

Reminiscences of a Chief Constable



by William Chadwick

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Having read *Reminiscences of a Chief Constable*, I am immediately impressed by the Author's concern for the welfare of the society in which he lived. Underlying one of the main responsibilities of a Police Officer—the prosecution of criminals—Mr. Chadwick reveals a deep sympathy for the victims of the social conditions under which he served.

The years since Mr. Chadwick retired from the Police Service have been years of radical change—not only in the phenomenal increase in crime but also in the number of crimes it is now possible to commit. It is said that it now takes two million laws to enforce the Ten Commandments. This is basically true but law breakers have developed a sophistication which calls for sophisticated methods of detection.

Nevertheless, offences being committed in the nineteenth century are still committed today—things may change but the passage of time brings little change.

I find this book of intense interest—not only as the recollections of a predecessor but as an intimate picture of the district in a period hitherto unknown to me.

Chief Superintendent
K. B. Mellalieu, Q.P.M.
Commander
Stalybridge Division
Cheshire Constabulary

Also published in this occasional series of books of local interest are *The Reminiscences of Mottram*, by William Chadwick and *The Legends of Longendale*, by Thomas Middleton

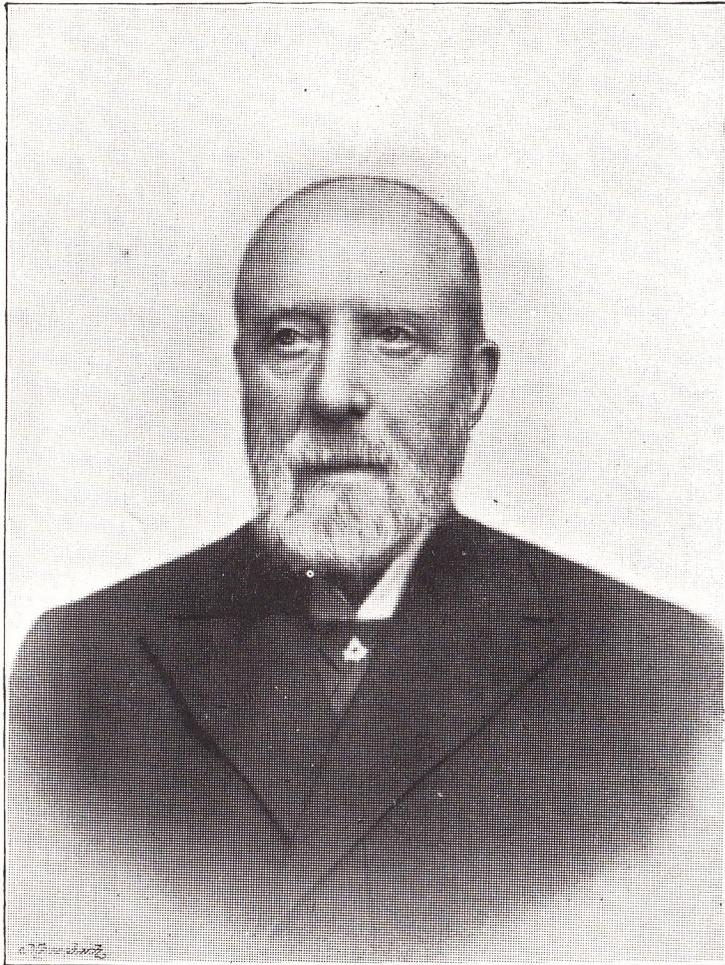
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WILLIAM CHADWICK

William Chadwick was born at the Hague, near Mottram, in July, 1822, into a family settled in Mottram for over 450 years. His father died when William was 5 years old, and the boy had to earn his keep from the age of 8. After working a 13 hour day in Sidebottom's mill in Broadbottom, he went to night school and to Sunday school to educate himself. He still found time to join the Mottram Band and the Singers. In 1851 he went to London to join the Metropolitan Police Force. After two years service in the slums of London, he left to join the Cheshire County Constabulary, and was stationed in Dukinfield. He later became the Inspector of Ashton-under-Lyne Police force, and in 1862 was made Chief Constable of Stalybridge, a post he held until his retirement in 1899.

William Chadwick died in 1902, and was buried at Mottram.

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Police Review.

REMINISCENCES
OF A
CHIEF CONSTABLE.

BY
WILLIAM CHADWICK,
Oldest Borough Chief Constable in England.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. WALLACE COOP.

LONGDENDALE AMENITY SOCIETY

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TO
COLONEL SIR HOWARD VINCENT, C.B., M.P.

(LATE DIRECTOR OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS),

This Volume

IS, BY PERMISSION, RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
IN GRATEFUL RECOLLECTION OF SERVICES RENDERED TO THE
POLICE OF THE COUNTRY.

PREFACE BY

COLONEL SIR HOWARD VINCENT, C.B., M.P.

(Late Director of Criminal Investigations).

THE Author of "Reminiscences of a Chief Constable" asks if he may dedicate it to me. Anything which takes me back to my police days is welcome. They were the happiest man ever had—full of work and often of anxiety, but associated both in the Metropolis and the Provinces with the finest of organised bodies. The Secretary of State for the Home Department said in appointing me "I hope you will establish the closest relations between County, City, and Borough Forces and Scotland Yard." It was not necessary. The Chief and Head Constables were without exception courteous friends—closest allies. Mr. Chadwick wore a blue coat whilst I was in long clothes, yet his experience and that of others enabled me, therefore, to give a new light sometimes to methods. May he long enjoy that honoured retirement which is the policeman's due.

C. E. HOWARD VINCENT.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

In venturing to place the following pages before the public, I trust that the absence of literary skill, of which there is no pretence, will not detract from their value. Some of the matter has appeared in the local and other papers in various forms during the last thirty odd years, but a great portion has been compiled in the quiet seclusion of Leicester Villa, Altrincham, since my retirement from active service.

Many suggestions were made to me by friends to publish my experiences, as they would no doubt be interesting to many unfamiliar with the doings at the time I joined the London Police half-a-century back, and to some extent during the time I worked as a civilian twenty odd years prior thereto.

Some of the matter first appeared in the *Ashton Reporter*, under the heading of "Reminiscences of Mottram by a Native." This went on at about a column a week for several weeks, when a number of friends, who, like myself, had left Mottram, recognising the incidents referred to, and attributing them to me on account of my long connection with the old place, pressed upon me to acknowledge being the writer which I did, at the same time taking advantage, while I had public attention, of ventilating a scheme conceived in my boyish days, of perpetuating the memory of the deceased Mottram genius, Lawrence Earnshaw.

A number of gentlemen from Stalybridge, Mottram, &c., rallied round me and formed a good working committee, and in a few months' time sufficient money was subscribed, and the handsome monument in Mottram Cemetery, a picture of which is given in this volume, was erected, just a hundred years after the death of the old genius. The unveiling of the monument was a red-letter day in the history of Mottram, which many people still living well remember.

I ask the indulgence of the reader for any shortcomings, and at the same time express a hope that my well-meant labours, set forth in this book, will help to bring a truer picture of the life of a constable before those who are too apt to regard the lot of "Robert" as being a superlatively happy one.

THE AUTHOR.

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REMINISCENCES OF A CHIEF CONSTABLE.

SHORT AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

My early days were spent in a small hamlet known as the Haigh, Mottram, where I was born on July, 24th, 1822.

When but five years of age I had the misfortune to lose my father. In those days there were not the facilities for giving children a sound education as there are at the present time. To attend day school was out of the question, and at eight years of age I was sent to work, for about thirteen hours a day, at a cotton mill belonging to the Sidebottoms, of Broadbottom. My early education was therefore acquired at Sunday and night schools. My father belonged to an old Mottram family, his name being second on the register at Mottram Church 400 years ago, the first being Hollingworthe, of Hollingworth. I continued working at the mill for many year, leading an uneventful life, the monotony of which was only broken by the part I played in the village band and choral society, until January, 1851, When I joined the Metropolitan Police Force, being then in my 29th year. I was stationed in the N Division, under Mr. Superintendent Walker, at Edmonton. There the seamy side of life was presented to my view with an almost appalling suddenness. I had a valuable preliminary experience in the Metropolitan Police Force, being engaged mostly on night duty, so that there was ample opportunity for studying the harrowing sights of the metropolis, as seen under the glimmer of its gas lights. Whilst in London two great historical events occurred. These were the funeral of the Duke of Wellington and the opening of the World's Great Fair at the Crystal Palace, at both of which functions I feel somewhat proud of having been on duty.

Disliking the monotony of night duty I left London after about two years, and joined the Cheshire Constabulary, which at that time consisted of special high constables and petit constables, who wore no uniform. I was stationed at Dukinfield, along with Mr. George Dalgleish, late Chief Constable of Ashton-under-Lyne. The township was divided into two districts, so that each officer had about 7,000 inhabitants to look after, and we had invariably from six to ten cases each at Knutsford Quarter Sessions, besides attending Chester and other assizes. We both held excise commissions, as In those days illicit distilling was carried on to a great extent; so much so, that we had nearly forty convictions for this offence during the three years I was stationed at Dukinfield. It was no unusual thing for us to patrol our districts together all night in what we called still-hunting.

Shortly before the Consolidated Police Act came into force I was appointed Inspector in the Ashton-under-Lyne Borough Force, and on leaving, in 1862, to take up the position of Chief Constable of Stalybridge, I held the record for the number of convictions of thieves, etc. Since then, an up to my retirement, in the closing year of the nineteenth century, my time was spent in the Stalybridge district, where a finishing touch was imparted to an otherwise eventful career.

AMATEUR DETECTIVE.

Although I did not join the force until January 23rd, 1851, I had taken a deep interest in the duties of constables even in my early teens, for one of my mother's brothers was the parish constable and another the magistrates clerk in Mottram. I was also familiar with handcuffs. The first I ever saw were made of oak. They had opening for the wrist. One end was fastened with iron hinges, and the

other by a padlock. The building opposite the Crown Pole in Mottram was built by the authorities of the county of Chester as a petty sessions house for that end of the county. This was before Hyde was considered a place of any importance. I well remember mixing amongst the people as a sort of amateur detective at a wakes time, and reporting anything that attracted my attention. There was, however, little to report in those days, except men coming out of public-houses to fight in the streets. This, however, was so common that when I mentioned it to my uncle, he would say, Never mind, lad; they find their own bones. This would appear to have been the view taken by the magistrates, for as late as 1855, after I had removed to the Cheshire Constabulary, I had two men up before the late Captain Hollyngworthe (who had formerly presided at the Mottram Court), at the Hyde Petty Sessions, for fighting in the street. When asked by the magistrates what they had to say in defence of their conduct, each accused the other of being the aggressor. The Captain, after looking them over for a moment, said; Well, after all I see little harm in settling these things in the good old way, if they are both agreeable, and pretty well matched, but you must not fight in the street in future. On another occasion a young man was brought before the Captain, charged with having deserted from the army. This was during the Crimean war. The man admitted the charge, and then the Captain said; Young man, I am ashamed of you having deserted the colours, when the country require all the soldiers they can possibly get hold of. I should be at the front myself, but they won't have me. They say I am too old for further service.

My first sight of a paid police officer was one Saturday night, when I went to Stalybridge to view the new market (now the Town Hall). I saw a tall, stout man, wearing a long topcoat, with a tin lantern in one hand, and a big knobstick in the other. I was told this man was a night watchman, named John Oldham. Some time after I knew John Gatley, Deputy Constable of Stalybridge, and Robert Newton, Deputy Constable of Ashton. About the same time I got to know Wright Broadbent, a sort of inspector, of Stalybridge, who was inspector when I took charge of the Stalybridge Police Force, in February, 1862, and from him I received considerable information respecting the doings of a notorious family named Swan. The members of this family were never suspected of dishonest practices, as they attended their work regularly at Leech's mill. I took an interest in them, as I knew the father, the mother, and the brothers and sisters of John Swan, the elder, and Robert Hartley, their son-in-law. They had been in the habit of going about the country armed with bludgeons, swords, and pistols. This they seemed to have done with the greatest impunity, as there were no night police patrols. When they were found out, it was by the merest accident. Although there were no local newspapers in those days, I was kept pretty well posted up in what was going on in the neighbouring police courts, and also at the assize trials.

POLICEMEN PAST AND PRESENT.

The present generation, having been accustomed to see smart, neatly-dressed policemen walking about the streets with a sort of clockwork regularity, hardly realises the state of things which existed some fifty or sixty years ago, when the peace of a town was in the hands of some trades-man, as Deputy Constable, who attended to his duties, if convenient, when called upon. He was assisted by some two or three old men, past hard work, as night watchmen, in some places known as Old Charlies, who were employed some eleven hours at a stretch for seven nights a week at a remuneration of twelve or thirteen shillings a week. Indeed, down to 1856, there was no law for the

whole of England requiring that there should be paid policemen. It was the duty of every man of the township to take his turn as constable for nothing, excepting certain lawful fees allowed. Old Charlies patrolled the streets at night, in heavy topcoats, with large horn lanterns and huge knobsticks in their hands, and large wooden ricks in their pockets, with which to make an alarm in case of discovering a fire, or requiring assistance when a tough job presented itself. In addition to walking the streets, their duties included calling out at the top of their voice the hour and state of the weather at every street corner, such as Past one o'clock and fine morning as the case might be. Many were the pranks played on the Old Charlies by the young bloods, such as shouting the time after them at the different street corners and then running away, and placing rope lines across the streets for the old fellows to fall over in the dark. Other tricks men played on them. Sentry boxes were provided in which to sit down and rest when they were tired. It was no uncommon thing to see the old fellows fast asleep in these boxes, and very often some mischievous person would shut the door, pull the box over, and there the occupant had to remain until some good Samaritan came and released him. Discipline, as known at present, did not exist. In one case one of them was sent with a prisoner to a distant prison, and on the way (officer and prisoner having to walk most of the road, there being no railways) called at one public-house after another until the officer got drunk and fell asleep, so fast that the prisoner could not awake him in any reasonable time. Night coming on, the poor fellow was obliged to leave him and return home.



“ON DUTY.”
(The last of the Charlies.)

On another occasion one of the officers was sent to arrest a well-known character under a warrant. Having ascertained that the man was at and in bed, the officer, who was named Nelson, went and knocked at his door, upon which the man opened his bedroom window, and asked who was there. Nelson replied the officer, come down. What for? inquired the man. I have a warrant for you. Oh oh, replied the man. Nelson wur a good mon on the say bur he wur nowt on lond; it winno do, mon; and forthwith he closed the window.

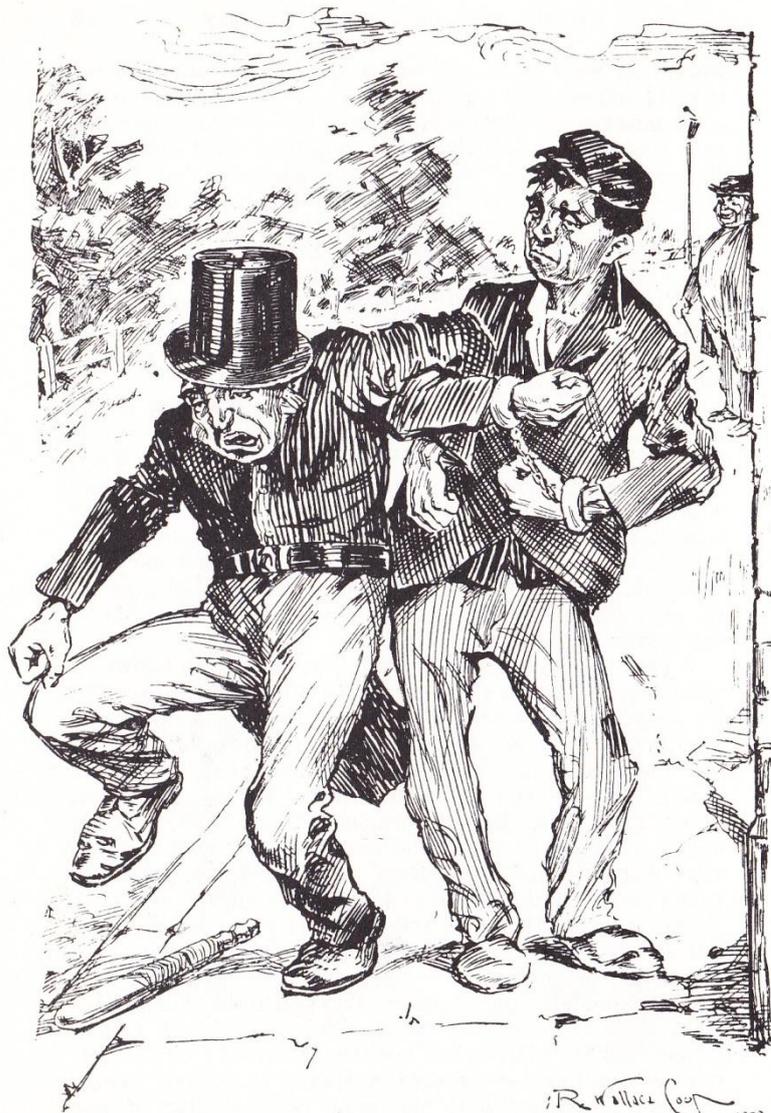
Previous to Peel's Act of 1829 London was protected by what were known as the Bow Street Runners, who paraded for duty at Bow Street. This body originated about the middle of last century, being then a small detective force of eight men. The majority of them were mounted. They wore blue frock coats and red vest, and carried as an emblem of authority, a small staff surmounted by a crown. Their duties were to ride about the outskirts of London to prevent stage coaches, etc from being put up and the passengers robbed by men of the Jack Sheppard and Dick Turpin type. Others patrolled the city in the daytime, but at night the populace was in the hands of the aforementioned Old Charlies.



"Past one o'clock and fine morning."

Our present day policemen may be said to have descended from and to represent the parish constable of former times. By the old English law the hundred of tithings, were responsible for the preservation of the peace, though the law recognised only the joint responsibility of the country justices. In time the place of the headman was taken by the constable of the village or parish. For a small stationary population in the country the old system of local constables did well enough, but it did not meet the conditions of a growing and shifting community. The highways had no protection and travellers by stage coach had to fight highwaymen on horseback in crossing any lonely spot such as Hounslow, or Putney Heath, and they carried pistols and blunderbusses as a matter of course.

When Sir Robert Peel's Police Act came into force, and organised police were put upon the streets, the majority of them, having been old soldiers, were rather bad to control. The manner in which



“ Called at one public-house after another . . . until the officer got drunk. ”

they treated people, for want of discretion, made them very unpopular, and they got the cognomen of Pealers and Bobby from the framer of the Act, which name has stuck to them to the present day. In course of time a different class of men was appointed, and their discipline was such that the London Police has become one of the smartest and most popular bodies in the world. The London policeman is the cheapest in the world. He costs only £97 a year, while his Parisian brother cost £140. No section of the Metropolitan Police does such useful work as the Thames Division. It is a very small division numerically (one man in 70 in the metropolitan Force is a river policeman), and its work is done so unobtrusively that there are thousands of people in London who do not even know of its existence. Still, it does more valuable work in safeguarding property and life than any similar body in the world. Formerly the river was raided by bands of robbers, who would board vessels and strip them of their cargoes, and would stop neither at outrage nor murder to compass their ends. During the 60 years that these police have formed part of the Metropolitan Force life and property



TOWNSEND.
(The famous Bow Street Runner.)

have been as safe on the Thames as in Belgravia. The men are practically the same as in other divisions of the force, only they must pass an examination in boat-craft; and, as may be imagined, many of the men are naval. The division consists of about 220 men and officers, and they have six hours on, followed by twelve hours off duty. They have quite a small fleet of boats and launches, and patrol twenty miles of the river. Challenging and boarding any suspicious craft. In winter it is a somewhat trying life, no doubt, but the men like it; in fact, it is the most popular division in the force. The original Peeler wore a blue swallow-tailed coat with bright buttons, blue trousers, waist belt, and tall hat, the latter having a leather top, and a narrow piece of cane up each side, to strengthen it. The change to tunic followed the example of the army, after the Crimean War, and the helmet was introduced in 1869. During the last quarter of a century there has been a great increase of responsibility cast upon the police. There is rarely a parliamentary session without some Act being passed which necessitates increased

vigilance. Education has done much to improve the modern policeman. The model recruit is the one with a healthy intellect, supported, of course, by a strong physique, and not the burly country bumpkin of the old school. The changes made in connection with the Metropolitan Promotion Examinations, and the educational scheme recently adopted by the Manchester Watch Committee, both show and ambition to improve the intellectual standard of the police force generally.

MY FIRST CASE.

In calling this my first case, it must not be inferred that I had been two or three months in the force and done nothing but monotonously patrol a beat in the great metropolis, where a man must either look alive or be left behind. I had made myself useful on many occasions before this, and more especially on an occasion shortly previous to my first felony—the circumstances of which I am about to relate in which I learned my first great lesson of that hideous spectre the social evil—the greatest of evils except the indulgence in strong drink (and these are evils all but inseparable), the effects of which are incomprehensible to people unaccustomed to the sight.

It was at that time my lot, as a police officer, to be brought regularly into contact with them. I then saw this great monster in all its forms, and woman will never have justice done to her until her wily seducer can be brought by law to the whipping-post. Unfortunately, however, such is the state of things, that the libertine who bears the image of his Maker, and who has brought ruin on scores of broken-hearted parents and young women by his devilish devices, blushes not to boast of it, and is admitted into the best society, and treated as a very amiable fellow.

One night I was on duty under the shadow of a fine, new building which, on several occasions, I had stopped to admire—it was a chapel in Fore Street, Higher Edmonton, belonging to the Congregationalists when I heard a noise as if a female were screaming for help, and ran in the direction from whence it came. On arriving near to the spot I found a woman, apparently about thirty-five years of age, rather with the paint on her cheeks and the borrowed plumes in which she was attired—good-looking. She was screaming at the top of her hoarse voice—first, all kinds of oaths and imprecations to a number of fast young men who appeared to be teasing her, and then, in a

drunken way, hiccupping quotations of Shakespeare's plays. Being several attempts to induce her to be quiet, which met with abuse, I took hold of her for the purpose of removing her, when she fell on me like a tigress, tore my coat, and endeavoured to scratch my face, at the same time making the most hideous yell I had ever heard from a human being; and what I should have done, had not a brother officer come, I cannot even now conjecture. She knew the other officer, who, with a little coaxing, induced her to go with him to the station, where I learned that her name was Fuller, and that I had her in custody for her fortieth time.

But my first important case was apprehending a man named John Kempton, on a charge of having stolen an overcoat from a spring cart in Shoreditch, the property of John Westcomb, landlord of the Three Tuns, Edmonton, of which information came from the chief office; and, after reading the information, the inspector turned round and said, This man is said to be known here; does any of you know him? No one else speaking, I made bold to say, Yes, sir, I do..which caused a murmur to go through the whole of the men standing near me, although nothing was said until we were marching up the street to our different beats, when the sergeant, who was walking along-side of me, very kindly cautioned me about saying I knew people when it was impossible for me, a young officer, who had only been in the town for a couple of months, to know this man, when an old officer did not. I replied that I did know the man though. Well then he said, the only way to prove it will be to arrest him.

The very week previous to this a gentleman had pointed the man Kempton out to me as a young man who, a few years before had lost his parents, who were in a good position, and had left him well off; but he finding himself the master of the money, commenced to live the life of a fast young man, and squandered in a few years what his parents had saved in a lifetime, and he was now reduced to beggary, and he had no doubt before long he would be in trouble for stealing, or something of the kind.

This dreadful story had impressed the man's countenance on my mind so that I could not but know him if I should meet him, and in about three or four nights after, about midnight, there was a man passed close to me in the street, with his topcoat collar turned up so as to conceal his face. I turned to follow him, wondering to myself how it was he attracted my special attention, and before I could overtake him the sergeant, who had before blamed me for saying I knew Kempton, came to me, having passed the man, and inquired what was up. I told him to wait there a minute. At this moment I saw the very man I was following was Kempton himself, who I caught hold of and said I want you, my man for stealing John Westcomb's topcoat. He replied, Do you? I said Yes; and this is the one you have on when he replied, Nay I have swallowed it.

At this juncture the sergeant came to see what was to do and heard the conversation. He accompanied me and my prisoner to see Westcomb, who identified him as the right man; upon which the prisoner told us that he had sold the coat in Petticoat Lane, to a Jew. I and Westcomb visited that mart, where there are second hand clothes enough to fit all the people in a decent-sized town, and where many a man has had his handkerchief stolen from his pocket, and bought is back again shortly after. We did not find the coat, but got hooted out of the place when the residents found out what we were after. Kempton was convicted and some time after that I was sent for to the Old Bailey sessions to prove a previous conviction against him, when he was sentenced to a very heavy term of imprisonment as an irreclaimable.

LANDSHARKS AND SMUGGLERS.

I am not sure that my mother did not intend me for a position in the force; but I am sure she never had it in her power, poor creature (peace to her ashes) to fit me by education for an excise officer, although I have done some service in that department in my time. When under my teens, my attention was attracted to an incident or two in the smuggling line, for as I have before stated, I had an eye to business.

I well remember an old man coming to our house, generally on a Saturday night. He was a low-sized, repulsive-looking man, dressed in a long coat, with large pockets in the skirts. Somehow or other I took a dislike to him the first time I saw him. There was so much mystery in his visits-a good deal of whispering with the old people- and I knew he always took a half-crown with him when he left, for something I often heard called brandy, which was kept in a stone bottle in a chest of drawers, and invariably brought into requisition when any of the family were ill. I shall never forget that bladder, and those kidnapping looking pockets in which it was carried. This went on for a long time, and if I asked a question about my old enemy (for I considered him as such), I generally got a box on the ear, and was called a busy-body; and I really believe, but for getting my dearest friends into trouble, I should have not the old fellow arrested by some means or other. However, these visits came to an end, and then, for the first time, I heard that the brandy smugglers name was John McKie; that he had carried on this contraband trade for many years in an old building behind the Coombs rocks; and that the Kings officers had at last scented him out, and taken both him and his brandy-spinning plant to Derby. It was afterwards found that he had cut a gutter under the heather, a mile long, to convey a stream of water to his house.

I knew another man in the same locality, who for years defied the inland revenue officers. He carried on a roaring trade in the villages around, having his regular customers, whom he supplied with almost as much impunity as a milk man. He, also, lived in an out of the way sort of place. I remember, on passing his house on one occasion, along with two or three others of my own age, it was suggested that we should try to get some whiskey-an article which, perhaps, none of us had ever tasted in our lives before- from Old Dick; and at the first knock at the door Dick himself put in an appearance, and queer-looking fellow he was. His hair, for some time at any rate, had not damaged a comb by frequent use, and his eyes were red and glazed, as if he had been in his cavern all the night before. On asking him, in our knowing way, if we could have a pint of the dear cratur, he came outside, eyed us over and looked suspiciously round and disappeared, after crossing a garden at the end of his house, as if he had tumbled head-long into a well, to appear again, by some magic acid, in a minute. He walked round the garden to where we were standing, and pulled a bottle from under his waistcoat. We paid him fifteen pence, and hastened away as fast as we could, believing in our own minds that the old man had dealings with another region.

These, and other little incidents of a similar character, possibly prepared me for my future career.

It is my intention to confine this part of my reminiscences to my experiences amongst what I shall call Landsharks and Smugglers. There will be nothing like fiction about them but plain ungarnished truths. There are, in every place of any importance numbers of people who subsist on what is generally termed living on their wits, and a great deal of that consists in practising all kinds of

slippery tricks in order to gull the gullible part of Her Majesty's lieges out of their hard-earned cash and to keep as it were, within the law. Amongst others, there was a class of men who travelled about both town and country places generally dressed as sailors, which they professed to be, wearing naval blue caps and sack coats, pockets all round, and brass buttons with the anchor on; they were licensed hawkers, but known as landsharks, of whom, perhaps, ninety-nine out of every hundred were never on the sea in their lives, except coming from Hibernia. On meeting with a person who was weak enough to listen to their blandishments, which often smacked of the sailor, they induced him to go into some out of the way public house, where they pulled from their pockets Indian silks and handkerchiefs, all smuggled, of course, glazed and got up for the purpose. No, they would not sell an ounce to the swinish shoppers for twenty pounds.

I knew an old woman, a country shopkeeper (a class of people generally seeking great bargains), who was once accosted in Manchester by one of these fellows, who asked if she did not want some cheap tobacco, as he had just come up from Liverpool with a large quantity he had smuggled over in the ship Pacific. He induced her to go to a house, where they were joined by another, who whispered aside (so that the old woman could hear) that he had better be careful, as he had previously seen an officer watching his movements, but if the lady was a customer he would go and look out whilst they made their bargains. The one who professed to have the tobacco pulled out a number of what he called Indian silk handkerchiefs, and requested her to be very quick in choosing, whereupon she told him she had come about the tobacco. Oh he said, that is in our chest, and we dare not fetch it just at present; these handkerchiefs are much better bargains, and if caught you would have to suffer along with me. The poor old creature parted with all her ready money for what she afterwards found to be worthless.

This was an every-day occurrence, especially in country places, and numbers of small trades people were taken in and done for by these sharks, but they were ashamed to own it. There were other methods adopted by these sharks to cheat, such as hawking the pawn ticket of their watch, having, as they stated, been obliged to pledge it through being out of work, when at the same time it had been pledged for more than its value in order to take someone in with the ticket. At times they would go about with flash jewellery and paste diamonds, but the greatest swindle practised by these people was the mock-auction dodge. Many a poor person was robbed of his money by just stepping inside, when he found half a dozen coarse-looking men and women. One or two of these would bid, whilst the others were operating on the stranger by telling him what a great shame it was that the old Jew (one of the gang always put on the Jew) should have all the bargains, and if they had only a trifle of money they would bid against him. These people had a run for years, but the Manchester police succeeded in bringing a number of them to justice. There was another class that were really smugglers—a distinct class from the sharks. Nine out of every ten of these were Irish people, many of whom learned their craft in the bogs in their own country. They were constantly moving about from house to house, and seldom made friends with their neighbours, and always removed their stock in trade during the night time, and all that was known about them was that the house was tenantless at night and occupied in the morning, and not more than one person was seen about the house, and that seldom until they went away again as mysteriously as they came, or a number of police and excise officers pounced upon the place quite unexpectedly, and removed the tenants, their plant, and furniture, which really consisted—instead of a broken table and two or three old chairs of a tin still and a large quantity of mugs, tubs, bottles, etc, when for the first time it became

known to the gossips that the people were whisky-spinners, and quite a sensation would be created for a time. I was engaged at many of these seizures during the year 1854-5-6.

In the first of these a pork butcher came to my house, and told me he had let one of a number of new cottages he owned to a stranger, and on going to the house to put up some hooks, which he held in his hand, he was refused admission by an old man, who came to the window, which was covered with a sack, and told him he would not be allowed to come in. He also said there was a strong smell of brewing. I at once secured the assistance of my superior, who accidentally happened to be in the village at the time, and after knocking for some time at the door, we forced it open, and found an old man, named Flynn, with a whiskey still in full operation. We took the old man into custody, and removed the still and other plant to the excise office; and poor Flynn, who, we had reason to believe, was only a paid agent, was sent to prison for three months.

Shortly after this I and three other officers made an onslaught on a quiet place on the road between Dukinfield and Newton. On arriving at the suspected house, we found all the doors fast, and were obliged to break in. There was no person in the house, but upstairs there was a neat little still, with chips underneath, ready to light the fire, and a large quantity of fermented preparation. After a consultation (during which the supervisor described the man he expected to have found in the house) as to the best mode of procedure, it was agreed to remove the still at once, and I was dispatched for a cart for that purpose. On coming into the turnpike road, I noticed a man loitering about, whom I thought answered to the description of the man mentioned by the supervisor. I arrested him, and he was identified as the very man wanted, and in his pocket were found the key belonging to the front door of the house, the latch belonging to the back door, and two bladders of whiskey. This piece of evidence was considered sufficient proof of occupancy to send him to prison, there to remain during Her Majesty's pleasure, in default of paying a heavy penalty.



"In his pockets were found two bladders of whiskey."

On another occasion I went to a house in Dukinfield, occupied by a very simple man named R___, and in the coal cellar I found a sheet-iron still, the only iron one I ever saw. I saw in the back part of the house old R___ open the door leading into the backyard. He tried to sidle suspiciously round a large rain tub, and when near enough to put his hand behind it, he attempted to do so, but was prevented by the limbs of the law. On looking in a recess, a gallon bottle, filled with very strong new whiskey, was found. As in duty bound, I took the old man into custody, but before he was sent to prison he did good service to the State by way of atonement, by enlightening the officers on several little matters convenient for them to know, and by so doing he certainly met with his reward by cheating the gaol governor out of one-half his imprisonment.

The most exciting case of this kind I was ever engaged in, was in taking a still in an old mill, which was snugly ensconced near a small brook in a valley, almost obscured from view by trees, and a nicer spot could not have been chosen for the carrying on of a contraband trade. It was partially surrounded with a reservoir of water, and the night we went was as dark as possible and we

experienced no little difficulty in groping our way to it. We had been in search of this same still for some time, but the person who gave the information being a stranger in the neighbourhood, and having only been once to the place, from his description of it we were led to search in an adjoining valley first. However, we ultimately succeeded in effecting an entrance into the mill without disturbing the family, who resided in the lower portion of it, and there we found the still and a good plant for carrying on and extensive business, quite warm from recent use. We took the whole away, and on leaving we met the occupier of the mill coming home with his horse and cart, having been to barracks with soldiers bedding, which he had washed in the mill, and returning with a load more to wash. We took possession of both the man and his horse and cart, which, however, were afterwards restored to his family through the intercession of his friends. Poor S was sent to prison, although it was known at the time he was but a passive tool in the hands of a great villain, and he submitted with a fortitude worthy a better cause.

There were others connected with this smuggling business, quite as essential as the makers; in those who disposed of the article. They often went about the country under the pretence of hawking small odds and ends, and got orders for the whiskey and served it afterwards. But at times they carried it with them, concealed about their persons. If it was a man, he was compelled almost to have it in bladders, and carry it in his pockets; but it was not as safe for men to hawk it as women, who could carry it concealed about their person in such a manner that in consequence of the delicacy attending searching them by the officers they better escaped detection. They had also a better chance of persuading women to buy it, by treating them to a drop where they considered it safe. Many a happy family have been brought to misery and ruin by this demon getting into the house. The hitherto dutiful wife and kind mother has been imperceptibly made into a miserable drunkard by these people's subtlety and craft.

We had awkward jobs to do in this line at times. On a certain Sunday morning, about one o'clock, in the summer of 1855, I and my brother officer were standing in one of the public thoroughfares of Dukinfield, just talking of going home, as all appeared to be settled down quiet after the turmoil attendant on a Saturday night in the cotton districts of those days, when we saw three men emerge suspiciously from some houses usually occupied by some hard working artisans. On their arriving opposite where we stood, they were startled by being suddenly confronted by us; and from their confusion, and from the fact of one of them bolting off, we seized the other two, both of whom showed fight. However, being stronger men, we secured them; and the one I had hold of I found had got a knife from his pocket, and was in the act of opening one of the blades. I wrested it from his hand, and then discovered that his jacket pocket was bulky, and from it I took a bladder, containing a gallon of illicit whiskey. Inside the clothes of the other was another bladder, containing a quart of the same kind of stuff. They were both afterwards convicted for having illicit spirits in their possession.

Of all other places where a police officer ought to make good use of his eyes and ears there is none more important than a railway station, for here may be often seen and heard something to his advantage. On a certain day soon after the circumstance I have just related I came on to the platform at Ardwick to return home, after a little chase I had had after other matters when I saw an old friend of ours, who sat unconscious of danger. After eyeing her well over, I noticed that her person on each side was larger than nature had made it, although she was a good sized-woman. I stepped up to her and said, Come Betty, out with it; you've got more than you can well conceal this

time, upon which she very quietly pulled from her pocket on each side a bladder containing about a pint of whiskey. Strong enough to make a quart of ordinary stuff, as it is generally retailed out. On giving them to me in her confusion she said, Where's Mary? Oh, Mary is all right, I said, knowing that she and Mary M__ were in the habit of doing a bit in the partnership line. I looked round, but could not see Mary. I thereupon asked a friend, who happened to be on the platform, to take charge of Betty for a few minutes. I went outside the station, and there I saw Mary running away as fast as her legs could carry her. I ran after her, and on getting near to her I called out, Its no go, Mary, you might as well give it up. She then stopped and endeavoured to pull something out of her pocket, but I caught hold of her, and with the assistance of a matronly-looking woman, who was passing, I succeeded in getting hold of a bladder, well filled with what Mary and some of her companions had christened, Oh, be joyful. Betty and Mary were sent into durance for two months each.

There was an active young fellow named J__T__, who gave me and my brother officers many a chase, and we had often stopped him but found nothing on him, in consequence of which we had taken little notice of him for some time. He was a downright cunning fellow, a quality we officers often admired, inasmuch as this kind of people rather excited our wits at times, and sharpened us up a little. One fine summer's day I had been to Hyde, and on returning I came upon my man rather abruptly, and noticed that he made a sort of bolt. Ah ah Jemmy, said I. You've got nabbed, have you? When he started away and I after him. Finding he could not possibly escape me, he stopped, and threw three bladders down in the road, and began to stamp upon them to burst them, in which he succeeded. However, he did not spill all the whiskey, for they were all filled tight with it, and I was enabled to take up about half a pint in one of the bladders before it ran empty, so Jemmy Wide-awake was sent to Knutsford, there to remain during Her Majesty's good pleasure.

It was surprising how tenaciously the people who once got themselves entangled in this business clung to it after under-going long terms of imprisonment. They almost invariably commenced the same game again. I have known old women sent to prison time after time without its making the least impression upon them; and when they were caught, and knew they would be sent again, they never appeared to consider that they had committed any offence, but were what they called unlucky in having been caught. The means they had recourse to for the purpose of hiding the spirits when they had it in their houses were at times really amusing. I have many times searched their places, well knowing even the quantity there has been in them without finding anything. I remember going to a house, and searching upstairs and down, the owner, Mrs. C_____ accompanying me through, and telling me all the time she had given it up; that she was heartily tired of the business, and would never do any more. I might look everywhere, etc, when at last __of course knowing all the while where it was I pulled cut the drawers under a cupboard, and betwixt the fireplace and the wall I found two tins, exactly fitting the recess, containing several quarts of the cratur. On seeing me go to the cupboard she began to breathe thick and fast, but when I pulled the tins out she commenced such a tirade of abuse on the head of one of her friends, whom she knew had told me only they two knew about her hiding place as I have seldom heard. She was quite right, though, in her suspicion. They were at times treacherous one to another. In fact, if they did not inform on one another we should have got badly on amongst them. However, she was sent to prison, and some years afterwards she gave a young officer as good a thrashing as he, perhaps, ever had, for daring to go into her house at all. We had a good run in this business for some three years, and succeeded, by indefatigable perseverance, in adding considerably to our wages by rewards granted to us by Her Majesty's Commissioners of Inland Revenue.

Every man with the power of a police officer does not succeed so well as others in their profession, as discretion and coolness are as great requisites as perseverance. I knew an inspector, he certainly was not a man of any experience, as an inspector ought to be, who, on one occasion received information from a beer-seller of a man who was in the habit of bringing a quantity of illicit spirits to his neighbours every week end, and causing him considerable injury in his trade, and in order that there might be no mistake, the beer-seller arranged that a quantity must be brought to his house at a certain time. When the time came he took the inspector to where he could see the man as he came. He actually waited until the man with the whiskey came in sight; he pointed him out, and was going away himself, when, instead of waiting until the man came to where the inspector was concealed, he rushed out to meet the man, who on seeing what was coming, pulled a bladder from his pocket, cut it open with his knife, and threw whiskey, bladder, and all into the canal. When our would-be clever inspector got up to him, he said, That's Whiskey you've thrown away ; when the man laughingly replied, yes it is; fetch it out again. It need not be stated that the man turned home again, chuckling over the escape he had had, and the little trick he had played on the inspector. Through the well-organised police system of the present day this kind of cases have become almost things of the past.

FOOTPADS AND GARROTTERS.

There are no greater pests in this country than the regular tramps and beggars, thousands of whom turn out every morning, with no settled intention but to gull the people out of their day's food and their next night's lodging; and the upper and middle classes contribute to keep this great evil alive more than they have any idea of by (no doubt with the best intentions) relieving them at all. If every lady and gentleman who can be induced to part with his or her money on hearing a pitiful tale of distress would never give anything until thoroughly satisfied that it was a deserving case, nine-tenths of the vagrants would disappear in a month; and police officers might render a great service to the community by paying special attention to these people although they are often discouraged by people finding fault with them for interfering with the poor man. I have known instances when constables have found articles, such as shirts, etc, upon this kind of people, and on going to the persons whom they say have given these goods to them, the officers have been actually abused for inquiring if the story told was true. Nevertheless, there are often cases in which stolen goods have been found on them. In the year 1855, on a certain Saturday morning, I was passing through a quiet street in Dukinfield, when I observed a man loitering about; and on questioning him, he admitted that he was begging, that he had tramped from Kidderminster, and had slept at a lodging-house in Ashton the night previous, and that if I would allow him to go about his business he would leave the town at once. I saw him outside the town myself, and I did not expect to see any more of him. However, about two o'clock the next morning, I and my brother officer were standing at a corner I use the plural, in as much as at that time there were but two of us in Dukinfield, although there were some fourteen or fifteen thousand inhabitants arranging about the Sunday's duties when we heard heavy and hurried footsteps, and on the person coming up to where we were standing, I saw it was the man I had seen begging the morning previous, with a white flannel jacket on over his old velveteen one. We stopped him, and asked him how he had come into possession of it. He stated that he had brought it out of Staffordshire with him, which I, of course, knew to be untrue. The man evidently did not know me again, or that he was in the same town he had left so abruptly shortly before. We took him to the officer, where he was detained, and on the Sunday forenoon, I went to one the many collieries in the neighbourhood, and the first person I saw inquired if I had heard

about J____H____ having been robbed the previous night, and on seeing the flannel jacket found on the tramp on my arm, he continued, Why that's his jacket. I at once proceeded to H__'s house, where I found him in great pain, waiting for the doctor, who came in directly, and on examining him, stated that his shoulder was dislocated. H____ afterwards told me that about twelve o'clock on the previous night he was proceeding home from a party, and when near to his own house a man rushed across the road and struck him with some kind of weapon he believed a stone slung in a handkerchief and knocked him down insensible, and on recovering he found that he had been robbed of his jacket and everything that he had in his pockets, and he must have been severely kicked or beaten with the same weapon. He was first attacked with it in different parts of his person, and how he got home he could not tell. On returning to the office I found several odds and ends in the prisoner's possession, which H____ identified as his property. The prisoner, who gave the name of Williams, was committed to the assizes, and ultimately sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. Had I not seen him on the Saturday morning, we might have believed his account of the way he came in possession of the jacket, and allowed him to go, and perhaps never been able to find him again.

Some years since nearly every newspaper issued contained accounts of what was known as garrotte robberies, a method of robbing people more convenient than knocking the victim down and having to struggle with him in the street, and run a greater risk of being caught. It takes its name from the manner of inflicting capital punishment in Spain by means of a collar which is tightly screwed round the neck of the criminal whilst seated with his back to an upright board, to which the apparatus is fixed, and is done by one ruffian attacking a person from behind and pressing his hands round his throat until suffocation or unconsciousness is produced, whilst a second ruffian rifles the victims pockets, and so quietly and noiselessly can it be done that persons have been robbed in busy thoroughfares and the people passing have not noticed what was going on; and these robberies grew to be so common that a special Act of Parliament had to be passed empowering the judges to order persons convicted of garrotte to be whipped, which had the effect of almost stopping it altogether.

About one o'clock on a certain Sunday morning a well dressed young man accosted me, and requested me to go with him to a street he named, which was wholly occupied by the social evil and a number of ruffianly fellows who idled about all day and lived on the proceeds of the women's prostitution and what they could rob men of who were foolish enough to be inveigled into the dens of infamy and vice by the blandishments of the fallen angels. On our way to the place the man told me he had gone up the street just to see what was going on, and when about half way up, a man came behind him and garrotted him, whilst another stole his watch out of his waistcoat pocket. They then threw him down on the pavement and ran into one of the houses, but he could not tell which, and if he could have told which house they had gone into it would have been of no assistance in the apprehension of the thieves, in as much as nearly every house in the block had a hole in the roof so that access could be had from one to another. However, he said he noticed that one of the men wore woollen cord trousers, a piece of valuable information, as there was but one man in the street that I knew wore that kind of trousers. I therefore went in search of this man and found him directly, when he was at once identified as the one who took the watch. I took him into custody, despite many protestations of his innocence. The next question was how to secure the watch, for the man was about the slippiest man we had amongst all our thieves, although he had but come out of prison two days previous after doing twelve months for a little job on an Irish cattle dealer. I left

no means untried to find the watch, but was foiled at every turn. My emissaries, for I had a few amongst the fraternity, were all at fault. I got my prisoner remanded until the following Friday, and several times he asked to see me, but it was only to protest his innocence and express his desire that the right person should be found out, but I was too wide awake to cease my exertions at his suggestions, because I felt as sure that he was the thief before as I did after he was convicted. Thursday night came, and the next morning if I could carry my case no further, I was sure to lose my prisoner; and about nine o' clock I made a last search of the house where he lived, and commenced to pull the oven and boiler down to examine the flues behind them. On taking hold of an iron plate, at the top of the oven, to my surprise it was quite loose, although it fitted so close that I had not discovered it before, and on removing it entirely away I found two bricks also loose, which I took out, and there discovered the object of my search. I took the watch to the office, and showed it to M___, who changed countenance on seeing it' and in reply to my question if ever he had seen it before, he replied, Yes and I suppose you 'll lag me now, a slang phrase for transportation. He was convicted at the following Liverpool Assizes, and sentenced to eight years penal servitude. My superiors gave me a reward for my energy and perseverance in finding the watch in the flue.



Waylaid by Garrotters.

Almost every imaginable device was had recourse to by these villains to decoy men into their meshes, and a drunken man was always preferred to be operated upon than a sober one. The women were constantly sent a head to look out for a subject, and if they could induce a man with money in his pockets to accompany them into their dens or into a public-house, he was very fortunate if he got safely out of their company again. Thousands have been robbed amongst these people who durst not tell.

On a certain Friday night, shortly after the last-mentioned circumstance had occurred, I was called out of the office by a poorly-dressed, pale, haggard mill operative, named R____, who stated that the night previous he was accosted by a little woman, who induced him to accompany her into the vault of a public-house, where he paid for drink for her, and came out again to go with her to some house she mentioned, and immediately he came out of the light of the public-house, a man came behind him, and put his arm under his chin, and pulled so tight that he became unconscious, and on coming round again he found that there was nobody near him, and all his week's wages, eighteen shillings, which he ought to have taken home to his five motherless children, were gone; that he had been in search of the woman all night, in his simplicity believing that if he could find her she would be able to tell who the men were, and that he might induce them to give him some of his money back. During the conversation I had with him he stated that he noticed that the hand that was put under his chin had at least two fingers short. Of course, I had J____ B. Apprehended in less than half an hour, and R____ identified him as the man who garrotted him. He was committed, and at the ensuing Liverpool Assizes was sentenced to six years penal servitude. The other man who assisted at the robbery escaped in consequence of R____ being unable to identify him, although I knew of a certainty who he was.

BURGLARS AND HOUSEBREAKERS.

The distinction between these two kinds of offences is so little that the uninitiated scarcely know one from the other. Indeed, there is no difference in the offences, only in the hours in which they are committed. If a person enters the house of another between nine o'clock at night and six in the morning, and steals, or attempts to steal therein' although no violence is used, that constitutes a burglary. At any other time the same act would be housebreaking, and the legislature have thought it necessary to enact that the pains and penalties should be greater in the former than in the latter kind of cases. The reason, no doubt, is because at night people have not the same chance of protecting themselves against thieves as in the daytime. Burglaries are what may be termed non-preventible offences, but house-breakers may, in a great measure, be guarded against by ordinary precautions. If people leave their houses, whether the doors are locked or not, so long as nobody is left in charge for several hours together, these cannot be considered proper precautions, in as much as there are numbers of sometimes well-dressed men continually prowling about, in outside places especially, who, if they have reason to believe a house is thus left unprotected, knock boldly at the door, and, should any one answer the knock, inquire for somebody unknown in the neighbourhood, or perhaps inquire if it be true that the house is To Let, or make any other excuse; but should no one answer after repeated knock and the door is fastened with nothing but an ordinary lock a skeleton key is inserted into the lock, and the door opened in an instant, and persons passing by never suspect but it is the occupier unlocking his own door. I have known many such circumstances in my time. This kind of men are so well acquainted with other people's habits that when a robbery is discovered one often hears such expressions as they have not come far; they know all about the

house, etc. When, in point of fact, the thieves may never have been in the lace before, and being strangers, if they once get clear away, it is more than probable they are never heard of again, or the stolen property either. Thieves, like other people, divide themselves into classes,. The swell cracksmen, who can enter a house as described, would look with contempt upon the low, ragged fellow, who goes about robbing clothes line, or skulks about at night trying doors, windows, and cellar traps, to see if they have been left unfastened, who, when they find one, enter, and leave again perhaps with a loaf of bread, etc., just to satisfy their present wants. The burglar of the present day is not a bullet headed, grizzly-haired fellow, with a crooked nose, slouched hat, and thick stick, but quite a swell, dressed in the height of fashion; and, so long as his ill-gotten treasures last, he lives in grand style with his fancy lady, and appears to move in a respectable sphere. I remember, some years ago, one of these fellows being caught committing a burglary, and his appearance and get-up was altogether, even to the make of a large number of skeleton keys found upon him, quite a stylish affair.



“ I made my way into the cellar and searched about.”

One dark morning, about four o'clock, a man came to me, and stated that, on turning the corner of a street in Ashton, he observed the cellar trap door of a shop go down, and that he was certain a man was under it. I hastened to the place, and found the inmates of the house and shop in question were up, having been roused by the same man before he came to me. Some of them were guarding the cellar outside, and others inside. I immediately made my way into the cellar, and searched about for a length of time without finding anyone, and was nearly giving it up, believing the man's eyes had deceived him; but he was so positive that I made another search, and, under some large sugar casks, not six inches from the floor, I discovered a man's shoe, and from that I was convinced that there was a man somewhere, and, with the united strength of three men, we succeeded in drawing a great hulk of a fellow from under the casks, who was so far exhausted that had he remained a few minutes longer he would never have been got out alive, but must have died from exhaustion. He was convicted at

the following assizes, and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

On another morning the house of a widow woman was found to have been entered by a back window during the night previous. A watch had been stolen from the post of the bed in which she was sleeping, some money had been taken from her brother's trousers pocket, on a bed in another room, and none of the family had been disturbed. However, the thief was apprehended the day but one after, whilst attempting to dispose of the watch, and a desperate looking fellow he was. It was very fortunate that the inmates did not disturb him when in the house, for during the eighteen months he was sentenced to serve for that offence he attempted to murder one of the prison warders by striking him on the head with a piece of iron, for which offence he was sentenced to fifteen years penal servitude, to commence at the expiration of the eighteen months.

On another occasion I was indirectly engaged in a very peculiar burglary case. A family at Saddleworth locked the door of their house on retiring to bed on a certain night, leaving the key in the lock. On coming downstairs next morning they found the house had been entered, and robbed of a quantity of wearing apparel, etc. The door was then unlocked, and the key still in the lock as they had left it, and no other way of having entered the place could be discovered. This made no small stir amongst us officers, as to how to account for the way an entrance had been effected, or how the door had been unlocked with the key in the lock. After a good deal of surmising, at last, however, a gentleman, who had been a working smith in his time, showed us how he could open any ordinary lock with passing a piece of common wire through the keyhole, hooking the wire in the bow of the key, and so turning the key round.

I have been engaged on some curious housebreaking cases. I was once assisting in a case where the frame of a house window had been cut, apparently for the purpose of inserting a knife between the sashes, in order to remove the catch. A great quantity of clothing was said to have been stolen from the premises. On examining the catch itself and catches cannot tell lies__I found that the dust had not been disturbed. I was from that satisfied an entrance had not been effected by that means. I called the attention of the mistress of the house to this fact, who up to this time had been rather glib in showing and telling how it had all been done, and how she found several articles of furniture upset when she came downstairs; but on seeing the turn matters were likely to take, she exclaimed, Why you do not think I've done it, surely? I replied, You are the only person that knows anything about it, though. I then left the house, and in an hour all the articles said to be stolen from the house were found to have been previously disposed of by the very woman herself, who had recourse to this dodge for the purpose of deceiving her husband.

Shortly after this I was in the office when an old man was brought in custody, on a charge of having stolen a sum of money from a dwelling-house at Ashton. On questioning the officer who brought him, and from the old man's appearance and manner, I felt at once convinced that, at all events, he had taken no part in any robbery. I at once proceeded to the house where the robbery was said to have been committed, and there I found, as usual, a large crowd of women, calculating on what punishment the old fellow would get. Some of them said they could never have thought it of him; but others, much wiser gossips, could always see something about him which they did not like. One old woman, mother to the man who occupied the house, protested that anything short of hanging would be too good for him. On investigating the matter further, I found that six sovereigns had been abstracted from a tin trunk, belonging to a lodger, in one of the bedrooms. Another trunk had been

forced open, and a good chest of mahogany drawers had been split, as if to open some of the drawers. I also found that a part of the kitchen window frames had been cut away, so as to admit a good sized person. The back door had also been forced open, the staple and screws lying on the floor; but it struck me that there did not require so many ways of entrance. If the thief, whoever it might be, had come in through the window, it would have been easier to unbolt the back door inside than draw the screws out by force; and, on examining the door-post, I found that the woodwork was in no way damaged, which fact led me to look at the screws, when I found that the paint had been scratched from the nick in the screw-heads, and on a shelf near there was a screwdriver, with the same kind of paint adhering to the edge. On making these discoveries, I then altered my mode of procedure, and commenced searching the premises, declaring to the mistress of the house that I believed the money had not been taken away, when the poor woman, who had been working in the factory, inquired if I thought her husband had done it. I made her no answer, but went to a pigeon cote in the backyard, which was locked, and of which she said her husband carried the key. However, I opened it with the screwdriver alluded to above, and in one of several small compartments, I found, wrapped up in a piece of rag, the number of sovereigns that were missing from the lodger's box, when some of the gossips, who had witnessed the whole proceeding, declared that nobody but the person that had hid it could have found the money there. I soon after arrested the occupier of the house, who, I ascertained, left the house key with a neighbour half an hour before the robbery was discovered, and I found the key belonging to the pigeon cote in his possession. He was convicted at the following quarter sessions, and sentenced to six months imprisonment, on a charge of having stolen money from a box belonging to his lodger.

There is no doubt that numbers of cases of housebreaking may and are prevented by the police paying attention to strangers, especially in places where the police force is sufficient in numbers to do it; but where such is not the case the inhabitants are sure to be losers. Besides the insecurity they must be subject to, a heavier tax is levied upon them in an indirect manner by having to submit to be plundered of their property, and the expense of apprehending, prosecuting, and victualling offenders than in places where they pay for proper protection directly. There can be no greater proof of the inefficiency of a police force than preventable robberies frequently occurring, however many may be discovered. I know a place which for several years was managed by two officers, and the apprehensions and committals would stand as at least four to one during the time there were two officers compared with the time when the numbers were several times as many.

NOTORIOUS BURGLARS

There have been but very few of what are classed as known thieves resident in the district. The crimes generally have been committed by strangers, that is, men and women who have made periodical visits for the purpose of robbery, and who have left as soon as they had succeeded.

A notorious gang comprised James Swan, Richard Gatley, and others, who were tried at Ashton for burglaries committed at Ashen Clough, Bradshaw, Ashton, and other places. On the 27th of July, 1844, John and Peggy Swan, with four son, and Robert Hartley and his wife (daughter of John Swan) were brought before the magistrates at the New Town Hall, Ashton, when evidence was given to the effect that they had apprehended the prisoners, and had found a large quantity of jewellery, clothing, etc, in their houses, which would be proved to have been stolen.

An old man, named James Bennett, stated that three men broke into his house at Ashen Clough, near Chinley, in the parish of Glossop. They made their way into the bed room, where he and his wife were sleeping, the only other person in the house being their daughter, a young woman. One of the men had a piece of lighted paper in his hand; a second had a pistol and a sword; and the third a poker and a thick bludgeon. They demanded the old man's money, telling him that if he refused it they would murder him and his family, and set the place on fire. He had only a few shillings, which they took, together with everything of value they could find, and they then left, telling the old man that they were going to another house, and they would call again on their return.

Three of the Swans were identified as the perpetrators of this outrage, and they were further charged with robbing the house of a widow, named Minshull, at Bradshaw, near New Mills, Derbyshire, about one o' clock on the morning of the 23rd of July, 1844. In this case the men had blackened their faces, and after robbing the old woman, they took eight shillings from Joe Goddard, and old man who lodged in the house.

When before the magistrates, the father of the three men (who was also in custody) made a statement which resulted in the arrest of Richard Gatley, son of the Deputy Constable of Stalybridge, who was in court at the time, The prisoners were then remanded, and the cases caused great excitement in Ashton and Stalybridge.

By order of the magistrates the bellman was sent round, inviting people who had missed any property to go to the Town Hall, where there were sixty bundles of goods, which were identified as having been stolen, and when the prisoners were again brought up, there were from 1,000 to 1,500 people waiting to enter the court-room. The evidence was very clear, and all the Swan family, with Robert Hartley and his wife, were committed for trial at Derby Assizes.

Richard Gatley was charged with committing a burglary at the house of William Yates, confectioner, Ashton, and was also committed for trial.

This gang of desperadoes kept the neighbourhood in a state of terror for some time, and it was difficult to account for their motives, as they did not have recourse to actual violence, and it is questionable whether they would not have proved to be cowards if met on anything like equal terms.

The members of the gang were eventually brought to trial at Derby Assizes, on December 11th, 1844, the sentence of the court being that each of the three sons be transported beyond the seas for the term of their natural lives, and that John Swan, the elder, and Peggy Swan, his wife, be each transported for ten years. There were twenty-one cases of burglary in the neighbourhood, in which one or more of the prisoners were concerned. At the trial James and George Swan cross-examined the witnesses with some acuteness, and displayed great coolness throughout. On one occasion, when the counsel for the Crown was examining a witness, the prisoner George Swan called out, My lord, I'll thank you not to let that man put leading questions, and turning to his brother, in the dock, he said, He'd be d__d if he would stand it. There has never been so notorious a gang in the district since the Swans were rooted out.

Crimes were very rare in Mottram and neighbourhood previous to the building of the Manchester, Ashton-under Lyne and Sheffield, now the Great Central Railway, which passes through

Broadbottom, neither was there any great amount of drunkenness there, but when the navvies, stone-masons, carpenters, etc. Came in such large number, quite a change took place. Men were often arrested for poaching, one them being a notorious poacher named Stott. The counting house at Broadbottom Mills was broken into and robbed one Friday night some years previous, when the money which had been brought there to pay the was stolen, which amounted to several hundred pounds. A man named Arundale, employed as a labourer at the works, and who resided in Hattersley, was convicted and transported for the crime, whilst another man named Shawcross, a notorious thief, who also resided in Hattersley, and an accomplice of Arundale's left the country, was never afterwards heard of, except, as the story went at the time, that some officers traced him to a public-house in Scotland, from which, on their approach, he made his escape through a window, and discharged a pistol at them.

MURDER OR MANSLAUGHTER

There is no word in our Queen's English so revolting to our feelings as the word Murder. It conjures up in our minds everything that is hideous. It can have no other meaning attached to it than that of one person taking the life of another. Whether it be with deadly weapon or subtle poison it still sends a shudder through our system, and, being such a horrible thing, it assumes more shapes on investigation than any other kind of crime. As it is generally understood murder is killing with malice aforethought or committing a premeditated act, and if there is not strong proof of that, the crime is treated as manslaughter or what is technically called in law, the killing a person without malice prepense, as in a sudden fit of passion, in a quarrel, etc.; and there is no doubt that in many instances juries are only too glad to have a way pointed out to them in trying cases of murder, whether right or wrong, of returning a verdict of manslaughter, on account of the consequences usually attending a verdict for the capital offence, in order to keep their consciences, as they consider, clear of having taken a fellow creature's life under any circumstances.

In my long experience I have been engaged in numbers of revolting cases, in many of which I would rather not have been obliged to take a part, for however zealous a police officer may be in hunting up offenders, his pleasure consists of doing a stern duty, having no excuse for consulting his finer feelings. I have assisted in bringing some persons to the gallows, but it is a curious coincidence that I have never had one in my own custody for an offence for which he has forfeited his life, although some of them have been very near paying that penalty. About the year 1855, one Monday night, about twelve o'clock, I was startled by a buzzing of voices near to my house, and immediately there was a loud rap at the door. I ran out, and was told that a murder had been committed, and that the murderer was running away. I followed the noise, for I could not see anybody. At that time the streets of Dukinfield were not lighted with gas. I overtook the crowd, who stood parleying with a slim young fellow, who was screaming and making all kinds of gesticulations. As soon as I appeared, a young man stepped up behind the alleged murderer, and clasped his arms around him, while at the same time a cry was raised, Look out he's got the knife. I seized both his hands, but found nothing. I then put my hand into his trousers pocket, where I found an awkward-looking knife, about six inches long in the blade, which was ground sharp on both edges. I then took him into my house and handcuffed him to the oven door, a plan I often had recourse to in those days, when locks_ups were fewer in number than they are now. I went out to ascertain what really had taken place, for in the confusion no one could tell me anything, only that a man had been murdered. I went to a surgery, and there saw a man lying on the floor, with a fearful gash in his body, the

weapon having penetrated his abdomen; and a more heartrending sight could scarcely be imagined, than to see a fine young fellow, nineteen years of age, lying with his life's blood ebbing from his wound. He lived some time, but ultimately succumbed from exhaustion. The man I had in custody was committed for trial to Chester, but was afterwards removed to Liverpool where he was convicted of the minor offence, and sentenced to penal servitude for life. In that case two young men's lives, as it were, were sacrificed through a little of what was called chaffing, at a party. The murderer, being of an irritable temper, resented what was intended for nothing but a joke, in the manner described.

I was engaged in a painful case arising out of an attack by some young Irish lads on a drunken man who was going quietly about his business. They threw him down and kicked him severely. He was assisted by some women who were passing at the time, and taken home. He lingered for some two or three weeks, and then died of his wounds. During his illness he gave me an account of how he was beaten, but not being able to leave the house he never could say who had beaten him. However, at the inquest on his body, a verdict of wilful murder was returned against some persons unknown. This verdict being made known it induced the females, who assisted the poor man at the time he was injured, to go with me into the neighbourhood in which the offence was committed, and they pointed out four young lads as the persons who they saw kick him. They were arrested and committed to Liverpool assizes, but escaped a conviction by a very curious but ingenious defence.

Some years after this some commotion was caused by a report that a child had been found drowned in the canal. I hastened to the spot, and, sure enough, I found this report too true, for I had shown to me as pretty a little babe as ever I saw, with a countenance as placid as if it had been asleep. It was about one month old, and the person who found it stated that she was going down the canal side when her attention was attracted to what she at first took to be a bundle of clothes, but, on making a further inspection, she discovered it was a child, with the face downwards in the water. She gave an alarm and it was taken out, but found to be dead. An inquest was held next day when a verdict of wilful murder was returned against some person unknown. From information conveyed to me a few days afterwards, I was led to arrest a woman who was afterwards convicted on the clearest evidence, and condemned to be hung. However, there is a great reluctance in high quarters to hang a female, and her sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life.

For several years prior to 1862, the police had been kept continually on the alert by what was termed union brickmakers. About once or twice a week information was brought to the police offices in the neighbourhood of Ashton, of bricks having been damaged by being trampled upon in the yards whilst drying, previous to being burned. At other times, thousands of needles had been thrown amongst the clay in order to prevent workmen making it into bricks. At other time, sheds had been set on fire wherever there were non-unionist brickmakers at work. This was continually going on; in fact, so vindictive did they become at one time, that the horses of brickmasters were hamstrung in the night time, rendering them unfit for further use, besides they cruelty to the horses themselves. For many night I and a number of other officers patrolled the neighbourhood of these brickyards with sidearms, and, if we had come across any of these ruffians, I have no doubt we should have used them, and the consequences must have been serious. However, we could not be allowed to watch any one yard at the expense of the others, and a number of the masters employed a watchman of their own. Several of these men had narrow escapes with their lives. On more than one occasion shots were exchanged between these watchmen and the depredators, and one poor

fellow was shot in the head, and the slug remained under his scalp for a week before it was discovered, and an ugly thing it was. It appeared to have been a good sized bullet cut in two. I at times paid these watchmen a visit to see if they kept awake, and one morning, about two o'clock, I went and placed myself under the shade of a number of houses overlooking a brickyard, where a man named Wood was watching, who had, a short time previous to his engagement, returned from Australia, where he had been roughing in the country, amongst wild beasts and wilder men. I stood for a few minutes looking across the brickyard, but could see nothing of Wood moving about, and to test his alacrity, I gave a low sort of whistle. After waiting a minute or two I was surprised to see him within twenty paces of me, walking on one hand and knee, and holding his gun to his shoulder with the other hand. I was obliged to stand still for several minutes, afraid to breathe, as I have no doubt, had he seen me, he would have let me have the contents of his piece. Thanks, however, to the shelter of the houses he never saw me, and I was glad to escape. This state of things, however, was suddenly brought to an end, as might naturally have been expected, by a collision between the police and these nightly depredators, in which there was loss in life. About three o'clock on the morning of the 28th of June, 1862, I was called out of bed by an officer, who informed me that officers Harrop and Jump had been shot by a number of union brickmakers. I immediately proceeded to a brickyard where some thousands of bricks had been trampled upon during the night, and, from a number of circumstances then communicated to me, I secured several of the damaged bricks with legible footprints upon them. I then went to Ashton, where I found the report about the shooting was too true. Harrop had been wounded with a pistol shot in the head, and poor Jump had been shot dead. This affair made no small stir in the country. Public feeling was aroused against the ruffians, who, it was considered, had shed innocent blood. The police were set to work in every imaginable form. The local magistrates met and offered a reward for the apprehension of the offenders, and some of their number went to the Secretary of State's office in London to lay the matter before him, upon which he augmented the reward already offered by them. The excitement was kept up for some days, during which time a number of men were apprehended. After various remands, several of them were committed to the assizes for trial, the reward offered, no doubt, having answered the object intended; for one of the men in custody gave a detailed account of the transaction, which was corroborated by overwhelming circumstantial evidence. They were tried at the next assizes at Liverpool, and all three were convicted, one to eighteen months imprisonment, as an accessory after the fact, and two, as principals, sentenced to be hung. One got his sentence commuted to penal servitude for life, in consequence, no doubt of certain communications he made during his incarceration; but the other was hung, and he stood to the last with a fortitude worthy of a better cause. At the trial I heard a speech made in his defence by an eminent counsel, specially retained superior to anything of the kind I ever heard in my life; and if anything could have disabused the minds of the jury of the conclusiveness of the evidence that stupendous speech would have done it. The prisoner listened to the warning administered by the judge and to the sentence passed on him with the greatest composure, and left the dock with a smile on his by no means repulsive countenance.

In the year 1841, during the time the railway was being made through Broadbottom, a foul murder, one out of several, was committed by a carpenter named Ford, employed on the railway works, the victim being a man named Shaw, a gamekeeper for Messrs. Marslands, of Best hill. The murderer also committed a rape on the wife of his victim. Shaw and his wife went to Mottram one Saturday night, and whilst there they called at a public house where the railway men were paid their wages,

and where Ford saw them. He followed them, and went behind Shaw and struck him on the head with a stone he had placed in a handkerchief, knocking him down insensible. He then dragged Mrs. Shaw through a gate into a field, about a hundred yards from the turnpike gate, where the rape was committed. Shaw was taken to his home at Long Lane, near Charlesworth, where he died. Ford was arrested the next day at his lodgings at Bank Wood, known as Botany, from which house he endeavoured to make his escape through the cellar when the constables went to arrest him. He was committed for trial, and at the following Chester Assizes was sentenced to be executed, but through the intercession of friends the sentence was commuted to transportation for life beyond the seas.

LIBERTINES AND THEIR VICTIMS.

Whatever alteration may be made in the system of regulation the hours for the sale of intoxicating drink, one thing is certain. And that is, by removing the temptation to drink, either by lessening the number of places for selling it or the number of hours during which it can be obtained, drunkenness will diminish in proportion, and as crime, prostitution, and numerous other evils which are inseparably connected with drink as the cause, is removed, the effect must necessarily decrease. I have known many young women who have been ruined through being induced to go to public-houses to enjoy the music and other amusements to be found there, and take drink, and thousands are annually seduced from the paths of rectitude by crafty libertines, with more money than brains, who ply senseless girls with drink until they are unable to protect themselves; but, if they escape their just reward in this world, they will assuredly meet with it in the next, if there is justice in heaven. I have also known promising young men who, when overcome in drink, have been led away by loose women, and have rushed headlong into all kinds of dissipation, and for a few hours sensual enjoyment, have had their prospects blighted for life. The number of parents who have been brought to premature graves by the conduct of a wayward child, whom they have nursed and cared for up to manhood, or blooming womanhood, in full expectation of their being a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, are innumerable, and can never be known in this world, their sad tale of woe and sorrow having gone untold with them out of it. There are hundreds of cases in which people are robbed of their money and valuables by the social evil, and dare not acknowledge it on account of the exposure which must follow; and when exposure cannot be avoided, recourse has to be had to every kind of subterfuge, which must follow; and when exposure cannot be avoided, recourse has to be had to every kind of subterfuge, I will not say perjury has not been committed to cover their shame. Of many of the incidents connected with this kind of cases none but police officers know anything.

One evening, in the year 1857, a man came to the police office, and reported that he had just had a silver lever watch stolen from his pocket whilst in one of these hells, where the social evil exist in all its forms. I accompanied him to the house, and, in order that there might be no mistake, I apprehended all, both male and female, there were in the house, and a thorough search was made without finding the watch. From the manner in which those in custody treated the matter, I felt convinced that they had not robbed the man, although any one of them was quite capable of doing so in an opportunity presented itself. I therefore, asked A_____ to allow me to examine his pockets, to which he assented, and, on passing my hand down his trousers, I found the watch in his rule pocket; whereupon, on telling him of it, he exclaimed, Well, upon my word, I put it there myself, and had forgot it!

On another occasion a man complained to me of having been robbed of half a crown by M___ one of the fallen angels, and the cleverest thief we had to deal with in Ashton at that time. I had her brought into the office, when the man repeated his story how she had picked his pocket of the half-crown, upon which she looked him full in the face, and asked him what he came into Crab Street for, if he did not expect to be robbed? Upon which the fellow, as if his eyes were just opened to the position he was placed in, turned round on his heels, walked out of the office, and refused to turn back when called on by the police. As he was leaving the office door, she called out, If you'd stop at home with your families, we should never come for you.

Some years since, whilst standing in a recess, at about midnight, I saw a very tall man come out of a public-house, and, by the light of a lamp over the door, I perceived that he was under the influence of drink. I should have taken no further notice of him, as I was watching for something else at the time, had he passed quietly along, but, instead of doing so, on coming opposite to where I was standing, he stopped a nymph of the pave, and to my utter astonishment, I saw him put something from his pocket into her hand. I was nearly rushing across the street, believing at the first that she was asking alms from him, but she left him immediately, and went into a vault close by; the man remaining, as if waiting for her, where she had first met him. She returned in a very short time with something bulky in her hand, concealed under her apron, and joined him again. I then concluded that he had given her money for drink. She went up Crab Street, the man at her heels, and your humble servant not far behind. They both entered a house, and before I could get to the door I heard it locked. I stood for a few minutes, wondering whether it was a dream, but soon concluded that police officers so seldom dream that it must be a reality. I immediately gave such knocks at the door of the house they had entered as could scarcely be mistaken for an official one, and which I was obliged to repeat more than once. I distinctly heard the man inside call out, Dont open it, dont open it, upon which I announced my office, and the door was quickly opened. On entering, I found the man sitting with his head betwixt his hands, in order to hide his face. I looked over the house, and, on leaving, I called him by his name, to convince him that I could not be deceived. He, however, refused to answer me. I then left the house, and the door was locked after me as quick as before, and in a few minutes I met another officer, when I returned to the house, having a great deal more anxiety for the man's welfare than he had himself, for I knew he had a valuable gold watch with him, and, as I have before stated, I also knew that if they robbed and beat him he dared not make it known. The door being locked made the house no safer, as the rood had a communication with the other dens, and the fact of the door being fast was the very thing by which the thieves knew where booty was to be had. We gained admission again, after many threats of violence, and I ordered him out of the house, when he inquired by what authority I did such a thing. I immediately left the house, telling hi as I did so that I had certainly no authority to make him go, but I had authority to tell a certain person what I had witnessed. This rather aroused him, for he followed us out and called after us several times, but we refused to stop until we got out of Crab Street, when he came up to us, and asked if I really intended to do what I had said I would do. He said it was nothing but a bit of a lark he was having. I replied, Lark or no lark, if I see you in that or any such place again I shall certainly expose you. He then went home with something to ponder about.

On another occasion I was fetched to the office, and on arriving there I found a very simple looking young woman in custody on a charge of having robbed a little, swaggering fellow, who was also in the office, telling how he had gone to the house where she lived, and had taken lodgings the night previous, having his money, which he said consisted of six sovereigns and some silver, in his pocket.

From the first I could not believe the girl in custody had robbed him. I therefore turned to the young, brainless fellow, and told him I did not believe he had had anything taken from him; upon which he pretended to go in a towering rage, and whilst swinging his arms about and vowing vengeance on both the girl and the police, I heard a chink, as of money, in his pocket, and told him that I could find his money in a minute if he would let me examine his clothes; upon which he exclaimed, Well if you find it on me it shall be yours.

I then put my hand into the breast pocket, and there found the same number of sovereigns he said he had missed. Upon seeing the course matters were taking, he became a little quieter, and declared that someone had placed them there when he had begun to make a bother about it, when in point of fact the fellow had put them in the most unlikely pocket he had about him to save himself from being robbed, got drunk afterwards, and forgot what he had done with it.

The majority of this kind of cases that are brought to light are of a most revolting character, and the men who are plundered of their money, etc, ought to undergo as much punishment as they who rob them for placing themselves within the meshes of such characters, either by going into their houses, or acknowledging them in the streets.

One evening, in the summer of 1858, three respectable men came to me, one of whom stated that about an hour previous he was passing along the street, when he was accosted by a middleaged female, and he told her to go about her business, which she did, and after she was gone he missed his watch from his vest pocket and his watch guard from around his neck. A rather cunning woman, said I to take your guard from your neck, and you wide awake; is she not? Well, it is so at all events, he replied. Now tell me the truth, I said, for if I tell the story as you have given it me, our people at the office will think I have gone beside myself. This drove him quite into a rage, and he began to talk about his word being as good as mine, etc. I allowed him to go on for some time, and then appealed to him whether he would believe either of his own friends if they had told such a story in his presence and hearing, upon which they (his companions) chimed in, and told him to relate a more likely story of how his watch and guard had been taken. This he positively refused to do. I, however, set some of my emissaries to work, and in the course of three or four days I found out the whole story. The man had been robbed of his watch and guard, but not in the way he would have led me to believe, nor the place stated by him. I waited upon him the first opportunity, and told him what I knew to be true, which he acknowledged, and asked me to say no more about it, as he had bought another watch and guard exactly like the one stolen, and his wife and family knew nothing at all about it, and he did not wish they should.

About the year 1858, on a fair day at Ashton, there was a greater number than usual of the Hibernian drovers attended and disposed of their stock of young cattle pretty early, and as soon as they had done so, some of them began to spend their money pretty freely at the different public houses in the town. I had an opportunity of seeing them in consequence of a little incident that took place by nine o' clock on that morning. It appeared that a man, about 30 years of age, had come from Roworth, in Derbyshire, to the fair, for the purpose of buying a cow, with some eight pounds in his pocket, that he had saved out of his hard earnings by working in a coal pit. On arriving in the town, he came in contact with two farmer-looking men who soon learned from his errand, and the amount of money he had upon him. They induced him to accompany them to a certain public-house, when one of them began to make free with money, telling the poor clodhopper that he had

just had a large fortune left him, and hardly knew how to spend it, to keep pace with his income. He then asked the poor fellow to allow him to see his money. The silly collier pulled from his pocket all the money he had, which was wrapped in a piece of old rag, telling him how long he had been working hard to save so much. The sharper took it from his hand, placed it in a new purse which he was making him a present of, and four sovereigns with it, saying he would rather help a striving man like him than spend his money in drink, and adding that it would enable him to make his wife's heart rejoice when he took home a much better cow than he could otherwise have done. The poor fellow, in his innocence, believed all was fair and honest, and allowed the villain to replace the money and new purse in his pocket, after which they left the house, to return, they said, in a few minutes. Without having the least suspicion of any foul play, the collier remained for a good part of an hour waiting their return. At the end of that time he began to have some misgivings, and pulled out his purse to count his sovereigns, it having struck him that instead of putting additional money into his purse they might have taken some out, and found that instead of eight sovereigns he certainly have twelve. He then went in search of his friends, thinking they must have lost their way and could not find the public house again. On meeting a neighbour of his in the street, he related the morning's adventure to him, who asked him to let him see the money. On examining it, it was soon discovered that instead of twelve sovereigns he had twelve counterfeit coins in his new purse. On making this discovery the man came to me, and in going round in search of these two rogues, I saw what was going on in the different public-houses, and came twice in contact with one of these Irish drovers above mentioned, named B___, who was showing his money to all comers. In course of time it got blown amongst the fallen ones and their fancy men that a good fish might possibly be hooked, and in a very short time he was induced by one of the nymphs to accompany her, and goodly number of her class of people were soon collected together around the man, ready almost to devour him. He was soon induced to find money to treat them to drink, and when he pulled out his purse the sight of the shiners, as they called them, drove the whole company into ecstasies. They began to dance round him, sit on his lap, sing for him—in fact, adore him. The drink went freely round, and in a short time he began to show signs of dozing over to sleep, upon which M___ cleared all out except his own mistress and his friend to Irishman, whom he said he had known for years. As soon as all was clear he tried to take the man's purse from his pocket, but he was nervous with excitement. Every time he was near accomplishing his object the man awoke, and stopped him. This state of things he knew could not last long, so he sent for a clever pickpocket from Crab Street, who came at once. On being told how matters stood, the female pickpocket sat down on poor Paddy's lap, and commenced to sing in his ear, Come steer my bark to Erin's Isle, etc. And in three minutes she handed unopened the purse containing the money with as much assurance as if she had performed some grand feat. She then left, agreeing to divide the spoil. M___ then got hold of his victim, and carried him out of the house into the street, where he left him to shift as best he could. When he awoke, in a few hours after, he went to the house of a friend, and informed him of his loss. Then the matter brought to my notice, but the man could remember very little of what had taken place. In the meantime M___ had gone to the others for the purpose of dividing the money, and on passing through St. Michael's Churchyard he seemed to have forgotten the adage that there was honour among thieves. He met the pickpocket and her man in a public house, and on examining the purse they found it contained twenty pounds. This was equally divided. From enquiries I made I learned that M___ had during the evening given some money to a person to take care of for him. I then apprehended him, and took possession of it, which was ten sovereigns. The next morning one of the Manchester police brought two boys to the office, and stated that late the night previous he had

met them in a street of Manchester, and seeing they were strangers he stopped them, when they told him they had walked from Ashton, and were making their way to Liverpool. Having plenty of money, they showed him ten sovereigns, and, on being further questioned, they stated that they saw a man place something behind a stone in St. Michael's Churchyard during the evening, and after he had gone away they went to see what it was, and there found ten sovereigns. On seeing M___ they identified him as the same man they had seen place the money where they found it. M___ was convicted at the following sessions, and sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment. The pickpocket, on receiving her share of the money, left the town, and remained away for some time.

I made some little trouble to find out who the men were that swindled the Derbyshire would-be farmer so neatly out of his eight sovereigns on the morning of the fair. I received information that two men answering the description of those who had robbed him had been making free with money for several days immediately after the fair at Ashton, and that they were lost sight of on the same day. I accordingly took the collier with me to Manchester, and after procuring the assistance of two other officers, we went to one of a number of beer houses in which, at that time, the scenes enacted would appal the strongest mind, unless it was rendered callous by such sights. Thanks, however, to the alterations in the system of licensing these places, it is to be hoped that such scenes will become things of the past.

Before entering this den of infamy, one of the officers accompanying us told the collier that if there was any fighting to be done he must stand his corner like a Briton. This, I saw, caused him to halt at the threshold of the house. However, he went with us in, and the sight that met our eyes was really sickening. A number of young women, varying from fifteen to thirty years of age, sat in different parts of the place, some dressed, others only partially so, but dirt and squalor was the order amongst them. The whole of them appeared to be either getting drunk or getting sober, as the case might be. Amongst them were a number of men gambling on the dirtiest of tables. All kinds of ribaldry were being talked; first, a snatch of some filthy song by the women, then a fearful oath by the men. Two men sat right opposite the door of a room which we entered, who fairly frightened the poor collier, and on being asked if he was anybody he knew, replied Yes, first and then No. On being pressed to say which he really meant to say, he bolted straight out of the place, and could not be induced to go in again. All I could get from him was that he wanted to go home. He would rather lose his money than having anything to do with such like people. A day or two after one of the same two ruffians asked one of the officers that accompanied him what he had done with the thick-headed Derbyshire farmer.

Whatever inconveniences men may be put to through being robbed by loose women, no sensible person can feel any sympathy for them. In many instances this class of women can not care for anybody, through having been driven, as it were, from the society for their friends, in consequence of the disgrace brought upon them by some wretch or other in human form.

I well remember a fine, blooming girl, about nineteen years of age, who was ruined through being victimised in the following manner; She was the only daughter of a man in Woodhouse, who, besides her, had five grown-up sons. He had, a short time previously, buried their mother, and all the household cares had devolved upon the young woman in question. One Saturday evening she left home to purchase groceries, etc. During the time she was engaged in going from shop to shop,

she met with a man who, in her innocence, she believed to be a friend of the family. After chatting with him a few minutes, he induced her to go into a public-house, where she partook of something to drink with him. She afterwards became unconscious, and remained in that state until the next morning, when she found herself in a barn, with the same subtle libertine. He had not only effected his diabolical purpose, but also caused a great deal of anxiety to her friends, by her absence from home all night, a thing which had never occurred before. In fact, she had never been known to keep company with any man, and as if to heap insult on injury, the licentious vagabond made an open boast of the great feat he had performed. This was more than the poor girl could bear, and she left her comfortable home and went into Crab Street, where she rushed into all kinds of dissipation, and in a short time became a mere wreck. Several attempts were made by her friends to reclaim her, but she positively refused to return home, stating that she could never live in her native village again, with the finger of scorn pointed at her. She soon got acquainted with a skulking fellow, who lived on her prostitution, and when that failed she was engaged in decoying men to out of the way places, where they robbed them. Ultimately, she was arrested on a charge of stealing, and the last time I saw her she was in the prisoners dock at Salford Sessions, when she had the appearance of a dissipated prostitute. She was convicted, and shortly afterwards died a premature death, like scores whose short career I have witnessed.

As I before stated, I had at that time a number of emissaries whom I contrived, by some means or other, to keep a look-out for me amongst the known thieves; and one night, in the year 1858, about nine o'clock, one of them came to me and inquired if I had heard of a man having been robbed. I replied that I had not. Well, said he you had better be on the look-out, for a watch has been stolen. He then described the place where the robbery had been committed, and said that C___ and his woman had done the job. They had watched an old man, and enticed him to a quiet place (the woman talking with him all the way), where they made a stop. She then put her hand into his pocket, and as quick as lightning, took his watch. He seized her by the arm, and cried, Thieves! Upon which C___, who had kept in sight all the time, sprang upon him, and knocked him down by a blow on the side of the head. They then both made off, and came to the house in which he (the former) was sitting, showed him the watch, and told him just what he had related to me. He refused to tell me exactly where the watch was hidden, because, he said, if I was seen near the place it would be known who had informed, and it would be about as much as his life was worth; but as soon as it was reported he would assist me in hunting out where it had been taken to. I heard nothing more of the robbery until near dinner time the next day, when old D___ came to me, and reported having been robbed at the time and place, and much in the same manner as had been previously described by my emissary. He offered £1 reward for the recovery of his watch. I thereupon found my informant, but he was unable to give me any further clue to the watch, except that the thief had gone away with it early that morning, and he was unable to say in what direction. Several days elapsed before I heard anything more of the watch, although I saw the thief several times in the street every day. Ultimately I heard that he had offered the watch for sale in Hyde the day after the robbery. I at once apprehended him, and by perseverance I found the man to whom he had sold it, and the watch was recovered. He was convicted at the following sessions, and sentenced to twelve months imprisonment. Shortly after the expiration of that sentence he was again convicted for another robbery, and sent to penal servitude. After serving a portion of his time, he was discharged on licence, and came to me with his credentials. I asked him what his intentions were, when he replied that he was going to live with his sister, and get into work. He had made up his mind to earn an

honest living. I promised him that if he really intended what he said, I would render him all the assistance I could; and, in order that he might suffer no inconvenience from his position, I promised further that, so long as his conduct remained good, no other person should know that he was a ticket-of-leave man. He left the office, promising to call again during the month, but he failed to do so, and the next time I heard of him he was in custody on a charge of burglary. A policeman had met him early in the morning, laden with the proceeds of a robbery at a neighbouring house, and on being stopped he attempted to inflict serious injury on the officer, who, however, managed to secure him. He was again sent away, on a longer term than before. This class of men created quite a sensation in the country some time since, by representations which were made through the press, of the police refusing to allow them to get an honest living. The police were said to have hunted them out their situations, where they were striving to earn a respectable livelihood. If such was really the case, nobody would, for a moment, defend it; but from my experience of these matters, I should say such cases were few indeed. I can quite understand a police officer informing an employer that he has such a man in his employ, inasmuch as if the employer found the man acting dishonestly, he would blame the police for not letting him know what kind of person he had about him. I have known numbers of employers who have engaged such men on the recommendation of the police, who have put themselves to some trouble in order that the men might have a fair start, and many have made for themselves positions in society without anyone knowing they were ticket-of-leave men, except the police and the persons they worked for, whilst others have relapsed into their old habits, in spite of everything that could be done for them. I know two who went back in that way, and when closely questioned, could assign no reason, except that they could not help it.

On another occasion a gentleman sought my assistance under the following circumstances; He was in the habit of receiving considerable sums of money in his business on certain nights, fortnightly, and on one of these nights, and as was his custom after he had done his business, he took a stroll round the streets, before going to bed. He was accosted by a young woman, and, after a little conversation, he went with her, for some reason or other, into St. Michael's churchyard. Whilst there the woman managed to abstract from his inside breast pocket a purse containing upward of £100 in money, and, with the assistance of J___, her fancy man, succeeded in making off with it.

He was unable to give me anything like a good description of either the man or the woman. However, I set to work, and, the night following, one of my emissaries informed me how the robbery had been effected, but he told a very different story to what the man himself told. The latter; however, turned out to be the true version of the affair. Nevertheless, the man had been robbed of his money, and it was a serious sum, too. I therefore made up my mind not to lose any chance, and posted off to Manchester the same night, between ten and eleven o' clock. I hunted about without success, and returned home at four o' clock, much discouraged. I was up and away to Manchester again by eight o' clock, and at eleven o' clock I had two prisoners in custody, and about £70 of the stolen money. There were two other officers belonging to Manchester with me, or I certainly should not have been able to have brought my prisoners from the place in which I found them, where they were enjoying a good breakfast of beefsteaks, etc. Their surprise may be easier imagined than described, when they found themselves in the strong grip of the limbs of the law, and no scruples were made in emptying their pockets of the beautiful shiners. They were both convicted at the following sessions. The man died before his term of imprisonment expired.

One night one of the officers brought a simple-looking man to me, and stated that he had come in search of his sweetheart. She had left home the week previous. He said he had found her in a house in Crab Street, with another woman, and a man. She induced him to have some drink which was brought into the house. He sat drinking with them for some time, and then fell fast asleep. On awaking, he concluded, from what he saw, that it was a house of ill fame. He left the place, and, on getting outside, missed his watch and chain. He then returned to the house, and asked for his property, but he was compelled to leave somewhat quicker than he went in. I accompanied him to the house, and made a pretence of searching in order to satisfy the poor dupe, but during the search the whole of the inmates kept protesting there was no watch there; and I believed them, for it was hardly likely they would have it in the house, well knowing that he had gone for the police. The man went away apparently satisfied, but not so with me, for I made up my mind that if nobody but the three in the house were concerned in the robbery, I could find the watch and bring the whole to justice, as none of them were sufficiently steeped in crime to escape me. I knew the man was at that time working in a cotton mill, and if he went to his work that morning, it was hardly likely he would return until after two o'clock, and if he intended to dispose of the watch he would go to Manchester as soon as possible after that time. I therefore disguised myself as well as I could in a suit of workman's clothes and waited patiently in sight of the bottom of Crab Street until nearly half-past four o'clock, when an omnibus was to start for Manchester. Just previous to that, as I had anticipated, the man and the two women came out of Crab Street, and passed, apparently with the intention of intercepting the omnibus on its getting outside the town. They were so near to me when I first saw them that I was obliged to stop at a watchmaker's shop, in the window of which there was a mirror, in which I could observe them pass with my back towards them. As soon as they had passed I turned round to watch them go forward, when I found that the man he left the women, and crossed to the other side of the street. As soon as he caught sight of me he commenced running. I immediately went in pursuit, and never lost sight of him till I overtook him, when another officer came up to see what I had been running for. I gave the man into his custody, and told him to hold him back until he saw me apprehend the two women, whom I pointed out. As soon as I came up to them and told them they must turn back with me, they tried to run away; but I caught hold of both at once, and told them it would be better to submit quietly, as I could not part company with them so soon. They were all taken to the office, and on putting my hand into the man's trousers pocket, I found a watch, which, on being examined, turned out to have J.C. scratched on the case. I then sent for the female searcher, and allowed all the three prisoners to sit near to each other. I commenced asking their names, and pretending to put them down, keeping my hand over my brow, so that I could if anything passed from the females to the man. As he had already been searched, and the chain not found, I concluded that it would be passed to him, and, almost as quick as lightning, I saw it pass, and called out, You might as well hand that chain here as put it in your pocket; upon which he gave it to me, exclaiming, Its no use trying to cheat you, I see. Poor J__C__, although done out of his sweetheart, had the satisfaction of recovering his watch and guard, as well as having his faithless Emma and her female companion in crime sent to goal.

ABSCONDING DEFAULTERS

Whatever the legislature may do with the question of educating the masses, it is questionable whether it will ever make all the world honest. So long as men indulge to excess in intoxicating drink, risk their money, and are tempted to risk other peoples whether at the card table, in the low public-house, or on the coming events, in the fashionable hotel, in a commercial country like ours, in

which men, whether as travellers, or cashiers at great business houses, or in the more humble stations of shopmen, etc. Are daily entrusted with large sums of money, so long shall we have what we see in almost every newspaper published, announcements of such men having absconded, taking with them large sums of their employers money. Tens of thousands have been either carried or squandered away by men who were considered men of the greatest integrity, and it must be admitted that, in some instances, they were not men known as either gamblers or excessive drinkers, but possessed of an unaccountable mania for contributing largely towards the maintenance of Sunday schools, places of divine worship, hospitals, etc, with other people's money; and in order to carry out their great and philanthropic ideas they have falsified their accounts, well knowing that discovery sooner or later was certain. In such cases the fall has been greater than that of the gamblers and tipplers, when it has been discovered some fine morning that Mr. So-and-so has been announced a defaulter. Of necessity, this class of men are men of considerable attainments in order to qualify them for such positions, and, in some instances, they give the police a great deal of trouble to unearth them if they once get a day or two's start.

In the month of December, 1859, a gentleman brought a warrant to the office for the apprehension of his traveller and cashier, who, he said, had absconded three or four days previously, and on his books being examined, it was found he had taken away with him something like a hundred pounds in money, which he had collected from the customers. He said he had reason to believe that the man had gone to Liverpool, intending to emigrate to the United States of America. He requested me to go forthwith to Liverpool, and arrest the man if possible. He, in order to awaken an interest in me, which was quite unnecessary-gave me a hint that some of the money would fall to my lot, providing I was fortunate enough to recover any. I started for the great shipping depot of the north of England, and on arriving I procured assistance, and spent two whole days in visiting outward-bound vessels and shipping houses a tedious job enough at all times. The answers an officer receives to his inquiries at such places are given in such an off-hand way that it leaves a vague suspicion on his mind that they are either not telling him the truth, or are telling him something more, the fare paid by these slippery people, who leave their native country in such a way, being the same to them as if paid by honest men. I have known instances in which a person has been traced to one of these offices in Liverpool, and on a police officer inquiring for him from the agent, and, in fact, showing a magistrate's warrant for his apprehension, he has positively refused to give any information that would forward the ends of justice, and when asked for an explanation of such conduct, the only reason assigned has been that if a person was to be apprehended in that way it might injure their business with this class of people. After two days search I left Liverpool and called at Bacup, where his friends resided, but had no better success there, although it occupied a third day. The evening after my arrival home, the man who had employed me came, and requested me to start for Queenstown by the next train, as he had reason to believe that the defaulter had gone through Ireland, and would get on board one of the mail boats which had sailed that morning. I was to get down to Holyhead, cross the channel with the London mails, and remain with them until they were put on board the vessel at Queenstown. I accordingly started on the following night, succeeded in coming up with the mails, and went through with them, but on boarding the steamships Vigo and Ajax, no C___ could I find there. On returning from the last boat I came in contact with a man who, from his appearance, I judged to be a detective officer, and having introduced myself to him, he pulled from his pocket a sheet of foolscap paper, which I had sent on the previous morning, giving a full description of C___. He told me I need not have come, for it the

man had been on board either of the steamers he could not have missed him, in as much as his right hand had been so mutilated in his younger days that there could be scarcely any mistaking him for another person. Having travelled about 400 miles during the past twenty-four hours, I felt pretty well done up and after taking a quiet cup of tea, I went with my detective friend to a kind of public-house and grocery store, kept by retired inspector of the Irish Constabulary, who related, for our amusement during the evening, some extra ordinary adventures in his twenty years experience in the Irish police, a great portion of his time having been spent in boarding vessels daily; and some queer freaks he related of young men from England, endeavouring to get away and avoid the payment of their debts, etc. We spent the time comfortably until the small hours of the morning, and two nicer companions I have not had in all my travels, either among strangers or friends at home. The next day I made my way home, and had not been there many hours before I received a telegram from a detective officer at Preston, who, from the description I had given him of C___, had identified and arrested him. I went to Preston by the first train, and on taking C___ into my custody, instead of finding a hundred sovereigns upon him, as I had been led to expect, I found a pawn ticket for his Sunday clothes, and a betting book, which plainly showed how the money had gone. He was convicted at the next sessions, and sentenced to six months imprisonment. In less than two years after this affair I arrested him again, on a charge of forgery on a firm in Manchester and on his own employer. A more ungrateful act I scarcely can remember, for the person in whose employ he was at this time actually went to the sessions at his previous trial, to speak to his character, and no doubt got his punishment mitigated considerably by promising the presiding chairman that he would find employment for him when he was released from prison. This he did, and that was the way his kindness was appreciated. However, on this occasion he was convicted at the Liverpool Assizes, and sentenced to twenty one years' penal servitude. The whole of this man's misfortunes could be traced to nothing but the betting houses and intoxicating drinks. His wife and family of small children were thrown on the world destitute, and a respectable father and several sisters were driven out of the neighbourhood through his disgrace.

It is highly necessary that police officers should exercise great caution in dealing with forgery cases, and, if possible, to secure a warrant for the apprehension of persons charged with this kind of offence, in as much as at times the people who complain are either so imperfectly acquainted with the law on such subjects, or allow their feelings to carry them away to extremes in the matter, and police officers, as a rule, cannot be expected to thoroughly understand such exceptional matters. If a case of forgery is made out to the satisfaction of the magistrates, before whom the accused is brought in the first instance, they have no further jurisdiction that to commit them for trial. I have seen more rascality disclosed in the investigation of this kind of cases than in any other, and they assume so many different forms. Within the past few years there has sprung up a system of insuring people's lives on a small scale—something like from five to fifty pounds, and the assurer pays weekly or fortnightly subscriptions of one penny or more, in proportion to the amount they are insured for. A number of men are fully employed as agents and collectors by these insurance offices; in fact, they have become so numerous as almost to have superseded what in country districts were known as the Club-fellows, a number of self-denying working men, who devoted a considerable part of their time at the weekends in collecting for sick clubs, some of which have been in existence for many years; in fact, it has been quite an institution in some localities.

Some few years since a married man, a factory operative of Newton, came to me and complained that one of the men employed as agent and collector for one of these life offices had induced him to

enter his family into the society, and, in addition, he had engaged him to canvass for other members in the neighbourhood in which he lived and he was to allow him a percentage on the money collected. He, however, had not kept his promise, but, more than that, he had had one of his children sick, and it died. During its illness the collector had called for the weekly subscriptions, and when the man applied for the funeral money he was coolly told that the child was out of benefit, and on looking over his contribution card he found it really was so. The consequence was that he was obliged to run into debt to bury his child decently. However, in a short time after, he heard of B___ having applied to the registrar of deaths for the district in which he lived for a certificate of the child's death, and he had no doubt but the man had received the money, which he ought to have had, from the office. I thereupon investigated the matter, and found that B___ had certainly received six pounds for the very same child's funeral, and in order to obtain it he forged the father's name on two different occasions. He was convicted at the following assizes, and it transpired that more than one poor family had been swindled out of the funeral money for their friends in the same way, in going his rounds to collect the weekly contributions. If he found someone poorly he would neglect to call for the number of weeks sufficient to exclude them from benefit, and if the person died, he would show them the rules, by which they were excluded, and then fill up another card, placing them within benefit, having kept them right at the office during the time. He would then forge all the necessary papers, and pocket the money. If the person recovered, he would collect their money himself, and say nothing about it. This same man made great professions about religion, and went about as a local preacher, deceiving the gullible part of the community. He was more than once robbed of money by loose women whilst he was playing the hypocrite in that way. He was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, and his wife came to a most horrible death during that time.

In the year 1858 a gentleman came to me with a warrant, and desired me to go at once and apprehend his traveller, who, he stated, had embezzled a considerable sum of money which he had collected from his customers. He had another man with him at the time, whom, he told me, he had engaged as traveller in place of the one he wished to have apprehended. I accompanied them to the man's house, whom we found confined to his bed and unable to move himself. They, however, insisted on having him apprehended-the new traveller displaying considerable zeal in the matter-which I, however, refused to do. The man died soon after, and it was found that if he could have been spared to have had the matter investigated he would have come out of the business better than his successor did; for in less than six months after his death the master again sought my assistance, and wanted traveller number two to be apprehended on a charge of having embezzled upwards of £50. He (the master) had been in search of him several days, but could not come across him, although he knew that he was in Manchester. I at once commenced hunting after the fellow, whom I knew to be a gambler, if nothing worse, and I spent two nights in visiting the lowest hells in Manchester, and heard of him having been seen on several occasions; but, do as I would, he was too quick for me. However, I began to dodge some of his friends to Manchester. This appeared to make it too hot for him, for he showed up early one morning at the office, with a solicitor with him, who, by some means or other induced the magistrates to believe that the so called traveller was a partner in the business, and so got him discharged, as much to his own surprise as anybody else's.

There are other ways of robbing employers besides embezzling their money if people are inclined to be dishonest. Where there are large numbers of people employed, it is next to impossible to guard against dishonest persons; although if plundering is practised to any great extent it is sure to be

found out in the long run, because the very fact of succeeding for a time only gives greater licence, as it were, and taking a trifle safely at first is an inducement to take more than can be concealed.

In 1857 I was sent for to a cotton mill, and on arriving there a man was given into my custody, along with his wife, on a charge of stealing cotton cops. The wife was in the habit of taking her husband's dinners into the mill, and remaining with him in the room in which he worked during the whole time the mill was stopped. The man was a weaver, and in consequence of weft cops having been missed from time to time, suspicion fell on them, and on the day in question, when the wife was leaving the mill after dinner time, she was stopped, taken into the warehouse, and in two large pockets, which appeared to have been made for the purpose, a quantity of weft cops were found. They were both given into my custody, and on going to their house, not many yards from the mill, I found a cartload of similar cops. The husband was committed at the following sessions, and, after serving his term of imprisonment, he was again apprehended for highway robbery, and sent to penal servitude for a long term. The wife was discharged.

Although police officers are continually engaged in dealing with offences against the law, and their feelings appear to be blunted to compassion with regard to peoples misfortunes, they nevertheless, are often moved with sympathy towards the persons whom they are compelled to bring to justice; and at other times, like other people, they enjoy a little amusement at the manner in which some people conduct themselves when in trouble.

The most amusing case I was ever engaged in arose out of a little trades union outrage. On a certain morning, two sawyers came to me and my brother officer, at Dukin field, and stated that during the previous night somebody had been to the place where they were working, broken their saw frames, and taken the saws away. They told us, also, that they suspected two other sawyers, whom they named. We arranged that they should go amongst the trade, and see if anything could be heard of the two men, whilst we went in search of the saws, although we did not expect to find them. On leaving us, they went and found two other sawyers, whom they told what had taken place, and whom they suspected of having taken them, upon which the two offered, for five shillings, to go and find the men who were suspected, and, whilst spending the money on them in drink, to find out what had been done with the saws. Accordingly they started out on the spree, and soon came across the two suspects, who after going with them from one public-house to another for some time, told them, as a secret, how cleverly they had got the saws away, and that they had hid them in the canal, where none of the police could find them. However, one of these amateur detectives left them for a short time to report progress to us, when it was arranged that he should return and tell them that the police had got a scent, and were going to drag the canal, and, if they did not intend the saws to be found, they must go as soon as it was dark and remove them to a safer place. The bait took, and by seven o'clock the two who belonged to the saws accompanied me and the other officer into a wood adjoining the canal, as near the place indicated as possible. We had not been waiting many minutes before we saw four men, the two who had taken the saws and the amateur detectives, stealing quietly down the other side of the canal, and in as short time as it has taken to describe it one of them stripped and plunged overhead into the water, fishing for the saws. We at once ran to the spot, and arrived just in time to see him bring them out. In the confusion the other man who had assisted in taking the saws would have got away, but for one of the sawyer detectives taking hold of and handing him over to my brother officer's custody, at the same time, to the utter astonishment of both culprits, exclaiming, It's no use, chaps; you are fairly trapped this time, and will

have to go with the constables. Both men were committed to the sessions but acquitted, the jury believing the case to have been one of wilful damage and not of stealing. They were, however, afterwards summoned to the county court, and compelled to pay for the damage done to the saws. A great deal of amusement was caused in the court at the sessions during the trial, in which the chairman and other magistrates joined most heartily, by the manner in which one of the sawyer detectives gave his evidence. He was a strong, powerful man, and several times appealed to the defending counsel to know if he thought he had been telling lies, and if he thought he could catch him. He then appealed to the chairman to know what that little chap, pointing to the counsel, had to do with it, and then turning to the prisoners, he cried out Eh, Bill; eh, Ned; you know you took um, and now you've got this little chap (counsel) for to say you did not do. You told both me and Wigan Dick what you' d done. A clever trick; eh dear, one could not a believed it on you, etc.

KLEPTOMANIACS

There are very few police officers of experience who have not been often brought into contact with cases of persons stealing that have shown up our poor humanity in its most unaccountable forms. There are instances in which people are tempted to steal through want of the common necessities of life, and prefer a prison to a work house; others steal to raise money to buy intoxicating drinks, their appetites being so strong that they will risk anything, even the disgrace of being sent to prison as common felons, in order that they might satisfy their craving for more drink. I am certain that nine out of every ten cases that have come under my notice haven been traceable to this cause. I have known numbers of professional thieves, who have made a living by stealing rather than work, but the most curious class are what are termed to have the kleptomania generally considered an indication of a diseased mind, or as absurd, eccentric. Etc. Which, however, is little noticed so long as it does not interfere with other people's property. But such practices often bring the person so affected into serious scrapes. I have known several females who have been caught stealing whilst in the family way; in fact a Mrs. Mc.N___ I knew, who had either two or three children born in prison, was never known to steal at any other time. I also knew a Mrs. A___ in Dukinfield, who was several times punished for stealing. She was not in the immediate want of anything. She was not in the immediate want of anything. She had a large and respectable family, and was never known to steal when sober; but when under the influence of drink she would pick up any little trifle which came in her way articles which she was never likely to have any use for whatever. I also knew an old man who collected all the old bits of iron, string, and indeed anything that was of no use either to him or anybody else. He would have stolen a rusty screw before a shilling in money, and a large hoard he had of such articles. There was a nobleman who stole all the old iron and crockery he could lay his hands upon, until he had several tons laid up. There was also a doctor who was in the habit of stealing all the table cloths he could from his patients houses, and after he took them home he never inquired what had become of them. There was also a wealthy lady who made a practice of purloining something from every shop she entered; and, to save her getting into disgrace, her friends always sent a person into the shop after she had left to pay for anything she might have taken away.

I well remember a lady who, about the year 1854, was caught stealing butter from a grocer's shop. Several Saturday evenings not only pieces of butter and lard, but the stands on which the butter was exposed on the shop counter had gone in a most mysterious manner, and several instances were reported to me and my brother officer. We were too much engaged on a Saturday evening to watch

the place ourselves, but found a man who agreed to watch for a small consideration, and the next Saturday evening he was concealed in the shop, so that he could see all that took place without being observed. About 11 o' clock, whilst the family were at supper, the door opened gently, without giving the usual alarm by ringing the bell, a thing the shopkeeper himself could not believe was possible to be done, and a female came noiselessly up to the counter, took hold of a board with a large piece of butter upon it, and was moving out of the doorway when the watcher stepped out and collared her, but she, however, managed to throw the butter into the street. She was detained and given into custody, and on going to her house no less than three boards similar to the one she was caught with, and a quantity of butter and other articles, were found in a box. The box was locked, and the key was taken from her. The husband was present when these articles were found, and he appeared to be so much affected on seeing them that there was no doubt of his innocence and sincerity. The woman was convicted at the following sessions, at Knutsford. In this case both the thief and her husband were in work, earning good wages, and how she came to steal was a mystery to me. She had butter enough in the box at home, and she was stealing more than would have supplied both her and her husband for several weeks; however, the propensity for stealing appeared to have been engrafted into her nature. For some twelve months after this affair I had complaints almost daily from people of goods being stolen from their backyards; one person had had a kettle taken, another a tub, a third a blanket. I spent the greatest part of several nights in this particularly quiet neighbourhood, but without result. The same story was repeated next day one or another had been robbed during the night. I was almost at my wits end, and was compelled to adopt another means to find out the depredators. I commenced a sort of tour of gossiping in the neighbourhood. One person had a cat, which I admired, in order to get into conversation; another had a very pretty plant or flower in the window. There is nothing will bring a matronly country woman into a good humoured conversation sooner than praising something, however trifling, that she herself admires. After breaking the way by this kind of observations, I could introduce my subject and ascertain all they knew without them ever suspecting that they were communicating anything like information to me. I continued on in this style until I came to a grocer's shop kept by a very respectable man who was quite open, and invited me to have a smoke with him a business at which I was a very poor hand. However, I did smoke, and in five minutes both house and shop were all on a whirl; but I persevered, being new at the job. I finished off with a dreadful cold perspiration and dizziness, which remained for some ten minutes. When I came round I could remember rather indistinctly that he had described a woman, whom I thought I knew, as having recently removed into a certain cellar I knew was the property of a certain mill owner, and for whom I concluded that the female would be working. I went and inquired at the mill-lodge for my former acquaintance, the butter stealer. To my great satisfaction the lodge-keeper sent for her at once, and on her coming in sight of me she staggered as if she would have fallen. I took her to the cellar, of which she produced the key, and every article of furniture in the place was identified as belonging to some of her neighbours; even the cola she had in the place was of different kinds. I procured a cart and took her and everything movable in the house to the police office at Hyde. She was again convicted, and sent for a long term of imprisonment. In about five years after she was charged with having stolen a gold ring, when she was sent to penal servitude for seven years as irreclaimable. I have had many kinds of people to deal with in my time, but this poor creature, although cunning at stealing, was about as simple and ignorant a specimen of human nature as I ever remember coming in contact with. She never attempted to offer any defence at the trials, but left witnesses to say whatever they thought proper about her unchallenged.

On a certain morning in 1857, I was just leaving the office, having been engaged in and out all the night, when a quiet-looking young woman rushed in, quite breathless, and announced, before she got properly within the threshold, that there had been a robbery. There was sitting behind the desk at the time the night office-keeper who called out Where what is it like? Etc. When she began to state that she lodged at the house of _____, and on coming down stairs to go to her worked, a little after five o'clock, she had found the house door and windows open, and a quantity of clothing, and a sum of money missing. I was at once struck with the appearance and manner of this young woman, and formed an unfavourable opinion of her; and as she was leaving the office, I told my colleague, who was an old and experienced officer, to go after her, and be careful not to lose sight of her, as I had no doubt she would herself find the missing clothes somewhere near the house, if no one else had found them before. I joined the officer at the house, where I found him with a number of women round him, and our informant was engaged in describing how she made the discovery of the house having been robbed; also how, when returning from the police office, she had found the bundle she was exhibiting, containing all the missing clothes, in an entry near the house. The officer had his pocket book out, apparently taking down all particulars, and on seeing me he gave me a look which told me plainly that my suspicions were confirmed. Without appearing to interest myself in her story at all, I very quietly asked the mistress of the house how long she had known her lodger, and before the woman could answer me, her lodger turned round and inquired if I thought it was her that had done it. Pretending not to hear her, I inquired a second time, when the woman answered only a few weeks, and another woman, apparently a neighbour, added, you never suspect her surely, for she goes to school and chapel every Sunday, and she seems a very decent young woman. Seeing however, that this decent young woman was sidling towards the back door, and keeping a very nervous eye on me, I told the women, who had at this time gathered close round me, that I unfortunately did suspect her, and moreover than that, I felt it my duty to take her to the police office. Upon hearing this, she made a rush for the door, a circumstance I anticipated, and was just in time to prevent her exit. I arrested her, after a short struggle, during which the whole of the women protested against such unkindly act, but advised her, as she was innocent, to go quietly, advice which she very reluctantly took, and she was soon on her way to the office. At this time it was sufficiently light to see that she was endeavouring to remove something from her bosom. I caught hold of her hand, which trembled dreadfully, telling her at the same time she had better leave it alone until she arrived at the office, when she quietly pulled out the purse containing the exact sum of money said to have been stolen in her lodgings, and on going back again to the house the mistress identified the purse as being the one in which she had her money, but she had not, in her confusion thought about the purse until I showed it to her. The decent young woman admitted her offence before the tribunal, at the sessions, where she received her due in duration.

BODY SNATCHING

I purpose now to give some of my reminiscences of body-snatchers, who at one time were the terror of the country. In the early thirties Stalybridge was noted far and wide as the abode of some very terrible men, and I remember that in Mottram people kept their children at home at nights by telling them that if caught by the Stalybridge Burkers or body-snatchers, they would have plasters put over their mouths to prevent them crying out, and would be killed, so that the doctors could cut them to pieces. I well remember seeing men wending their way to Mottram Churchyard, with heavy topcoats on, to watch the graves of their departed friends, and keep their bodies secure from the malpractices of the resurrectionists.



“The men were deeply engaged in a conversation carried on in an undertone.”

These were a class of men devoid of all feelings of humanity, all sympathy for broken-hearted widows, affectionate parents, brothers or sisters—all pity for fatherless or motherless children, men, in fact, who made a living by rifling coffins of the bodies enclosed, for the purpose of selling them to the members of the medical profession, to be cut and mangled, in order that a better knowledge of the anatomy of the human frame might be acquired.

Many circumstances took place of such a horrifying character that those who cannot remember the time will scarcely credit them. Those only who remember the reign of resurrectionists can properly understand the feelings of people who, when already borne down by the hand of affliction by death in the family, and to bear the additional burden of finding that after the last sad office of devotion and affection had been bestowed upon the remains of those who were near and dear, after the last look had been taken at the lifeless body before it was finally shut from the light of day, after the mournful procession had listened to the solemn service for the burial of the dead and the coffin had been reverentially deposited in what was supposed to be its last resting place until it mouldered into dust; the graves were desecrated, and the lifeless bodies abstracted from their coffins by the midnight robbers, anxious for the gold of the doctors. However necessary it might have been considered that subjects should be found for the medical profession, it could never console people who knew that the bodies of those they loved had been stolen. It is not difficult to understand the feelings of the midnight watchers as they walked through the graveyards of the district, in order to protect the remains of their dearest and best relatives and friends. English feelings resented such outrages upon humanity, and compelled the legislature to pass stringent measures for their suppression, for it should be understood that the law of the land was said to be such that no legal punishment for stealing a corpse had ever been devised, the Legislature never having contemplated a state of society in which such wretches as body snatchers could be found.

It was on a certain night, over sixty years ago, three men assembled in the bar-parlour of the Pack horse, Stayley, smoking out of long clay pipes and drinking glasses of spirits. The evening was so far advanced that the spindle had ceased to whirl and the shuttle to rattle, and all was quiet save the heavy steps of the watchman proclaiming the hour in the lower portion of the village, varied by the screeching noise of an owl in a wood on the opposite side of the river. The men were deeply engaged in a conversation carried on in an undertone, and there was such an air of mysteriousness about their conduct that the host was anxious for their room, particularly as it was near his usual time for retiring to rest. He gave them sundry hints that they must make short work with their glasses, as he intended to go to bed. They took little notice of his hints, as they were more interested in the anticipated arrival of another visitor, and very time they heard the least noise they glanced in the direction of the door. At length a man, who had enjoyed life for nearly the whole of the time allotted to most men on this earth, entered. He was dressed like a sexton, and after a few friendly greetings, he took his seat near a tall, straight man, apparently about thirty years of age. He was good-looking, and, from his superior make-up and commanding manner, it was evident he had seen better days, and from this description the reader will not be surprised to learn that his name was Captain Seller, and as such he was addressed by another of the company, apparently about forty years of age. The latter was well formed, with firmness and resolution clearly depicted in his countenance. He was called by the captain, Tellam. The other individual in the room was a burly, rough looking fellow, wearing clothing that had been given to him by those who had no further use for it, and he was evidently a hanger-on, while his look told plainly enough that he was just the man for an emergency that required less of honesty and virtue than of impudence and villainy. The sexton obtained a glass of his favourite beverage, which was of a pretty strong kind, judging from the jolly red nose he displayed. He took his seat near the captain, who, addressing him as Tom, said in a sharp tone:- What have you been doing of late that you have never sent for us to come and see you? The governors are complaining that you have not referred us to any work whereby they can increase their stock of useful knowledge, assed the speaker before Tom had the chance to reply. The captain chuckled at what he thought was a good hit on his part, and the company, as in duty bound, laughed at what he said. Tom did not appreciate it, however, for he turned on the captain and petulantly said:-

Its me ut owt to complain, take this then, at the same time following the advice of Shakespeare as to suiting the action to the word, by placing something in Tom's hand which caused his eyes to sparkle as much as it would his nose to redden before he was much older.

Better late nor never, said Tom, as he put the money into his pocket. Neaw, aw'll tell yo ut aw've not bin idling my time away in bed, like sum folk dun, for aw bin off to-day, un aw con put yo i'th' way uv a good prize, ut'll be gotten howd on beaut mich bother. It's at Mottram, where foaks goan to bed soon un gotten up late, so yo'll not ha' mich trouble to get on 't sleepy side on um.

At this good news the eyes of the three men glistened as much as those of Old Tom's did when he fingered the gold given him by the captain. The glasses were replenished, and all left the house after an arrangement had been come to for another meeting in Mottram before daylight. In a short time after the captain was wending his way past the Stocks. Tellam was going up the road past Bower Fold, while Wood was no great distance behind him, pushing a borrowed cart up the brow toward Mottram. An empty sack and a hamper had been obtained, while various tools were concealed

about the persons of the midnight marauders. Before daylight the cart was taken to a stable belonging to a professional gentleman in Stalybridge, within which a full hamper was deposited.

As soon as Wood had taken the cart home, the men quickly disappeared in different directions. That very afternoon a carrier's cart stopped near the stable to receive the hamper, and the same day it was delivered at a place in Manchester, to remain until called for. It was far from the first time the carrier had conveyed similar goods, but as he was well paid, he had never asked any questions as to what the hampers contained. He had several times thought there was something mysterious about the receipt and delivery of them, but he had studiously avoided saying anything. His suspicions, however, were aroused that day from something he noticed while the hamper was being delivered, and consequently he made up his mind that the very next he received he would manage to peep inside while he was on the way to Manchester. The same night another meeting of the midnight marauders was held, but not at the Pack Horse Inn. The four men previously described were present, and Tom was well paid for the information he had given at the previous meeting, and, in return, he told them of another prize they could obtain Dukinfield, although with more danger and difficulty than on the previous night. This, however, did not trouble them much, for they had become so hardened, and had been so fortunate in their various attempts, that they rather liked the idea of a change, and they at once determined that a young gentleman, named Bob, who occasionally joined them for the love of adventure, should be invited. He was a smart, active young fellow, apprenticed to a medical gentleman. Plans were laid, and before morning the captain, Tellam, Wood, and Bob were wending their way in different directions towards Dukinfield, on as diabolical and wicked an expedition as ever human being took part in.

The alarm and excitement created throughout the country in reference to body snatchers became so great that it was very difficult to obtain bodies from graveyards, and this led to the further development of a still worse evil. The high prices given for subjects for the surgeon's knife led to the most atrocious crimes and murders were committed with no other object than the possession of the body of the victim, and for the sake of the money it would bring. A notorious case was that of Burke, who was tried and convicted in Edinburgh for having murdered an old woman with that object. Burke, along with an associate named Hare, had murdered no less than sixteen persons, whose bodies they had sold to the anatomist. It was their practice to inveigle poor people, generally strangers, into their houses, make them drunk, and then smother them. Hare gave evidence against Burke, who was condemned to death, and paid the last penalty of the law in being hung, amidst the execration of the nation. He bequeathed a new verb to burke to the English language, which is still in use, as well as the name burker which became as familiar to people as any words in ordinary use. The alarm about the burkers was so great that it was common to see graves being occasionally opened to see if the bodies were safe; stones were placed over coffins, and straw mixed up with the earth, under the impression that the difficulty of emptying a grave would be too great to be accomplished in the time the burkers durst be engaged in the dangerous operation, although their plan was to get out no more earth than enabled them to get a rope attached to the head or feet of the coffin, and pull it out endways. The re-opening of graves was an almost daily occurrence in the district, and one the writer witnessed in St. Peter's Churchyard, Ashton, is a fair sample of the way it was done elsewhere. The grave was emptied to the coffin, and at a given time the friends of the deceased, to the number of twenty, assembled round the grave, while the sexton descended, and in their presence opened the coffin. He was muffled up round the mouth and nose with a cloth, and primed with a glass or two of spirits. It was often a sickening sight to the friends to view the

remains, but they endured it to set their minds at rest that the body was safe. Of course, empty coffins were found, and at last the authorities were compelled to put a stop to the re-opening of graves. Watch and ward were kept over graves, and many poor people were put to great expense in protecting the bodies of their relatives. A few local cases are given to show the audacity with which the practice was carried out in the district.

At Woodhead a coffin was interred so near the surface that by the time those attending the funeral had had tea at an inn, in accordance with the custom in those days, the body had been abstracted, and was taken through Stalybridge long before the funeral people arrived there. On another occasion an attempt was made to abstract a body from a coffin while the hearse was stopped in front of a public-house on the way to church.

Among the strange folks of Stalybridge was one John Chadwick, who had a peculiar way of walking, and a slight impediment in his speech, the latter causing him to say Bup a den when he meant Sup again. Upon his death the body was interred in Cockerhill Churchyard, and the doctors were specially anxious for it, as it was likely to possess some peculiar feature. A good sum was offered for it, and the body snatchers went to work in earnest. The body was soon above the earth, and the men were just lifting it out of the coffin to put it into a sack before placing it in a hamper, when the wind, whistling among the tombstones, seemed to say to them Bup a den. Tellam took to his heels, and in his fright jumped over the yard wall, rolled down the brow to the brink of the river, and it was next to a miracle that his life was not sacrificed. For a day and night he was not seen, but at last he was found concealed in the hay loft belonging his master. The body, however, was taken away, and was found to possess double shin bones. It is said that it is still in the possession of a surgeon residing in Stockport.

It is related of Tellam that on one occasion he was at the house of a local surgeon, on the invitation of an apprentice there, when he was sent to an outhouse to fetch a bottle of wine out of a particular hamper. On putting his hand into it, he set up a scream that alarmed the whole house, the fact being that he had been purposely sent to a hamper containing a body, and the man who had nerve sufficient to join a gang of body snatchers was terrified to find himself so near to a victim when he least suspected it.

On another occasion Captain Sellars was quarrelling with a carrier, when he taunted the latter with having conveyed the body of his own father to Manchester, and the writer is acquainted with a person who well remembers having seen some of the gang pulling the stockings from the body of a woman, as it lay in a stable preparatory to being stowed away. It was afterwards proved that the body was that of Betty Dain, of Back King Street. This case caused a further search, when it was discovered that the bodies were missing of old Joseph Platt, carrier, Rassbottom Street; old Joseph Hall, publican and clothier, Cockerhill; and Paul Greenwood, known as the Cap Man, because he went about selling caps made by his wife. It is probable that other coffins would have been found empty, but the ministers or chapel wardens at Cockerhill prohibited the opening of any more graves, as there was such intense excitement when it was discovered that another body was missing. Locally, the unblushing effrontery with which these wicked deeds were carried on roused the indignation of the people so much that on one occasion one of a gang was left for dead in the Catholic chapel yard, Dukinfield. It appears that while the resurrectionists were busy at work, a number of men who were watching the yard came across them, and at once attacked the plunderers

in such a manner that Bob was left for dead, and the others escaped with various marks of the affray upon them. The reason this course was taken was the general impression that there was no law to reach the body snatchers, unless they took some portion of the shroud or coffin, but not if they took the naked body, and left the articles with which it had been interred behind. The midnight watchers of Mottram had been sadly pestered with John Lee, better known as Tank and they made up their minds to enjoy some fun at his expense. Among those who occasionally went to the Bull's Head were James Dawson and James Stanney, one a painter and the other a plasterer. They were two smart young fellows, invariably dressed up in clean white moleskin suits and linen aprons. One night, having treated Tank to sundry glasses of ale, they arranged that he should take a turn round the



“The wind whistling among the tombstones seemed to say Bup a den.

churchyard while the rest were eating supper. Tank started off on his perilous journey, but no sooner did he leave the house than the two young men slipped away, and succeeded in getting behind a tombstone, where they lay concealed when Tank appeared. Just as he was passing they sprang up, and poor Tank, who had bragged a deal before starting made a dead stop. He next lifted up a furze bush to his face, so that he could not see the ghosts. Or resurrectionists, and began retreating, exclaiming: I never did nobody no hurt, and I hope nobody will do me none. This he repeated until he arrived at the churchyard gate, where he faced about and ran into the Bull's Head as fast as his legs would enable him, his hair, if possible, stiffer than ever. After recovering his breath, he related how he had seen two ghosts, or boggarts, dressed in white, spring

from a grave. He was afterwards told what he had been frightened at, when he maintained that he neither cared for ghosts nor body snatchers, but nothing could ever induce him to walk round the churchyard again after dark. The company enjoyed the fun, and it has often formed the subject of a light tale to the many dark and gloomy incidents connected with the reign of the midnight robbers.

The following cases, properly authenticated, will show how extensively the practice was carried on:-

On January 15th, 1828, the body of a Mrs. Hall was stolen from the chapel yard at Hollinwood. On December 20th, 1830, the body of Joseph Ogden was stolen from the same place. The same year the body of Mrs. Booth was stolen from the chapel yard at Denton. The resurrectionists in this instance

came from Gorton or Manchester, for the body was afterwards found hidden under a heap of soil near Debdale Lane, Gorton. It is supposed the robbers had either been so hard pressed that they were compelled to get the body out of sight or that it was too much decomposed to be of use to the doctors. On February 11th of the same year, a child, nine weeks old, was interred in a grave at Gorton Chapel-yard, in which Mr. Thomas Dunkerley, aged sixty-two years, had been interred on April 15th, 1828. On the 17th of March, 1830, being about five weeks after the interment of the child, Mr. Aveyard, the sexton of the place, noticed that the gravestone was out of order, and, therefore, he replaced it. The day after he found that the body snatchers had been during the night and taken the coffins of Mr. Dunkerley and the child. It was supposed that the resurrectionists, noticing the gravestone had been newly laid, took the coffins and bodies under the impression that they had recently been interred. Afterwards they had to get rid of the bodies as best they could, when they discovered their mistake. The general opinion in this case was that the resurrectionists had come from Audenshaw or Hooley Hill. In 1831, the body of Mary, daughter of John Schofield, of Gorton, was stolen from the chapel yard. The deceased was eighteen months old, was interred on January 8th, and in about a week afterwards was stolen from the grave. A very remarkable case was that of Alice Ashworth of Hyde, whose body was interred at St. Thomas's Gorton, on May 4th, 1831. She was a very handsome young woman, and died of a lingering disease. Previous to going to Hyde, she resided at Goose Green, and worked at Gorton Mills. On the day following her interment, the sexton, James Knott, perceived that her gravestone had been jugged against the adjoining one. Knowing he had left it in a more workmanlike manner, he suspected that the body had been stolen, and at once proceeded to Denton to inform her brother-in-law. The news spread, and upon his return the chapel yard was filled with hundreds of people watching the opening of the grave. Marks of corduroy trousers were found as the earth was thrown from the grave, leading to the impression that the body snatchers had knelt on it, in order to get it all into the grave again. At length the coffin was gained, and found to contain nothing but the grave clothes with which the deceased had been interred. The report in the village for years afterwards was that these were presented to a female residing near, who made an under garment of them, which she wore until it was done. The brother-in-law placed the coffin under his arm and conveyed it home. He afterwards put it into his hat shop, where, it remained several years until he emigrated. A more remarkable case still occurred at Mottram. The body of a robust man, of the name of Sloane, of Gee Cross, had been interred in the Mottram Churchyard, and it is supposed there were special reasons why it should be obtained for the doctors. One morning shortly after the interment the body was found doubled up and packed in a hamper, as if the resurrectionists had been disturbed in their nefarious tricks, and compelled to beat a hasty retreat, leaving the object of their night's work in the churchyard. The news spread like wildfire, and all kinds of stories were soon in circulation. Graves were opened in order to see whether the remains of dear departed ones still remained. The story of the removal of the body of James Brierley is still well known in this district. When the father had ascertained what had taken place, he took the coffin which had contained his son's remains and exhibited it at the Crown Pole Steps one Sunday morning. The affair created a great sensation in Mottram and Staly bridge, as the coffin was taken by the father to his home, in the latter town. He often declared he would be interred in it, and it is said that on one occasion he took it on his back to Millbrook to have it repaired. He kept it until his death, but as to whether he was interred in it the writer knows not. He placed a stone over the grave where his son had been interred, and got the following inscribed on it:-

Though once beneath the ground his corpse was laid,
For use of surgeons it was thence conveyed;
Vain was the scheme to hide the impious theft,
The body taken; shroud and coffin left.
Ye, wretches, who pursue this barbarous trade,
Your carcases in turn may be conveyed ,
Like his, to some unfeeling surgeon's room,
Nor can they justly meet a better doom.

Captain Sellers became so reduced in circumstances when the trade was put an end to, that he had to commence working as a labourer at the gasworks, and died very poor, and some say even miserable. Bob joined the army, and went out to India under the East India Company, and Wood dragged on a miserable existence for several years. He left the locality for Saddleworth, where he died.

INGENIOUS FRAUDS AND ROBBERIES.

It would seem somewhat singular that most of the important cases I have been engaged in for the last forty years have been connected with Stalybridge. In 1861, on the breaking out of the American Civil War, cotton became both scarce and dear, and some manufacturers laid in large stocks. The goods warehouse at Park Parade, Ashton, was full. A number of men in Ashton commenced stealing bales of cotton from different places, and great anxiety was created at the police offices by the complaints that were made. Watch was set on certain individuals, and warehouses and mills were guarded without any discovery being made until Messrs. Reyner changed their night watchman at Cockbrook Mills. A night or two after Alfred Buckley commenced his duties as night watchman he was waited upon by three men he knew, who asked him to allow them to take a bale of cotton, telling him he would be well paid for it, and that the late watchman had allowed them to have bales of cotton and skips of cops. Next morning Buckley told his employers what had taken place, and they sent him to their solicitor, Mr. John Lord, of Ashton. Mr. Lord sent for me, and on telling him that this sort of thing was going on elsewhere, he told me to see to it. I arranged with Buckley the watchman, that if the men came again he must tell them that they could have a bale of cotton if they would come at two o'clock next morning. They agreed to do so and came as arranged with a horse and cart. This they loaded with a bale of cotton from the warehouse and started off. I and two other officers who had been in waiting, stopped them. One of the officers took hold of the horse's head, upon which all three men jumped from the cart. We arrested two of them. The third man ran away across the brickfield, but we saw who he was. We took the men and the horse and cart and cotton to the Town Hall, and then went to the house of the third man, and found him in bed with all his clothes and boots on, which were smeared with brick-clay. I turned the clothes down, when the man exclaimed, "This is a fair catch! These three men were, at the Salford Sessions, sent to penal servitude for three years each.

But cotton stealing still went on, and the wife of one of these men already mentioned came to me several times and complained that her husband had been sent away for stealing cotton, and she thought it very hard, as the men who enticed him into the trouble were having legs of mutton cooked at different public-houses each night and riding about in cabs. She further stated that she knew that cotton was still being stolen from the Park Parade warehouse. The police were occupied night after night watching the warehouse, but nothing seemed to take place. I told the manager of the Bridgewater Trust Co. what this woman had told me more than once. He, however, set very little reliance on the story, but I told him that he would change his tune before long.

At this time I left Ashton to go to Stalybridge. In a week or two after that a detective came from Manchester to Stalybridge police office with the foreman carter of the goods warehouse in custody. On seeing them I said, "Mr Buckley has the cotton bubble burst? What do you mean? I said, Why man, there's thousands of pounds of cotton been stolen in Ashton. Pointing to the prisoner, I said, You know Jack? The detective said, It's all about a load of cotton, but he said he could explain it away. He then asked to see the manager of Cheetham's new mill. I told him where he could find him, and he then left with his prisoner. In a short time after the manager of the Bridgewater Trust Co. came in and asked me if I had seen Mr. Buckley and their foreman carter. I said, "I have, and they have been here, but gone to see the manager of Cheetham's new mill," and I added, "Now, what do you think about the cotton business?" "Oh, you policemen are so suspicious," he replied."All right, I remarked, but you will come to see me again before long, playing a different tune." In a couple of days after he did come. He said. "Oh Mr. I owe you an apology. I am very sorry I did not take notice of you long ago." On the case being investigated, it came out that the foreman carter and his assistants had been in the habit of taking cotton by loads from the goods warehouse and selling it to manufacturers under market value in open day. The upshot was these men were sent to penal servitude, and some of those who had bought the cotton paid £1,000 each to escape greater trouble.

Stalybridge has produced very few of the Swan class of thieves since they were sent away, although there have been serious cases brought under the notice of the police during the last forty years; but as some of the offenders have friends still living in the town, it would be uncharitable to cast the misdeeds of the parents on the second or third generation of their children.

Once case in which the police were entitled to considerable credit is deserving of mention. It was in the middle of the day, and a woman, on leaving the post office (then in Market Street), put six sovereigns into her dress pocket. She was crossing the street, when two well-dressed men pushed against her, one of whom she saw take the money from her pocket. He ran away, but the other man she caught hold of. Being a big, powerful woman, she held him till she gave him into custody. When at the police office she described the second man as being much like the one in custody, but said he was wearing a navy blue cap, with a brass button on each end of the peak. Detective Clayton stood there. I said, Clayton, those are not common clothes; look alive. He at once went off to the railway station and from there ran along the railway line to Park Parade Station. Then he ran across to Charlestown Station, and on arriving there saw a man at the end of the platform wearing a cap like the one mentioned. A train was coming in from Stalybridge for Manchester, and as the man boarded the train Clayton took hold of him. He brought him to Stalybridge, and on arriving at the police office, the woman who had been robbed was still there. Upon seeing the man she said, "That's the man who stole my money." I told Clayton to search him, and as he was doing so I asked

the man his name. He tried to speak, and I could hear something ringing in his mouth. I told Clayton to collar his throat, and he did so, and after throttling him a bit he disgorged the six sovereigns. On hearing Clayton tell where he had arrested him, the first man said, "you are a nice fellow to be caught on a railway platform, and all this horseflesh about."

On another occasion a man went to a Stalybridge lodging house keeper, and arranged for letters addressed to Wm. Gilbert to be kept on hand for him. These became so numerous that the proprietor of the house became suspicious, and he communicated with me. I sent two plain clothes constables to be on the spot when the letters were delivered to the man, and instructed them to arrest him. They did so, and brought him to the office, whereupon I opened some of the letters, and found that he had been advertising certain things for sale, and on receiving payment for the same had failed to supply the articles. Witnesses came from London and elsewhere, and he was sentenced to a term of imprisonment at Knutsford Sessions. On being sentenced, he said: What for? I have done nothing amiss.

A well-known Stalybridge tradesman once complained that a certain man, who moved in high circles in a Derbyshire town, had swindled him out of £400. He had had a warrant placed in the hands of the county police, which had been sent to London and returned, as nothing effective could be done in the matter. He asked me if I was able to do anything. We went to London together, and I got one of the city detectives to accompany me. We ascertained that the man was wanted by other people. I accordingly proceeded to the town where the alleged swindler lived, and there came across a superintendent—an old friend of mine in London, who agreed to assist me. The alleged swindler somehow got wind of our movements, as he absented himself from home, and remained hidden in a wood all night. Some days afterwards he appeared in Manchester, and put the matter in the hands of a solicitor. They went to Ashton and arranged for a trial, which was subsequently brought off. And the man, by an ingenious defence got acquitted.

MURPHY RIOTS

In 1866, before I had got the Stalybridge Police Force in proper working order, the Murphy Riots broke out. A band of men, with a person named Murphy at their head, went about lecturing against the Roman Catholic priesthood. The inhabitants of the town were divided into two parties: the English supported by Murphy and his party, and the Irish were against them. The lectures were continued, and the result was that fierce disturbances broke out in the streets. The windows of the Roman Catholic Chapel were smashed, and the military had to be called out.

Murphy was an Irishman, about 40 years of age, of medium height, sandy complexion, a fluent speaker, shrewd and sarcastic in manner, and applied himself to exposing the Confessional and other religious precepts in connection with the Roman Catholic Church. He was originally a Roman Catholic, but seceded on account of his views. He made his living by going about from town to town incensing the people against the priesthood, and his life was continually in jeopardy. The first real disturbance occurred in Stalybridge, when Murphy engaged the People's Hall, in which to deliver his lectures. Large coloured posters, announcing the times and dates of the lectures were printed, and these were stolen from the billposters houses, apparently under the mistaken notion that if the bills were not posted the lectures could not take place. On the night of the first lecture a large crowd gathered round the People's Hall, and it was discovered that the owners had locked the doors and barricaded them inside. This caused such excitement that considerable disturbance arose in the

street, the Roman Catholics and Protestants coming to blows. The crowd threatened to break into the hall, and they would certainly have done so had not the police prevailed on the owners of the hall to give them admission. The lecture was duly delivered, but not without a great deal of uproar, the Catholics doing all they possibly could to thwart Murphy. After the lecture there was great commotion in the town, and quarrels and fisticuffs were common at every street corner. This went on for two or three days when the Murphy Riots actually commenced. So excited were the people that the police were altogether powerless, and the damage done was so great that the military had to be called out. The then Mayor of the town suggested that I should arrest Murphy when he first arrived in Stalybridge, but I pointed out this was beyond my power, as the man had not committed any offence against the law. I, however, consulted the Town Clerk, in order to make my position more secure, and he came to the same conclusion, and told me I had no power to lay hands on him at all.

A ringleader, named Reuben Bailey, late one night climbed on to the roof of a house overlooking the Catholic Chapel yard, which was piled up with stones to repel any attack by the mob, and was shot by a priest. An application was made for a warrant for the arrest of Father Carroll, the then senior priest in Stalybridge, but I told the magistrates I could not sit there and see the warrant issued, knowing that Father Carroll was innocent. Father Daley had previously told me he had winged one. When the gun was fired the Murphyites could see by the flash of the powder that it was a priest who fired the shot, and when Father Carroll was exonerated, they fixed on Daley, he being the only other priest in the town. Proceedings were instituted against him, and an indictment made out at the Knutsford Quarter Sessions, the late Earnest Jones, barrister, from another circuit, being engaged to prosecute. Daley was given the benefit of the doubt and acquitted. Stalybridge was invaded by about 500 roughs, who had been driven by the military from Ashton. They wrecked Thomas Street under a dropping fire of revolvers. I mustered together about 50 men, and charged the rioters with side arms, driving them across the river. The riots extended to surrounding towns, and numbers of men were convicted at the assizes. The excitement created in Ashton, Oldham, Rochdale, etc., through Murphy going there to deliver his lectures was very great, and many persons were sent to prison for taking part in the disturbances. Murphy's visit to Stalybridge did good in one sense. It gave an impetus to Protestantism, and, o doubt, Christ Church was built much earlier than it otherwise would have been. Not only was monetary assistance freely given, but a number of working men, many of whom were Murphyites, under the direction of William Holroyd, gave their services free every evening, after doing their daily work, and in this way succeeded in cutting the ground for the foundation of the church. Murphy persisted in his exposition of the priest craft, and eventually he received a bullet wound, from the effects of which he died.

THE JOHANNAS.

About sixty years ago the whole of the district was agitated by the proceedings of the followers of Johanna Southcote.

Johanna was a domestic servant, and was born about the year 1750, in Devonshire. She claimed to write prophecies, and announced herself as the woman spoken of in the 12th chapter of Revelations.

In 1814, she published "Prophecies concerning the birth of the prince of Peace." She announced that the Prince of Peace was to be born at midnight on October 19th, 1814, and although she was past sixty years of age she was to be the mother. Her followers purchased an expensive cradle, and

everything was prepared in a style worthy of the second Shiloh. Upon the arrival of the long-looked-for night, large crowds of people assembled in the neighbourhood of Johanna's residence in London to hear the first announcement of the sacred appearance of the Messiah, but the hour of midnight passed over, and then the vast crowds were induced to disperse by being told that she had fallen into a trance. Seventy-four days after the disappointment to her followers, her hopes and fears were put to an end by death, after she had declared that "if she was deceived, she had, at all events, been misled by some spirit, either good or evil." Her followers were confounded at her decease, which they could scarcely believe had taken place, and her speedy resurrection was announced and confidentially anticipated. It is estimated that at the time of her death she had about 100,000 followers, many of whom resided in Ashton. The body of Johanna underwent an anatomical investigation after her death, and the appearance which had deceived her followers, and probably herself for a time, was found to have arisen from dropsy.

After the death of Johanna Southcote the excitement in reference to her increased throughout the country, and in several parts males and females put themselves forward as prophets, and it became a somewhat difficult matter for the believers, as they were called, in various towns to decide which was the real one. In Ashton they adopted George Turner and William Shaw, and after them John Wroe, who afterwards played a most important part in the history of the body. He was born at Bowling, near Bradford, Yorkshire. His father, who was a worset manufacturer and owner of coal pits, put his son John to all kinds of drudgery, and kicked and cuffed him about. Before he was fifteen years old he was nearly bent double carrying a window stone to the second floor of a house his father was having repaired, and he was never able after that to walk straight. After he was grown up he went to school for part of a year, but left it little better educated than when he entered, and his master declared he would learn nothing however long he might stop, and that was the end of his schooling.

Wroe related these facts, in order to show that the hard usage of his father and his brothers was like the conduct of Joseph's brethren towards him on account of his dreams. During the whole of his career among the believers he professed to be unable to read or write, and before he entered the pulpit to preach he would have the particular verse or sentence read to him from which he intended to speak, and then the first letter of each sentence marked on his hand and from these letters he took his text, and from the text delivered his sermon. In his journal he recorded that "On thinking of the conduct of my brother Joseph, and the losses I had sustained by him, I determined to kill him, and, for this purpose, I procured a pistol, and set off to go to his house, but before I went, I wrote on a piece of paper, a portion of the 55th Psalm, and this I intended to put under his door, and give him time to read it, and then to shoot him through window, but I gave up my intention. Wroe was afflicted with a severe fever, which caused him to consider the life he had led. He was worn to a skeleton, but recovered, and then commenced a series of what he termed, wrestlings with God, which lasted several months, during which he had several visions. These visions lasted from seven hours to several days, during which he remained blind and speechless, and after he began to have them, he stated that it was made known to him that the people who believed Johanna Southcote to be the woman spoken of in Revelations xii, were right, for he had seen the woman transfigured before him with the child in her left arm. He said he had been commanded to go to London and Liverpool to preach to the Jews, and he started off without money or food, and after his return home again, he heard a great rushing as of wind, and after that a voice called, Go thou to the Jews at London and declare my words, which I shall give thee. He started once more with a shilling, after

being away sometime returned home with five shillings, to let them see that the Lord had not returned him empty. During this time he professed to have received the following command:- "That he should go to different bodies of the believers in the visitation to Johanna Southcote and George Turner, and to the Jews, and unto all the nations, and preach the everlasting gospel' and speak with his hat upon his head, and a man should travel with him as a witness and pay his expenses, as he was commanded not to touch money himself. Many tried to dissuade him from going on such an errand, but he stated that the Lord had told him if he did not go he should die. On the day named in the command Wroe left Bradford, and for about half a mile a mob was at his heels throwing stones and sods at him. He was accompanied by one William Muff, and they first went to Colne, then to Preston and Liverpool, and from the latter place they started for Ashton-under-Lyne, but when a few miles off Muff was so unwell that he left Wroe, who arrived in Ashton by himself. He made his way to the meeting house, Charlestown, and startled some of the believers by his not very prepossessing appearance. He entered the meeting with his hat upon his head, was very poorly attired, spoke very indifferently, and made many mistakes and blunders, which had a very unfavourable impression upon the believers. Wroe was publicly baptised in the River Medlock, near Park Bridge, Bardsley, and when he came out of the water he stood with one foot over the water and the other on the land, and said, I swear by him that liveth for evermore there shall be time no longer. Subsequently he appeared in Mottram, and addressed a meeting from the steps of the Crown Pole. His visit caused a great commotion in the place. He wore a drab-coloured broad rimmed, thick-furred felt hat, and a curiously cut woollen coat, neither in the common nor the quanker style, with vest of a similar odd cut and material. Wroe had an interview with the Rev. Mr. Chetwode, rector of Ashton church, along with Mr. France, the curate. The rector asked him who had sent him, and he replied, That God that appeared to Moses in the bush. The interview was short, as the door was opened for Wroe to go out, and he took the hint. He next made his way to the Rev. Mr. Hutchinson, but there the interview was short. He afterwards went to see the Rev. John Sutcliffe, who invited him into the house. Wroe told him his errand, when Sutcliffe fetched the Bible, and the two argued upon several passages of Scripture, and parted amicably. Towards the close of the year Entwistle, who was with Wroe at Mottram, was turned out of the leadership of one of the twelve tribes for adultery. Wroe made application to preach in the Methodist New Connexion Chapel, at Ashton, but was refused. He had very peculiar ideas about the way he should impress his notions upon the ministers of religion. He published a communication to the Catholics of Ashton, which he said he had received from Jesus, who was represented as saying, If they do not pull down their crucifixions, I will tell thee what I will do unto them. I will burn down their houses and their images with them, for I will have no pity on them. He also published a communication to the Dissenters of Ashton, in which he said I the lord of heaven and earth ow command thee, my servant, John, as I commanded Moses, to cry aloud that they enter into the water and be baptised for the redemption of soul and body. John Wroe was publicly circumcised after a service held in a new building belonging to John Stanley and Henry Lees. The day after he preached to a large congregation in a field adjoining the building, and said, A light shall break forth out of this place where I stand, which shall enlighten the whole town, with a light also to enlighten the Gentiles. This prophecy was fulfilled in a practical manner by the erection of the Ashton Gas Works in the very field, and if taken in a spiritual sense, by the conversion of a portion of the building belonging to the company into a chapel, used by the Johannas as a meeting and preaching room.

The members of the body styled themselves Israelites, but the outer world insisted upon calling them Johannas. Mr. Edward Lees, of Ashton, a believer, and a sufferer for the principles he believed, once wrote a letter on behalf of the Israelites, in which he said: We take the Scriptures as the foundation of our faith, and believe its divine authority in common with all Christians. In this we are not peculiar; the great difference betwixt us consists in the apprehension and application of those truths contained in the Scriptures common to all, and to which all have access, and this information we confess to have not from men, but from the soul, and by the same means as the truths in question were communicated to man. And we believe God did this in mercy to His creatures to bring them to a knowledge of the truth and unity of the faith, from which all have more or less departed, preparatory to the establishment of universal good and the removal of evil.

A somewhat extensive acquaintance with the Israelites has satisfied the writer that Mr. Lees very fairly expressed the fundamental doctrines of the body of which he was a member, but as they held that God still spoke by prophets, it is difficult to tell what they really did believe upon minor matters. They always appeared to the writer, however, as believing that the devil was the author of all mischief, and that the Son of god would again appear on earth, when the devil would die, and all evil would cease with him, after which the mortal body would put on immortality and universal happiness, and would reign on earth forever. They conformed to the Mosaic laws, the men not only wearing beards, but sanctioning circumcision. They attached much importance to the numbers 12 and 7. The seven days of the week were said to represent 7,000 years. There were to be three dispensations of 2,000 years each from the foundation of the world. The end of the state of things on earth was to be brought about quite suddenly by the appearance of Christ, when the elect ___144,000 persons, selected in equal numbers from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, were to reign with the Lord on earth for 1,000 years. Every man would then sit under his own vine and fig tree, the lion would lie down with the lamb, and everything on earth would be as perfect as before Adam gave way to temptation. They were very peculiar in their notions of what they should eat and drink, and the vessels they should use, as well as the style of clothing they wore. Animals which did not chew the cud were not to be eaten, neither were fish that had not both fins and scales. The blood of animals was forbidden, as well as several particular portions of them, and so rigidly were these laws carried out that some of the members were years and never tasted animal food. They were not forbidden to use intoxicating drinks, but, as a body, they were temperate, both in eating and drinking, and this, no doubt, had much to do with the good old age to which many of them attained. With regard to their clothing the laws were equally strict. The females dressed in a manner which set the fashions at defiance. They were only allowed to use certain colours, and as red, scarlet, yellow, and black were prohibited, green, blue, and drab were the favourites. The materials were generally of an expensive kind, as silks or woollens, it being one of their laws not to wear any article made of mixed materials. All silk would do, or all linen, but a mixture of the two was forbidden. Silk dresses must be sewn with silk thread, and the lining must not be of cotton or woollen, but either linen or silk, while the trimmings were to be of a prescribed material. The underclothing must be of linen, and the stays of a given style, without any such supports as whalebone, etc. They were only to wear one skirt at a time, and that was generally of a coarse linen, and in some instances as many as twelve and sixteen yards were used in a skirt. Their dresses were of a style of their own, and the bonnets were made to match, and of both it may be said they are the same to-day as they were seventy years ago, and probably they will be in seventy years to come, if the anticipated millennium does not arrive before that period. Fashion varies very much to suit the

tastes of the ladies, but it is doubtful if it will ever veer round to the fashions of the Johannas. Very often the women wore veils, upon which some words or Hebrew characters, or signs were worked, so as to fall just below the eyes, and on certain great festivals, such as the Passover, their ideas of dress were carried out to such an extent that both women and men wended their way to the

sanctuary dressed in white linen, even to the uppers of the shoes upon their feet. Formerly the coats of the men were made to suit the various tastes of the wearer, but afterwards a change was commanded, and they were made in anything but a fashionable style. They had no collars, but plain backs, and curiously-formed seams up the sides. There were no buttons behind, but in front were some of silver. The vests were single-breasted, and buttoned high up front. The trousers were nearly straight in the legs, and in many instances the buttons were of silver. The hats were broad-rimmed, with drab bodies, green under the rims, and invariably of good felt. They were always made to order, and often cost 25s. Each. The cloth of which the clothes were made was entirely of wool, and under the same regulations as to colour as the women's clothing. Their shirts were of linen only, and were finished with a frill or ruffle in front. They treated the animal creation in a manner deserving of especial notice. They would not confine a bird in a cage, neither would they follow the barbarous practice of cutting dogs ears or tails. They would not have a picture of any kind, except what was on the coins of the realm, because they considered it contrary to the command, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image." They had their peculiar notions of religion, but the outer world had no cause to complain of their honesty and integrity. They had much good practical Christianity among them, and helped one another, and provided for their own poor. They adopted the co-operative principle of opening shops for the supply of good articles to their community or the public. They were honest and fair dealers, and although Friday evenings were very busy nights, the Johannas rigidly closed their shops at six o'clock, in accordance with their ideas as to the time the Sabbath really commenced. From those shops have sprung most of those owned by members of the body in various parts of the district.

Public prejudice always ran very high against the Johannas, and a circumstance occurred at Hurst which caused a great commotion. A child was circumcised when eight days old, and in a few days after it died. Public opinion at once pointed to the circumcision as the cause of death, and Mr. Ogden, surgeon, of Ashton, was ordered to examine the body. He did so, and not being able to find any satisfactory cause of death, he attributed it to the part upon which the operation had been performed having mortified. The father of the child was put in confinement, and an inquest was held on the body. A verdict was passed of manslaughter against a gentleman residing in Ashton. He was taken into custody, and conveyed to the county gaol, but was admitted to bail until the assizes, then six months off. He was tried at Lancaster, and was acquitted, owing to some portions of the medical testimony not being conclusive, and the gentleman who so narrowly escaped punishment afterwards circumcised many more. Wroe stood up in large congregations at Ashton, and said "Thus saith the Lord: Before this year shall be expired, that I will bring distress upon this land, England; people shall mourn and lament for bread." Singular as it may appear, the banks broke, business was paralysed, the people wanted bread, and many farmers and others were ruined before the year expired. About the same period Wroe received a communication, in which it was said, "Thou shalt seem more foolish to the world than ever thou did." During the year another prophet appeared of the name of John Ward, calling himself "Shiloh," but being rather too late in the field, he did not make much progress. During this year, too, was erected "The Israelites Sanctuary," in Church Street, Ashton, at a cost of £9,500, which was entirely defrayed by Mr. John

Stanley, who at one period of his life was a mechanic. Wroe prophesied that Mr. Stanley would live to be one of the richest men in Ashton, and, whatever may be said about prophecies, Mr. Stanley's success in life was perfectly extraordinary.

John Wroe, in obedience to a command he said he had received from the Lord, left Park Bridge to wander in the fields for fourteen days, during which time he travelled in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire, and was frequently out all night. It being winter time, the frost and snow were very severe, and he had to beg his food from those who did not believe him to be a prophet. He was to receive nothing from believers during that period, and it is said that he got very little from anybody else. Upon his return he received a communication that within seven months, which was explained to mean seven years__ the Lord's temporal house at Jerusalem shall be built and established, and that is the day that your millennium shall take place." Wroe announced in the congregation at Ashton that "The Lord has shown me two men, one belonging to this body, the other belonging to Bradford; he at Bradford is a tall, young man, and he seeks to slay me privately; the other is a short man, and he seeks to do it publicly." He also stated that he had received another communication from the Lord, who was made to say, "What a mighty cutting of beards there is; what a mighty shaving there is!"

A considerable amount of indignation was expressed by the people towards those who belonged to the Johanna body through several cases of adultery coming to light.

At Bradford, Wroe was charged before the magistrates with having committed a gross outrage upon his servant girl, aged 12 years, but the case broke down. Many similar charges were investigated by the body against members, and, as Wroe declared at the time, the newspapers were filled with abominations about them. Several more Shilohs appeared than had been announced, and these were not confined to one sex.

Wroe was brought to trial before a jury of the body in reference to his alleged conduct to three single young women who had been his servants. The trial took place in a house, now known as the Odd Whim, near to the Ashton Barracks, on the Mossley Road. Wroe declared that he had not done the things laid to his charge.

The trial was adjourned to the following day, when two of the jury, named James Smith and William C. Mastermann, were replaced by two others, because they were said to be determined to act contrary to the rules of the court. A fight was the result, and some of the jury were forcibly expelled from the room. The remainder sat for six days, and in the end acquitted Wroe of the specific charges. The same night Wroe left Ashton for Huddersfield. He alleged that he had received a communication from the Lord, who was represented to have said, Stop thou out of Ashton till the indictment be removed, for within dwell thieves,, adulterers, and murderers. In another communication received, Wroe said; At one o'clock this morning the word of the Lord came unto me, saying Son of Man, thou shalt set up an iron battery, and thou shalt set one point against Ashton, and thou shalt lay siege thirty nine days, and on the fortieth I will turn the corner of the city till every stone be blown down, so that there is not left one stone upon another in that bloody city; for in it they slew a man for the life of my servant and the name of that city shall be called blood. Wroe arrived in Ashton, and spoke in the sanctuary to the friends, and also to many of those who had the city mark the beard. In the afternoon he was to speak to the public in the same place, and the excitement to hear him was intense, for during the previous week bills had been issued signed by Mastermann and Samuel

Walker, lately believers in Wroe's power as a prophet, stating that he stood convicted of lying, perjury, and other worse crimes, on the evidence of these respectable females, and at the close of his preaching that day a catalogue of his crimes and impositions would be read over and he would be asked to answer them. The sanctuary was therefore crowded to excess with people of all ranks, including two magistrates, many leading men of the town, and a few soldiers. After Wroe had preached the charges were read against him, instead of replying to them he went down out of the pulpit very suddenly, and the people supposed he was trying to leave the sanctuary. Thomas Spencer, who had been a believer, cried out, What are you running away? And Silas Lee and a number of others attempted to prevent him, when a fight ensued between the public and the believers, and many were knocked down. Some of Wroe's friends pushed him into a room under the singing gallery, the floor of which was not finished. The people pressed towards the place where Wroe had disappeared, but he got out by some means or other, one party alleging that he made his escape by the back door and up a flight of steps, but the other party declared it to be by divine agency. Windows were smashed as well as people's heads, and the amount of damage done was very considerable. On the following day a large mob, consisting of colliers, labourers, and others were in search of Wroe, and in the afternoon they received an intimation that he was at the house of William Skin and thitcher they proceeded as fast as possible, and various manoeuvres were tried to find him, but they were not successful. Silas Lee tried to get inside the house when he received from the master a violent blow on the head with a poker, which caused a torrent of blood to flow from the wound. A general riot was the result and much mischief was done. Then came the mighty cutting of beards, and the mighty shavings which Wroe had foreseen, from that time Johannaism commenced a downward career. The short man whom Wroe had declared would seek to slay him publicly was Silas Lees, and the tall man was one at Bradford who sought to attain the same end in a private manner. Wroe again visited Ashton, and preached in the sanctuary in the afternoon, and when it got noised about, a number of people attempted to enter, but were prevented. The town again became a scene of uproar, but Wroe managed to get away safely. On the following morning a number of the believers from Ashton and elsewhere, among whom was a band of musicians, left the town with the printing press of the society. It was drawn by four beautiful black horses, with uncut manes and tail, belonging to Mr. Stanley. The Lords Prayer in Hebrew was repeated in the street and several chants were given, accompanied by the musicians. Wroe had directed them to be at the place where his trial took place at sunrise, and as he was going with William Skin, before the body moved with the press, they saw Mastermann and Spencer at their heels.

The former seized hold of Wroe by the collar, and a person told him to knock his head off, which caused Wroe to inquire what good it would do. Many more arrived at the spot, when Wroe preached to them, and those who had followed to stone him are said to have returned back ashamed. The procession passed on to Huddersfield and Sheffield, and along the route the horses and music were much admired. From that day Wroe kept out of Ashton for many years, but he still continued to prophesy. He declared that after he left Ashton a grievous plague would break out, and in the summer of the following year the cholera appeared, and the very house where Wroe was tried became the cholera hospital, and the ground belonging to it was used as a burying ground for those who had died of a dreadful disease. Formerly there was a wall round the place, now there is nothing to mark the spot where a considerable number of bodies lie. This does not speak well of somebody's veneration for the dead, and when we hear of the desecration of the graves of Sebastopol again, it would not be amiss to remind the public that graves are desecrated much

nearer home. Wroe continued to utter extraordinary statements which were believed to be prophecies. And there is no doubt at all that many of them were fulfilled in a remarkable manner, but the same time there were many of them that never did come to pass, and never will. In 1835, Lord Morpeth put up for a member of the West Riding of Yorkshire, and his opponent was John Stuart Wortly, Esq. Wroe was asked on the 5th of May to say which of the two would be returned, but he declared that the Spirit of the Lord had not moved him to tell. On the 6th he wrote a letter to Lord Morpeth, in which he said The Spirit of the Lord hath fallen upon me. I am a freeholder of Bradford, but thou wilt not stand in need of my vote, else I would give it thee. On the 9th Lord Morpeth wrote to say that he was much gratified by the result of your prophecies, and sincerely hope you will contribute to their accomplishment by recording your vote in my favour. On the 12th Lord Morpeth was returned by a majority of 2807 votes.

Whilst Wroe was returning from Flowery Field to Dukinfield, where he had been preaching along with John Hall, John Roddis, and John Beaumont, all of or near to Mossley, Beaumont asked him when he should enter Ashton again, and his reply was I have not been shown as yet the time; but stand still; now the spirit is upon me to tell thee, that I shall not come in this year, but when I do come it will be a day of days, and a year of years, and a day to be remembered. Now I have told you what the spirit has shown me, that it may be sent to all places where there is a body of people. He had often declared that he should not re enter Ashton until those who had risen against the Word of the Lord were dead, and when he did so not a dog would move its tongue against him.

On Sunday January 6, 1839, he was at a meeting in Dukinfield, when he informed those present that on the following day he should enter Ashton, for the people would have something else to do than to look at him, and he warned the believers not to go out except on business, as there would be great danger. About midnight a hurricane commenced, which extended over a considerable portion of the three kingdoms, and on the never to be forgotten January 7th, 1839, the streets of Ashton were covered with slates, chimney pots, bricks, and other articles displaced from the roofs of buildings. It was unsafe to be in the streets, and on that occasion Wroe entered the town after an absence of nearly eight years. He did so peaceably and unmolested, and for a considerable number of years afterwards, continued to preach occasionally in the Sanctuary at Ashton. He was a great Rambler, being always on the move, and during his career he visited Australia several times, as well as America, and various countries on the European continent. He ended his days in Melbourne, Australia, in December. 1863, in the 82nd year of his age, and up to the very period of his death he was as zealous, if not as active, in promoting the cause in which he had spent his life as ever he had been. Since that period the Israelites have been very weak in numbers and influence yet they have faith in the success of the principles they believe in. They still meet in their meeting room at the gas works, Ashton, and they are as earnest and sincere in their conviction as ever they were. Their doctrines might have been erroneous, but their practice with the outer world was fair and honest, and it would have been an extraordinary thing to find one of them in a police court for an offence.

At one time they had many wealthy people connected with them in Ashton, and as these had to attend the Manchester Exchange, a dispensation was granted them whereby they were permitted to shave. In due time, however, an equality in beards was proclaimed, and all had either to wear them or be kept outside the favoured few. The preachers were generally earnest in their utterances, but not always very well educated. On one occasion one of them was describing the difference between the man who built his house upon a rock, and the man who built upon the sand, and in an energetic

tone he exclaimed, The winds blows, the rains felled the floods comes, and the house was carried away. The same preacher, in speaking of the Israelites as a sect, said, We are laughed at my friends; we are mocked, we are derided, and the newspapers blazes at us. The earnestness of the preachers was imparted to the followers, and thus became as zealous, earnest, and sincere as it was possible to being any movement. It was very pleasing to hear them sing at their services, as they were always accompanied by a number of wind instruments. The females sang very sweetly, but during the time the instruments were in full tune their voices were lost to the listeners. Twenty or thirty instruments were often in use, and I have been present in the Sanctuary at Ashton when as many as from sixty to seventy players accompanied the singing, on such days as the Passover.

Not only did the Johannas do much towards instilling a love of music in the minds of the people of the district, but at one time they established schools in Ashton, Mottram, and other places, for the sole purpose of teaching their children the Hebrew language; but from some cause or other they were not long in coming to an end. Another instance of failure on the part of the believers was a proposal to convert Ashton into a city for the believers to dwell in. The city boundaries were defined, and houses erected for the gates, which still remain. The Southern Gate was near the Ashton Barracks, and is now known as a public-house with the very appropriate title of The Odd Whim. The Northern Gate house was at Waterloo, on the turnpike road to Oldham. The Western Gate was about one mile from Ashton on the Manchester turnpike road, and the Eastern Gate was in the neighbourhood of Dukinfield Hall. These Gates of the Temple of the Children of Israel are no longer inhabited by the high priests or low priests of the fraternity of Israelites, but two are used as gentlemen's residences. It was intended to erect wall from gate to gate, so that the city would be thoroughly in the hands of the believers; but the disturbances of 1831, and the gradual weakening of the Israelites as a body, caused the plan to be abandoned.

At one time great preparations were made for the consummation of all earthly things by the reappearance of Johanna Southcote, and some of the faithful were to go and meet her, but they were not to take either scrip or purse with them. A certain dealer in corn, meal, and similar articles was afflicted with the notion that he was appointed to go and meet Johanna at Jerusalem; and as the time approached he summoned his poor neighbours to clear his shop, as he had no further use for it nor the stock it contained. He announced that money would be of no use to him on the forthcoming journey, but the neighbours thought he was mad or playing a trick upon them, so they took very sparingly of even those things that were useful to them. He encouraged them, however, to clear the stock away, and ultimately they did so, to the great injury of the man's family. It was a foolish dream or delusion on the part of the man, as Johanna never put in an appearance. So firm, however, were the body in their faith, that they did not renounce the idea even after the failure of the expedition to Jerusalem. Mottram furnishes instances of that devotion to the faith so characteristic of the Johannas, and in the village resided one who made large sacrifices in order to get to the promised Land. He had a large family, and it was rumoured in the district that he had made great preparations, even to the purchase of some Jerusalem ponies. A joke was played upon him which set the villagers talking for months after. He resided in an old two-storey house, with very small windows and heavy flagged roof, upon the road from the Mud to War Hill. One Saturday at midnight the meadows were covered with a thin silvery sheet of snow, when two young fellows who had been out playing with a band were returning home, one of whom carried a trumpet under his arm. They knew the old gentleman's failings about the journey to Jerusalem, so they determined to try his credulity to the fullest pitch. One of them accordingly mounted the wall which led to the

back of the house, and placing himself nearly under the bedroom window, he blew three or four melodious blasts from his trumpet. The jokers listened attentively, and soon were rewarded by hearing the old man arousing the whole of his family from their pleasant slumbers, and anxiously inquiring how they could sleep on such a joyous occasion. The family had to get up and he reminded them that he had often told them there would be a sign when the time of deliverance came, and lo. All had come to pass as predicted, even to the sound of the trumpet. When the men heard him bustling about the house, they thought it was high time to be making themselves scarce, so they got away as quietly as possible, and the following morning it oozed out that the old man had been disappointed. It was generally reported that the faithful fellow took his family as far as Ashton, and returned a wiser and more prudent man than he went, although he continued in the faith he had become such a firm believer in.

THE CHRISTIAN BRETHERN

Although Mottram never produced many ministers it has been the birthplace of many people who have stood firmly to the faith which was in them in spite of evil reports and slanders. They were as zealous and as conscientious as the Johannas, and suffered much more persecution for their opinions. The mass of the villagers openly ridiculed the Johannas as they went through the streets, but troubled very little further about them, because there was little probability they would make converts, while the men I shall now speak of were intimately connected with the secession of a whole congregation from a established society, under circumstances which are without parallel in the history of the district, and for the part they took therein they underwent much persecution.

Previous to 1841 there was a Sunday school belonging to the New Connexion body, and as was common in those days, writing and other rudiments of education were taught in the forenoon, and much good was conferred upon the village by that means. A few years previous to 1841, Mr. Joseph Barker was a travelling preacher belonging to the New Connexion body, and the conference appointed him as minister at Mossley and the district. He was a plain and earnest speaker, and became very popular with the people of the district. It was thought by several other preachers that some of the doctrines he taught were far from orthodox, and at the Halifax conference, on June 5th, 1841, he was put to the test on several doctrinal points. The result was that he, Mr. Trotter, and Mr. Sturges were expelled from the New Connexion body. The leaders, stewards, trustees, and members of the Mottram society met on June 20th, and a very strong feeling was manifested in favour of the expelled members, and it was unanimously resolved to with draw the society from under the power of the conference. Mr. Thomas Sturges was appointed superintendent preacher of the Mottram Society in the Stalybridge District. The chapel was held in trust by a number of persons, but it had been made over to the conference, so after the trustees had seceded it was not difficult to rent the chapel, and an agreement was entered into to pay £18 a year for it.

At a meeting held on September 5th, it was resolved to take the name of Christians or followers of Christ. The Rev. T Sturges was accepted as the pastor, and became very popular, although it is recorded of him that he frightened the young and timid so that they were afraid to stir from their seats. When he commenced his labours there were 70 members, and during the year he increased them by 17, but these did not remain. His labours were somewhat abruptly brought to a close by the society, but not until he had won the affection of a few who did not agree with him on doctrinal points. In July, 1842, the chapel was rented for £16 a year, and about the same time Mr. Barker

startled the members by giving up singing and praying before preaching. Great excitement was the result, and Mr. Barker defended his view in a pamphlet which satisfied some, but others were so shocked at it that they never recovered their former religious position. The public made the most of the circumstance, but the schools continued to prosper, and 400 names were on the books, and the scholars progressed in reading and writing. In May 1843, a proposition was made to engage Mr. Thomas Oldham as missionary and preacher in the district at £12 a year, which was subsequently adopted. A sick fund was established to keep the poor brethren from the parish books. The members began to think and act upon their private judgements on religion, but it was argued if all were left to think freely for themselves it was evident the church could not stand, and considerable discussion took place which did not always end in the most brotherly affection. In 1844, the Rev. David Seddon, the vicar, took upon himself to visit the parents and families of many of the scholars, and cautioned them against sending their children to what he considered an unholy place. He described the secular education as a profanation of the Sabbath, and in some instances he induced the parents to remove their children from the school. To counteract that step, tracts were freely distributed to every family attending the school, and they had the desired effect. The vicar next wrote a sharp letter to the superintendent of the school, Mr. John Clayton, Broadbottom, which was replied to in an excellent manner. Finding himself foiled in the attempt, the vicar carried the subject into the pulpit, and Sunday after Sunday denounced the practice of teaching writing on Sundays. The freedom with which the reformers enunciated their opinions created no small amount of excitement.

An attempt was made to draw up certain opinions which all must believe in who were members, but after much discussion it failed. Secret meetings were held in order to find out some method of putting a stop to the freedom of speech, and to this the support of members of other congregation was obtained. Mr. Barker was written to and an announcement was made that he would lecture in the chapel on What is a Christian? Some of the trustees of Hollingworth Chapel sent word they would forcibly put Mr. Barker out if he attempted to lecture from the pulpit. A society's meeting was held, and it was agreed that the lecture should be in the schoolroom, and at the time appointed the place was filled. He opposed several doctrines considered essential to salvation, and declared them to be errors. Some opposition was offered, and propositions were made for discussions, but they amounted to nothing in the end. The lecture was considered to do much good to the reformers as they called themselves in as much as the excitement led to considerable discussion. Mr. Barker at this time denounced hired ministers in a tract, and many got the impression that such persons were not necessary to a place of worship. In 1845 the leaders of the society, who were anxious to have a creed, tried every means they could think of for that purpose, even to separation. Mr. Davis, New Connexion preacher, Stalybridge, and Mr. James Broadbent, a leader of the same body, at Hollingworth, appeared in the chapel, the first being in the pulpit, and the latter at the bottom of the stairs. The members were surprised at seeing them, as they had not been in the chapel since the body left the New Connexion. Mr. Davis said the object was to give the society a friendly invitation to return to the New Connexion and they would do them good ever after.

They had been led away by Joseph Barker. An aged member rose and said he was content where he was, as he was among a loving people, who were labouring to do good. Others spoke for and against, and Mr. Davis stated that he should not have attended but for an invitation he had received. The members decided to remain as they were. The annual sermons were to be preached in November, but as no minister would preach to them but Unitarians, the Rev. Franklin Howarth, of

Bury, was invited, and consented. The bills announced him as a Unitarian minister, which caused a great commotion among the various denominations, as he was the first Unitarian to preach in Mottram. He visited the school in the morning, gave an address on temperance, and left a number of tracts, and a book for teachers and scholars to sign teetotal in and altogether left the impression that he was a kind, humane, and homely man. He gained the respect and esteem of the Mottram friends, and proved the means of leading them to a settled society. About Christmas, 1845, the trustees gave the members of the society notice that they must leave the chapel on account of teaching erroneous doctrines, upon which a meeting was called, and it was agreed to build a new school and preaching-room. It was feared, however, that as Admiral Tollemache owned the land in the neighbourhood, and was a rigid Churchman, they would not be able to get any ground for the purpose. Application was made to him direct, and he referred them to his agent (Mr Cawley) to whom he sent certain instructions. The land was secured, and then a subscription list was opened, which was very freely contributed to by several gentlemen connected with Unitarian congregations. In the beginning of 1846, building operations were commenced, and on the 15th November the new place was opened. A valuable folio Bible for the pulpit was presented to the chapel by Mr. Dakin Cheetham, formerly postmaster at Stalybridge. The opening morning service was conducted by Dr. F.R. Lees, of Leeds; in the afternoon by Mr. Joseph Barker, and in the evening by the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, of Dukinfield. The building cost between £600 and £700, the members raising by their own contributions and subscriptions from Unitarian gentlemen about one-half the amount. The chapel in which the members had worshipped was opened in a Sunday or two after they had left, by the New Connexion body, and at the bottom of the bills was the following announcement: The trustees beg to state that the chapel is licensed, and that no irregularities, such as discussions etc, will be allowed. The following day (July 27th 1846) a great tea party was held, when several congratulatory addresses were delivered upon the restoration of the chapel to the body to which it formerly belonged. Strenuous efforts were made to get the place supported, but they were in vain, for in twelve months it was closed for want of a congregation and scholars, and it remained closed for about a year. It was then let to the Latter Day Saints for 2s. A week and afterwards to the Independents, who bought the place in the end.

The opening of the Christian Brethren Chapel did not put an end to the troubles of the society, for great opposition was offered afterwards. So high did feeling run, that many employers of labour ordered their hands to burn the tracts issued by the Brethren, on pain of losing their employment in case of refusal. The Brethren always took a great interest in the progressive measures of the age, particularly in the education of the young. They taught, in addition to the ordinary education of Sunday schools, writing, arithmetic, and other branches. As in most other cases, the burden of the struggle in connection with the Christian Brethren devolved upon a few who appeared to have been imbued with the spirit of their fathers. Among these may be mentioned Mr. John and Mr. Epaphias Clayton, of Broadbottom, whose father, Mr. John Clayton, together with Mr. Samuel Ridgway and Mr.

Joshua Reddish, were the first to solicit subscriptions for the establishment of Sunday schools in Mottram. John Lowe, John Sidebottom, and many others, including some noble women, as Miss Ann Slater, Ann and Sarah Renshaw, and others stuck to the Brethren through good and evil report.

RAIDS ON PRIZE-FIGHTERS, ETC.

In the old days when prize-fighting, cock-fighting, bear-baiting, dog-fighting, and other brutal sports were the common pastimes of the people, and laws began to be enacted to suppress them, raids were often made by the police as a matter of necessity.

Prize-fighting was in practice to a considerable extent, as well as dog-fighting, in Longdendale and on the Coombs, above Charlesworth.

In 1855 there were eight men besides Mr. Little in the Hyde Division, and many a rough job they had about Woodhead. One Sunday night information was given at the Hyde police station of a prize-fight which was about to come off the next morning at Woodhead, betwixt Harry Carter, of Ashton, and a man named Smith, of Sheffield. A messenger was at once despatched to Dukinfield, which was received there at midnight, ordering me and my brother officer, Dalgliesh, to proceed to Woodhead as quickly as a horse could take us, and also to take constables from Staley and Hollingworth with us. Accordingly we procured a horse and light cart, and getting the before mentioned officers out of bed, proceeded through Tintwistle betwixt three and four o'clock in the morning, each man armed with pistols and cutlass. On the way we passed a large number of greengrocers carts from Ashton, with backers in them, as well as some scores of men on foot. On arriving at Woodhead, we found Mr. Little amongst a large crowd of roughs, who were swearing vengeance against him. He had come from Newton by the same train as them, but unnoticed until the train arrived at Woodhead Station, when he jumped out of the train, went to the luggage van, secured the ropes and stakes intended for forming the ring for the fight to take place in and put them into the porters room bed for the mob were aware of his presence. They threatened to break into the place and take them out, but the bold front shown by the officers induced them to hesitate, and they left the station, when Mr. Little put the ropes, etc, into a passing train and sent them to Hyde. The mob, however, were not for returning home without the two men fighting, and they went from place to place, followed by the whole of the officers, deep snow being on the ground. They several times attempted to commence operations on the borders of all the three counties of Cheshire, Derbyshire, and Yorkshire, but moved away at the approach of the police. This went on for several hours, when the police officers got quite out of patience, and at last, ascertaining that the man Smith was in a light cart which was passing, a dash was made and the horse stopped, upon which Smith jumped out and attempted to bolt, but officer Maden aimed a blow which brought him to mother earth. He was at once secured and handcuffed to me, and I dragged him into a public house amidst a shower of stones. A rush was made to rescue, when the whole of the officers drew their swords (none of which had hitherto been seen by the mob), which caused a regular stampede. The mob, however, rallied again, and stoned the officers who kept guard in front of the house. One party went round to the back of the house, where they could see me and my prisoner Smith, through the windows, which were low ones, and protected by iron stanchions. As they came up, I very quietly pulled out a loaded pistol, and pretending not to notice their approach, quietly examined the priming, upon which one of these brave heroes called, He's going to shoot, when another rush was made across the field. The mob of roughs dispersed, and I took my prisoner to Woodhead Station, and thence to Hyde, where he was taken before a magistrate and bound over to keep the peace.



Previous to the time that the police began to interfere with prize-fighters in this part of the country, and at the time when Ben Caunt and Thompson, of Nottingham (better known as Bendigo) were in their pomp, the two latter and a large number of the fancy together with several hundreds more from Glossop, met on the Chunal side of the Coombs Rocks one day to witness a fight betwixt two men known as Gallows Dick and Paddy one of whom hailed from Manchester. These two men pummelled into each other for something like two hours, after which Caunt and Bendigo (who had a very short time previous fought a great battle together, and were consequently the heroes of the company), in order to gratify their love of fighting or rather of seeing other people fight, opened a subscription to raise a purse of gold, for any two men present to try their powers at the noble art of self-defence; and to the surprise of every one unacquainted with the doings of such men, two men, who had perhaps never seen each other before, singled themselves out and actually knocked each other's eyes up to gratify a gaping crowd. In those days what were called gentlemen did not consider it beneath their dignity to stand by and witness such brutal work. Cock-fighting was looked upon as innocent amusement, and there are many people still alive who can remember Captain White. Of Park Hall, near Hayfield, having a particular breed of fighting cocks, which he kept entirely to himself for the purpose of fighting. The grandfather of the present Earl of Derby had also a particular breed of his own, which money would not have purchased. It was the practice of noblemen and gentlemen to attend cock fights, and magistrates were in the habit of not only witnessing but betting money on the birds. Cock-fighting was carried on at what was known as the

Hare and Hounds Inn, at the top of Ridgehill, Stalybridge, up to 1863. This inn was kept by Mr. George Seward, who came from America some years before, and was said to be the fastest runner of his day. Cock fighters came from many miles round to this place, which was a sort of amphitheatre and would hold a thousand people at once. Mains and matches were held every Monday. I should like to mention the old cock-pit, which was established in 1837. It was at the rear of what is now called the George Hotel. I have seen many famous mains fought there. The old cock-pit at Preston, established by the late Lord Derby, had no more enthusiastic patrons than were to be found in Stalybridge. The stakes, as a rule, did not run high. A modest half-crown was occasionally waged, but if the sum was small, the same could not be said of the attendance. The feeling between Stalybridge and Charlestown used to run exceedingly high, and whichever side won, there was nearly always a return match. Those were the good old times one so often hears of. Personally, I am glad they are over. Cock-fighting and bull-baiting may afford amusement for some but it was a wise act on the part of the legislature to put an end to them.

In the old days betting-houses, as we know them now, were not numerous, so that raiding was not essential to the public welfare.

I once carried out a raid in Stalybridge on a public house where betting had been indulged in for a long time. A warrant was obtained to raid the place, and officers were told off in two bodies to fall upon the house simultaneously. On arriving at the house the police entered and fastened the doors to prevent any egress. A number of men were found inside the place. They were arrested and taken in cabs to the police station. All were subsequently admitted to bail. In the landlord's possession were found betting books and papers, and a large sum of money, and he pleaded guilty. He was mulcted in a fine of about £50. The others were dismissed with a caution. Raids were rarely made on licensed houses, especially in small towns, owing in a great measure to the increased influence of the brewing trade upon the police, through the medium of town councils, on which there is in many places an abnormal representation.

BLACKMAILING

To levy blackmail is one of the most despicable and hideous of crimes. The hapless victim of the blackmailer is virtually between the Devil and the deep sea, for whichever way he turns, he is confronted by this ruthless hydra-headed monster of society. One door of escape generally presents itself and that only by a continuous application of hush-money. When that is not forthcoming, the victim is filled with intolerable terror by accusations of having committed an offence, or otherwise placed himself or herself in a position which favours the suggestion of criminal intention.

Blackmailing is carried on in various ways, and some cases that have come under my notice serve to show how terrible are the contrivances of that section of the community who live by their wits, or what is commonly called in Lancashire working dodges.

I have known persons to be led into monetary entanglements, and who have endeavoured to extricate themselves by the commission of fraud and forgery thinking it could be conveniently remedied before discovery. But before such a desire has been accomplished, the unscrupulous blackmailer has stepped in and bled the unhappy victim, or else some well-to-do relative anxious to save the family reputation.

Another phase of this dastardly business is luring individuals of highly-respectable position into ambiguous situations, and threatening them with accusations of a criminal character. Blackmailing finds encouragement amongst those so infamous to practise it, because it is so difficult to grapple with and to punish.

Perhaps, the most villainous, and, in a way, the most audacious, example of this infamy with which I ever had to deal occurred in Stalybridge. It was an attack upon defenceless women, whose conduct was not excusable, committed in a most cowardly and daring manner. I do not wish to discuss the details of the hideous business more than to remark upon its wide-reaching and organised nature.

A certain individual advertised a medicament for a specific purpose for women, under the title of Montrose's remedies for women. A rascal of the very worst type obtained possession, presumably by mutual arrangement, of the letters of the women ordering these medicinal tablets, and threatened them with arrest unless they sent him two guineas. Several thousands of these blackmailing communications were sent out, and one post alone brought back letters containing over a thousand pounds in hush money. It was through my instrumentality chiefly that this huge swindle was discovered. After I had made some very close investigations respecting the Stalybridge cases, I at once communicated with the Scotland Yard authorities in London. The very next morning after my communication reached the London authorities, the office of the notorious Charles J. Mitchell, that being the man's name, together with hundreds of pound which arrived for him by post, was in possession of the police. Mitchell must have smelled a rat, for he disappeared, and the Metropolitan police now hold numerous warrants for his arrest. When the blackmailing case came to light letters poured in from all over the country from distressed women who had been made the victims of this human fiend, and who had preferred to pay hush-money rather than have their illegal operations brought to light. A great many no doubt kept their troubles to themselves.

There have been many criminal prosecutions during the past few years of women in good social positions, and these blackmailing revelations only go to emphasise the painful fact that the responsibility of maternity is not clearly understood as it ought to be.

Through fear of gaining publicity a very small percentage of blackmailing cases are ever revealed, and the professional blackmailer pursues his devilish tactics unmolested except in rare instances, where, happily, frustrated by the police.

No better illustration of the ramifications of the black-mailing system could be given than the revelations of the recent Hooley case, which served to show the extent of its operations. Even police officers have been known to become tainted, as was shown by the recent scandals in connection with the Manchester police. Private information once reached me, though it was not borne out sufficiently by evidence to make a case, of policemen going into certain public-houses at midnight, where men were drinking and gambling, and for a consideration compromising with the landlord of the house in order not to divulge, thereby being guilty not only of blackmail, but also of gross neglect of duty.

There is a lesson to be learned from the blackmailer, but it is not through such a devilish instrumentality that one would wish to see a better view of social obligations brought about.

STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS

Strikes, when of long duration, are almost as baneful in their effect as civil wars. In an industrial centre like that in which most of my time was spent, strikes were of frequent occurrence, and several I had to cope with were of the most distasteful kind owing to friction caused by the importation of so-called knobsticks into the districts affected.

Most of the important strikes and industrial disturbances in the Manchester district have arisen in and around Stalybridge, probably owing to there being so many of the Tailors of Tooley Street class.

Before a strike commenced in real earnest, a lot of agitation generally went on, but, once begun men's minds got warped, and sometimes they carried matters much further than was ever intended. There always have been periodical disputes between Capital and Labour, at one time greatly aggravated by the introduction labour-saving machinery into the hand-spinning and other trades. There was considerable opposition to the steam loom when it first came out, so much so that some of the masters in Great Britain had loads of boulder stones placed on the roofs of their factories ready to hurl down on the heads of the mobs who were going about to break into the mills and smash the looms. Some of the men known as Blanketeers-who conceived the mad idea of marching to London, with blankets strapped to their backs to cover them when they lay by the roadside at night were joined at the outset by men from Stalybridge; so were the Luddites, who were a gang led by a man dressed in women's clothes, with his face blacked, and who went under the cognomen of King Lud. These men burst into cotton mills, and smashed up the blowers, which had taken the place of the old cotton-batting appliances. The increased production by such machinery however, brought down prices considerably, and this acted as a palliative upon the working classes, and also led to greater demand for goods. Another factor in reconciling the hand to the adoption of labour-saving machinery was the reduction by degrees in the long hours of labour then worked, until at the present time the working classes now receive higher wages for fewer hours work than at any previous time during the last half century.

Many of the strikes occurred through employers wanting to reduce wages on account of falling markets, or else through the operatives demanding an increase through rising markets.

Some sixty years ago the operative spinners made a great effort to establish a trade union on a sound basis. There was a prolonged strike amongst them in 1830, known at the time as the four-and-twopence-or-swing turnout-the spinners demanding 4s,2d. For spinning a thousand hanks of yarn. The union being weak, and in its infancy, the turnouts were obliged to return to their work on the employers terms. The strikers marched in a body to Glossop, and on their return to Stalybridge they were met at Bower Fold, Mottram Road, by a number of horse soldiers, who stopped the band at the head of the procession from playing, and they were compelled to finish the journey between files of military. On arriving in town, they found pieces of cannon planted in the streets ready in case of need. This failure, however, gave such an impetus to trade unions that they ultimately grew strong enough to be almost in a position to fix the price to be paid for labour. The trade organisations virtually forced the passing of the Ten Hours Bill for females and children in factories.

Some time after the Four and two pence or swing Strikes one of the brothers Ashton, of Apethorn Mills, Gee Cross, was shot dead from behind a hedge in the lane leading to the mill. The perpetrators of that cold-blooded murder were men in no way connected with the dispute then

going on in the cotton trade, but mere idle loafers, ready to do any diabolical deed for pay . They were afterwards hanged for the crime.

About 1835, the late Mr. James Wilkinson, who was building the second mill at Copley, Stalybridge, was shot at whilst passing from Stalybridge to his home one night. This was in consequence of a strike amongst the stone masons building at his mill. Amongst others, a stone mason, named Naylor, was hanged for that shot. He was afterwards said to be innocent of the crime. The chief evidence against him was that the nails in his shoes were identical with marks found on the ground from which the shot was supposed to have been fired. These shoes were said to be in the house of a woman with whom he lodged at the time the deed was done, and she might have saved his life if she would have put herself to the trouble of proving this. It was also stated that Naylor was in the company of his sweetheart, a servant at the Boar's Head Inn, Stalybridge, at the time, but this woman could not be found when wanted to give evidence. Some rather ugly things were alleged against the prosecution. Whether Naylor was innocent or not, a brother of his whenever he passed through Stalybridge after the occurrence was in the habit of carrying his shoes under his arm.

About this time there was a strike amongst the sawyers in the Ashton district, and non-union men or knobsticks were employed by the masters to do the work. One of these knobsticks, named Benjamin Cooper, of Tintwistle, was one night working as top sawyer for a builder in a yard opposite the cemetery, on Stalybridge Road, when he was shot dead through the boards of the shed. When daylight came a piece of a steam pipe was found near the place. It had been made into a cannon. A loafing fellow named Hulme, in no way connected with the Sawyers Union was hanged for the murder. A great strike was the plug-drawing or six weeks turn out in 1842. In order to make the strike general, numbers of operatives went in a body mills which were still working and compelled their stoppage by drawing the plugs from the steam boilers. There was much suffering amongst the operatives during the strike, and several of the leaders were afterwards convicted at the assizes and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. The failure of the strikers on this occasion was in some measure responsible for the introduction, some six years later, of the Peoples Charter, a question much to the front in those days. The agitation ended in a general uprising of the Chartist in Ashton, during which James Bright, an Ashton police officer was shot dead in the street. Several ringleaders were apprehended and hung.

My first official connection with a trade dispute was the Preston weavers strike of 1855. A levy of so much per loom was made on the weavers of the surrounding districts. A Stalybridge young woman, a weaver at Messrs. Hyde's mill, Dukinfield, refused to pay this levy, and when it became known the other weavers waited outside the mill every evening and followed her all the way home, shouting and railing at her. This went on for a few nights, when such a large crowd began to collect, and threaten her with violence, that the police had to interfere. Mr. Little, the then head of the local police, did not wish to take the extreme measure of indicting anyone under the Intimidation Act then in force, so he arranged with Mr. Hickey, then chief constable of Stalybridge, to meet him with a number of policemen near St. John's Church, as the mob entered the boundary of Stalybridge. As soon as that limit was reached each of the Cheshire and Stalybridge policemen arrested a man. This onslaught caused quite a stampede. The prisoners were all marched to Stalybridge Town Hall, and locked up till next morning, when they were removed to the police court, at that time held at the Foresters Refuge. As all the magistrates at the trial were cotton manufacturers, the case was adjourned for a fortnight, in order that the police might procure the attendance of disinterested

parties. During this time, Mr. Roberts, better known as the miners attorney-general, who acted as defendants solicitor, made a speech in the Ashton Town Hall, in which, alluding to the Stalybridge case, he said. I ordered the Cotton Lord magistrates to make themselves scarce from the bench. When the case was again brought up, Mr. Roberts attention was drawn to the statement, whereupon he turned to the audience in the courtroom, and shouted at the top of his voice I deny it in to which caused much cheering. A local paper was handed to him and on seeing the words mentioned in the speech, he said to the bench: Gentlemen, I might, in the excitement of a public meeting have used such words. After the case had been investigated, fines were inflicted on the prisoners. Had the case been taken under the powers which Mr. Little had outside the area of the Stalybridge Police Act, it must have been sent to Quarter Sessions or Assizes.

In 1861-2 there was a big strike amongst the brick-makers in the Ashton-under-Lyne district. A number of members of the Brickmakers Union were in the habit of visiting brickyards during the night time and destroying bricks which had been moulded by non-union men, and also of throwing thousands of needles over the clay prepared for moulding bricks, so as to prevent its being handled. They also visited fields in which the master brickmakers horses were quietly grazing, and cut the hamstrings of the poor beasts, causing them intense suffering, and rendering them unfit for further use. This went on until the morning of the 28th June 1862, when a number of these men were met in a field at Smallshaw by Sergeant Harrop and Constable Jump, of Hurst. The men were returning from a brickfield, belonging to a man named Clifford, of Stalybridge, where they had done considerable damage by trampling upon a large number of moist bricks. On being spoken to by the officers they fired two pistol shots at close range, one shot wounding Harrop on the head, and the other killing Jump. A brickmaker named Ward, and a man named Burke, a labourer, were a few days afterwards arrested for the murder. Ward was hung, whilst Burke, who supplied some useful information to the police, was sentenced to penal servitude for life. Ward, on receiving sentence of death, left the prisoner's dock laughing, and when on the scaffold, with his arms pinioned, he threw his cap amongst the assembled spectators, executions at that time taking place in public.

The people of Stalybridge have immortalised themselves in the way of strikes, or turnouts, so called formerly. The last two strikes of any importance in Stalybridge will both be fresh in the memory. The Cotton Spinning Company's strike in 1891, lasted six or seven months, and was made into a test case between the Masters Federation and the Operative's Union. The contagion, however spread to other mills and a general deadlock was impending. The work people had frequent collisions with the imported knobsticks, and some fifty extra constables, twenty of them mounted were requisitioned. This strike ended without serious consequences. Nowhere perhaps has there been a keener and more prolonged struggle than the ever-memorable Carbrook strike in 1896, in which the famous Boss Union Smasher Graeme Hunter played such a fearless and adventurous part. The imported knobsticks in this case lived in a compound of galvanised iron shanties, which remain there to this day, close by the works, forming a miniature village of themselves, and standing as a memorial of the victory of Capital over Labour.

The strikers in the big disputes have so seldom succeeded in gaining their object that the distress and misery brought about by the loss of wages has ill-compensated them. Yet they were content to starve with a fortitude worthy of a better cause.

Owing to scarcity of newspapers, in the old days the operatives knew very little about fluctuations of trade, excepting what their leaders and paid agitators chose to tell them, and often when there was a depression, they would swear vengeance against their employers, or the King, Queen, and Ministers, as the case might be. This bitterness of feeling ran so high at one time in Stalybridge, that Sir Robert Peel, and also a certain manufacturer, long since dead, were burned in effigy, and spat upon by the people.

VAGRANTS AND TRAMPS

Our Boards of Guardians have, for years, been endeavouring to solve the question of how best to deal with those who frequent the vagrant wards of the workhouses, and who have to be sheltered and fed at the expense of the ratepayers. They have taxed all their skill in order to find out a remedy for this social blot on our civilisation. We are told by the very highest authority that the poor we have always with us, and we are also told that the righteous are not likely to be forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread. We are bound to receive these sayings with all due respect, but we are at present dealing, not with the poor in the sense contemplated by the wise people who left these sayings on record, but with the scum which floats on the surface of our social system—a class which we cannot shirk the responsibility of dealing with in some way or other. It is scarcely a question of discussion at present as to how these people become reduced, both morally and physically to the low state in which they are found, but it remains to be shown how they can be dealt with to the greatest advantage. At the outset, a large majority exist not so much by their own wit as by the want of wit in others, who allow themselves to be imposed upon by all sorts of pitiful tales. Indiscriminate almsgiving has led to more vagrancy than anything else. This country was, perhaps, never in so prosperous a state as it has been for several years past. Only a short time since there were numerous establishments with machinery standing idle for want of hands, not only in skilled, but in all kinds of labour: and with all this we have still a floating vagrant population which certainly leads to the conclusion that proper remedies have not yet been applied. There are numbers of people who, blest with abundance of the good things of this world, make it a duty to dispense some portion of their wealth in the relief of their poorer brethren, and having done this, they quietly sit down in their comfortable houses, and lay the flattering unction to their shoulder that they have done their duty. They do not think it at all necessary that they should be sure that what they have given is not misapplied. Anyone who tells them a pitiful tale is taken as a fit object for their charity, and the idle and dissolute, who compose the scum of society, are not only adepts in concocting these pitiful stories, but they are well able to single out those who will easily become their dupes. These vagrants when they are in luck and can afford to pay for a bed, go to the commonest lodging houses, and there, as well as in the vagrant wards their modus operandi and plan of action are regularly discussed. Should there have been a colliery accident, or a mill burned down, the best possible information is obtained, as well as the best disguise secured, by a change of garments among the ragged crew and on the following morning, when they have travelled sufficiently far to escape recognition, they commence operations, by which they are enabled to live in clover for some days, and can stand drinks for those of their fellows who are out of luck. Hard-working artisans are easily imposed upon by these sharks. It is a common practice with these people to put on a careworn, travel-stained, appearance, and to impose upon people by telling them how they have walked long distances in search of work, their trade perhaps the ribbon trade—being slack. Any trade will answer the purpose, if nothing is known of it in the locality where they are. There are among this floating scum, numbers who do not, as a body, practice any real imposture—such as navvies and mechanics,

who have to tramp long distances in search of work. Having spent their money as they earned it, they are soon reduced to the necessity of seeking assistance in some way or other. These cases, however, are not common, and can be easily dealt with. Hard-handed men are unable to practice deception to any great extent, and few of such have any desire to do so. There are others who from defective intellect, are unable to follow any useful employment permanently, and they take a pleasure in a vagrant life, but these again, are not very numerous, and can be dealt with by the ordinary parochial machinery. No one should be admitted into the tramp ward of a workhouse until he has obtained a certificate from the police that he or she were fit objects for such charity. Almsgiving should be altogether discontinued, except under certain restrictions.

If a proper plan were adopted one-third of the money dispensed in indiscriminate charity would suffice, and do considerably more good, to say nothing of preventing juvenile crime, nearly all of which is traceable to children who are sent out begging by drunken and dissolute parents. Many an idle loafer hangs about a public-house vault from one week end to another, living on his wife and children's degradation and shame. I have known numbers of instances in which children have remained away from home the whole of the night, sleeping in privies, and even in pigstyes, their parents having sent them out to beg, and the children have been afraid to go home without taking bread or money. These children, sooner than return home empty-handed, would steal anything that might come in their way, and hence it is we have so many juvenile thieves. I have also known instances in which a husband, after idling about all the week when he might have been working, would return home on Saturday and demand his wife's hard earnings for drink, and when this has been refused he has kicked his wife and children about the house to within an inch of their lives. To satisfy the craving for drink the children have had to turn out and beg, and the wife to sacrifice that which is most dear to every woman who is not hopelessly lost. In many cases these poor creatures are compelled to suffer this treatment for fear of worse consequences, or for want of the means to bring these scoundrels to justice. If the brutes knew that their movements were being inquired into by those who were ready to relieve their wives and children, they would doubtless find it advisable to change their course of life, and so escape the clutches of the gaoler. I have known many cases of thieving by vagrants, although I do not believe a very large percentage of robberies are committed by the class of persons who frequent the night asylums. Those who are in the habit of relieving beggars expose themselves to very great risks, because what are known among the fraternity as the good places are most frequently visited.

THE RESIDENCE OF THE RESIDUUM

Those who are making efforts to improve the dwellings of the poor are deserving of every commendation; but whatever may be done in the way of shutting up cellar dwellings and improving the ventilation in houses of the poorer class these efforts will be entirely useless unless some attempt be made to improve the morals of those who herd together in our back slums. Amid all their filth and squalor the majority of these people seem to have the greatest antipathy to fresh air. I have seen men who have been suffering severely from asthma sitting in close, confined houses, and crouching close to the fire, coughing and expectorating violently when the house has been so full of smoke that one could only detect their presence by their heavy breathing while an open door or window would have purified the place in a few minutes. Apart however, from these places being closed persistently against both air and light, the internal arrangements have been thoroughly unfit for any living creature. I have visited houses in Stalybridge where a man and his wife, with three or

four children, have lived all together in only one small, dirty room. They have taken their meals and slept downstairs, while the whole family have made use of the floors upstairs until there has scarcely been a single inch which was not covered with heaps of filth. One of these dens was occupied by a man and his three children. The eldest, a girl about eight years old, was crouching close to the fire, with the double object of keeping herself warm and screening her nakedness from the gaze of strangers. She had scarcely an article of clothing upon her, and the other children were in a similar state. There was a piece of dirty bread and some dirty butter on a still more dirty plate; a broken-legged table, with a chair or two all tied round with rope to keep them together, completed the furniture, and the floor of the room was thick with dirt. The stairs and the upper room were in a similar state, the floors being covered so thick with dirt that every footstep left its impression, and in one corner of the bedroom was a heap of straw so filthy that few people would have allowed their pigs to rest among it. The mother was in prison for drunkenness. The father could earn thirty shillings a week when he felt inclined to work, but on being remonstrated with about attending to his work regularly, and keeping his house in ordinary decency, he declared with an oath that his house was his castle and that he did not thank anybody for interfering with his affairs. He said he would not work every day in the week to please anybody, and that he would have a day's fuddle when he thought proper. The majority of those who occupy these dens are idle loafers, who may be seen continually lounging about public-houses and beershops, and who send their mothers, wives, and children out to beg and impose upon people with all sorts of pitiful tales, in order that they may be maintained in idleness and drunkenness, while there is abundance of work for them to do.

These are strong reasons why indiscriminate almsgiving should be discontinued. Few people have any real conception of the filthy state of some of the dens in the back slums, but it is gratifying to know that Corporation authorities have of late years taken practical steps for sweeping away these filthy dwellings.

POLITICAL INCIDENTS

In the old days when Liberals and Tories were little thought about, parties were divided into Jacobins, Paynites, and Loyalists. The latter corresponded to our Tories in their loyalty to the constitution, whilst the two first named were more of a Revolutionary or Democratic order. Then there was an agitation by the Democratic body, known as the Chartists. Secret support of the movement was given by many men in Stalybridge who would not openly acknowledge it, and many interesting incidents could be related in connection therewith. Among others, a tailor, named Jamieson, was said to be supplying arms to the members of the organisation. There was a certain reverend gentleman who displayed more zeal than discretion in his endeavours to assist the authorities in suppressing them, and in order to procure evidence against Mr. Jamieson he endeavoured to worn himself into his good graces by going to his shop. Putting on his blandest of smiles, he asked him if he could not furnish arms for the Chartists, and supply him with a pike. The tailor chuckled over the reverend goose, and smilingly said it would be a pleasure to serve him, and told him to call again the following evening. His reverence came at the time appointed, and received his parcel, paying a good price for it. He hastened home, quite elated with his success, and before he went to give information to the authorities he examined the weapon, and his chagrin may be better imagined than described when, instead of a sharp pointed steel weapon, he found a stale, stinking pike-fish. Nowhere, perhaps were the Loyalists more enthusiastic than in Stalybridge. It is on record that when Sir Ralph Abercrombie succeeded in driving Bonaparte out of Egypt, to

celebrate that event a great day of rejoicing was hit upon. A birch tree was secured from a wood near. Its branches were decorated with ribbons, silver tankards, and other plate lent for the occasion by the gentry of the neighbourhood. The tree was then carried through the streets, borne on the shoulders of a number of stalwart men and at last fixed up in the middle of a croft, where the fire-engine house now stand, in Shepley Street. Many a jug full of beer was drunk, and many a song was sung, under its wide-spreading branches. The day's proceedings were not relished by some of the leading Jacobins and Paynites, who went about the town blaming people for rejoicing at what they believed to be a national calamity, for they said if Napoleon had been permitted to go on, everything having the least resemblance to aristocracy would have been swept away from the face of the earth, and the grand millennium of liberty for the people would commence.

By the local act of 1828, entitled An Act for Lighting, Watching, and otherwise Improving the Town which received the Royal Assent of George IV, the inhabitant ratepayers of Stalybridge were empowered to choose twenty-one commissioners by show of hands in public meeting to conduct the affairs of the town. This election ceremony was enacted on the first Wednesday in May in each year. The custom was followed for some years until some of the inhabitants became dissatisfied with the way the elections were conducted, as it was said that some of the large mill-owners put their own friends into office by bringing out the operatives to vote as they were ordered. It was a time of democratic upheaving, and there happened to be in the town a number of pushing young men who were fond of hearing the sound of their own voices, and anxious to have a finger in some pie or other. As to any difference of principle between the colours, it would be hard to tell what it consisted of. It was not a political question. People did not trouble their heads about politics at that time as much as they do now.



Lawrence Earnshaw's Monument. — See Author's Preface.

The party factions known as the Whites and yellows sprang up in a peculiar way. An agitation commenced about 1854, in Stalybridge, about the irregularities by the then rate collector. Mr. Henry Lees was the Town Clerk, and he and Henry Bayley took sides with the collector. Mr. Abel Harrison and Mr. Abel Swann were against him, and each side had its supporters. As the time came round for electing the commissioners these parties took yellow and white as distinguishing partizan colours. For some time there was confusion and turmoil in the town. Each of the two parties had two champion leaders—two Abels and two Harrys. A good deal of ill feeling was engendered between the rivals and this led to litigation. Writs were continually being served, and on one occasion Mr. Henry Lees clerk, was kicked out of the Town Hall whilst serving one. The yellows obtained a majority, and thus got the upper hand, when nearly all the town officials, as well as the obnoxious rate collectors, were discharged as partizans of the other side. In 1857 a Charter of Incorporation was obtained. Mr. William Bayley was elected the first Mayor of the borough. Since then there have been twenty Mayors in Stalybridge, and but eight of them are still living, viz, Messrs, Ralph Bates, Robert Stanley, Samuel Warhurst, Mark Fentem Joseph Ridyard, William Tinker, J. R. Norman, and Allwood Simpson, the present mayor. The question of getting up the petition for incorporation was entrusted to the late Mr. Peter Johnson, and on one occasion he committed what was regarded as a breach of the rules of the House of Commons. There was a motion for the arrest of Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson, who was in the gallery became alarmed and bolted. He ran across Palace Yard and along Whitehall, and got somewhere concealed in some property which then stood on the site of the present Royal Courts of Justice. He eluded search for a time, and the matter being allowed to drop. He left his hiding and returned to Stalybridge. Under the charter the borough was

divided into three wards, viz. Lancashire, Stayley, and Dukinfield. Millbrook was not then included. To each of the wards six councillors and two aldermen were allotted. Few of those who took part in that contest are now living. There are however, a few left amongst whom may be mentioned Mr. Ralph Bates, J.P. Mr. David Harrison was appointed under the charter to conduct the first election, the following being the successful candidates: Lancashire Ward: Mr. William Johnson, Portland Place, cotton manufacturer; Mr. Robert Hopwood, Dean Street surgeon; Mr William Bayley, Stamford Lodge, cotton manufacturer; Mr. George Gimson, Mottram Road, engineer; Mr. John Wade, Rassbottom Street, licensed victualler; and Mr. Edward Shepley, stamford Street, firebrick maker. Stayley: Mr. Thomas Fernihough, Stamford Street, currier and leather dealer; Mr. Randal Ridgway, Kenworthy Street, factory manager; Mr. Gerrard Schofield Stokes, Dean Street, timber merchant; Mr. Martin Travis, Stocks Lane, grocer; Mr. James Miller, Back Grosvenor Street, licensed victualler; Mr. Iorworth Davies. Grosvenor Street, stationer. Dukinfield: Mr. Edward Cheetham, Hollins Street, grocer; Mr William Dean, Tame Street, ironfounder; Mr. Moses Davenport Thompson, Grosvenor Street, surgeon; Mr. John Marsland Stokes, cotton spinner; Mr. John Ridgway, corn dealer, Grosvenor Street; and Mr. Ralph Bates, cotton manufacturer, Cocker Hill.

The first aldermen for the three wards were; Lancashire: Messrs. Thos. Harrison and Henry Lees. Stanley: Messrs. George Adshead and Albert Hall. Dukinfield: Messrs. Henry Bayley and James Sidebottom.

THE GOOD OLD TIMES

We hear people talk a lot nowadays about the good old times. With the conveniences we have at the present time, and the same standard of morals in the old days might perhaps be preferable. By way of comparison, in 1835, there was but one superintendent of police and seven watchmen in Stalybridge. The magistrates complained of the unprotected state of life and property. At that time burglaries and other serious robberies were of frequent occurrence. The state of terror was such that people were in the habit of piling up cans, tea-trays, fire-tins, etc, behind their house doors before going to bed at night, in order that if the doors were interfered with during the night these things would fall down and alarm the inhabitants that something was wrong. In those days public houses were kept open nearly all night through and gambling was openly carried on in them. Houses of doubtful character were tolerated. Men went into the highways, and, in a state of nudity, ran races. Terrible fights were witnessed, for men fought with nothing on but their boots, and these had iron spikes fixed round the toes. Dog and cock-fighting were carried on to a great extent, and the authorities seldom interfered. Gentlemen, as well as working men, were in the habit of spending their evenings at the card table, playing for any amount of stakes they thought proper without let or hindrance, going home at daylight in the morning. The Quinns, Lynhams, Becketts, and others of a like stamp, were in the habit of having their fights in public-house taprooms or in the streets for an hour or two at once, and patrolling the streets in search of someone to tread on the tail of their coats, and if unable to meet with a foe as British as themselves, would knock down the first person they came across. If a watchman came to interfere with them they would have kicked him within an inch of his life. In fact, it was at that time said that a ruffian could punch an officer the length of Rassbottom Brow for 5s, and costs.

The people, including women and children of tender age, were kept at work in the factories for 12 or 13 hours a day, for six days a week. These long hours and the scanty food which the lower classes

got had a deteriorating effect on their constitution and appearance; scores of young men might have been seen in the streets, bow-legged, knock-kneed, hunchbacked, etc, and of stunted growth generally. Poor people were huddled up in cellars and other ill-ventilated places, regardless of age or sex, or of sanitary arrangements-one convenience having to answer for ten or a dozen houses. Ashes lay about in heaps covered with all sorts of filth and refuse. Night soil was carted about without any covering at all hours of the day.

The social conditions of the people have been greatly improved, comforts and conveniences having been provided which were not thought of sixty years ago. Men do not strip off their clothes and endeavour to kick each other to pieces; dog-fighting, cock-fighting, open gambling in public-houses, and houses kept for even more objectionable purposes, are all but things of the past. No such places as the last-mentioned have been permitted for the last forty years. As soon as the police hear of them they at once clear out the occupiers. The owners of houses and house agents have, except in a very few instances, assisted the police in suppressing these places without troubling the magistrates by, at the request of the police, at once turning the occupants out.

Religious animosity is not so great as it was in the good old times. There was a great deal of prejudice at one time between the Protestants and Roman Catholics of the town, and even amongst the Dissenting bodies.

One Whit-Friday, during the usual processions of Sunday school scholars round the town, a collision took place in High Street, between the Protestants and Roman Catholics, blows being exchanged with flagstuffs. The event was an unfortunate one. It has never been repeated, and it is to be hoped it never will. Thanks to the influence exercised by the late Bishop Carroll, his noble and exemplary qualities dispelled much of that enmity and petty jealousy existing between the two religious bodies, and nothing but a friendly rivalry as to the best display on Whit-Friday now exists.

I was engaged on seven Whit-Fridays in succession to play in a band for Old St. Georges (Cocker Hill), Stalybridge. The parents at that time took quite as great pains to turn their children out as nice as parents now do, but their means were greatly limited compared with the present day. Females were considered fairly dressed if they wore cotton prints, strong shoes, and bonnets. And the bonnets then worn, to use a colloquial term, were gradely ones. They were made of Leghorn, Tuscan, or other straws. The bonnets took much the form of the hard felt hats which men wear nowadays. The wearer's head fitted well into the crown, and the front part covered the ears and projected so far beyond the face that the fair wearer's face was only visible from the front. It is said that directly the women began to wear thin shoes and little bonnets doctors began to ride in carriages. Boys, up to young men, were considered smartly attired if they wore velveteens.

For whatever office a person was seeking, whether as commissioner or as a member of the Town Council, every burgess was canvassed for his or her vote. In these days, when nearly everyone belongs to one or other of the political parties, and when party lines are more defined, that canvassing to a great extent, is unnecessary. The law in those days did not compel local authorities to pave, flag, sewer, and regulate municipal matters to the same extent as now. If a street had to be paved, etc, the ratepayers had to be consulted, or somebody would get blamed.

When I took charge of the Stalybridge Police Office in 1862, the police uniform then worn had neither shape nor form about it. Neither were the men provided with shields or sightly numbers.

Tenders were procured from several tailoring contractors in other towns, and it was then found that up to that time nearly double the money had been paid in the town to the amount for which much better and smarter clothes could be obtained elsewhere. Of course, there was a terrible outcry about money being spent out of the town, but the Watch Committee considered it their duty to go out of town for their goods, when it meant a saving of 70 percent of the ratepayers money, and a great improvement in the appearance of the officers.

A ludicrous suggestion was once made that in order to save money a commissioner should take all the watchmen to Shudehill Market, and fit them out with second-hand coats. On another occasion a zealous commissioner brought forward a motion that the Chief Constable should come to his work at six in the morning, like the mill hands; when another commissioner rather staggered him by intimating that of course he would have to leave off at six o'clock at night.

It seems singular that in 1836, there were but 23 public houses and ten beershops to 17,200 of a population while prior to 1869, there were over a hundred to a population of 30,000. This may be accounted for by the fact that from 1836 to 1869 beerhouse licenses were issued by the excise authorities to any person that applied, the magistrates having no control over the granting of them. Since 1869, these licenses have been granted and renewed at each brewster session by the magistrates.

Some of the 13 men of 1862, were of little use as constables, having through local influences, been appointed because they had got too old to follow their usual employment in the factory. The increase in the number of officers, and the consequent improvement in discipline, caused crime and offences against persons and property to be reduced almost to nil. Instead of piling tin cans, etc, behind their doors when they retire to bed at nights, now the people often take their slumbers with their doors unfastened, and in the course of a year's time the night constables discover hundreds of houses that are insecurely fastened.

MAGISTRATES.

For that most thoroughly English of English institutions, the Commission of the Peace, we are indebted to the fourteenth century. The existence of Justices of the Peace, as a definite permanent institution may be dated from the year 1360. For a long while the shire was dependent on the occasional visitation of Judges commissioned by the king, while what might be called its police was still under the Sheriff's control. An estate in land worth £100 a year, or the occupation of a dwelling-house assessed at £100 a year, qualified a man to be a County Justice. The Justices held office during the queen's pleasure, and could be dismissed without the assignment of any reason, though this was never done save for grave causes.

In most boroughs, except the smallest the Queen granted a separate Commission of the Peace. These Justices, like the County, were appointed by the Queen (Lord Chancellor). They were unpaid, and held office during good pleasure. No property qualification was required, and they were not entrusted with any high criminal jurisdiction, this being reserved for the higher courts.

During my rather long experience I have, in one way or another, come in contact with a considerable number of gentlemen of the Commission of the Peace. My earliest recollections of them were in the country where they were looked up to with great awe and reverence. Their ranks were composed of

the proverbial squire and parson, with a corresponding representation of retired military officers. In those days the Magistrates exercised their functions generally in a very high-handed manner. I well remember a circumstance which came under my observation in the early sixties. I was away on business at an isolated county end, and had just found the district police officer, when a widow who held a farm under the local squire handed a warrant to the officer for the arrest of a certain man, and to bring him before the squire immediately. I accompanied the officer in search of the man. We found him at home, and he did not demur, but came straight away with us. We proceeded to the hall occupied by the squire, and there found him and the widow waiting for us. The squire, in a peremptory manner, asked the man what he had to say to his conduct in quitting his work as a mower without leave that morning, knowing well that it was in the middle of the harvest time. The man seemed much frightened, and had little to say. He was given the alternative of returning at once to his work or be sent to prison for a month. He, of course, chose the former, and went to his work again. The whole of this transaction did not occupy more than an hour.

This form of summary jurisdiction grew up in a curious, accidental fashion. The statute prescribed that petty offences might be punished sometimes by one Justice, sometimes by two or more, but did not state as to how, or when, or where the case was to be tried. The effect of modern legislation, however, has been that no sentence, except the pettiest, can be inflicted, save after a trial before at least two Justices, sitting in some place regularly appointed for such business, a petty sessional court-house.

Within the last fifty years villages have grown into large, populous towns, and have got the Municipal Corporation Acts, and appointed Borough Magistrates to administer justice within their jurisdiction. In the appointment of Magistrates, it is desirable to select intelligent men, though their political views too often, alas, are their only recommendation. Some Magistrates understand more about weighing sugar and measuring calico than the administration of justice, and, in consequence, they are sometimes very inconsistent in their actions and remarks. I have known them to sentence offenders to so many calendar weeks imprisonment, and it was a common thing for the Clerk to have to pull them up. A Magistrate may easily become unpopular and jeopardise his business. I remember a case where a tradesman was the Chief Magistrate of a borough during a very extensive and protracted trade strike. Many offenders were brought before the Borough Bench for intimidating and other misconduct, and the Justices had to be rather severe at times, always, however, keeping leniently within the law. When all was over the tradesman was boycotted, his business went away, and he was obliged to leave the town. He was singled out, and none of the other Justices were so treated. It seemed a pitiable state of things that this should be his reward after many years of faithful service. At unsettled times like that related there is invariably a demand for the appointment of Stipendiary Magistrates. This would not be of any advantage to the artisan classes, in as much as a Stipendiary Magistrate could not please everybody, and he would never try.

Considering that for over half a century it has been open for any large town to equip itself with a paid Magistrate, very few have taken advantage of the innovation, and the unpaid and unprofessional Justices appear to have given satisfaction. Although there were some magistrates who, through sudden impulse, did indiscreet things, the majority, I have known exercised sound common-sense and judgement in dealing with offenders.

PROMOTION AND FAVOURITISM

A policeman's lot, although not generally considered a happy one is pretty much what he himself makes it. The career of Robert can be made or marred in a measure proportionate to his merit and ability. Still, as everywhere else, favouritism may spoil many of his chances of promotion. In the appointment of chief constables nowadays, influence appears to be a greater factor than merit. It is a question of having friends in court. In the English counties more than three-fourths of the chief constabships are held by outsiders of the military class; while the English cities and boroughs favour the civil element in the proportion of eight to one, and in that proportion place practical ability before social standing in appointing their chief constables. This state of matters raises a suspicion that in the counties the selection of gentlemen of social standing as chief constables, to the disparagement of able men who have been trained to the work, is made for the benefit of certain classes, rather than in the interest of police efficiency. Those chief constables who have served their apprenticeship in the ranks, and gained their proud position by merit and ability, are better able to efficiently discharge the responsible duties of the office than those who have their duties to learn after appointment. The experienced chief is naturally in close sympathy with his men, understands the difficulties and temptations they have to contend with from personal experience, and is able to point out the numerous pitfalls and stumbling blocks that surround the constable on his beat. He will also have an extensive knowledge of the criminal classes and their habits.

I remember some years ago meeting with a number of gentlemen in a small borough in which a new chief constable had been appointed a few hours before. Amongst the unsuccessful candidates was a captain, who, on being asked if he had any knowledge or experience of police duties, replied: Oh, no It is a matter of getting the appointment, as I am told that there can always be a man got to look after the business for about 30s a week.

The superintendents of counties, and chief constables of boroughs, recommend their men for promotion, and although they are often accused of favouritism, I do not think such a thing is practised to any great extent, in as much as these superior officers are responsible for the good management of their departments, and it is only likely they will try to secure the best men they can get. There have been cases where the recommendations of a chief constable have been ignored through the nominee not having friends in court. More than probable, owing to influence and the back-door policy such promotion was made before the Watch Committee actually met together, and when the meeting did take place everything was cut and dried.

I well remember on one occasion being present at a watch committee meeting where the merits of a constable were being discussed. One gentleman remarked, I think him a fairish officer, as he interferes with nobody so long as they will let him alone.

If favouritism were carried on to any great extent, it would constitute a great drawback to the good discipline of police forces.

SUPERANNUATION OF POLICE OFFICERS.

The first Police Superannuation Act caused much agitation throughout the police system for many years. I myself joined a deputation which waited upon the Home Secretary, Mr. (now Lord) Cross, in

1874, on the subject, accompanied by Mr. T.H. Sidebottom, M.P. For Stalybridge. We were introduced by Mr. Bolcoe, M.P. For Middlesbrough. The Home Secretary agreed with the deputation, that the Police Superannuation Act was defective and ought to be amended, but he could not hold out any hopes that anything could be done just then. At that time municipal corporations had discretionary powers to either put the Act in force or not. Little of this was done until the Act of 1890 was passed. In the early sixties considerable agitation was carried on in the police papers of that time. All sorts of absurd suggestions were made in the various police magazines respecting the time men should serve, the amount of superannuation they ought to claim, and as to its being made compulsory, which caused influential men to hold aloof, and to refrain from assisting in the promotion of an amended Act.

Mr. Kempster, editor of the Police Review, who might be termed the pioneer of the 1890 Act, rendered great assistance by advocating the claims of the police, although any ordinary man would have felt discouraged at the stupid and irrelevant questions put to him by many of the police officers. This went on for some years, when the police officers got enfranchised. After that it was pretty fair sailing. An Act was passed through Parliament with little or no opposition, neither of the political parties apparently caring to risk the chance of losing votes by placing obstacles in the way. The 1890 Act laid down a hard and fast line as to the number of years a man should serve before he could claim superannuation in full, and the amount of pension he was entitled to. It also made provision for the wives and families of men killed or otherwise incapacitated whilst in active service. The whole of the police of the country are greatly indebted to Col. Sir Howard Vincent, at one time head of the Criminal Investigation Department at Scotland yard, for the assistance he gave in bringing about the compulsory adoption of the Superannuation Act. Several years ago I was subjected to severe strictures by certain police officers, on the stand I took in regard to pensions. Some of the suggestions were that superannuation should come into force after fourteen years service, whilst in other cases twenty-one years was fixed as a limit, and in the latter case that two-thirds of the weekly pay should be allowed. Such a tall order, as I pointed out at the time, was unreasonable, as it meant that in a comparatively short time there would be thousands of able-bodied men on the superannuation list to meet which it would be necessary to levy increased rates in the different municipalities. From that agitation I take credit at all events in having assisted to get the 1890 Act passed. In the many articles I wrote on the subject, I never said a word against the principles of police superannuation. The objections I took were to the suggestions already mentioned. The superannuation system in vogue amongst railway companies, fixes an age limit to prevent retirement in the prime of life, special provision being made for those incapacitated whilst in the service. The principles to which I adhered were embodied in a lecture on Brain Rust, delivered by Sir James Crichton-Browne, M.D. F.R.S. At St George's Hall, London. He said I do not know of any surer way of inducing senile decay than for a man of active habits to retire and do nothing when just past the prime of life, nor do I know of any surer way of enjoying a green old age than to keep on working till the close. This fact ought, he said, to inspire us with some doubt as to the wisdom of the superannuation and compulsory retirement regime under which we live.

The present Act makes provision that if a man becomes incapacitated after 15 years service he is entitled to superannuation based on a sliding scale; but if under 15 years service, power is granted to make him a gratuity in accordance with discretion. Prior to 1890 there was no obligation to superannuate the men; in fact, most municipal authorities had no funds.

The Act was not in operation at Stalybridge when I first went there, but I had been a contributor in other forces some 10 or 11 years previously. I at once brought the subject before the Watch committee, and the Act was adopted with some reluctance. For a long time the funds were not subsidised, receiving only the weekly contributions deducted from the men's pay. The Watch Committee, however, saw that they would be in a fix some day if they did not pay attention to the matter, and all fees, fines, etc, were therefore paid into the fund. The fund was so weak a few years ago that for me to have then retired would have caused a drain which it could ill afford to bear, and it was even suggested to me to defer the matter in consequence. Watch committees have power to levy a rate if the superannuation fund became deficient, but it would be considered unsatisfactory to have to levy a pension rate. A logical view of police pensions is that they are for worn-out officers, so to speak. I am deeply interested in the scheme, having been a contributing member nearly half a century.

A resolution was recently passed by the Cheshire Police Pensions Sub-committee, stating that it was expedient that the provisions of the Police Act, 1890, with reference to pensions of constables, should be amended so as to provide that the amount of pension in respect of each rank should not as at present, be based on the pay, but in lieu thereof, pensions for each rank should be of fixed and definite amounts (not being less than the amounts now payable). And not liable to forfeiture after twenty-five years service except for some offence mentioned in section 8 of the Act; and, further, that county police authorities should have the power of fixing the pay of all ranks of constables in the same manner as borough councils.

ABOUT POLICEMEN IN GENERAL

In venturing a little advice to young aspiring P.C.s. I shall be brief, remembering the golden rule amongst old experienced constables never to offer advice without first ascertaining which particular character of advice is required. True, the life of a policeman is full of variety and vicissitude. He may not be a man of gigantic intellect, but he must be an observer. Robert must be impervious to outside influences. He must be adamant yet elastic, a cosmopolitan creature capable of striking the happy medium wherever he goes. He carries his life in his hands, so to speak. If he is in conflict with the midnight marauder he must be as cool and collected as he is supposed to be when his sergeant provides an ambush for him in the dead of night just to see if his withers are unwrung. Pope's sublime sonnet on Vice has no meaning for the constable on his beat. He must frequent the haunts of vice and pass out unsullied. Civility perhaps becomes him more than anyone. He must be courteous to everybody, and yet callous. Incivility is one of the gravest offences in the force.

In an address to police constables on their duties, the Right Hon. Lord Brampton (Justice Hawkins) said:- whatever duty you may be called on to perform, keep a curb on your temper. An angry man is as unfit for duty as a drunken one. Be civil and listen respectfully to everybody who addresses you.

Col. Sir Edward Bradford, Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, said:---The duties of a police officer present frequent, almost constant, opportunities for the exercise of good temper, courage, tact, and common sense. A man who cultivates these qualities will invariably bear himself well in any circumstances, however trying.

The late Bishop Frazer, in an address to the A Division of the Manchester Police Force, said he did not know any body of men more deserving of the confidence placed in them than the police. They

had opportunities of doing great and good services, as they were brought into contact with much that was unlovely in the streets. Particularly in the case of young servant girls coming into the towns from the country, and to children and women in danger, they could afford sympathy and help.

The constable has therefore many duties and heavy responsibilities. I shall not forget being in London once with a friend. I asked an officer the shortest way to a certain well-known street. He replied that he was not a walking encyclopaedia. He so irritated me that I called him a puppy. He turned upon me in an instant with the remark: What did you say? I repeated the statement, and then pointed out to him what the consequences of his incivility would be if I went to the yard. Finding he had caught a tartar, he commenced to climb down, and directed us the right way.

When strong complaints of incivility have reached me, I sometimes sent for constables off their beats to obtain the facts, and if necessary to admonish the party at fault. One important matter for an officer to learn is discretion. Half the assaults made upon police officers are brought about through lack of discretion, and injudicious treatment of those in their custody. Many a breach of faith has been committed by police officers, in years gone by, in detailing information entrusted to them in confidence, such as informing suspected publicans of an intended raid, and in other ways betraying their trust. Confidential matters should be kept strictly secret if justice must be done. The desire of every police officer having done his duty faithfully and well.

ECCENTRICITIES...

There are few towns and villages but what have their odd characters. The latter are, perhaps, not so numerous nowadays, due, no doubt, to the advantages of improved education, and increased facilities for intellectual training and cultivation of character.

At one time there was a parish constable in Hollingworth named George Shaw, or better known at the time as George Shay, who was a strange sort of guardian of the peace, as he was in the frequent habit of going on the spree, and when in his cups could be frequently seen marching about, truncheon in hand, with a lot of wondering children following him. Now and then he would come to a stand, strike his truncheon against the wall, and call out, G, for George, and R, for Rex; what does that stand for? Others succeeded him of nearly as strange a character. There was a parish constable in Mottram, a farmer and shoemaker, named Jim Bradley, a big, strapping fellow, who made it a practice of going to fights when they were over. However, if the fight lasted too long, he would have gone, not to arrest the fighters, but to separate them and make them go home, in order to do which he did not pull himself to pieces, but after asking them to desist and they continued to fight, he would say, If you don't give over I shall have my share of the battle, when he would have laid his rather formidable boots about their ribs, which generally caused a cessation of hostilities.

During the Chartist times, in 1846-7-8, there was considerable excitement in Mottram, as it was said that the Chartists of Stalybridge were in the habit of going on Hobson Moor to practise military drill, for the suppression of which a number of special constables were sworn in. These were officered by John Goddard, who displayed a considerable amount of alacrity in looking after them; and on one occasion, in the autumn of 1847, John's mother, standing in front of their house, discovered, or rather thought she did, a number of men at drill in open day. Sending for John, she, placing her hand over her eyes, said, Look, John, these fellows are in yonder field playing at soldiers. Thou mun do thy duty, my lad; get thi men together, and stop em! Aye, aye, mother, said John, never fear but I shall

do my duty; but I must first send to Hollingworth for Isaac Bradshaw to meet me at Thorncliffe Hall with his men to assist. John thereupon sent a messenger for Bradshaw to meet him, and hastened to collect his specials together, whom he marched down the town in great state, John himself, like a good general, at the head. When they had got as far as the Junction Inn, John's mother came running up, saying, John, my lad, thou's forgotten they law book, at the same time handing him a formidable book from under her apron. The whole army of specials then proceeded by a circuitous route near to the scene of action, where they met Isaac Bradshaw with the Hollingworth contingent, and, calling Bradshaw on one side, they held a council of war, in which John related what his mother and he had seen, and laid down his plan of attack. After instructing their men to follow them cautiously along, the two men went stealthily up the side of a hedge and down the back of another, until they came to the field they were in search of. On peeping through the hedge they discovered, not an army of Chartists, but a number of sheaves of wheat piled up all over the field.

Old Joe Brownhill, a man nearly seven feet high, often boasted of having more freehold property in Mottram parish than any other man, in as much as he would cover more inside his grave than either Mr. Tollemache or Lord Stamford. He was a very merry fellow, and was never better pleased than when the joke was going merrily round along with the jug. Jack o' Bothams, who was a very small man, used to challenge old Joe to measure him. Old Joe went out one Sunday morning to look for something, and on getting into the road he came across some footmarks, which puzzled him very much, as he always thought he could stride as far as anybody he had ever seen; but do what he would he would he could not fill the tracks left in the snow on this particular morning, either by running or walking, for he tried both. He had heard of giants, and he concluded that these marks were the footsteps of one, and he determined, if it were possible, to overtake and have a look at such a curiosity. After a good deal of hard walking, he at last came up with the object of his pursuit, whom he found to be an ordinary sized man, with a wooden leg. Old Joe was a very eccentric character altogether, and was once summoned to give evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons, in connection with the Manchester Waterworks, when, in answer to a question, he said he lived where there was seven months winter and five months of cold weather.

A butcher, named Nicholas Booth, better known as Owd Nick o' Boots, on fetching his sheep from his native Derbyshire hills used to call in at the old Church Steel (Bull's Head), Mottram, and would generally drive his stock into the croft or yard. One dark night in the early thirties, when the only illuminant in the house was a halfpenny dip, gas being unknown in country places, he drove a black tup into the cellar, and then went into the kitchen, where sat George O' Woolley, the host, better known as boniface, and his good lady, along with old Tinker, the sexton, and the parish clerk, old Stephen Fullalove, engaged in a quiet conversation. He sat down and asked the landlady to fetch a pint of beer. She lit a halfpenny dip and went out for the purpose. The wily butcher, knowing she would have to go to the cellar for it, sat listening. She did not scream, but returned to the kitchen as pale as a ghost, having left the candle on a barrel inside the cellar, and called, George, fetch a pint of ale, offering him the empty pt, as there is something in you cellar I do not like. The old chap took the pot from her, murmuring about not knowing what women were good for, and left the kitchen, but returned in less time than his better half had done, with his hair on end, exclaiming. Stephen, if there's a deil, he's in our cellar. Stephen rushed into the passage, and saw for himself what they all agreed was something covered over with black hair, with large, sparkling eyes. None of them could look straight at Stephen, who at once ordered them to find a Bible and a Prayer Book, whilst he ran for the vicar to lay the Evil One the butcher keeping his seat and quietly enjoying the fun. While old

Woolley and his good lady were waiting for old Fullalove returning with the vicar, the old lady said, George, I have told you scores of times what would be the end of using those short measure pots, and the old man promised her that if he could only get out of that scrape he would break them all and buy a new lot, and never, as long as he lived, serve short measure again. In a few minutes the sexton returned with the vicar, who took a look at the tup, which, in its fright, had wedged itself between two barrels facing the cellar door, and feeling convinced that he was in the presence of the Evil One, returned to the kitchen to make preparations to banish him. A procession was formed, the vicar in front, reading suitable passages for the occasion from the New Testament. Then came old George Woolly followed by the sexton, and the old landlady close behind. On seeing the cellar door open, the tup made a rush for freedom, knocking down the vicar, the vicar in turn knocking down old Woolley, old Wolley the sexton, and the sexton the old lady, so that in a second or two all four were sprawling on the floor screaming for mercy. The tup got outside, ba-baaing, and the butcher, after securing him and the other sheep, made his way homewards, chuckling over the fun he had had.



The parson with Testament, etc., etc.

About the year 1843 numbers of small buildings were put up in different parts of the country by the Wesleyans and Primitive Methodists, which were used both as Sunday schools and preaching-rooms, and in which local preachers held forth on a Sunday. They were a body of self-sacrificing, zealous men, earnest in the cause, and good livers to boot, though generally men of little education. One Sunday afternoon I attended service held in one of the aforementioned places of worship, at Leehead, near Charlesworth. It was a warm summer's day, and those in attendance were principally old people and young school children. Many of the old people appeared from their manner to be deaf. A very tall, thin, man, about thirty years of age, walked straight up the aisle into the pulpit, with an air of assurance and levity unbecoming a preacher of the gospel. His ill-fitting suit of black was worn threadbare; his linen was of an iron-rust colour; his shirt collar, a very deep one, hung loosely over his mildewed neckerchief; his hair appeared to have a will of its own; and his hands, to say the least, were anything but clean. In commencing the service, he managed, in the most

common-place way, to give out the first hymn, to which a drawling kind of tune was commenced by a thick-set, uncouth-looking man, a blacksmith from the neighbouring collieries. The most amusing part of all was the apology for a sermon by the preacher, the whole of which was devoted to informing the congregation that, like our Lord's disciples, he had never been at college, and how wonderful it was, therefore, that he could expound the Scriptures. After the first five minutes one-half of the congregation were in the arms of Morpheus; whilst some of the old people, regardless of whether the sentiments offered were suitable or not, now and then called out Amen, and other responses. A paper was handed up to the preacher to be read, announcing that sermons would be preached the following Sunday and collections made on behalf of the Sunday school. When he came to the name of the man who was to preach he made a dead stop. After a considerable pause, he commenced spelling. C-a-t, C-a-t, C-a-t, he repeated three times, and then stopped again. He then lifted his head from the paper, and called out from the top of his voice, Yo mun ha bit o pashuns wi mi, awn nobbut a stripper and grinder fro Marple, yo knoan, but aw'll mak it eawt yet, as blunderin' chap as aw am:. He then began to spell as before, and at last the man with the terrible voice shouted out Catherall, mon. Aye, aye, thank yo, said the preacher, Aw knowed wi could do it. After another dreadful sing, etc. the congregation left the place, the minister shaking hands with all round.

At the commencement of Queen Victoria's reign the only public conveyance in Stalybridge, in addition to the stage coach, which passed through between Manchester and Sheffield, was a two-horse conveyance which started from the White Hart, Market Street, Mottram, on market days. Some of the manufacturers who wished to get to Manchester speedily had to walk, being able to accomplish the journey much quicker afoot than going by the conveyance. A few drove to market in gigs, whilst others went on horseback. One gentleman was in the habit of walking to Manchester to attend the market. He had some grown-up daughters, who did not like him to appear so ungentlemanly. With much persuasion, they induced him to go on horseback, but, much to their surprise and chagrin, he returned at night on foot, as usual. On being questioned as to what had become of his steed, he stared at them for some time, then, collecting his thoughts somewhat, exclaimed, Well! Upon my soul, I put it up at the inn, and forgot all about it.

Old John Buckley, of Carr Brook, was no exception to the rule of eccentric people amongst the farmers of Staley. John was in the habit of going on the spree, and neglecting his business during his drinking bouts, which annoyed old Mary, his better half, very much, and she was determined to make straight with him. Having placed him at the churn, he began, in his usual way, to make excuses, and suddenly remembered that he had to go to Mossley fair. His good dame told him that he did go she would leave the churning for him to do when he returned. Knowing she would not see him again that day, she took a second thought, and got it done by other means. At night Johnny returned full to the brim as usual, and hiccupping, inquired if the churning was done. His better half indignantly pointed to the churn, which stood where he had left it, and told him that he would have to finish his job before he went to bed. He pulled off his coat, and commenced, very reluctantly, to do his work, the old lady, in the meantime, going quietly to bed. About three o'clock in the morning the old gentleman, covered with perspiration, awoke her, and told her with alarm that he had been churning the whole of the night, and yet there were no signs of butter. She coolly replied that he must keep on then, as it was hardly likely that drunken folks could get butter as soon as sober ones; and so the poor old fellow tried again until five o'clock, when he disturbed his wife a second time, and said, Still no butter. The old lady saw that by this time Johnny had got quite sober, so she told

him he might leave it and come to bed, as she had done the churning, and taken the butter out, whilst he was sitting in an alehouse corner.

Jethro Tinker, to whose memory is erected a monument in Stamford Park, Stalybridge, having been brought up at North Britain, when quite young became familiar with the names of two different species of moths (butterflies), plants, flowers, etc, and whatever else he was engaged in his mind continually reverted to these objects. On one occasion he had been assisting the choir at St. Michael's Church, Ashton, and at the end of the service, on emerging from the church, amongst hundreds of the church people, he saw flying over his head a butterfly, of a peculiar species. Forgetting both the church and the people, he made a run as if for very life after it, down Stamford Street, with his hat in his hand and his hair blowing about, to the astonishment of some and the amusement of others. He ran on until he arrived at Ryecroft, where he captured the innocent beauty, and made his way back down the same street, with the butterfly primly secured inside his hat with a pin, unmindful of the jeers of those who were uninitiated into the mysteries of entomology, and who, no doubt, shrugged their shoulders, and pitied his simplicity.

During the time of the agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws Mr. Cobden paid a visit to Mr. Richard Matley, at the Hodge Print Works, Broadbottom. One afternoon Mr. Matley and Mr. Cobden went out for a walk. Having rambled through the Haigh, they entered the old beerhouse of Mr. Shaw, a thorough-going Tory, who would fly up immediately politics were broached. On the two guests asking for refreshments, Mr. Shaw placed a good-sized piece of cheese and a number of oatmeal cakes before them, fare which Shaw used to say was good enough for a prince. In fact, it was his own diet, though he kept a loaf or two of wheaten bread in his house for special occasions. Whilst the two guests were refreshing themselves, Mr. Matley introduced the question of the repeal of the Corn Laws, which he and Mr. Shaw argued rather warmly. Mr. Cobden, who appeared to enjoy the discussion, now and then threw a word in, to keep it alive as it were. After a time, they both rose to leave, and when about to bid Good-day, Mr. Matley, in an offhand way, remarked, Oh, Mr. Shaw, allow me to introduce my friend, Mr. Cobden, to you, which I ought to have done at the first. Mr. what did you say, ejaculated Mr. Shaw, opening his eyes to the utmost limits. Mr. Cobden, replied Mr. Matley, What, the great Mr. Cobden? Said Mr. Shaw, The very man, replied Mr. Matley. Eh, Mr. Matley said Mr. Shaw, you ought to have told me before, and I would not have set oatcake before him! I would not, for sure, I would have brought a loaf out. Never mind, friend, remarked Mr. Cobden, we have had good, plain country fare, and you will have cheaper loaves by and bye.

There were some rather eccentric schoolmasters in the old days, and their methods of tuition were very peculiar. Old Robert Smith kept a school in Stalybridge, and had a goodly number of scholars, many of whom afterwards became the leading men of the town. One day a number of seats were piled one upon another in the schoolroom, in order to make a ring, in the centre of which two boys were down on the school floor fighting, the other scholars, along with the schoolmaster, standing over and encouraging them. After a time some of the bigger boys attempted to separate them, upon seeing which the master shouted out, Dunno touch em, let em, have it eawt; they'n happen agree better when they know who's th mester.

Another schoolmaster, after setting his scholars their small spelling lessons, was obliged to leave them, and attend to his work at the mill, telling them to be attentive until he returned, as he would

run up at tea time and see how they were getting on. The school being his house, they were pretty comfortable for a time, but after a while the mistress left the house also, which soon made spelling without a master rather monotonous. An examination of the house was commenced, and the first object found worth notice was the sugar pot, with which they occupied themselves. The mistress immediately missed her sugar on returning, and accused the scholars of having stolen it, which they denied. The mistress caught hold of one boy's sleeve, which she licked with her tongue, when horror upon horrors, it was found that it had touched the sugar when putting his hand into the pot. The upshot of it was that the offending scholars were kicked out of school.

I was once attending the Sessions at Strangeways, when the Courthouse was first opened, and the late Dr. Aspland was presiding over the second Court. A case was brought before him which, after it had been gone through, was put to the jury. They were such a long time consulting together that the Doctor asked them if they were likely to agree, because, if not, they had better go into a private room, and let the other business be going on. The foreman got up and said, There's an old chap in that corner will agree to nowt. It was noticed that the man referred to always shook his head. The Doctor said they had better try again. They sat down, and ultimately came to a verdict. No one could tell which side the man had previously been opposing, in as much as he shook his head to every proposition put forward.

Several experiments were tried at gas making in Stalybridge before the noble works now in existence were thought about. Some of the tradespeople had it brought from Manchester in airtight bags, made for the purpose, at so much per hundred feet. But a well-known druggist and a tinsmith worker were determined to make their own jointly, one finding the resin, of which they intended to make it, and the other to give his material and skilled labour in pipes, joints, etc. For a holder they got an iron pot, round at the bottom, and placed it mouth downwards into a hogshead containing water. They then commenced firing under the retort. They had an outlet tap, and after firing some time they began to suspect that the gas was blowing off in some other way than going into the holder, as it did not rise. Not thinking the part betwixt the top of the pot and the water would have to be filled first, one of them, with a lighted candle in his hand, pressed upon the holder. The gas rushed out and became ignited, and went off like a great clap of thunder, sending the iron holder up into the air, grazing the man's shoulder who had the light in his hand. They might be termed the pioneers of gas making in Stalybridge.

An odd character, whom the writer often came in contact with, was John Shaw, inventor of the first musical instrument in England played with valves. About sixty years ago I frequently saw him with this instrument, and heard him play it. He had it covered over with green baize, to conceal the invention until he could secure a patent for it, to which he was well entitled, but not having sufficient means, the facilities at that time not being so great as at the present day, he never succeeded, although on one occasion he went to London for the purpose, but was so unfortunate as to spend both money and time for nothing. In the end he found himself penniless and friendless in the great metropolis. However, he was a man of resource, for he succeeded in making a musical instrument out of straws, fastened together with sealing wax, which he played like bagpipes, and worked his way home with it. In after life he often showed this wonderful instrument to his friends when relating his London adventures.

A stern disciplinarian a big, powerful gentleman who was a major in the Ashton Volunteers, on going home one night found a little tailor crouching down behind the kitchen door. Taking hold of him by the collar, he asked him what he was doing there. The little man, half dead with fright, begged pardon, and pleaded that he had only come to see the cook, to whom he was engaged. This did not satisfy the major. He sent for a constable, who took the intruder away.

Next morning the major, on enquiry, was told that the tailor had been sent about his business. This ruffled him, and a letter subsequently appeared in the local paper in which he found fault because the man had not been dealt with by the magistrates. A few days afterwards the whole of the master tailors in the town went to the major's house, with books of patterns of cloth under their arms. The major said he wanted no clothes, whereupon each of the tailors produced a circular inviting him to come. The major dismissed them with disgust, and said he knew nothing about the circulars.

On another occasion a rather prominent man in the town was knocked up at four o'clock in the morning. On coming to his door, he found half a dozen chimney sweeps quarrelling as to who should sweep his chimneys. Each of them produced a circular, asking him to come and do so, and so obstinate were they that he was obliged to fetch his horse-whip to drive them away.

Old Sam Matley was often made the butt of cynicism. On one occasion, when knee breeches were in fashion, he went to a ball. Having rather thin legs, his sister was determined no young fellow should be smarter than he. She enlarged the calves of his legs, and improved the shape, by stuffing his stockings with small pads. Sam strutted about, and danced with all the pretty girls present in their turns, when, judge his indignation at seeing everyone making fun at his legs, and, on looking down, found that the pad on one leg had slipped down. He bolted from the room and ran straight home.

A peculiar character was old James Stretton, who lived near Mottram, and over whose door was a blackboard, which announced, in rude, white letters, that he was licensed to sell beer, etc, by retail. On paying a visit one day, in in company with a friend, Jim began to relate how he had been a whole week at a time, during the past winter, and never a customer came into his house, and said that if we would go upstairs he would show us what he had been occupying himself with during the dreary time. He led us up a rude kind of ladder, by way of a very small hole, into a large and apparently empty room, open to the slates. In one corner he pointed out a small, but tidy-looking, new cart, wheels on, and all complete, and, as he observed, with a twinkle in his eye, quite ready for painting. We all praised his handiwork, and were attempting to force our selves down the ladder, when one of my companions observe, Jim, you' ll have some difficulty in getting your cart down this hole, upon which he lifted up both hands, clutched his hair convulsively, and looked at the hole below, and at length, with bated breath, exclaimed, Well, upon my word, I never thought of that before. We persuaded him to saw a hole of sufficient dimensions to let the cart in its entirety through the floor into the taproom.

John Oldham, an old Mottramite, was a very enthusiastic violoncello player. He was one day on his way to play at Hope Wakes, and passing peak Forest, took a short cut across the fields. An ill-natured bull saw him and gave chase. Burdened with his violoncello, a sudden thought struck him, and that was the charming influence of music. He had often heard that music had charms to soothe the savage breast, so he commenced playing on his great fiddle. His Majesty the Bull ceased his bellowing, and followed close upon poor Oldham, who kept on playing, at the same time wriggling

towards a wall. Seeing a low place, he ceased his music, and tried to get over, upon which his bullship made a rush, and catching him in a soft place, lifted fiddler and fiddle over the wall at a much quicker pace than was anticipated. Oldham got to his feet, and taking stock of his broken fiddle, remarked, in an expression of disgust to the bull, You may be a musician, but you are no gentleman.

His brother, William Oldham, it was said, attended York Festival, and heard a gentleman play a bassoon so much better than he could, that it preyed upon his mind to such an extent that he gradually sank and died. The Stalybridge Old Band bore the expense of erecting tombstones over the graves of the two worthies in Mottram Churchyard.

Of Mottram musicians, none shone so conspicuously as Mr. James Shaw (or Old Drummer, Shaw, as he was more generally known), who, up to the 82nd year of his age maintained all his vocal energy unimpaired, and was, as he had been for a generation, the leading member of the musical society of the village. When old James took to himself a wife, when single life received its deathblow he acted somewhat remarkably. They were married early in the morning, and a few hours after the mystic knot was tied he might have been seen walking at a quickened pace along the road. He arrived at Oldham Old Church soon in the afternoon, where his comrades had gone to join in ringing a peal on the bells; but it was not known by them for some time afterwards that he had been there to listen, on his wedding day.

The fuddlers in the old days seldom got into trouble by their drinking, partly because there were not any policemen patrolling the town, and partly because they did not indulge in ardent spirits as at the present time. The most notable person amongst the fuddling fraternity was a woman named Deborah C___, who was tall and thin, and appeared to be lame on one leg. She was often seen reeling drunk up the Mottram main street, with a number of children after her. Now and then she would come to a stand, and deliver an oration to them. Her family had much trouble with her on account of her drunken habits, and when in that state she was in the habit of telling them to put the following epitaph on her gravestone: _

This is where poor Deborah lies,

Nobody laughs nor nobody cries,

Where she's gone or how she fares,

Nobody knows and nobody cares.

When old John L____, of Hazlehurst, had his first tea kettle, only a very small one, tea being all but unknown, a rather humorous incident occurred. The kettle was singing on the fire, when he placed his feet on the fender to warm them. The steam began to hiss from the kettle spout, when he looked thunders, and inquired what it was hissing at. By-and-bye some of the boiling water spurted out on his feet and scalded him. This was more than he could stand. He had told his wife many a time what she would come to with her new-fangle notions. He jumped up, took his walking-stick, threw down the offending kettle, and battered it out of shape, all the time repeating that he would be master there whoever came.

During the thirties, when Broadbottom was in its balmy days, and expanding into what it has since become, a rather extensive village, there were some odd people. No cheap weekly and halfpenny daily newspapers being then published, the gossips made the most of any little matter that cropped up. Stockport was the leading market town, and it was a common expression on a Friday to say, Its Friday at Stockport to-day. All the country carriers went to Stockport on a Friday for groceries and other marketable commodities. Amongst others was Jim Oldham, quite an original character in his way, who, in addition to returning half seas over, had invariably some wonderful story to tell of what he had seen or heard on his journey, and so much interest was attached to his stories that frequently a number of young fellows waited his arrival to hear the latest news. On one occasion he told them that when he was going on the road in the morning he saw some men digging the ground up, and on his return at night there had been a long row of houses built on the spot, one of which was tenanted and had good stuff in the window. On another occasion he had seen some men fry a thick flannel topcoat in cart grease, which they eat at the public-house where he put his horse up. There was another character who caused abundance of food for the gossips, in the person of Ellen Hall, a stout, red-faced woman, with a voice that could be heard the length of a street off when excited. Should any new piece of gossip turn up, she would be the first to become acquainted with it, and would never rest until she had related it through the village. On one occasion an odd sort of man, named Jim Lowe, secured a large walking-stick, and started up the footway, quite in a hurried manner, on the opposite side to Ellen's house. ~When opposite to her house she came rushing out, and called aloud, Heigh, Jam! heigh, Jam! Pretending not to hear her, Jim kept going on, until a number of neighbours had come to their doors, when he came to a stand and said, Why, bless me, woman, have you not heard? Heard what? Shouted Ellen, out of breath with excitement. Why dear o' me, woman, the Romans are coming. Where are they, Jam? Shouted Ellen. Why, replied Jim, they are just now coming through Chosorth (Charlesworth). Off rushed old Ellen, with a number of children after her, as if going to meet the Romans and give them a welcome, and exclaiming, as she went, Their times come; I knew they would have their revenge!.

Whilst at a gathering in Mottram once the company was just breaking up about midnight with He's a jolly good fellow, when it was announced that Bob-o-th-Hill was fighting with Jack-o-Nancy's. A rush was made outside, and there Bob and Jack were found engaged in a kind of running tussle. During the fight Bill-o-th-Dale came up with a fortnight's groceries for a rising family, and amongst other things he had a four-quart can full of treacle, which he placed against the wall along with his basket, while he watched fair play. Either by accident or design the can got kicked over, and its contents spilled on the ground. This was a fine treat to the younger portion of the company, and they began to smear one another in the face with the treacle, which caused a greater commotion than ever. Bob was rushing about in search of his foe, who had taken shelter amongst the crowd of laughers, when Shawright made a treacle plaster and clapped it over the mouth and face of Bob-o-th-Hill. The latter rushed wildly about, being unable to see or breathe properly, until someone pushed his fingers into his mouth, which brought him to a dead stop. The first words he uttered were, Aw conno spake! Many of the company got smeared with treacle, and it was whispered the week following that one man took such large quantity home in his jacket that his wife boiled it out, and made small beer or treacle whip out of it.

Old John Bottom, better known as Jack O'Botham was a dapper little fellow, not more than five feet high, and was the possessor of a full alto voice, of which he was very proud. He received an invitation to attend Mottram Church, to assist in singing Kent's anthems, but Mally Botham's better

half-determined that her husband should not go. The couple were of contrary dispositions, but they jogged along pretty comfortably, and resided at a three storeyed plain stone house, boasting of the aristocratic name of Mote Ho, or Mort Hall. The Sunday morning Botham was to go to Mottram Church was in the winter season. Botham awoke just as daylight was peeping through the window curtains, and he found that Mally was down stairs already. With bright visions of a good breakfast before he started to Mottram, Botham got up, but could find no clothes to dress himself with. After hunting a while, and shouting to his Mally down stairs, and receiving no answer, he hastened below to discover what it all meant. He could find no one in the house, and he had no better success when he looked for his shoes, stockings, and other articles. His Sunday clothes were all gone, the fire was out, and the doors were locked, and poor Botham was in a fix. He determined to go to church, for he could not believe that his dear Mally had taken his clothes out of the house, but had simply hid them to keep him at home. He was sure he could find them, so to work he went, but could find neither stockings, shoes, hat, coat, or trousers. Botham was not the man to say die, so he ascended a ladder and entered the attic, a place he had not explored for years. At the bottom of a flour barrel he discovered an old coat formerly worn by his father, who had been a much larger man than Botham. It had been in fashion some thirty years previous. Botham continued his search, and was rewarded by finding an old pair of trousers which had done duty at a remote date. After sundry brushing the cloth began to polish up like a pair of patent leather boots. Botham placed them before the fire to dry a bit, and descended into the cellar, where his explorations were rewarded with a pair of shoes, which he made to fit by cutting slits in the sides. A second journey into the attic brought an old hat to light, crushed and mouldy. Although Mally had taken Botham's stockings, she had forgot her own, and he at once put hers on; shortly after up went the window and down came Botham into the garden, by a gradual descent from the chamber window by means of a bed sheet. He started on his way by lanes and byways, so as to escape observation, and arrived at the church soon after the commencement of the service in the afternoon. The day being dull, and the church badly lighted, Botham managed to get a corner near the organ quietly. When the anthem came on the members of the choir were delighted to hear Botham's well-known alto voice, although scarcely one of them had seen him. When the chorus was sung as the congregation left the church, Botham crept out very quietly, and down he went to the White Hart, the rendezvous of the singers. He there fully displayed his father's coat, Mally's stockings, his grandfather's trousers, and an improved edition of his grandfather's hat. On the Wednesday following Mally found her husband still at the White Hart, and there promised that if he would return home she would never try to frustrate him again.
