probably be executed, and the population be retained in health and contentment.”

Here is an evident foreshadowing of the Public Works Act, which a few months after passed the Legislature, and has done and is doing so much good in the Cotton Districts.

Our Local Relief Committee did not wait for the promptings of the Central Executive Committee before setting about so obviously expedient, if not absolutely necessary, a work as finding labour, or occupation of some kind, for the unemployed. We have already seen that sewing classes for women and girls were in full operation by the month of August, and early in September they were recognised by our Local Committee as important auxiliaries in the work of relief. The educational classes, and then the industrial schools, for youths and men, were a short time after brought similarly under the control of the Relief Committee, and obtained a weekly grant like the sewing classes. But something more than mere occupation, such as the school room afforded, was required for a large proportion of the able-bodied men who had been brought to depend for subsistence on either the poor rates or the relief funds—especially as the Autumn of 1862 brought with it no indication of either a speedy termination of the American war, or the restoration, by any other means, of the prosperity of Lancashire. The Guardians made unsuccessful efforts, which I have already detailed, to keep at out-door work the able-bodied who were in receipt of relief from the poor rates; and the Relief Committee made a small effort, which was scarcely more successful, to employ a few of those whom they relieved in the laying out of the Infirmary Grounds. But nothing further in this direction was attempted till the spring of 1863, when the Central Relief Committee made the finding of out-door work for the able-bodied male operatives almost a *sine qua non* on the part of the Local Committees applying for grants. The Guardians had also been urged to resume the so-called “labour test,” which they had abandoned; and both they and the Relief Committee having come



to an understanding at the close of 1862, by which, from and after the first week in 1863, no person should be relieved from both sources, it was very natural that they should now conjointly attempt the solution of a problem in which singly they had both failed. Accordingly, at the suggestion of the Relief Committee, a deputation from each of the two bodies met (Mr. H. B. Farnall being present), and the result of their deliberations was the appointment of a Labour Committee, composed of an equal number of Guardians and members of the Relief Committee, and in a few weeks a scheme of employment was arranged and put in operation.

Under this scheme the able-bodied recipients of relief were offered employment at the rate of 3d. per hour, their weekly earnings from this source being at the same time restricted to the following scale:—

|                                   | s. | d. |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|
| Single able-bodied men each ..... | 4  | 6  |
| Two of a family.....              | 7  | 0  |
| Three of a family.....            | 9  | 0  |
| Four of a family .....            | 10 | 0  |
| Five of a family.....             | 11 | 0  |
| Six of a family .....             | 12 | 0  |

with 2s. per week added for every additional member of the family until the payment reached 16s. per week. According to this arrangement a single man worked out of doors two days, from 6 a.m. till 6 p.m., each week, while during three of the remaining days he attended school from 9 till 12 and from 2 till 4 each day, and for this labour and school attendance he received in all 4s. 6d. A man with a wife or one dependent worked three days and attended school two; with two dependents he worked four days, attending school one; with three dependents he worked five days, and with six and upwards the whole week. The earnings of the men were paid to them, two-thirds in money and one-third in provisions—flour, meal, bacon or beef; and the cost of the relief thus afforded as wages for labour, was borne in the proportion of two-thirds by the Relief Committee and one-third by the Guardians.

The above scale could not at first be adhered to in its entirety, in consequence of the large numbers, far exceeding what the Labour Committee could find employment for, who volunteered, and even pressed to be employed on the works undertaken by the Committee. It was therefore temporarily arranged that each gang of men should work one-half of the day and attend school the other, and this arrangement, as the Relief Committee state in their report, "served the

double purpose of getting a larger number of men upon the works at once, and thus qualifying them more quickly for future work of the same kind, and enabling the Committee to respond to the earnestly expressed desire of the men to be supplied with work."

The arrangements thus made for setting the able-bodied unemployed to work proved in a short time abundantly successful; and too much praise cannot be given to James Henderson, Esq., Her Majesty's sub-Inspector of Factories for this district, for the tact and assiduity he displayed in organising and superintending this department of the Relief Committee's operations. The satisfactory progress of the out-door labour scheme will be apparent from the following table, shewing the number of men thus employed weekly from the commencement till the beginning of August, when the Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, 1863, came into operation:—

| 1863.          |     | 1863.         |     |
|----------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| April 22 ..... | 66  | June 17 ..... | 527 |
| " 29 .....     | 202 | " 24 .....    | 511 |
| May 6 .....    | 317 | July 1 .....  | 533 |
| " 13 .....     | 501 | " 8 .....     | 455 |
| " 20 .....     | 626 | " 15 .....    | 494 |
| " 27 .....     | 698 | " 22 .....    | 486 |
| June 3 .....   | 572 | " 29 .....    | 482 |
| " 10 .....     | 564 | Aug. 5 .....  | 550 |

But notwithstanding the success, great when compared with the result of former efforts, which attended the operations of the joint Labour Committee, the Relief Committee in their report confess:—

"Although their efforts in this respect were most cordially seconded by the Lord of the Manor, Joseph Feilden, Esq., and other private individuals, who, in addition to employing many of the operatives, furnished the Committee with a large amount of work; yet they have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that the whole scheme would have proved abortive but for the aid afforded to them by the passing of the Public Works Act, and by the cordial acceptance of its provisions by the Corporation of Blackburn."

And they add:—

"The advantages offered by this measure in the employment of the Cotton Operatives, were recognized at an early stage of its progress through Parliament by the Relief Committee, and by the Corporation of this Town, and, by a mutual arrangement sanctioned by Mr. Rawlinson, several months before it became law the Labour Committee were preparing to work under its provisions. The result was, that when the act received the royal assent, several hundreds of men were immediately set to work in Blackburn, in forming, paving and draining streets. By this judicious anticipation of the action of the Legislature, much valuable time was saved, a great public improvement effected, and a healthy vigorous feeling was infused among the distressed Operatives which never afterwards flagged, and which enabled

your Committee to conduct their operations steadily and comfortably, until the necessity for a continuation of their labours ceased."

The Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, 1863, received the royal assent on the 21st of July; and this is perhaps the most suitable place for recording the share which the Corporation had, in urging upon Government the policy of which that measure was the embodiment. The subject of the distress, and the means of employing the able-bodied male operatives, had frequently occupied the attention of committees of the Council, especially the Highway and Drainage and General Purposes Committees, which have under their charge the paving and sewerage of the borough and the management of the Corporation Park. But the lack of funds, and the exhaustion of the borrowing powers of the Corporation, were insuperable obstacles to anything being undertaken which could be regarded as even an appreciable measure of relief.

Meanwhile the Government were looking around and considering what should be done, and in April they appointed Mr. Rawlinson, the eminent engineer, to visit the distressed districts, and report as to the public works which might be undertaken and the amount of labour available for their execution. He set out on his mission on the 1st of May, and on the day following visited Blackburn. He arrived while a meeting of the General Purposes Committee was sitting, and being introduced to the meeting explained at length the object of his visit and the views of the Government with regard to the employment of the able-bodied cotton operatives on public works. After the meeting he visited, in company with Mr. Frederick Smith, the Borough Surveyor, the different gangs of factory operatives employed in out-door labour, in Weir Street, Park-place, Preston New-road, Duke's Brow, Revidge, &c., the men numbering about 360. He also visited several of the educational and industrial Schools, and expressed himself highly pleased with the success of the out-door labour experiment, so far as it had been tried, and much gratified with the contented and cheerful disposition of the men at work. On Wednesday following, the 6th of May, Mr. Rawlinson revisited the town in company with Mr. H. B. Farnall, and at an interview with the Highway and Drainage and General Purposes Committees, entered into a full explanation of the duties required from the Corporation in the present emergency, and his views as to what should be done. He reported as the result of his inquiries that work could be found here for 1,500 operatives, at a cost of £50,000, and suggested that the money should

be borrowed from Government for that purpose. He also suggested the adoption of the Local Government Act, which he said would greatly assist the Corporation in the matter. The subject was left over for consideration at the Council meeting on the following day, when both he and Mr. Farnall attended and entered into further explanations, but were unable to convince the Council of the advantages to be derived from the adoption of the Local Government Act in the Borough.

The result of Mr. Rawlinson's visit to Blackburn was embodied by him in a report addressed to Mr. Villiers, the President of the Poor-Law Board, and is to the following purport:—

"The Corporation of Blackburn exercise powers under a local act, 10 and 11 Vic. cap. 255, amended by 17 and 18 Vic. cap.—Population, 1861, 63,125; annual rateable value, £145,000. The Corporation have borrowed and expended on improvement account £70,000; repaid, £8,200; owing, £61,800. Borrowed and expended on main sewerage account, £46,000. Total debt, £107,800. Under the powers of the Local Government Act the Corporation might borrow

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| £145,000 X 2=.....        | £290,000 |
| Deduct existing debt..... | 107,800  |

Sum which might be borrowed.....£182,200

There is in Blackburn a public park of about 50 acres in extent. A portion of the borough has been sewered. Many streets have been formed and paved, but there is a considerable length of main sewerage remaining to be completed, and many streets require to be formed and paved. Estimate:—Streets neither sewered nor paved, 3,310 lineal yards; streets sewered, but not formed and paved, 3,985 lineal yards; total lineal yards, 7,295, or four miles and 355 yards. To sewer, form, pave, and complete these streets will cost about £20,000. Some 12 miles of streets are only partially completed, and about 12 miles of main sewers are required in addition to the work done. A sum of £50,000 may be expended on these streets and sewers, or £70,000 in the whole may be profitably expended in Blackburn on public and private account."

Mr. H. B. Farnall also addressed a report to Mr. Villiers, in which he makes the following reference to Blackburn:—

"The population of this borough is 63,125, and its net rateable value is £144,418. During the year ended Lady-day, 1863, the ratepayers paid 9s. 11d. in the pound on the net rateable value, which payment included every description of rate for which their property was liable. There are 27,840 operatives here, of whom 13,393 are working full time, 1,749 are working four or five days, and 12,698 are wholly out of work. The estimated loss of wages is £10,700 per week. It is estimated that there are now 3,000 unemployed able men here, or in the immediate neighbourhood."

After Mr. Rawlinson's visit the Council resolved that something should be done. At a joint meeting of the General Purposes and Highway and Drainage Committees held on the 11th of May, 1863,

a Memorial to the Home Secretary was prepared, and adopted a few days after by the Council, setting forth the population and rateable value of the Borough; the amount borrowed and expended under the Blackburn Improvement Act, 1854; giving a summary of the number and length of the streets which had been already sewered and paved and the number and length of the streets which were still unserved and unpaved, and praying "That Her Majesty's Government will take the necessary steps, by legislative enactment or otherwise, to enable Government to lend to the Corporation of Blackburn, and the Corporation to borrow at a low rate of interest, a sum of money of not less than £70,000, to be advanced by such instalments as may be required on security of the Improvement Rate of the Borough, to enable the Corporation at as early a period as possible to proceed with the various public works above mentioned, such principal sum so advanced to be repaid with interest by annual instalments extending over a period of 30 years." The Right Hon. Sir George Grey was communicated with and appointed a day for a deputation, consisting of the Mayor (J. B. S. Sturdy Esq.), Ald. Hutchinson, Ald. Baynes, and Mr. Brierley, the Borough Engineer (as representing the corporation), and Mr. John Livesey and Mr. James Henderson, (as representing the Relief Committee), to present the Memorial and support its prayer; and at the suggestion of the Mayor, Sir George Grey arranged for the presence at the interview of Mr. Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Villiers, President of the Poor Law Board. The memorial was presented to Sir George Grey at the Home office on Saturday, the 16th of May, the deputation being introduced by Mr. Pilkington, M. P. for the Borough; and a more lengthened conference with Mr. Villiers took place at the Poor Law Board on the Monday following, when the deputation further and very strongly urged the prayer of the Corporation memorial. Sir George Grey and his colleagues on the Saturday, and Mr. Villiers on the Monday, promised to give the subject their early attention and careful consideration, and intimated pretty plainly that something would be done by Government for accomplishing the object in view. The Blackburn Memorial was the first of the kind presented to Government, but it was followed by others from most of the towns in the distressed districts, and no doubt had its influence in urging forward the preparation of the Public Works Act, which became law only two months after.

The Public Works Act, as I have said, received the royal assent on the 21st of July, and at the meeting of the Blackburn Town

Council, held on the 6th day of August following, it was resolved to make an application to the Poor Law Board for power to borrow, under the provisions of the new Act, the sum of £78,300. The following is a summary of the estimates submitted to and approved of at that meeting:—

|   | £      | s. | d. |
|---|--------|----|----|
| No. 1—for sewerage and other works connected therewith...   | 13,750 | 12 | 11 |
| No. 2—for the flagging and paving of streets and highways.  | 59,511 | 13 | 5  |
| No. 3—for pitching the bed of the river Blakewater, and improving Whalley Banks, Darwen Street, and Eanam Bridges ..... | 5,038  | 0  | 0  |

£78,300 6 4

Which sum would have to be repaid as follows:—

|   |        |    |   |
|---|--------|----|---|
| By the sewerage rates.....  | 9,867  | 13 | 0 |
| By the improvement rates for repairs and paving of declared public highways .....                               | 8,721  | 8  | 9 |
| By the improvement rates—the 1s. per yard between the price of setts and pebbles for paving all private streets | 7,278  | 10 | 0 |
| By private property owners for private and surface drainage, flagging, forming, and paving of streets.....      | 52,432 | 19 | 7 |

£78,300 6 4

The rateable value of the borough at that date was £145,000, so that the three estimates amounted to about one-half of the town's borrowing powers (limited to the rateable value) under the Act. The works comprised in estimate No. 1 were 16,389 yards, or about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles of sewerage; in estimate No. 2 there were 20,791 yards, or about 12 miles of streets and roads to be flagged and paved; and in estimate No. 3 there were pitching the bed of the Blakewater for about 2 miles in length, from Derikins Bridge at Brookhouse, to the boundary of the Borough at Wensley Fold; £500 for widening, lowering and otherwise improving the Darwen Street bridge, over the Blakewater; £300 for the widening and improving of the Whalley Banks Bridge; also £400 for widening and otherwise improving the bridge at Eanam, over the canal.

The decision of Parliament having been anticipated in the preparation of these plans and estimates, and even to some extent by the actual commencement of some of the contemplated works, the corporation did not wait for the necessary formalities connected with the obtaining of a loan being gone through, before setting about with vigour the improvements which had thus been determined upon. The training which a large number of the cotton operatives had received under the superintendence of the Relief Committee, had made them tolerable

spademen, and they were found by the Corporation officials to be both industrious and tractable in an occupation comparatively new to them. Mr. Frederick Smith, the Borough Surveyor, most assiduously seconded the efforts of the Relief Committee to find employment for the factory workmen, and carried out the instructions of the Corporation with respect to these new works in the very spirit of the Public Works Act—which was to provide out-door employment for factory workers. So far as Blackburn was concerned it was resolved that the Act should have a fair trial, and I believe the result has been most satisfactory to both our local officials and those at head quarters, and that Blackburn stands A. 1 among the towns and districts which have availed themselves of the Act, both as to the extent to which money has been borrowed and the mode and promptitude with which it has been applied.

I may be here permitted to note, what experience has only confirmed, that great as the advantages of the Act were in many points of view, but chiefly as affording to municipal and other public bodies the opportunity of obtaining cheap money, on very favourable terms of repayment, for the purpose of carrying out public improvements, I never yet could see that as a measure of relief for the unemployed factory workers, and the payers of poor rates in the distressed districts, it would effect the good that was anticipated from it; and had the distress in Blackburn been as great during the winter of 1863-4 as it was during the previous winter, I feel convinced that this would have been apparent to the most sceptical. In August, 1863, immediately after the act was passed and the Corporation had resolved to apply for their first loan, I expressed my views as follows:—

“The sum of £78,000 is a large amount of money to be spent in Blackburn; and were the whole sum to be expended in wages it would not only be an appreciable but a very great relief to the operatives and the small tradesmen. But it will be seen that close upon £60,000 is to be spent in the flagging and paving of streets and highways, and of that expenditure three-fourths goes in material, leaving only £15,000 for wages. Of the £13,700 proposed to be expended in sewerage works, one-half, or at least one-third will go in material, leaving about £9,000 to be expended in wages. This makes the total amount to be expended in wages in these two principal departments £24,000. How much of this can be regarded as wages for cotton operatives? The superintendence of the works, and the skilled labour which must necessarily be employed, will absorb a considerable amount, probably one-third, but certainly one-fourth, leaving at the most £18,000 to be spent in wages to cotton workers. Now, the present estimated loss of wages in Blackburn is £8,200 per week. One half of this must be regarded as lost by women and children, to whom the labour provided by the Public Works Act cannot bring any relief. And suppose, therefore, we take £4,100 as the weekly loss which the Public Works Act is intended to mitigate, if it cannot make up, and that the wage money

be expended so as to make up only half of this loss, or at the rate of £2000 per week, the £18,000 will provide for only nine weeks. We do not of course believe that it will be possible for the Corporation to raise their weekly expenditure to an amount that will yield £2000 per week in wages to the cotton operatives employed on public works; they may not be able to exceed a fourth of that amount; but the difference between £500 and £2000 per week will serve to show how far the Public Works Act falls short of adequately making up the loss in wages sustained even by those who are fit to be employed on such works as it provides.”\*

In little more than two months after this first loan was applied for, namely, at a special meeting of the council, held on 13th October, it was resolved to apply for a further loan of £66,744 making a total of £145,044, or the full amount of the rateable value of the property within the Borough. The estimates prepared with a view to this second loan were as follows:—

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| No. 4—For sewerage and other works connected therewith .....          | £14,470 |
| „ 5—For the flagging and paving of streets and highways...            | 45,004  |
| „ 6—For new covered Market (area 3900 superficial square yards) ..... | 8,775   |
| „ 7—For new Public Baths .....  | 5,000   |
| „ 8—For improvements in the Corporation Park .....                    | 1,350   |
| „ 9—For Abattoir.....   | 3,902   |
| Total.....  | £78,501 |

or about £12,000 in excess of the sum applied for. The works comprised in estimate No. 4 were 23,634 yards, or about  $13\frac{1}{2}$  miles of sewerage; in estimate No. 5 they were 16,829 yards, or about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles of streets to be flagged and paved; the improvements in the Park (estimate No. 8) included the completion of the two side entrances to the Park by the erection of lodge houses and the fitting up of gates; estimate No. 9 contemplated the erection of 12 slaughter-houses with the necessary conveniences.

\* *Blackburn Patriot*, August 8th, 1863.—The figures given at page 143 will shew that this anticipatory calculation was under the truth.

While preparing these pages for the press, I find in the speech of the Earl of Derby at the opening of the session of 1865, the following remarks:—“Her Majesty’s Speech refers to the act for the encouragement of public works. I am not about to deny that many useful results have proceeded from that act, that many works were undertaken, and much employment afforded under it; but I regret to say that the persons deriving the greatest advantage from the application of the act did not belong to the class it was intended to benefit. The advantage derived by the cotton operatives was infinitesimally small, though, no doubt, they gained an advantage from the general benefit given to trade. With every desire to carry on works which would be of benefit to the community, I think the Poor-law Board were hasty in accepting proposals—at least I am acquainted with some singular instances of the kind—for works which required a large amount of skilled labour and an infinitesimally small portion of that unskilled labour which it was the principal object to employ.” This is the testimony of one, who, as chairman of the Central Executive Committee, has had ample opportunities of observing the operation of the act and knowing its effect as a measure of relief.

As I have already stated, the works were commenced in anticipation of the Act being passed, and several months prior to the first loan being obtained. From a report on the expenditure under the Act for the year ending June 30th, 1864, prepared by the Borough Surveyor pursuant to the order of the Council, I find that so early as July, 1863, the corporation were employing as many as 120 men on works included in the estimates, which were only confirmed, as I have said, on the 6th of August and transmitted to the Poor Law Board, along with their first application for a loan. A tabular statement in this report shews the number of men daily employed on these works, during the twelve months embraced in the report, to be as follows:—

| MONTH.          | Paid by the Corporation | Paid by the Relief Committee and Overlookers' Relief Committee. | Contractors. | TOTAL. |
|-----------------|-------------------------|---|--------------|--------|
| 1863.           |                         |   |              |        |
| July .....      | 120                     |   | 41           | 161    |
| August .....    | 129                     |   | 49           | 178    |
| September ..... | 142                     |   | 60           | 202    |
| October .....   | 189                     | 417   | 78           | 684    |
| November .....  | 260                     | 442   | 76           | 778    |
| December .....  | 295                     | 487   | 60           | 842    |
| 1864.           |                         |   |              |        |
| January .....   | 350                     | 496   | 68           | 914    |
| February .....  | 470                     | 220   | 57           | 747    |
| March .....     | 457                     | 359   | 15           | 831    |
| April .....     | 506                     | 137   | 24           | 667    |
| May .....       | 453                     | 50  | 34           | 537    |
| June .....      | 388                     |   | 44           | 432    |

These figures do not include the men employed by the Relief Committee in the Corporation Park. From the Relief Committee's report we learn that there were several hundreds so employed, but for this work "no charge has been made, the men being employed at it solely with the view of affording the Committee an opportunity of furnishing each man with a labour test. The value of the improvements effected has been estimated by the Borough Surveyor at £1000. In a similar manner," the report continues, "gangs of men were from time to time employed in the Corporation Stone Yards, on the grounds of the Infirmary, and also upon those surrounding the New Workhouse. The value of the public work done gratuitously at these places, may be safely estimated as amounting to at least another £1000."

Having given the number of men employed, it may be interesting to add the amount of the work executed, and the cost, during the

period embraced in the Surveyor's report. The following is a summary:—

|   | £       | s. | d. |
|---|---------|----|----|
| Sewerage Works and Drainage (including 17,568 yards, or about 10 miles of sewers) ..... | 15,773  | 1  | 4  |
| Highways and Private Improvements .....   | 16,946  | 2  | 9  |
| Improvements in the Park .....  | 490     | 0  | 0  |
|   | £33,209 | 4  | 1  |

A note appended states the expenditure on account of improvements in the Park to have been "principally in providing material and skilled labour to superintend and direct the labour given by the Relief Committee," and therefore the sum of £490 must be regarded as the cost to the Corporation of improvements which may be valued at about £1,500. Another portion of the Surveyor's report has an important bearing on the question I have already referred to, the amount of relief which the Public Works Act was capable of affording to the ratepayers in the distressed districts by providing employment and wages to the Cotton Operatives, and so keeping them from being claimants on the poor rates:—

|  | £      | s. | d. |
|--|--------|----|----|
| Amount paid by the Corporation in Wages to Day Labourers in all Departments .....          | 11,298 | 8  | 11 |
| Amount of Work executed by the Relief Committee, as per agreement .....                    | 2,026  | 4  | 10 |
| Amount paid to the Overlookers' Relief Committee for Work executed, as per agreement ..... | 607    | 10 | 10 |
| Money paid to Contractors for Labour executed, as near as can be ascertained ....          | 1,800  | 0  | 0  |

This is the actual expenditure in wages during twelve months, or, if we deduct the two months by which the passing of the act was anticipated in Blackburn, during ten months, and if we assume that two-thirds of the money was paid in wages to factory operatives who must otherwise have been dependent on the Guardians or Relief Committee for the means of subsistence, the relief afforded by the Public Works Act amounted to an average during that period of £250 per week. This is a large amount, which is by no means to be despised, but small in comparison with the weekly loss in wages during the time the distress was most severe, or with the weekly expenditure through the several channels by which the contributions of the benevolent were distributed and the suffering thousands saved from starvation during the winter of 1862-3.

From the Surveyor's report I take one additional extract:—

Five miles and 127 yards of pipe sewers have been excavated by the Relief Committee at the prices agreed upon.

Two miles and 1054 yards of the pipe sewers have been excavated by the Overlookers' Relief Committee at the prices agreed upon.

One mile and 5 yards of the pipe sewers have been laid and completed by Contractors.

One mile and 765 yards of the Pipe Sewers have been executed by day labourers.

The sewerage works executed by the day have been done cheaper by 5 per cent. than those executed by contract.

The last sentence, considering that a large proportion of the day-labourers were cotton workers, is at once significant and satisfactory.

The date of the Surveyor's report on the works executed under the provisions of the Public Works Act, 1863 (June 30th, 1864), corresponds pretty closely with the time when the Relief Committee suspended their operations, and this chapter, therefore, may be very fitly closed with the Relief Committee's balance sheet, published with their report in October, 1864. The balance sheet is as follows:—

ABSTRACT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FROM DECEMBER, 1861, TO  
SEPTEMBER 10TH, 1864.

RECEIPTS.

To Subscriptions as per list, viz:—

|   | £     | s. | d. | £      | s. | d. |
|---|-------|----|----|--------|----|----|
| The Lord Mayor's Fund, exclusive of £2,030 remitted for Overlookers.....                                    | 2780  | 0  | 0  |        |    |    |
| Manchester Central Committee .....  | 4910  | 12 | 4  |        |    |    |
| Revenue from Soup.....  | 1277  | 0  | 8  |        |    |    |
| From all other sources, exclusive of large sums spent by other parties independent of Relief Committee..... | 14151 | 12 | 2½ |        |    |    |
| „ Poor Law Guardians on Labour Account.....   |       |    |    | 92337  | 5  | 2½ |
| „ Blackburn Corporation do. ....  |       |    |    | 1306   | 0  | 7  |
| „ Amount received from sale of Clothing not suitable for distribution.....                                  |       |    |    | 500    | 0  | 0  |
| „ Amount received for Sand, Labour and Sundries.....  |       |    |    | 140    | 13 | 3  |
| „ Amount received from sale of Plant by auction .....   |       |    |    | 207    | 12 | 2½ |
|   |       |    |    | 155    | 8  | 1  |
| Total.....  |       |    |    | £94646 | 19 | 4  |

PAYMENTS.

By General Relief in Cash and kind..... 35938 3 8

„ CLOTHING DEPARTMENT—

|                         |       |    |            |
|-------------------------|-------|----|------------|
| Relief in Clothing..... | 13024 | 19 | 6½         |
| Redeemed Pledges.....   | 2830  | 8  | 1          |
| Clogs .....             | 1274  | 4  | 1½         |
| Sewing Classes.....     | 926   | 14 | 0          |
| Tailors' Wages.....     | 255   | 14 | 3          |
| Cost of Management..... | 416   | 10 | 5          |
|                         |       |    | 18728 10 5 |

„ EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT—

|                                       |       |    |            |
|---------------------------------------|-------|----|------------|
| Sewing and Educational Classes.....   | 11273 | 4  | 7          |
| School Pence.....                     | 1227  | 5  | 6          |
| Management of Industrial Classes..... | 57    | 10 | 0          |
| Grants to Industrial Classes .....    | 1494  | 11 | 4          |
|                                       |       |    | 14052 11 5 |

„ LABOUR DEPARTMENT—

|  |       |    |            |
|--|-------|----|------------|
| Plant and Repairs.....                       | 619   | 0  | 0          |
| Labourers' Wages.....                        | 11608 | 16 | 2          |
| Gangers' Wages .....                         | 958   | 7  | 2          |
|  |       |    | 13186 3 4  |
| „ Coals.....                                 |       |    | 5010 6 0   |
| „ Infirmary and Medical Kitchen Account..... |       |    | 2202 15 1  |
| „ Soup .....                                 |       |    | 1698 11 8½ |
| „ Advertising, Printing and Stationery.....  |       |    | 430 11 9   |

„ INCIDENTAL EXPENSES—

|   |    |    |           |
|---|----|----|-----------|
| Gas and Water.....                            | 78 | 7  | 5         |
| Law Expenses .....                            | 18 | 5  | 3         |
| Auditing.....                                 | 26 | 5  | 0         |
| Sundries .....                                | 63 | 13 | 11½       |
|   |    |    | 186 11 7½ |
| „ Rents.....                                  |    |    | 56 12 0   |
| „ Office Furniture, School Fittings, &c. .... |    |    | 204 15 1  |
| „ Wages of Clerks and others .....            |    |    | 787 11 7  |

„ TRANSFERS TO OUT-DISTRICTS AND AT SUBSCRIBERS' REQUEST—

|   |     |   |          |
|---|-----|---|----------|
| John Baynes, Esq., for Oswaldtwistle and Knuzden.....         | 516 | 7 | 4        |
| Paid to Overlookers' Fund.....                                | 92  | 0 | 0        |
| Paid to Sizers' Fund.....                                     | 25  | 0 | 0        |
| Grants to Sewing Classes .....                                | 178 | 0 | 0        |
| Paid to "L. P." for Mothers' Kitchen and Clothing Funds ..... | 167 | 6 | 5        |
| Paid to the Rev. G. H. Ashe, for Witton.....                  | 7   | 2 | 0        |
| Paid to Mr. James France, for Livesey.....                    | 2   | 2 | 0        |
|   |     |   | 987 17 9 |

|  |      |    |             |
|--|------|----|-------------|
| „ Balance at Messrs. Cunliffes, Brooks & Co..... | 1143 | 4  | 2           |
| „ Do. Preston Banking Co.....                    | 32   | 13 | 9           |
|  |      |    | 1175 17 11  |
|  |      |    | £94646 19 4 |

ROBERT HOPWOOD HUTCHINSON } Joint Treasurers.  
JOHN PROCTER,

JOHN C. FIELDEN, Hon. Secretary.

Audited by us and found Correct,

IBBOTSON & LONSDALE,

Blackburn, September 12th, 1864,

Public Accountants.

## CHAPTER X.

*The Relief Committee resume operations—Resignation of Mr. J. C. Fielden as Hon. Sec.—Presentation to Mr. Fielden—New scale of Relief—The winter of 1864-5—The weekly and monthly expenditure of the Relief Committee—Termination of the Relief Committee's labours—The subscription list—Gifts in kind—The Labour Committee and the Guardians—Memorial of the Council on behalf of Mr. Henderson—Resolution of the Relief Committee in support of the memorial—The success of the memorial—The expenditure by the Guardians and how it was met—The poor rates—The weekly out-relief by the Guardians—List of Guardians.*

The Relief Committee, as we have seen, suspended operations at the beginning of June, 1864, and fondly hoped that their labours were at an end; but before they had completed and published their report and balance sheet, they were obliged to resume the distribution of relief. At a meeting on the 6th of June they ordered their plant to be sold, and voted the sum of £20 to be placed in the hands of Mr. Eaves, the relieving officer of the Blackburn district of the Union, "to be distributed among such special cases as may be recommended to him by the members of this Committee." Their next meeting was on the 20th of September, when a deputation of the Operative Spinners' Association attended, and urged them to resume the distribution of relief; but they were loath to consent, and adjourned the consideration of the subject for a week. At their meeting in the week following (on the 27th of September) the subject was discussed, and while some were in favour of a further postponement for another week, the majority decided that the necessary steps should be taken for arranging "a Relief Committee or Board to receive applications for relief from Cotton Operatives who have been in employment within the past three months but are now unemployed and who have not hitherto received parochial relief." On this resolution being passed the Relief Board was formed as follows:—

Mr. Richard Beaty, Chairman.  
 „ Robert Watson.  
 Revd. J. V. Meany.  
 Mr. Robert Smalley.  
 „ E. Duxbury.

Mr. J. Booth.  
 „ John Procter.  
 „ Richard Edmundson.  
 „ James Henderson.  
 „ Green.

Mr. Thomas Lewis.

Shortly after the suspension of the Relief Committee's operations in June, Mr. J. C. Fielden, the Hon. Sec., removed from Blackburn to Ribchester, which rendered it inconvenient if not impossible for him to resume the discharge of the duties which he had performed from the first appointment of a Relief Committee in November, 1861; and on the Committee coming to the resolution to resume active operations, he tendered his resignation. The Committee received his resignation at their meeting on the 10th of October, and passed the following resolution:—

"That this Committee accept with regret the resignation of Mr. J. C. Fielden as Hon. Sec. to the Blackburn Relief Committee. The Committee are aware the retirement is owing to Mr. Fielden's removal from Blackburn, and they beg to tender their warmest thanks for his services, which have been so earnestly and willingly rendered, during the sufferings arising from the Cotton Famine, and to express their high opinion of his zealous exertions in reference to the late distress, and desire this resolution to be communicated to him."

At the same meeting Mr. Henderson was requested, and he consented, to undertake the duties of Hon. Sec., which he continued to discharge till the final close of the Relief Committee's operations in May, 1865.

The Relief Committee and others, fully appreciating Mr. J. C. Fielden's services as Hon. Sec. during so lengthened a period, resolved to present him with a testimonial in acknowledgment; and a subscription having been entered into, which ultimately amounted to considerably more than £100, the presentation was made to him in the Mayor's parlour on Wednesday, the 26th of April, 1865. The testimonial took the form of a silver cup and a purse of sovereigns, and was presented by Mr. J. B. S. Sturdy as Chairman of the Relief Committee. The cup bore the following inscription:—

"Presented, together with a purse of gold, to Mr. J. C. Fielden, by the subscribers, as a mark of esteem and an acknowledgment of important services which he rendered to the unemployed operatives, as honorary secretary to the Blackburn Relief Committee during the cotton famine, in the years 1862-3-4. Blackburn, April 26th, 1865."

The Vicar, Mr. Alderman Baynes, Mr. Alderman Hutchinson, Mr. Councillor Livesey, the Rev. C. W. Woodhouse, the Rev. J. V. Meany, the Rev. W. Chambers, Mr. Jas. Henderson, Mr. Councillor Shackleton, Mr. Richard Eccles, and Mr. Richard Edmundson each offered a few remarks with respect to the services rendered to the



Committee by Mr. Fielden, and one or two of them referred to the unsectarian character of the Committee, and to the impartial distribution of relief, without regard to the religious or political feelings of the applicants. Mr. Fielden thanked them for the kindness which had prompted the presentation, and for the valuable testimonial they had given him, and said he could entirely corroborate and sympathise with the remarks that had been made as to the totally unsectarian character of the Relief Committee, and as to the various political parties having met together in the utmost friendship. So far as he was concerned, his connection with the Relief Committee had certainly removed a great amount of prejudice from his mind, and made him think decidedly better of those who might be said to be his political opponents.

The first distribution of relief, in pursuance of the determination to resume active operations, was made in the week ending 8th October, and according to a scale of relief, as follows:—

|                       | s. | d. |                                     |
|-----------------------|----|----|-------------------------------------|
| Single Women.....     | 2  | 6  | per week.                           |
| " Men.....            | 3  | 0  | " .....to work two days.            |
| Two of a family ..... | 4  | 6  | " ..... husband to work three days. |
| Three " .....         | 6  | 0  | " " " four "                        |
| Four " .....          | 8  | 0  | " " " five "                        |
| Five " .....          | 10 | 0  | " " " all week.                     |
| Six " .....           | 11 | 0  | " " " "                             |
| Eight " .....         | 13 | 0  | " " " "                             |
| Nine " .....          | 14 | 0  | " " " "                             |
| Ten " .....           | 15 | 0  | " " " "                             |

On the 10th of October the Committee agreed to extend relief to all unemployed cotton operatives, without regard to the length of time within which they had been at work in mill or factory, and without regard to their having been at any time in receipt of parochial relief, on condition that "an arrangement be made with the Guardians by which the previous division of the recipients can be maintained, and a proportionate portion of the cost of their maintenance while employed at work be borne by the Board." A Sub-Committee appointed to confer with the Guardians on the subject effected an arrangement, according to which all able-bodied cotton operatives were to be placed on the labour list, and one-third of the money expended in payment of the men employed by the Labour Committee was to be borne by the Guardians, and two-thirds by the Relief Committee. This was substantially to the same effect as the arrangement made with the Guardians when the Labour Committee originally commenced operations early in 1863.

As the winter of 1864 deepened on the town, the men employed

in out-door labour made application to have the scale of relief increased; but the Relief Committee did not consider it desirable to do so generally, and they responded to the request by ordering a distribution of coal, at the rate of 2 cwt. to each household, and an increase of 6d. per week in the allowance to single men and women. This distribution of coal, and increase in the allowance to single men and women, commenced about the middle of November, and the distribution of coal continued till the end of February, 1865. The following statement, in which I have included the first week of the resumed operations of the Relief Committee, and the last week, when their operations finally ceased, will shew the extent to which their aid was required during the winter of 1864-5 and the spring of 1865:—

| 1864.           | No. of Cases. | No. of Persons. | Relief.  | Families supplied with Coal. |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|------------------------------|
|                 |               |                 | £ s. d.  |                              |
| October 8 ...   | 122           | 441             | 39 8 6   |                              |
| " 29 ...        | 450           | 1693            | 150 6 6  |                              |
| November 26 ... | 460           | 1876            | 161 19 0 | 377                          |
| December 31 ... | 453           | 1716            | 150 16 6 | 406                          |
| 1865.           |               |                 |          |                              |
| January 28 ...  | 209           | 883             | 77 2 0   | 255                          |
| February 25 ... | 290           | 1272            | 107 11 0 | 410                          |
| March 25 ...    | 114           | 499             | 46 19 6  |                              |
| April 29 ...    | 35            | 156             | 16 12 6  |                              |
| May 6 ...       | 25            | 119             | 12 9 0   |                              |

I add also the total monthly expenditure of the Committee during the time that their resumed operations were continued:—

| 1864.          | General Relief. | Clothing. | School Pence. | Expenses. |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
|                | £ s. d.         | £ s. d.   | £ s. d.       | £ s. d.   |
| October .....  | 433 18 7        |           |               | 15 5 0    |
| November ..... | 698 18 7        | 48 4 2    | 18 17 0       | 11 8 0    |
| December ..... | 626 10 6        | 171 6 0   | 45 10 0       | 26 18 0   |
| 1865.          |                 |           |               |           |
| January .....  | 649 10 7        | 248 12 0  | 39 15 6       | 25 15 0   |
| February ..... | 442 11 4        | 645 18 10 | 38 10 0       | 25 9 6    |
| March .....    | 485 11 8        | 129 16 11 | 36 1 0        | 22 12 0   |
| April .....    | 123 16 0        | 169 12 6  | 35 8 6        | 11 14 6   |
| May .....      | 12 9 0          |           |               | 1 16 0    |

And thus terminated the active labours of the Relief Committee in the distribution of relief, which had continued, exclusive of the period between June and October, 1864, when their operations were suspended, for 160 weeks.

I have already given some details of both the first and second subscriptions, and may here append in a note a list of all who subscribed

£50 or upwards up to the date of the Relief Committee's Report, giving the names in the order of the first subscription. (See below.)

In addition to these contributions in money there were many valuable gifts in kind, which must not be overlooked. The Relief Committee were materially aided in their first distribution of coal by the gift of 1,400 tons from the following donors:—

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Mr. John Blundell .....                       | 250 tons. |
| Messrs. Wm. Henry Brunker & Co. ....          | 200 "     |
| Trustees of the late Mr. Joseph Barnes .....  | 100 "     |
| Mr. John Dean.....                            | 100 "     |
| Messrs. Case & Morris, per Mr. John Dean..... | 150 "     |
| Earl of Crawford & Balcarres.....             | 250 "     |
| Messrs. Thomas Simpson & Co.....              | 100 "     |
| Exors. of the late Mr. John Hargreaves.....   | 250 "     |
|   | 1,400 "   |

## LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS.

| NAME.   | First Subscription |    |    | Second Subscription |    |     | Total. |    |     | Reserved for Special Distribution. |    |    |
|---|--------------------|----|----|---------------------|----|-----|--------|----|-----|------------------------------------|----|----|
|   | £                  | s. | d. | £                   | s. | d.  | £      | s. | d.  | £                                  | s. | d. |
| The Lord Mayor's Fund.....  | 3800               | 0  | 0  | 26080               | 0  | 0   | 29880  | 0  | 0   | 2030                               | 0  | 0  |
| Manchester Central Committee .....                                      | 2600               | 0  | 0  | 46508               | 12 | 4   | 49108  | 12 | 4   |                                    |    |    |
| Revenue from Soup .....   | 770                | 9  | 1  | 506                 | 11 | 7   | 1277   | 0  | 8   |                                    |    |    |
| Mr. Tiplady's Appeal Fund .....   | 237                | 6  | 2  |                     |    |     | 237    | 6  | 2   |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. Pilkington Brothers and Co.....                                 | 100                | 0  | 0  | 1000                | 0  | 0   | 1100   | 0  | 0   | 400                                | 0  | 0  |
| Wm. H. Hornby, Esq., M.P.....   | 100                | 0  | 0  | 1000                | 0  | 0   | 1100   | 0  | 0   | 400                                | 0  | 0  |
| Messrs. R. Hopwood and Sons.....  | 100                | 0  | 0  | 1000                | 0  | 0   | 1100   | 0  | 0   | 500                                | 0  | 0  |
| Messrs. J. and J. Livesey.....  | 100                | 0  | 0  | 500                 | 0  | 0   | 600    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| A. Churchman .....  | 100                | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 100    | 0  | 0   | 100                                | 0  | 0  |
| Messrs. McConnel and Hadfield.....                                      | 100                | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 100    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Miss Burdett Coutts .....   | 100                | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 100    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| W. C. Brooks, Esq.....  | 100                | 0  | 0  | 500                 | 0  | 0   | 600    | 0  | 0   | 500                                | 0  | 0  |
| Joseph Feilden, Esq.....  | 100                | 0  | 0  | 1000                | 0  | 0   | 1100   | 0  | 0   | 750                                | 0  | 0  |
| His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury...                               | 100                | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 100    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Lancashire Lad's Appeal Fund.....                                       | 100                | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 100    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Baron C. T. Hambro.....   | 100                | 0  | 0  | 50                  | 0  | 0   | 150    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. J. and N. Phillips .....  | 100                | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 100    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| The Ecclesiastical Commissioners .....                                  | 100                | 0  | 0  | 500                 | 0  | 0   | 600    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| D. Thwaites, Esq.....   | 80                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 80     | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Collected at Leominster, by the Rev. A. G. Edouart .....                |                    |    |    | 61                  | 16 | 7   | 61     | 16 | 7   |                                    |    |    |
| The Rev. J. Hindle and Congregation.....                                |                    |    |    | 50                  | 16 | 11½ | 50     | 16 | 11½ |                                    |    |    |
| The Clergy of the Established Church, Blackburn, and their friends..... |                    |    |    | 2000                | 0  | 0   | 2000   | 0  | 0   | 2000                               | 0  | 0  |
| John Baynes, Esq.....   |                    |    |    | 1000                | 0  | 0   | 1000   | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Presbyterian Friends, per the Rev. Francis Skinner, D.D.....            |                    |    |    | 500                 | 0  | 0   | 500    | 0  | 0   | 500                                | 0  | 0  |
| Messrs. Wm. Dickinson and Sons.....                                     |                    |    |    | 200                 | 0  | 0   | 200    | 0  | 0   | 200                                | 0  | 0  |
| Messrs. Cunliffe and Co., Blackburn and London .....                    |                    |    |    | 150                 | 0  | 0   | 150    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| The Society of Friends, Manchester, per Mr. R. Shackleton.....          |                    |    |    | 150                 | 0  | 0   | 150    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. A. Swainson and Sons, per W. H. Hornby, Esq., M.P.....          |                    |    |    | 100                 | 0  | 0   | 100    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| James Thompson, Esq.....  |                    |    |    | 100                 | 0  | 0   | 100    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. Coddington Brothers, Liverpool.....                             |                    |    |    | 50                  | 0  | 0   | 50     | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Alderman Cunningham .....   | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 50     | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| R. R. Jackson, Esq.....   | 50                 | 0  | 0  | 500                 | 0  | 0   | 550    | 0  | 0   | 288                                | 10 | 0  |
| Dowager Lady Feilden.....   | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 50     | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Major Feilden .....   | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 50     | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| J. T. Hopwood, Esq., M.P.....   | 50                 | 0  | 0  | 890                 | 0  | 0   | 940    | 0  | 0   | 40                                 | 0  | 0  |
| Messrs. W. D. Coddington and Sons .....                                 | 50                 | 0  | 0  | 250                 | 0  | 0   | 300    | 0  | 0   | 89                                 | 13 | 6  |
| Family of the late B. Eccles, Esq.....                                  | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |     | 50     | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. Firth and Sturdy .....  |                    |    |    | 100                 | 0  | 0   | 100    | 0  | 0   |                                    |    |    |

I have already mentioned incidentally, that Blackburn shared with the other towns in the distressed districts in the provisions sent from America per the "George Griswold," the gift of the New York International Relief Committee; and from Canada West, Blackburn received a special consignment of 45 barrels of provisions (30 barrels of flour, 10 of beef and pork and 5 of peas), the gift of the inhabitants of South Monaghan, a township situated a few miles from Port Hope. The announcement of this welcome gift was made to the Mayor (Mr. Sturdy) by Mr. C. Quinlan, the Mayor of Port Hope, in a letter dated February 4th, 1863, and the result of the exertions of the two chief magistrates was, that the consignment reached Blackburn free of charge for carriage. The Relief Committee acknowledged the gift

## LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS CONTINUED.

| NAME.  | First Contribution |    |    | Second Subscription |    |    | Total. |    |    | Reserved for Special Distribution. |    |    |
|--|--------------------|----|----|---------------------|----|----|--------|----|----|------------------------------------|----|----|
|  | £                  | s. | d. | £                   | s. | d. | £      | s. | d. | £                                  | s. | d. |
| Dowager Lady Buxton .....                              |                    |    |    | 100                 | 0  | 0  | 100    | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Joshua Armitage, Esq.....                              |                    |    |    | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 50     | 0  | 0  | 10                                 | 0  | 0  |
| W. B. Ranken, Esq.....                                 | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| J. Harrison and Sons.....                              | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Joseph D. Bolton, Esq.....                             |                    |    |    | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Miss E. Hargreaves, French Haye.....                   | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| W. Atkinson, Esq.....                                  | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Lord Radstock.....                                     |                    |    |    | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 50     | 0  | 0  | 50                                 | 0  | 0  |
| Citizens of York .....                                 | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Exors. of the late J. Hargreaves, Esq.....             | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Earl of Derby .....                                    | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Duke of Buccleugh.....                                 | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| John Pender, Esq., M.P.....                            |                    |    |    | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 50     | 0  | 0  | 50                                 | 0  | 0  |
| M. R. ....   | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Proceeds of Oratorio, per Mr. Wm. Riley...             | 40                 | 13 | 4  |                     |    |    | 40     | 13 | 4  |                                    |    |    |
| Wm. Birtwistle, Esq.....                               | 40                 | 0  | 0  | 100                 | 0  | 0  | 140    | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. T. and W. Thwaites .....                       | 40                 | 0  | 0  | 20                  | 0  | 0  | 60     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Proceeds of Oddfellows' Concert, per D. Thornber ..... | 38                 | 11 | 7  |                     |    |    | 38     | 11 | 7  |                                    |    |    |
| Proceeds of Concert, per D. Johnson .....              | 31                 | 9  | 9  |                     |    |    | 31     | 9  | 9  |                                    |    |    |
| Officers and Privates 84th Regt.....                   | 31                 | 8  | 8  | 10                  | 1  | 6  | 41     | 9  | 8  |                                    |    |    |
| Trustees of Blackburn Poor Stock.....                  | 30                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 30     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Concert at St. Bee's College.....                      | 27                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 27     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| T. Dutton, Esq.....                                    | 25                 | 0  | 0  | 170                 | 0  | 0  | 195    | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. Lewis Brothers.....                            | 25                 | 0  | 0  | 100                 | 0  | 0  | 125    | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.....                    | 25                 | 0  | 0  | 150                 | 0  | 0  | 175    | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| J. G. Potter, Esq.....                                 | 25                 | 0  | 0  | 500                 | 0  | 0  | 525    | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| J. G. Potter and Eng. Residents at Biarritz .....      |                    |    |    | 95                  | 0  | 0  | 95     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. Jas. Forrest and Co.....                       | 25                 | 0  | 0  | 100                 | 0  | 0  | 125    | 0  | 0  | 50                                 | 0  | 0  |
| R. Shackleton, Esq.....                                | 20                 | 0  | 0  | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 70     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Wm. Pilkington, Esq.....                               | 20                 | 0  | 0  | 250                 | 0  | 0  | 270    | 0  | 0  | 50                                 | 0  | 0  |
| A. W. Paterson, Esq.....                               |                    |    |    | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Miss J. H. Eccles.....                                 | 20                 | 0  | 0  | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 70     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. L. and W. Wilkinson.....                       | 10                 | 10 | 0  | 150                 | 0  | 0  | 160    | 10 | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Lady Kay-Shuttleworth.....                             | 10                 | 10 | 0  | 45                  | 0  | 0  | 55     | 10 | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Messrs. John Dugdale and Sons.....                     | 10                 | 0  | 0  | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 60     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Adam Bullough, Esq.....                                | 10                 | 0  | 0  | 100                 | 0  | 0  | 110    | 0  | 0  | 29                                 | 9  | 0  |
| Messrs. T. Lund and Bro.....                           | 10                 | 0  | 0  | 100                 | 0  | 0  | 110    | 0  | 0  | 35                                 | 0  | 0  |
| Blackburn Weavers' Association.....                    | 50                 | 0  | 0  |                     |    |    | 50     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| R. B. Dodgson, Esq.....                                | 5                  | 0  | 0  | 50                  | 0  | 0  | 55     | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| T. Hindle, Esq.....                                    | 2                  | 0  | 0  | 100                 | 0  | 0  | 102    | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |
| Rev. J. Hewitt .....                                   | 2                  | 0  | 0  | 100                 | 0  | 0  | 102    | 0  | 0  |                                    |    |    |

by a resolution of their best and warmest thanks, passed on March 31st, which was duly transmitted by the Mayor to Mr. Quinlan.

The operations of the Labour Committee ceased when the Relief Committee suspended the distribution of relief at the end of May, 1864; and the further prosecution of the works projected under the Public Works Act, 1863, was left entirely under the direction of the Corporation. The total value of the works executed by the Relief Committee for the Corporation up to this date was £1,873 9s. 4d.; but this sum can by no means be regarded as expressing the extent to which the Public Works Act economised the funds of the Relief Committee. But for the Public Works Act, and the large sums expended in wages to factory-workers employed under its provisions, the Relief Committee could not have suspended operations at the end of May, 1864, but must have continued the work of relief during the whole summer of that year and up to the present time (May, 1865.)

In concert with the Labour Committee of the Guardians, the Relief Committee directed the execution of works involving an expenditure in wages amounting to £13,032 19s. 9d., of which, according to the arrangement with the Guardians, the sum of £4,344 6s. 7d. should have been repaid by the Guardians. But the Relief Committee settled with the Guardians for the sum of £1,656 0s. 7d., besides which they received £155 8s. 1d. for the sale of the plant used in connection with the works, making a total of £1,811 8s. 8d., and leaving a balance of £2,532 17s. 11d. The Central Executive Committee of Manchester were dissatisfied with this arrangement, and a correspondence, rather unpleasant at the outset, took place between the two bodies—the Central Executive Committee being under the impression that the funds contributed by the charitable were by this means appropriated to the effecting of public improvements properly chargeable on the rates. But a full explanation of all the circumstances of the case, prepared by Mr. Henderson, at the request of the Relief Committee, satisfied the Central Executive, and restored the good understanding which for the moment appeared to have been destroyed. Into the particulars of this explanation it is unnecessary to enter, but I may state this much, that the Guardians having relinquished their claim to their proportion of the money due for the work done, the apparent balance of £2,532 17s. 11d. is reduced to £1,688 6s. 0d., and the Relief Committee being convinced that the arrangement with the Guardians had practically proved to be inequitable, by pressing unduly upon the Guardians, came to the settlement I have

referred to as that which in their opinion was just and equitable.

The services of Mr. Henderson, at which I have only very cursorily glanced, were very highly appreciated by not only the Relief Committee but the Town Council, and at the monthly meeting of the Council held on the 2nd of March, 1865, it was unanimously resolved:—

“That a memorial to her Majesty’s principal Secretary of State for the Home Department should be adopted by the Council, signed and sealed by the Mayor, setting forth the untiring and distinguished exertions of Mr. James Henderson, her Majesty’s Sub-Inspector of Factories for the Blackburn district, during the period of distress arising out of the cotton famine, and particularly as chairman of the Labour Committee of the Relief Fund, in his attention to the duties incident thereto.” In accordance with this resolution a memorial was prepared, and submitted and read to the Council at their meeting on the 6th of April, when it was resolved:—

“That the memorial presented to this meeting and read, setting forth the untiring and distinguished exertions of Mr. James Henderson, her Majesty’s Sub-Inspector of Factories for the Blackburn district, during the period of distress arising out of the cotton famine, be adopted by the Council, signed and sealed by the Mayor, and forthwith transmitted to the members of the borough for presentation to her Majesty’s principal Secretary of State for the Home Department.”

The memorial was to the following purport:—

“TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR GEORGE GREY, BARONET, HER MAJESTY’S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT,

“*The Memorial of the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Blackburn in Council assembled,*

“SHEWETH,—That your memorialists desire respectfully to call your attention as Her Majesty’s principal secretary of state for the Home Department, to the valuable public services rendered to the inhabitants of Blackburn, during the period of the cotton famine, by Mr. James Henderson, Her Majesty’s sub-inspector of factories for the Blackburn district.

“Your memorialists desire to explain that Mr. Henderson was appointed to the Blackburn district about the close of the year 1861. A few months afterwards many of the labouring classes of this town, in common with many other towns in the cotton districts, were plunged into the deepest distress by the stoppage of the mills and manufactories in which they were employed.

“At one time the daily wants of more than 30,000 people in this borough alone had to be supplied by, and were dependent on, public charity for their subsistence, consequently an enormous amount of labour and a serious responsibility devolved upon the local authorities and the members of the Relief Committee.

“Mr. Henderson, although quite a stranger, having first obtained the consent and concurrence of the head of his department, Alexander Redgrave, Esquire, inspector of factories, voluntarily offered to give assistance and rendered important aid in systematizing and arranging the distribution of relief.

“At a subsequent stage of the distress, when the attention of the legislature

was drawn to the condition of the unemployed cotton operatives, and when by the passing of the Public Works (Manufacturing Districts) Act, 1863, out-door employment was made available for them, Mr. Henderson rendered the local authorities invaluable service by establishing, as Chairman of the Labour Committee, and successfully putting in operation a scheme of labour by which the great bulk of the cotton operatives, who were deprived of employment in the factories, were furnished with out-door work.

"Your memorialists feel that it is scarcely possible to over-estimate the services rendered by Mr. Henderson in this respect. His arrangements were made with considerable tact and skill; his energy and assiduity were untiring; and to the success with which the Labour Committee, with Mr. Henderson at its head, developed the scheme of employment in Blackburn, your memorialists feel is to be attributed, in a great measure, the maintenance of the public peace and order during a most critical period, and the continued exercise of those industrious habits of the population which it was feared might be destroyed, during such a time of suffering and distress, and also the successful prosecution of the Public Works in this town.

"The services of Mr. Henderson have attracted the admiration of all, but his position precludes the idea of a testimonial.

"Your memorialists therefore think it right to call attention to the zeal and assiduity displayed by Mr. Henderson, and would desire to impress on Her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, the great value of these talents in a public servant, and would most respectfully suggest for your consideration some improvement in his position in recognition of his untiring, gratuitous, and, we may almost say, unparalleled public services rendered without detriment to his public duties.

"Given under the corporate seal of the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the said borough of Blackburn, at a meeting of the Council of the said borough, this sixth day of April, 1865."

"WILLIAM STONES, Mayor."

It was subsequently arranged that the memorial should be presented to Sir George Grey by a deputation of the Council, and an effort was made to induce Sir George to fix an appointment for the purpose; but the pressure of public business, caused by the shortness of the session in prospect of the dissolution, prevented Sir George Grey acceding to the request. A delay of a few weeks brought the labours of the Relief Committee to a close, and at their meeting on the 8th of May, when it had been determined to cease operations, the Relief Committee passed the following resolution:—

"That this committee hereby authorise its present chairman (J. B. S. Sturdy, Esq.) to co-operate with the deputation from the Town Council in conferring with the Home Secretary on the subject of the memorial to be presented to him on behalf of James Henderson, Esq., and it would express their earnest hope that this memorial may be successful in obtaining from Her Majesty's government that substantial acknowledgment for his invaluable services in taking a prominent part as chairman of the Labour Committee, and latterly as hon. secretary to the General Committee, to which services this town owes so much during its deep distress arising from the cotton famine."

An appointment for a deputation to present the memorial having been refused by Sir George Grey, the memorial was presented, as originally intended, by the Borough Members, and it was accompanied by a letter from Mr. Sturdy, as chairman of the Relief Committee, setting forth more in detail, and with less of official formality, the services of Mr. Henderson. The result is likely to be most satisfactory, and it is hoped that Mr. Henderson will receive promotion in the shape of an addition of several years to his professional life, which will raise him at once from the lowest to an advanced grade of Factory Inspectors.

Having thus completed my review of the operations of the Relief Committee, I must revert for a moment to the beginning of 1863, and glance at what had to be done by the Guardians and the Overseers during the interval from that date to the final closing of the Relief Committee's labours. I have already stated that shortly before Christmas, 1862, the Guardians found themselves in a position to borrow, under the provisions of the Union Relief Aid Act, the sum of £3,517, in respect of the expenditure in and about the relief of the poor for the quarter ending Michaelmas, 1862. This sum they borrowed, on such terms as they were able, which were not by any means favourable. The expenditure for the Christmas quarter of 1862 amounted to £17,955, or £10,111 in excess of what a rate of 9d. in the £ would yield. The Guardians had then the option of borrowing the sum of £10,111, or throwing the sum of £4,884 on to such of the neighbouring unions as were in a position to bear the burden, and borrowing £5,227. They divided upon the question, but eventually decided to borrow the whole sum, as being the more independent and self-reliant course. In the quarter ending Lady Day, 1863, the expenditure amounted to £13,224, being £5,379 in excess of what a rate of 9d. in the £ would yield, and £782 in excess of what a rate of 1s. 3d. in the £ would yield. The Guardians again borrowed the excess of a 9d. rate, making the total amount borrowed by them under the provisions of the Union Relief Aid Acts £18,517.

These figures have reference to the whole Union; and it must not be overlooked that they do not express the whole expenditure of the Union, but simply the expenditure "in and about the relief of the poor," excluding the equally necessary expenditure on account of the new workhouse and for other purposes of a general character. But great as they shew the distress to have been in the Union generally, they do

not indicate the extent to which the township or borough of Blackburn was called upon to contribute in the shape of Poor rates for the purpose of meeting such a large expenditure. While the whole Union was chargeable, at Michaelmas, 1862, with an expenditure for the quarter of £11,361, Blackburn township was chargeable with £6,156. The Union expenditure for the Christmas quarter was £17,955, of which £9,854 were chargeable on the Blackburn township; and for the Lady Day quarter of 1863 the Union expenditure was £13,224 of which £7,008 were chargeable on Blackburn township. The pressure on the ratepayers of Blackburn will be more clearly indicated by the following statement, showing the rateable value of the property in the Borough or Township, and the amounts and dates of the several poor rates which were required to bridge over the crisis, independent of the money borrowed under the provisions of the Union Aid relief Acts :—

| Date.                     | Rateable Value. | Rate per £. | Estimated Produce. | Actual Produce. | Recoverable Arrears. |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
|                           | £               | s. d.       | £                  | £               | £                    |
| 1860, February 28th ..... | 132695          | 1 8         | 9603               |                 |                      |
| 1861, March 8th .....     | 137776          | 1 10        | 10948              | 10681           | 266                  |
| 1862, February 13th ..... | 144418          | 3 0         | 18743              | 17312           | 986                  |
| „ September 26th .....    | 144589          | 3 0         | 18675              | 15100           | 3785                 |
| 1863, March 24th .....    | 147516          | 4 6         | 28311              | 27620           | 2720                 |
| 1864, March 15th .....    | 140651          | 2 8         | 16147              | 15523           | 2064                 |

In this table the “estimated produce” of each rate is exclusive of the “recoverable arrears” of the previous rate; but the “actual produce” is the amount actually collected, inclusive of the “recoverable arrears.” The large amount of “recoverable arrears” of the rates made in September, 1862, and in 1863 and 1864, shews the extent to which the over-burdened ratepayers took advantage of the concession made to them, as already explained, whereby they might postpone payment of their poor rates without the risk of having their property distrained upon for the amount. It will be seen that the “rateable value” in March, 1864, was considerably less than what it was in March, 1863. This was owing to the Union Assessment Committee having in the interim revised, and in doing so reduced, the assessments; otherwise, the “rateable value” in March, 1864, would have considerably exceeded £150,000.

In continuation of the tabular statement given at page 62, and for the purpose of shewing the fluctuations in the amount of relief by the Guardians during the subsidence of the distress, embracing the

long period of two years and a half, from the turning point at the beginning of 1863 till the close of the Relief Committee's operations in May, 1865, I give the returns of out-door relief for the last week in each month of that interval, as follows :—

| 1863.             |       | BLACKBURN DISTRICT. |       | WHOLE UNION. |       |
|-------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| Week ending.      |       | Number.             | Cost. | Number.      | Cost. |
| January 24.....   | 10346 | 711 10 1            | 13358 | 846 5 0      |       |
| February 28.....  | 8858  | 591 4 1             | 10804 | 709 4 10     |       |
| March 28.....     | 10663 | 768 19 0            | 12936 | 911 1 6      |       |
| April 25.....     | 8789  | 572 11 4            | 10549 | 673 17 2     |       |
| May 29.....       | 6410  | 344 0 7             | 8012  | 440 1 6      |       |
| June 26.....      | 5332  | 295 19 10           | 6925  | 404 0 9      |       |
| July 24.....      | 4967  | 271 3 2             | 6469  | 359 19 5     |       |
| August 29.....    | 4866  | 266 10 6            | 6473  | 358 16 11    |       |
| September 26..... | 4701  | 281 14 9            | 6369  | 368 18 9     |       |
| October 24.....   | 4170  | 228 6 0             | 5711  | 324 8 5      |       |
| November 29.....  | 4296  | 229 16 7            | 5745  | 326 15 0     |       |
| December 27.....  | 4277  | 223 14 8            | 5783  | 323 19 9     |       |
| 1864.             |       |                     |       |              |       |
| January 30.....   | 4811  | 276 4 9             | 6623  | 383 2 7      |       |
| February 27.....  | 4622  | 247 15 1            | 6648  | 365 9 0      |       |
| March 26.....     | 4270  | 214 18 2            | 5842  | 313 4 6      |       |
| April 30.....     | 4220  | 223 15 2            | 5798  | 317 9 3      |       |
| May 28.....       | 4009  | 201 9 11            | 5373  | 290 19 3     |       |
| June 25.....      | 4008  | 200 9 11            | 5282  | 284 18 3     |       |
| July 30.....      | 3695  | 182 14 0            | 4992  | 268 1 5      |       |
| August 27.....    | 3785  | 188 4 0             | 4994  | 267 1 10     |       |
| September 24..... | 4378  | 215 1 1             | 5706  | 303 19 8     |       |
| October 29.....   | 5656  | 317 16 5            | 7734  | 434 14 3     |       |
| November 26.....  | 5019  | 277 3 11            | 7170  | 409 11 5     |       |
| December 31.....  | 4630  | 246 10 6            | 6509  | 363 2 1      |       |
| 1865.             |       |                     |       |              |       |
| January 28.....   | 4445  | 238 3 7             | 6164  | 343 18 1     |       |
| February 25.....  | 4798  | 254 0 9             | 6596  | 364 15 10    |       |
| March 25.....     | 4587  | 231 14 4            | 6260  | 341 18 9     |       |
| April 29.....     | 4259  | 228 18 4            | 5609  | 317 7 2      |       |
| May 27.....       | 3789  | 209 14 4            | 5002  | 289 14 9     |       |

It is manifest, from the large expenditure by the Guardians and the heavy rates that were required to meet it, that a great responsibility rested on the Overseers, by whom the rates had to be made, and on the Guardians, by whom the proceeds of the rates had to be administered; and it is fitting, therefore, that I should put on record the names of the gentlemen who, during the crisis, so efficiently discharged the duties of these responsible offices. The overseers in 1862 were the late Mr. James Parkinson (who was also treasurer of the relief fund), and Messrs. John Bushby, William Mallison and Peter Higham. In that year they were under the necessity of making two rates of 3s. in the £, and at the close of the year they naturally felt

anxious to retire and leave to others the unpleasant duty of imposing the rates necessary to meet the expenditure of 1863. But there was a difficulty in finding gentlemen willing to undertake the unpleasant duty they were desirous of relinquishing, and they eventually consented to remain in office during 1863, in which year a rate of 4s. 6d. in the £ had to be made. In the following year they were succeeded in office by Messrs. Christopher Alston, John Briggs, Thomas Hindle, and John Woods, who had the pleasure of making the very much reduced rate which sufficed for the necessities of 1864. The assistant overseer was Mr. John Clough, who has for many years efficiently discharged the duties of the office, which he still fills to the universal satisfaction of the public of Blackburn.

The following is a list of the Guardians of the whole union elected in the spring of 1862:

|   |                            |                      |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| BLACKBURN—which comprises the Wards of— |                            |                      |
| St. Peter .....                         | Mr. James Dickinson .....  | Cotton Spinner.      |
| St. Paul .....                          | Mr. William Durham .....   | Licensed Victualler. |
|   | Mr. Miles Baron .....      | Tailor and Draper.   |
| Park .....                              | Mr. John Smith .....       | Quarryman.           |
|   | Mr. Alex. Wm. Paterson ..  | Cotton Manufacturer. |
| St. John .....                          | Mr. Thomas Copeland .....  | Cotton Manufacturer. |
| St. Mary .....                          | Mr. Thos. Clough .....     | Attorney-at-law.     |
| Trinity .....                           | Mr. Thos. Hartley Pickup.  | Druggist.            |
| Balderstone .....                       | Mr. Thomas Walmsley ...    | Gentleman.           |
| Billington .....                        | Mr. James Sharples .....   | Farmer.              |
| Church .....                            | Mr. John Hargreaves .....  | Farmer.              |
| Clayton-le-Dale .....                   | Mr. John Pickles .....     | Grocer.              |
| Clayton-le-Moors .....                  | Mr. Joseph C. Garfit ..... | Farmer.              |
| Dinkley .....                           | Mr. James Fielding .....   | Farmer.              |
| Eccleshill .....                        | Mr. George Lonsdale .....  | Farmer.              |
| Great Harwood .....                     | Mr. Michael Haworth .....  | Tailor.              |
| Little Harwood .....                    | Mr. William Birtwistle ... | Cotton Spinner.      |
| Livesey .....                           | Mr. William Clark .....    | Farmer.              |
| Lower Darwen .....                      | Mr. Moses Cocker .....     | Farmer.              |
| Mellor .....                            | Mr. John Ainsworth .....   | Farmer.              |
| Osbaldeston .....                       | Mr. Thomas Counsell .....  | Farmer.              |
| Oswaldtwistle .....                     | Mr. John Hayes .....       | Land Owner.          |
|   | Mr. Thomas Simpson .....   | Coal Proprietor.     |
| Over Darwen .....                       | Mr. Robert Reddish .....   | Coal Proprietor.     |
|   | Mr. Joshua Baron .....     | Calico Printer.      |
| Pleasington .....                       | Mr. Thomas Kenyon .....    | Gentleman.           |
| Ramsgreave .....                        | Mr. James Waring .....     | Stone Merchant.      |
| Rishton .....                           | Mr. James Harrison .....   | Farmer.              |
| Salesbury .....                         | Mr. Edward Duckworth ...   | Canal Bank Ranger.   |
| Tockholes .....                         | Mr. William Bourne .....   | Farmer.              |
| Wilpshire .....                         | Mr. Moses Kershaw .....    | Farmer.              |
| Witton .....                            | Mr. John Eatough .....     | Farmer.              |
| Yate and Pickup Bank ...                | Mr. Richard Thompson ...   | Ratepayer.           |
|   | Mr. Michael Haworth .....  | Farmer.              |

In the year 1863, Mr. Henry Kitcher and Mr. Richard Shakeshaft were chosen as the guardians of Park Ward; Mr. James Simson for Balderstone; Mr. Edmund Haworth for Clayton-le-Dale; Mr. W. E. Taylor for Clayton-le-Moors; Mr. David Kearton for Livesey; Mr. John Rawlinson for Lower Darwen; Mr. Geo. Clark for Rishton, and Mr. John Taylor for Yate and Pickup Bank.

Although the expenditure was greatest in the township of Blackburn, there were many of the out-townships that suffered very severely, and the large proportion of the expenditure which was chargeable to the Common Fund, amounting to upwards of two-thirds of the whole, gave the country Guardians a direct interest in the expenditure within the township of Blackburn, and threw on all the Guardians a very heavy responsibility. At the close of each of the three quarters in respect of which the Guardians borrowed money under the provisions of the Union Relief Aid Acts, the expenditure in all the townships had exceeded 9d. in the £; and in the quarter ending Christmas, 1862, when the expenditure of the whole union had considerably exceeded 1s. 3d. in the £, and the Guardians were entitled to throw about £5,000 on to neighbouring unions, there were only two townships in which the expenditure had not amounted to 1s. 3d. in the £, namely Little Harwood and Wilpshire, containing an aggregate population of only 498.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Parochial and congregational efforts—List of the Clergy, &c.—The labours of the Clergy and their wives—The relief of special cases—The Parish of St. Mary—The Parish of St. John—The Parish of Holy Trinity—The penny Bible readings—The Gladstone soup kitchen—The Parish of St. Peter—The Parishes of St. Paul, St. Michael and Christ Church—St. Luke's district—Dissenting congregational efforts—James Street Chapel—Park Chapel—Mount Street Chapel—Efforts of the Roman Catholics—The post-office relief fund—The Society of Friends—The Ripon training school—Emigration—Conclusion.*

The history which I have given in the preceding pages of the operations of the Relief Committee, and the various auxiliary agencies by which they were so efficiently supplemented, has exhibited incidentally the active interest taken in the work of relief by the Clergy of the town, the Dissenting Ministers and Roman Catholic Priests; and the great efforts they made to provide for the moral as well as the material welfare of the destitute members of their respective parishes and congregations. But in order to obtain a correct idea of the extent to which the ministers of religion assisted in providing the means of relief, and in distributing the means thus placed at their disposal, it is necessary to look, not only at what the Clergy accomplished as a Clerical Association, but at what each Clergyman and Minister achieved parochially and congregationally. And it will perhaps be best to preface what I have to say on this subject with a list of the Clergy, Dissenting Ministers and Roman Catholic Priests who in 1861-3 were labouring within the Borough. To the list of the Clergy I have prefixed the census of the Parochial Districts, as published by the Vicar in 1861:—

POPULATION,  
1861.

## CHURCH CLERGY.

|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| 11,464. | Parish Church (St. Mary)...   | { John Rushton, D.D., Vicar.            |
|         | and   | { H. Wescoe,                            |
| 6,368.  | District of St. Thomas .....  | { J. W. Oates, M.A., } Curates.         |
| 8,261.  | { St. John .....  | { John Smith, Incumbent.                |
|         | { " .....   | { W. Wallace, M.A., Curate.             |
|         | { St. Peter .....   | { C. W. Woodhouse, M.A., Incumbent.     |
|         | { " .....   | { T. Cooper, M.A., Curate.              |
| 8,244.  | { " .....   | { W. Hudson, B.A., } Volunteer Curates. |
|         | { " .....   | { F. Binyon, B.A., }                    |
| 9,718.  | { St. Paul .....  | { H. W. Marychurch, M.A., Incumbent.    |
|         | { " .....   | { R. J. Wallace, B.A., Curate.          |
| 6,317.  | { St. Michael .....   | { J. W. Pengelly, Incumbent.            |
|         | { " .....   | { J. Barnes, Curate.                    |
| 4,560.  | { Holy Trinity .....  | { C. Robinson, LL.D., Incumbent.        |
|         | { " .....   | { W. Ogden, M.A., Curate.               |
| 6,642.  | { Christ Church .....   | { R. Moss, M.A., Incumbent.             |
|         | { " .....   | { G. Donaldson, Curate.                 |
|         | St. Luke's District, (formed<br>from part of the Districts<br>of St. Mary, St. Peter,<br>and Witton.) ..... | { A. Gallagher, M.A.                    |

## DISSENTING MINISTERS.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Chapel Street (Independent).....         | A. Fraser, M.A.                                 |
| James Street .....                       | J. B. Lister.                                   |
| Park Road .....                          | A. S. Maclean.                                  |
| Bolton Station .....                     | R. W. Pearson.                                  |
| Mount Street (United Presbyterian) ..... | F. Skinner.                                     |
| Clayton Street (Wesleyan) .....          | { W. Chambers, G. S. Tyler, and<br>J. Smithies. |
| Primitive Methodist.....                 | John Oscroft.                                   |
| Baptist (Montague Street).....           | J. S. Baily.                                    |
| Particular Baptist.....                  | M. Horbury.                                     |
| Paradise and Barton Street United .....  | { J. Edgar and G. Robinson.                     |
| Methodist Free Churches.....             |   |
| New Jerusalem Temple .....               |   |

## ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS.

|                  |                               |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| St. Anne's.....  | J. V. Meany and Gerald Meany. |
| St. Alban's..... | T. S. Irving and R. Parker.   |
| St. Mary's.....  | R. Dunderdale.                |

I have already explained, that on behalf of the various schemes of the Clerical Association, special appeals were made and special funds thus raised for their support; but in addition to that, the Vicar, on behalf of the whole of the original Parish of Blackburn, over which his patronage extends, and the Incumbents, on behalf of their respective parishes, issued appeals, either in the shape of circulars or letters addressed to the editors of the Church-papers, soliciting contributions for general relief; and many were the places at a distance to which the Vicar and the other Clergy journeyed to preach, address meetings and plead the cause of the unemployed operatives amongst those who had the means to give but were imperfectly acquainted with either the necessities or the deservings of the



Lancashire factory workers. In response to these appeals the Vicar and several of the Clergy received large sums of money and immense quantities of clothing; and it might almost be said that for upwards of twelve months the Vicarage and every Parsonage in the town was converted into a relieving office, to which the poor resorted for help in their extremity. Every clergyman's wife became for a season a "Dorcas," and for many months spent hours almost daily in hearing and investigating applications for relief, and distributing clothing, money, or orders upon shop-keepers to the thousands of applicants who thronged their doors. Ladies from a distance whom friendship for the clergyman or his family, or a desire to be useful, attracted to Blackburn during the season of distress, and who found a temporary home at either the Vicarage or a Parsonage, witnessed scenes never to be forgotten, and readily lent a helping hand in the charitable work their hostesses were day by day engaged in. Not a few of the poor in the parish of Trinity, who happened to apply for relief during one or other of Mrs. Gladstone's visits to the Rev. Dr. Robinson, received from her hands the stockings, petticoat, or other article of clothing they were in want of, while Mrs. Robinson attended to the wants of their neighbours. The wife of a clergyman in the Lake district, from whose letters I have already quoted an account of a visit to the St. Peter's Mothers' Kitchen, thus describes what was for many months an almost every-day scene in the house of the Rev. C. W. Woodhouse, whose guest she was during her visit to Blackburn:—

"On our return to Mr. Woodhouse's he found a pile of letters awaiting him, out of many of which dropped bank notes, bills or post-office orders. There, too, we found his aged mother diligently cutting up webs of flannel into shirts and petticoats; indeed it was a matter of astonishment to us to find, how large and active a part this old lady and her daughter have taken, in the way of dispensing the bales of clothing sent to them for the poor—preparing work for the schools, &c. Their house is besieged from morning till night by those who have been duly visited, and received orders to come. It was beautiful to see the cheerfulness with which the servants, too, entered into the work, and though nearly worn out, they were never willing to send any away without having their wants attended to. Some days the household could not even get any regular meals."

Substantially the same might be said of the Vicar, the Rev. Mr. Smith, and the Rev. Dr. Robinson, and the labour which was thus imposed upon them was immense. The Vicar and Dr. Robinson found the correspondence so overwhelming, that they were compelled to employ paid secretaries; and Mr. Woodhouse was probably saved the necessity of resorting to the like expedient (except during a short interval at the height of the distress) by the fact of his then

having as his assistants in the Parish of St. Peter two volunteer curates, who took indefatigable pleasure in all manner of work connected with the relief of the distress.

The tabular statements given at pages 122 and 127, afford some idea of the amount of labour devolving upon the different clergy and ministers in connection with the sewing and educational classes; but it must not be overlooked that these figures express only the numbers on behalf of whom the capitation grant was made. In all the classes, especially the Church classes, there were many who were not eligible for the capitation grant—youths and girls belonging to families who in ordinary times occupied a position somewhat superior to that of operatives, and who, without being reduced to the destitution which would give them a claim to relief from the Guardians or the Relief Committee, were yet sufficiently impoverished to require such help as the clergy and ministers were entrusted to dispense. Many were the families who thus, and in other modes, received relief without having the opportunity of feeling, what might have been unpleasant if not painful to them, that they were deriving their means of subsistence from public funds.

In reference to the men's schools (see page 127) one noteworthy fact is the large numbers in attendance at the Church classes compared with the numbers in attendance at the Roman Catholic and Protestant Dissenting classes; and another important fact is, the very small number who attended what was called the "non-sectarian class." The one fact is a testimony to the power and influence of the Clergy, and the other proves the respect for religion entertained by the great mass of the people. In all the denominational classes there were daily religious exercises; and in the Overlookers' and Tape-sizers' classes, which were self-constituted and non-sectarian, each day's duties commenced with Scripture reading, singing and prayer; and the Clergy and other ministers were frequently invited to hold a short service with them on Sunday. In the so-called "non-sectarian" class alone was there no recognition of religion, and the maximum attendance at that class was only 29.

In addition to the labour involved in carrying on and providing for the maintenance of their various schemes of relief, the Vicar and Clergy had the labour imposed upon them by many of their kind hearted correspondents, of looking out cases to be made the objects of special relief, and of supplying such cases week by week with the sums appropriated to their support. One benevolent gentleman, for ex-

ample, offered to provide 15 families with 2s. 6d. each per week; and he required as a preliminary the names and circumstances of each family. Another would give 12s. 6d. per week to one family for 20 weeks; another 10s. 6d. per week to one family for 12 weeks; another 5s. per week to one family for five months; and in each case the name and circumstances of each family had to be given, in order that the donors might have the feeling of a more direct interest in and sympathy with the families they were relieving. To the Rev. Dr. Robinson there were no less than 100 donations made in this form; and besides the incalculable labour of selecting cases that would exactly suit the requirements of each donation, and distributing the donations in the exact manner required by the donors, the ever varying circumstances of the people—rendering a family, to whom 2s. 6d. was in one week a sufficient measure of relief, so destitute that 10s. would hardly suffice for their necessities in the week following; another, whom 10s. supplied with the bare necessities of life in one week, so improved in position as to be able in the week following to dispense with charitable aid altogether—required a constant correspondence with the donors in order to obtain their sanction to the transfer of their benefactions from one family to another, and their appropriation in a form varied somewhat from that in which it was originally stipulated they should be given. It was in many respects a commendable feeling on the part of the benevolent that prompted this mode of relief; and in seasons of partial distress there might be no great difficulty in carrying it out; but during such times as those we have passed through, the kind hearted people who require their contributions to be dispensed in this manner in the relief of special cases, have no idea of the labour which, for no appreciable good, they thereby impose on the clergymen or others whom they may select as their almoners.

The labours of the Vicar in connection with the Town Hall sewing classes and the Radstock Kitchen, added to the general oversight he took of the other schemes coming within the cognizance of the Clerical Association, and the correspondence in which his position involved him, fully occupied his time, and left him no leisure for any special relief expedients such as were to be found in some of the other parishes in the town. And there being no day or Sunday school in connection with the Parish Church of St. Mary (if we except the school at Bottomgate, which was then a separate district, with a church in progress) he had not, like the other clergy of the town, the means

which such a gathering together of the young affords, for becoming acquainted with the people of his charge, learning their wants and relieving their necessities. But notwithstanding this, the Vicar and his curates were not without the means of distributing judiciously the money and clothing entrusted to them. By personal enquiries, and the reports of trustworthy visitors, they ascertained who were in distress, and the kind and extent of the assistance that was required, and were thus enabled to dispense to the necessitous the bounty which had reached them from the remotest corners of the land.

One of the most complete parochial organisations was that established by the Rev. J. Smith of St. John's. Possessing a staff of ninety-seven tried and devoted Sunday School Teachers, having under their care, at the St. John's and Plack Gate Schools, an aggregate of about 2,000 scholars, Mr. Smith constituted them a Relief Committee, to attend to the wants of their scholars and the families to which they belonged. He also engaged a number of men and women, of known piety and tried fidelity, who were themselves suffering from the effects of the cotton famine, to make periodically a systematic visitation of the parish, and to be as eyes and ears to him in investigating such applications for aid as he was unable personally to inquire into. By these means he was kept fully informed of the depth and extent of the distress in his parish, of the rapidity with which it increased, and of the manner in which it ebbed and flowed, after the turning point had been reached; and was thus enabled more satisfactorily to administer the large funds, and distribute the enormous amount of clothing, remitted to him for special distribution in his own parish. Being resolved, also, that as far as in him lay, the visitation should exert a salutary influence on those who were reduced to poverty and suffered privation, about Christmas, 1862, he formed Sunday classes for married men and married women; the men's class, numbering 50, being taught by Mr. Joseph Brierley, the Borough Engineer, and the women's class, numbering on the average 180, by Mrs. Smith, his devoted helpmate. These were not proselytising efforts, nor was attendance at these classes made a condition of receiving relief; they were simply opportunities of religious instruction, specially improvised for the benefit of those who had been previously, during years of prosperity, careless and indifferent, but whose hearts had been softened by adversity, and who were now willing and anxious to be instructed in the things that concerned their everlasting peace. The amount of money which Mr. Smith received for distribution through these

agencies, was about £1,500; and many a home was made glad, and many a bitter pang of suffering averted, by the prompt relief, conveyed in the spirit of christian sympathy, administered through these various channels. Clothing, also, in bales of which no reckoning could be made, was distributed in the same manner, and supplied the necessities of many an ill-clothed household.

In the parish of Holy Trinity we have seen that the Rev. Dr. Robinson and his curate undertook the management of the two Industrial schools bearing the names of Mrs. Potter and Mrs. Gladstone, and for the men attending these classes they established a reading room, which friends supplied with books, newspapers and periodicals. They had also the Orphanage under their charge for a time, and then the penny Bible readings. To the particulars I have already given of the penny Bible readings, I may here add a statement of the numbers who each week, and the average number who each day, received through this Institution an hour's instruction in the Holy Scriptures and a penny (or the substantial meal which was in November substituted for the penny payment), and the weekly cost at which this scheme was maintained for so many months:—

| Week Ending<br>1862 | Men. | Women. | Daily<br>Average. | Weekly<br>Cost.    |
|---------------------|------|--------|-------------------|--------------------|
| October 11th.....   | 2208 | 1601   | 762               | £ s. d.<br>16 9 11 |
| " 18th.....         | 2599 | 2595   | 1039              | 23 16 11           |
| " 25th.....         | 3441 | 3439   | 1378              | 30 0 2             |
| November 1st.....   | 4313 | 4880   | 1838              | 64 6 5             |
| " 8th.....          | 4880 | 5114   | 1999              | 83 5 8             |
| " 15th.....         | 4696 | 5294   | 1998              | 83 5 0             |
| " 22nd.....         | 4385 | 5569   | 1990              | 82 19 0            |
| " 29th.....         | 2204 | 4549   | 1350              | 56 5 6             |
| December 6th.....   | 2974 | 4188   | 1432              | 59 13 8            |
| " 13th.....         | 3362 | 4743   | 1621              | 67 10 10           |
| " 20th.....         | 2815 | 6979   | 1959              | 58 3 2             |
| " 27th.....         | 2393 | 3619   | 1202              | 50 2 0             |
| 1863.               |      |        |                   |                    |
| January 10th.....   | 2261 | 2838   | 1020              | 42 9 10            |
| " 17th.....         | 2394 | 3238   | 1126              | 46 18 8            |
| " 24th.....         | 2578 | 3193   | 1154              | 48 1 10            |
| " 31st.....         | 2760 | 3607   | 1273              | 53 1 2             |
| February 7th.....   | 2474 | 3695   | 1234              | 51 8 2             |
| " 14th.....         | 2593 | 3855   | 1289              | 53 14 8            |
| " 21st.....         | 2249 | 3962   | 1240              | 51 15 2            |
| " 28th.....         | 2460 | 3991   | 1290              | 53 15 2            |
| March 7th.....      | 2099 | 3895   | 1199              | 49 19 0            |
| " 14th.....         | 1732 | 3083   | 963               | 40 2 6             |
| " 21st.....         | 2381 | 4153   | 1307              | 54 9 0             |
| " 28th.....         | 2406 | 3550   | 1191              | 49 12 8            |
| April 2nd.....      | 1819 | 2615   | 887               | 36 19 0            |

The soup distributed to those who attended the Bible readings was of a most nutritious character, and helped greatly to preserve the recipients in health and strength. It was cooked in a kitchen fitted up in Messrs. Yates' Factory, and appropriately termed the Gladstone Kitchen. In a work entitled "Practical dietary for families, schools, and the labouring classes" by Edward Smith, M.D., L.L.B., F.R.S. &c., and which the author has dedicated to Mrs. W. E. Gladstone, I find the composition of this soup and an analysis of its nutritive qualities given as follows:— \*

"Pea soup for 100 rations (carbon 1048 grains, nitrogen 75 grains; cost 0.94d. per ration), Beef, meat only, 4½lbs., bones ½lb., ham 5lb., salted pig's cheek 4 1-6thlb. white peas 20lb., pea meal 2lb., swede turnips 6½lbs., onions ½lb., seasoning with pepper, curry and salt." †

Dr. Buchanan of the Privy Council Office pronounced this soup excellent, and said that if the operatives received one such meal per week they would not suffer. The allowance was a pint of soup and a piece of bread; but the option was given of taking a quart of soup without bread, and this was an alternative of which many availed themselves, preferring to take the soup home and boil it down for the benefit of other members of the family.

The Gladstone soup kitchen was also made available for supplying the scholars attending the day schools in Trinity parish with a substantial and wholesome dinner, on two days in each week; and on Saturdays an arrangement was made whereby the wives or mothers of the men attending the Industrial schools were supplied with a quart of soup to take home to their families. The number of children thus partially fed was 600; and the number of women who attended on Saturday to receive the quart of soup was about 1,000. The women received in addition 6d. each in money, being a payment supplemental

\* In the same work I find the following given as the composition and analysis of the Potato Pie supplied at the Mothers' Kitchen:—"For 100 rations (carbon 2984 grains, nitrogen 109 grains; cost 3½d. per ration.), potatoes, 150 lbs.; meat 30lb., bacon 2½lbs., lard 5lb., flour 20lb., pepper and salt."

† Compare the above, and the recipe of the soup supplied from the Public Soup Kitchen as given at page 20, with the following recipe for 580 quarts of soup made during the distress in 1847:—

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| The coarser parts of fresh and well-fed beef.....                  | 120 lbs. |
| Scotch Barley .....  | 60 "     |
| Prepared Groats.....   | 30 "     |
| Peas.....  | 50 "     |
| Salt .....   | 14 "     |
| Onions (dressed).....  | 14 "     |
| Cayenne pepper pods well bruised and suspended (in muslin)         |          |
| during the boiling process.....                                    | 2 oz.    |
| White pepper ground added at the close of the boiling process..... | 5 oz.    |

to the allowance made to their husbands and sons; and the clergy of Trinity also provided for them a special service in the school-room, which was well attended by crowds of apparently devout worshippers. The Gladstone soup kitchen continued in operation for about five months, and during that period there were dispensed from it the enormous number of upwards of 200,000 dinners, being an average of 10,000 dinners per week. In support of these various schemes of relief, and for the purposes of general relief according to his discretion, the Rev. Dr. Robinson received contributions amounting in the aggregate to upwards of £4,000.

The clergy of St. Peter's parish had under their charge the girls' and women's classes at the Mechanics' Institution and Paradise Lane, and the men's classes at Pump Street and Shakespeare Mill. Mr. Woodhouse had also under his care the straw plaiting class at the Town Hall; and we have seen that when the sewing and educational classes were brought to a close, he commenced a night school for the benefit of those who had attended these classes (for attendance at which they received a small payment), in order that they might continue their educational improvement. In fact, the attention given to education—the Clergy personally superintending and holding periodical examinations—was specially characteristic of the classes, for both old and young, carried on in St. Peter's parish, or under the charge of St. Peter's Clergy. In the men's classes were taught writing from dictation and letter writing, branches of learning in which the operatives are sadly deficient. There was also in St. Peter's, as in Trinity parish, a reading room established for the men attending the classes. At Pump Street and Bent Street lectures were occasionally delivered to the assembled classes attending Pump Street and the Shakespeare, by friends who visited the Incumbent. These lectures were on such subjects as Pompeii, the wars of the Punjaub, the Druids, &c., and were rendered doubly interesting by the maps and drawings with which they were illustrated. In addition to the short religious service with which each day's duties at the several classes were commenced and closed, the clergy of St. Peter's (with the consent of the Bishop) had full church service, with sermon, once a week in the men's school room, Pump Street, which, the reader will remember, was an unoccupied weaving factory, at which the men from the Shakespeare school attended, bringing with them their benches, and so improvising a very comfortable chapel. These mid-week services were highly appreciated by the men, many of whom had

previously been strangers to the House of God and its services, and the apparent devotion with which they joined in the prayers and praises and listened to the sermon, justified the hope that these opportunities of religious instruction were not without lasting benefit to many.

Mr. Woodhouse, like Dr. Robinson, had many benevolent correspondents who offered contributions for the relief of special cases, and the labour and correspondence which this mode of relief involved was found by him to be enormous, far exceeding any advantage which it afforded, or anything which the amiable sentiment in which this mode of contributing originates could justify. In the distribution of clothing, and relief in money from the funds entrusted to him for use at his discretion, Mr. Woodhouse had the assistance of his three curates, and a number of his Sunday school teachers, male and female, besides a Bible woman, and, for a time, his paid secretary, and was enabled by these means to attend very efficiently to the wants and relieve the most pressing necessities of the poor in his parish and congregation. The sums of money he received for the purposes of general and special relief, and in support of the various schemes which he originated or undertook the management of, apart from the projects of the Clerical Association, amounted to £2,301 5s. 11d. This money was expended in payments through the classes to those who were not church scholars; through penny night classes; in school fees for children, additional to those paid for by the Guardians and Relief Committee; for the married men's dinner, educational and industrial classes; for special cases thus kept from the Guardians and Relief Committee; for clothing, clogs and shoes; for getting things out of pawn; for gifts to meet small savings; for Christmas dinners; for cottage class after other classes had closed; for sewing materials; for the mothers' kitchens in the two winters beginning in 1863 and 1864; for invalid operatives; for a Bible woman; and for incidental expenses. The number of bales of clothing received and distributed by the Rev. C. W. Woodhouse was 161; and in this matter special attention was paid to the members of the men's classes (as their attendance at the classes afforded an opportunity of knowing both their character and necessities), and to the teachers and scholars attending the Sunday schools.

In addition to the evening class for girls formed in St. Peter's parish after the close of the general Sewing Classes, which I have already referred to, the Incumbent commenced in a cottage a class of

about twenty girls, between the ages of 12 and 14 years, who were taught the church catechism, reading, writing, arithmetic, sewing, knitting and mat making, and paid 1s. per week for attendance. These girls were only waiting an opportunity of getting into a factory and learning to weave, and this class was a means of their employing their leisure profitably. The class was commenced on the 10th of July, 1863, and continued till the 30th of July, 1864, at a cost of £71, and it was under the care of a teacher, whose remuneration as such obviated the necessity of her applying for charitable relief.

In St. Paul's parish there were no special measures of relief, but the Rev. H. W. Marychurch, and his Curate, the Rev. R. J. Wallace, took their full share of duty in assisting at the Town Hall classes, and in all the schemes connected with the Clerical Association. One of the most successful of the Young Men's Classes was formed in the parish of St. Paul, and conducted in a most vigorous and efficient manner by the Rev. Wm. Wallace, Curate of St. John's, brother to Mr. Wallace, Curate of St. Paul's. The amount received by Mr. Marychurch for parochial distribution was about £100, besides large quantities of clothing.

In the parish of St. Michael the severity of the distress was not felt at so early a period as in some of the other districts of the town, as most of the mills situated in that neighbourhood continued working till towards the end of 1862; and after they did close, the pressure upon such funds as the clergy were entrusted to dispense was very much mitigated by the liberal manner in which Mr. Hornby provided for the relief of those who had been employed at Brookhouse Mills. But the Rev. J. W. Pengelly and his curate, the Rev. J. Barnes, were indefatigable in their attention to the work of relief, and took a very active part in assisting at the Town Hall sewing classes, and in superintending the Orphanage (after its removal into the parish of St. Michael) and in visiting wherever distress was known or suspected to exist. For the purposes of casual relief, Mr Pengelly received from various friends sums amounting to about £200; in addition to which he was made the almoner of numerous small sums for the relief of special cases, of which there were at one time between thirty and forty in his parish. These sums for the relief of special cases reached him chiefly through the Vicar and Mrs. Rushton, from whom he also received large quantities of clothing and £46 to be used at his discretion in the purchase of clothing, or in redeeming what had been pledged. The Rev. C. W. Woodhouse, also, from funds

received by him for special objects, appropriated £12 to St. Michael's parish for the purchase of clothing.

But in addition to these relief labours of a general character, in which the clergy of St. Michael's bore a share in common with their brethren connected with the other parishes of the town, Mr. Pengelly, at the suggestion of Mr. Hornby, commenced classes for boys and girls between the ages of 13 and 14—the ages for which neither the day school nor the sewing and educational classes made any provision—where they were taught reading, writing and arithmetic, and the girls were in addition instructed in sewing. The classes were formed in two cottages belonging to Mr. Hornby, by whom the whole expenses were defrayed. They were commenced on the 17th of October, 1862, and continued till the 1st of May, 1863, and the attendance of boys ranged from 27 to 37, and of girls from 12 to 22. The boys were paid 6d. and the girls 1s. per week for attendance, and the cost during the six months and a half that the classes were in operation was £63. The girls class was under the special superintendence of Mrs Pengelly, who was assisted in her labours by Mrs. and Miss Hoyle, of Little Harwood Hall, and Mrs. Robert Riley.

In the parish of Christ Church there were no special measures of relief, but through the Sunday schools, and by means of diligent parochial visitation, the Clergy were kept informed of the condition of the more necessitous of their parishioners, and enabled to dispense judiciously the funds entrusted to them. The Rev. Mr. Moss received from private friends and through the Vicar, for purposes of relief according to his discretion, about £300, besides large quantities of clothing. This may seem a small amount, compared with the sums which several of the other clergy had at their disposal, for so poor and populous a district, but a large proportion of the destitution which might otherwise have been cognisable by the Clergy, was relieved by Mr. Hutchinson, whose benefactions through private channels of relief greatly exceeded his public subscriptions.

The Rev. A. Gallagher, Curate of St. Luke's district, shared with the clergy of St. Peter's the care of the females belonging to St. Luke's, who occupied a room sometimes in the Mechanics' Institution, and sometimes in adjacent premises. Mr. Gallagher also assisted in visiting the men's operative schools in St. Peter's parish, and in distributing to special cases weekly allowances which were assigned to him either from general sources by the Vicar, or from friends by the Incumbent of St. Peter's, and clothing at his discretion.

The ministers and members of the various Protestant Dissenting congregations made most laudable and, in many cases, very successful efforts to relieve the poorer families connected with their respective chapels. We have seen that the congregation of James Street were amongst the first to commence sewing and educational classes, and the tabular statements of the attendance at these classes shew that the James Street sewing school was the most numerously attended of all the Protestant Dissenting sewing classes. But in addition to the numbers given in that table, which embraces only the young women on behalf of whom the Relief Committee paid capitation grants, there were a large number of married women in attendance at the James Street sewing class, who received a liberal allowance from private funds placed at the disposal of Mr. Lister for the general purposes of relief. Mr. Lister had the advantage of a large staff of most zealous Sunday school teachers, both male and female, who lent important aid during the whole crisis, and most efficiently provided that none of their fellow-worshippers should suffer the privations to which the pressure of the times exposed them. Much was done privately by the members of James Street congregation, by means of funds of which no account has been kept. But the congregational and official expenditure amounted to £798 16s. 3d., of which £440 were received from the "Manchester Congregational Committee"; £172 7s. 6d. direct from Congregational Churches in other parts of the country; and £28 14s. 6d. per the editor of the *Christian World*.

The Manchester Congregational Committee sent money and clothing, to a greater or less extent, to all the Independent congregations in the town, with the exception of that assembling at Bolton Road Station; and the funds thus received, aided by contributions from other sources, enabled them to carry on classes for both young men and girls, in which an allowance was made supplemental to the Relief Committee's Capitation grant, and classes in which many were assembled—married women and others ineligible for the Relief Committee's grant—whose weekly allowance had to be made wholly from the funds thus entrusted to the Ministers for Congregational distribution. The extent to which these private or congregational funds were expended, may be judged of by the fact, that from the 1st of December, 1862, till the close of the distress, the sewing and men's classes in connection with Park Chapel were maintained at a cost of £228 17s. 4d., of which sum only £16 7s. 8d. were received from the Relief Committee in the shape of Capitation grants.

The minister and congregation of Mount Street Chapel were most liberally supplied with funds for the support of the unemployed connected with that place of worship. On occasion of the second subscription (October, 1862) Dr. Skinner, on behalf of Presbyterian friends, guaranteed the sum of £500, to be raised and expended in relief of the poor connected with his congregation and schools; and on the 8th of December he was in a position to decline all further aid from the Relief Committee in support of Mount Street sewing classes. The letter in which this announcement was made deserves a place in this history. It was addressed to the late Mr. James Parkinson, who was at that time treasurer to the relief fund, and is to the following purport:—

"It affords me great pleasure to inform you as Treasurer of the Relief Fund, that in the meantime we shall not receive any further capitation grant to carry on Mount Street Educational and Sewing classes. From the first we have not only paid the school wages of all our scholars without receiving any assistance from the Guardians or the Relief Fund, but we have given pecuniary help to all of them who are workers out of employment. We have never taken a penny from the General Fund for our young men's classes; we have also kept our people independent of the Guardians, and now our classes will be entirely independent of the capitation grant from the Relief Fund. Our having given 3s. a week to each of our young people and married women, and 1s. to each of those under 14 years of age, has subjected us to very considerable expenditure, but we have been able to meet it. And now that our system, combining education with pecuniary relief, has been in full operation for fourteen weeks, we have no wish to recall a shilling we have spent, and we are encouraged to hope that we shall be able to go forward in our work of benevolence without the capitation grant from the General Relief Fund."

The Roman Catholic Priests received considerable sums of money and large quantities of clothing—the Rev. J. V. Meany (St. Anne's) about £300 in money and clothing to the value of about £200—for distribution at their discretion amongst the more destitute members of their respective flocks. But the large proportion of poor, chiefly natives of the Emerald Isle, and not the most provident in seasons of prosperity, or the least clamorous for relief in times of adversity, professing the Roman Catholic faith, rendered it impossible for these private funds to make an appreciable impression on the vast amount of distress with which the Priests had to deal. And it may therefore be said that the Roman Catholic unemployed were only very partially relieved by means of the funds entrusted to their religious teachers, and had to depend for subsistence almost entirely on the relief dispensed by the Guardians and the Relief Committee.

In enumerating the miscellaneous sources of relief which the crisis improvised, I must not omit the "Post Office Relief Fund," a



fund collected by Mr. George Birchall, the Postmaster of Blackburn, from Postmasters and other post-office officials in every part of the country, and distributed by him, principally in the shape of clothing and for the purchase of sick nourishment, amongst the necessitous, chiefly those whose poverty had been aggravated by sickness or failing health. Up to June, 1863, this fund amounted to £425 19s. 11d., contributed in sums varying from 1s. to £10; and the care with which it was dispensed will be seen from a passage in the report which Mr. Birchall addressed to his subscribers under date June 13th, 1863:—

"On setting out to distribute the aid your generosity had provided, I resolved that I would personally visit the home of every family to whom I afforded relief from the funds before assisting them, that I might as far as possible guard against imposition. Up to the present time I have visited about fifteen hundred almost destitute homes, and have beheld scenes that I could not have believed to exist, had I not actually seen them."

Mr. Birchall adds, with respect to the sick:—

"We have had much sickness to contend with as well as poverty, especially in regard to consumptive youth of both sexes. In the destitute condition in which the families were, it was felt to be a duty to set apart a portion of our funds for their subsistence, as the parents were quite powerless to provide for them. Upwards of twenty cases of this kind have been supported for many months. Although several have died and no longer need our aid, still we have at this moment a dozen who are fed suitably and provided with all that is necessary for them in regard to clothing at a cost of about three pounds per week."

The following shews the expenditure of the fund, with the exception of a balance of £9 5s. 2d.:—

|  |    |    |   |
|--|----|----|---|
| 150 yards Flannel for Petticoats, Park Church Sewing Class (Rev. A. S. Maclean)..... | 8  | 2  | 6 |
| 150 do. St. Peter's do. (Rev. C. W. Woodhouse).....                                  | 8  | 2  | 6 |
| 150 do. St. Michael's do. (Rev. W. Pengelly).....                                    | 8  | 2  | 6 |
| 250 do. St. John's do. (Rev. J. Smith).....  | 13 | 2  | 6 |
| 150 do. St. Mary's do. (Rev. H. Wescoe).....   | 8  | 2  | 6 |
| 150 do. Holy Trinity do. (Mr. Lewis).....  | 8  | 2  | 6 |
| 150 do. Christ Church do. (Rev. R. Moss).....  | 8  | 2  | 6 |
| 220 do. St. Anne's Roman Catholic do. (Rev. J. V. Meany).....                        | 11 | 18 | 8 |
| 40 yards Print at 6½d., Widows' Class do. ....                                       | 1  | 1  | 8 |
| 50 Frocks for Girls at Roman Catholic School do. ....                                | 7  | 10 | 0 |
| 200 yards Calico, Poor of St. Anne's do. ....  | 5  | 8  | 4 |
| 150 do. Barton Street Chapel (Rev. J. Edgar).....                                    | 3  | 15 | 0 |
| 100 yards Flannel do. do. ....   | 5  | 8  | 4 |
| 100 do. Poor of Park Ward (Rev. W. Oates).....                                       | 5  | 8  | 4 |
| 150 do. Mechanics' Sewing Class (Mrs. Clarke).....                                   | 8  | 2  | 6 |
| Clothes purchased of Park School Sewing Class for distribution.....                  | 44 | 11 | 7 |
| Do. Mechanics' Institution do. ....  | 23 | 7  | 3 |
| Do. Town Hall do. ....   | 16 | 3  | 0 |
| Pledges redeemed for destitute families .....  | 21 | 9  | 6 |
| Clothing, new and second-hand, from Pawnbrokers and Clothiers for distribution.....  | 87 | 0  | 0 |
| Repairing and altering Clothes sent for distribution.....                            | 3  | 3  | 0 |
| Paid for Clogs, Boots and Shoes .....  | 23 | 3  | 2 |

|   |      |    |    |
|---|------|----|----|
| Sick Relief Lying-in Women and Consumptive Patients.....  | 30   | 14 | 10 |
| Urgent cases of distress relieved with Cash.....  | 11   | 8  | 3  |
| Beds and Bedding for destitute families.....  | 16   | 18 | 10 |
| Paid for Postage, Printing and Parcels .....  | 15   | 10 | 0  |
| Paid two families (Airey and Lambert) 10s. per week for 26 weeks, subscribed for the purpose by the Officers of the Bath Post Office..... | 13   | 0  | 0  |
|   | £416 | 14 | 9  |

Subsequent to the date of this report (June, 1863) Mr. Birchall received £12 9s. 3d. and expended £18 12s. 5d., leaving a balance in hand on the 1st of July, 1865, of £3 2s.

The members of the Society of Friends in Blackburn established a special distribution of money and clothing for cases of extreme destitution, which the common allowance granted from the Relief Committee or the Board of Guardians would scarcely suffice to meet. Mr. Councillor Shackleton acted as treasurer to this fund, which amounted to over £700, and was dispensed privately by the members.

I may also mention that the managers of the Ripon Training School for domestic servants, a most excellent institution under the superintendence of Lady Mary Vyner, the Countess de Grey, and Mrs. Goode, the wife of the Dean of Ripon, placed several nominations at the disposal of the Clergy; and six or eight well-behaved and deserving girls enjoyed for upwards of twelve months the many benefits which residence under that roof affords. Two or three found excellent situations as domestic servants, and the remainder returned to their homes in Blackburn and resumed work in the factories.

In the spring of 1863, the attention of the operatives was directed a good deal to the subject of emigration, and many proposals were made, which grants of money from some of the Colonies encouraged, for a wholesale deportation of the bone and sinew, the skill and ingenuity of the cotton districts, to some of the young and rising offshoots of the mother country, where labour was thought to be in demand, and where the prospects of prosperity and plenty were considered more encouraging than at home. A large number of the operatives were favourable to these proposals, and they made out a very plausible case when they urged, in pleading for funds in support of emigration, that their object was to "preclude the necessity of their being longer dependent on poor rates or public donations." The Central Executive Committee had the subject under their consideration on several occasions—when petitions and memorials came before them requesting that they would devote some portion of the funds at their



disposal to the promotion of emigration; but they could never see their way to giving such proposals anything more than a negative approval. The conclusion to which on this subject they were led, after many months' observation and experience, was very clearly expressed in the "minute" of 20th April, 1863, to which I have already referred. The passage is as follows:—

"The Central Executive Committee have been unwilling to sanction or promote any government interference for the sudden removal to the colonies of so large a number of factory operatives, not inured to out-door work, as would operate as an immediate and effectual relief. They do not believe that the colonies are prepared for the sudden absorption of so large an amount of labour. Nor could a sudden large emigration of unseasoned cotton workmen occur without a disastrous loss of life during acclimatization. But the Central Executive have been ready to give immediate publicity to the grants of the colonial governments, and to facilitate the communications of their agents and of the emigration commissioners with the local committees."

In Blackburn, the feeling in favour of emigration was expressed at frequent intervals by the operatives, but there was no response by the employers, who could not indeed be expected to favour a movement which would withdraw from the neighbourhood of their mills and factories the most skilled and industrious of their operatives. An effort was made to obtain funds from the Mansion House Committee, and for this purpose a petition, signed by one hundred and fifteen working men, was presented to the Lord Mayor, in which they represented that there was no prospect, within anything like a reasonable period, of an adequate supply of cotton being obtained for the supply of the wants of Lancashire; and that there was no such active demand for labour in other parts of England as would justify their migration to the seat of another description of manufacture; while in Australia, they contended, the great want was labour such as they were both able and willing to afford. But at that time the Mansion House Committee declined to accede to the request for aid, although subsequently they devoted a portion of the funds at their disposal, considerable sums having been sent from the colonies for the purpose, to the assistance of those desirous of emigrating. But although the cotton spinners and manufacturers of Blackburn declined their aid, several persons not directly connected with the cotton trade gave the emigration movement their countenance, and a certain amount of pecuniary support; and a society was formed for the purpose of promoting emigration, which collected funds to the amount of about £250, and assisted nearly 200 persons to leave Blackburn for new homes in the colonies.

The very limited success of the emigration movement, which was owing as much to the apathy of the operatives as the hostility of the employers, proved the confidence which both felt in the speedy revival and ultimately increased prosperity of the cotton trade. On the part of the employers this was still more significantly manifested by the assiduity with which they not only adapted their machinery to the short staple cotton they had to deal with, but built new mills and extended old ones. To such an extent has this been the case in Blackburn, that by the time all the new factories and additions to old ones which were commenced during the period of the cotton famine are at work, it will be found that the number of looms has been increased from 30,000 to 40,000, or about 33 per cent., and the number of spindles from 1,000,000 to 1,500,000, or an increase of about 50 per cent.

The prosperity for which these preparations have been made is as yet only dawning. Let us hope that the bright anticipations they indicate may not be disappointed. And let us also hope, that the experience and recollections of the long period of gloom through which we have passed will not soon be forgotten; but that the lessons they teach will for many years be influential in exciting gratitude to the Great Disposer of all, and in tempering to harmony the jarring which so frequently manifests itself between the operatives and their employers.

## APPENDIX.

## SUPPLEMENTARY BALANCE SHEET.

I received too late to be inserted in its proper place at the close of the Relief Committee's operations, the following supplementary Balance sheet showing the receipts and expenditure of the Relief Committee between the 12th of September, 1864, and the 18th of June, 1865:—

BALANCE SHEET FROM SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1864, TO JUNE 17TH, 1865.

## RECEIPTS.

|   | £    | s. | d. |
|---|------|----|----|
| To Balance in Bank.....                               | 1175 | 17 | 1  |
| „ The Manchester Executive Committee .....            | 1495 | 0  | 0  |
| „ „ Mansion House „ .....                             | 350  | 0  | 0  |
| „ „ Blackburn Corporation (Public Works account)..... | 1373 | 14 | 10 |
| „ „ Board of Guardians .....                          | 1081 | 13 | 8  |
| „ Amount received from Miscellaneous Contracts „..... | 359  | 13 | 7  |
| „ Subscriptions .....                                 | 103  | 2  | 6  |
| „ Bank Interest .....                                 | 32   | 10 | 2  |
| Total   | 5971 | 12 | 8  |

## PAYMENTS.

|   | £    | s. | d. |
|---|------|----|----|
| By General Relief in Cash .....                     | 3158 | 13 | 7  |
| CLOTHING DEPARTMENT.                                |      |    |    |
| By Relief in Clothing .....                         | 1044 | 4  | 8  |
| „ Clogs.....  | 240  | 7  | 6  |
| „ Coal .....  | 310  | 2  | 6  |
| „ School Pence .....                                | 211  | 6  | 8  |
| „ Infirmary .....                                   | 69   | 3  | 8  |
| „ Printing, Stationery, &c. ....                    | 94   | 0  | 10 |
| „ Rents .....                                       | 25   | 7  | 0  |
| „ Office Furniture .....                            | 2    | 18 | 1  |
| „ Incidentals, including Whitelining, Gas, &c. .... | 28   | 15 | 11 |
| „ Wages of Clerks, Labour Department.....           | 72   | 9  | 0  |
| „ „ General .....                                   | 87   | 4  | 0  |
| „ Cash in Cunliffes & Co.....                       | 623  | 12 | 3  |
| „ „ Hand .....                                      | 3    | 7  | 0  |
| Total   | 5971 | 22 | 8  |

This brings up the total receipts of the Relief Committee to £99,442 14s. 1d., and the expenditure to £98,815 14s. 10d.

## PUBLIC WORKS.

By the courtesy of Mr. Smith, the Borough Surveyor, I am enabled to present a few particulars respecting the progress of the Public Works in the twelve months from June, 1864, to June, 1865. This is an interval during which, as I have explained, the Public Works were wholly under the control of the Corporation; and during which, it may be said, the Corporation acted as a Relief Committee, by finding employment for large numbers of Factory Workers. The following statement of the number of men employed, and the amount paid in wages weekly, with the average weekly earnings, will give some idea of the extent to which the Poor Rates or the Relief Fund must have been burdened had it not been for the extensive Public Works then in progress within the Borough:—

| Date.<br>1864.      | Total number<br>Employed. |                        | Total. | Total amount<br>of wages paid. | Average<br>Weekly<br>Earnings |       |       |   |
|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|-------|---|
|                     | Skilled.                  | Factory<br>Operatives. |        |                                | £                             | s. d. | s. d. |   |
| July 30th .....     | 149                       | 341                    | 490    | 364                            | 10                            | 0     | 15    | 0 |
| August 27th .....   | 325                       | 285                    | 610    | 461                            | 3                             | 0     | 15    | 9 |
| October 1st .....   | 402                       | 223                    | 625    | 498                            | 8                             | 6     | 15    | 9 |
| „ 29th.....         | 448                       | 623                    | 1071   | 795                            | 3                             | 0     | 14    | 9 |
| November 26th.....  | 461                       | 378                    | 839    | 659                            | 0                             | 10    | 15    | 9 |
| December 31st ..... | 421                       | 531                    | 952    | 554                            | 7                             | 8     | 11    | 6 |
| 1865.               |                           |                        |        |                                |                               |       |       |   |
| January 28th .....  | 369                       | 362                    | 731    | 437                            | 6                             | 0     | 10    | 3 |
| February 25th ..... | 360                       | 116                    | 476    | 127                            | 6                             | 0     | 5     | 3 |
| March 25th .....    | 378                       | 99                     | 477    | 374                            | 3                             | 1     | 15    | 9 |
| April 29th.....     | 271                       | 63                     | 334    | 295                            | 5                             | 6     | 14    | 9 |
| May 27th .....      | 258                       | 49                     | 307    | 289                            | 10                            | 3     | 18    | 0 |

These figures shew that a large proportion of factory operatives were employed on Public Works. But many who are entered as skilled operatives, are really factory workers, who have become "skilled" by practice in the use of the spade and pick. The small average earnings in December, 1864, and January and February, 1865, is accounted for by the broken time of the men on account of the weather. In October, November, and December there were considerable numbers who were partially employed on Public Works as a labour test, and who were paid by the Relief Committee according to the scale of allowance, in proportion to the number in the family. The amount of work executed under the provisions of the Public Works Act up to June, 1865, was as follows:—

|                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Brick Sewers.....           | 2 miles.             |
| Pipe Sewers .....           | 19 miles, 840 yards. |
| Kerb Stones laid down ..... | 14,790 lineal yards. |

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Flagging of Footways .....   | 29,453 Square do.      |
| Paving of Carriage ways .....  | 48,720 " "             |
| Representing a length of newly paved and<br>flagged streets completed of about | 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles. |
| The River Blakewater has been pitched and<br>otherwise improved for about      | 1,400 lineal yards.    |
| The total cost of the Sewer Works has been about                               | £27,061                |
| " " Street Paving .....  | 40,451                 |
| " " River Improvements .....   | 1,900                  |
|  | <hr/>                  |
| Total  | 69,412                 |

The amount paid for skilled labour has been about £13,000

" " unskilled, or the labour  
of Factory workers. } 12,500

These figures shew that the Corporation up to that time had not quite expended one-half of the money they were authorised to borrow.

